

Southwick Congregational Church
488 College Highway
Southwick, MA 01077

First Congregational Church of Westfield
18 Broad Street
Westfield, MA 01085

April 30, 2021

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in shared ministry for Southwick Congregational Church and First Congregational Church of Westfield. Our combined Search Committee is happy to share our individual profiles with you. Partnering together, we offer a full-time position for a settled pastor to minister to our two independent parishes on a 50/50 basis.

Both Churches have discussed and studied the opportunity for shared ministry since last summer. It was overwhelmingly approved by votes of both Congregations. We have found that we have much common ground including our joy in the love of God, eagerness to adapt and thrive in these changing times, commitment to our seniors and youth, music programs and more. Of special note is that we have strong lay leadership at both churches to support our new shared and settled minister in doing what they do best. We also embrace the separate identities of our two congregations with their distinctly different community settings and long cherished histories.

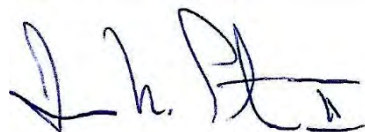
Since March 2021, we have been working together as a combined search committee. Interviews, contract development and other candidate interaction will take place through the Combined Search Committee. We will continue together until such time as the two congregations have voted to call a Settled Minister and the minister has accepted our call. At the time of the completed calling, the Combined Search Committee will disband and lay governance of each congregation will commence.

We acknowledge that both churches' "wants" exceed their respective 50% of a settled minister's time, and that these differ somewhat between the two churches. Rather than to set unrealistic expectations in advance, we seek to collaboratively sort this out and finalize reasonable expectations during the interview process with our candidate of choice. This will be a work in progress in which we will need to listen closely to each other, and, above all for God's guidance.

Both Churches have existing processes for coordination and feedback with their Minister. We propose to keep these processes in place. In addition, representatives of these two groups and the Minister would meet at least twice annually or on a schedule mutually agreed to at which feedback from both churches would be shared. We are committed to transparent, real-time 3-way communication to ensure the success of our partnership, while keeping the necessary structure simple and streamlined.

We urge you to listen for God's voice in this unique ministerial opportunity. So please read our respective Profiles. We hope to hook you on our *little bit city, little bit country* opportunity for growth here in beautiful western Massachusetts. Come discern with us. We look forward to meeting you and learning about how you would add a new, vibrant, loving chapter to our respective 350-year and 250-year histories as beacons of God's love and wisdom in our communities.

Sincerely on behalf of the Combined Search Committee,



James N. Putnam II, Co-Chair



Janet St. Jean, Co-Chair

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

Southwick Congregational Church
Southwick, Massachusetts

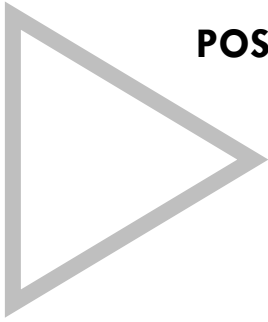
Settled Minister

Hampden Association of the Massachusetts Conference

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

- Position Posting
- Who Is God Calling Us to Become?
- Who Are We Now?
- Who Is Our Neighbor?
- References
- Consent and Validation

*“God is able to provide you with every blessing, so that
having all sufficiency in all things at all times,
you may abound in every good work.”
(2 Corinthians 9:8)*



POSITION POSTING

LISTING INFORMATION

SCOPE OF WORK

COMPENSATION & SUPPORT

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: Southwick Congregational Church

Street address: 488 College Highway, PO Box 260

Supplemental web links: <http://www.southwickucc.org>

Facebook: Southwick Congregational Church UCC

Additional ecumenical affiliations (e.g., denominations, communions, fellowships): None

Conference: Massachusetts

Association: Hampden

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person: Rev. Terry Yasuko Ogawa, Area
Conference Minister, NW Region (508) 782-8593, ogawaty@sneucc.org

Summary Ministry Description:

In a short paragraph, reflect on where your church is going and what it might look like when you get there. What do you need to get there? Who are you seeking to join you on this part of your church's faith journey?

Southwick Congregational Church seeks to grow and flourish in faith, service and impact as a Christian community. We eagerly look to a settled pastor to provide inspired spiritual leadership as we continue to pursue the 250-year journey of our Southwick Congregation in a post-COVID world. Our pastor is expected to build and innovate on our best traditions while assisting and challenging us to expand our impact and relevance in our larger community.

We recognize that our “wants” are greater than what is realistic for our shared full-time minister to fulfill. We commit to collaborating with our called ministerial candidate to develop a realistic job description for Southwick Congregational Church that becomes a path to success for all involved.

We are committed to partnering with First Congregational Church of Westfield and fully expect our shared fulltime pastor to be effective in building bridges and facilitating our relationship as well as fostering joint programs where appropriate. We embrace that their “wants and needs” may be different than ours, and we will respect and support their relationship with our shared settled pastor.

Photographs:



Clockwise from the top left—picture #1-our church, picture #2 -voice choir, picture #3-church supper, picture #4-handbell choir.

For additional photos of our beautiful Church, please see: <http://southwickucc.org/gallery/6359>

What we value about living in our area:

Southwick is a recreational community ideally located in Western Massachusetts. Southwick residents love its spectacular natural scenery nestled between high hills to the east and west, with the Congamond

Lakes, expansive farmlands, forests, hiking trails and athletic facilities interspersed with a wide variety of residential neighborhoods. It is a bedroom community to Springfield, Massachusetts and Hartford, Connecticut and yet is only 2 hours from Boston, New York City, and much of Vermont. The nearby Berkshire Hills offer beauty, culture, diverse hiking and seasonal snow sports. With a population of 9,500 and substantial growth in recent decades, Southwick embraces its “small town” heritage including its traditional Open Town Meeting and its many volunteer civic organizations.

See **Southwick Spectacular** at <https://youtu.be/LORm43r9gWQ>

Current size of membership: 101 (2019)

Languages used in ministry (*other than English*): None.

Position Title: Shared Fulltime Minister (50/50 with First Congregational Church of Westfield, halftime for each church)

Position Duration: Settled pastor for long-term shared ministry with First Congregational Church of Westfield, covenanted through a 3-year contract

Compensation Level: Offering total salary and benefits of \$82,000 - \$104,000 (\$41,000 - \$52,000 Southwick share) commensurate with experience and skills and subject to negotiation.

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines? Yes, based upon the current cost of living in western Massachusetts. See detailed analysis in First Congregational Church of Westfield Church Profile.

Note: Throughout this document we will refer to “shared Minister” with the explicit understanding that Minister’s time and compensation will be shared 50/50 and will be funded 50/50 by the respective Churches. We understand that this is officially referred to as “yoked” relationship, but have found the term “partnering” resonates much better with our members in reflecting the strong desire of both Congregations to preserve our respective identities and missions, even as opportunities to collaborate are revealed to us.

SCOPE OF WORK

Scope of Work (20-25 hours weekly / 5-6 units of approx. 4 hours each):

- Preparation and leadership of Sunday worship agreed-to Sundays each month including scripture study, crafting of liturgy, bulletin input, sermon preparation, guiding and sometimes finding lay liturgists, preaching, offering of prayers, etc.

- Preparation and leadership of worship in various formats designed to meet the needs of members of our congregation
- Administration of the sacraments of communion and baptism and performance of funerals, marriages, New Member Sundays, confirmations, etc. and participation in preparation/meetings associated with these activities
- Energizing and deepening the spiritual connections and faith understanding of lay members through prayer, Bible study, service, and facilitating helpful resources/opportunities.
- Providing/coordinating weekly pastoral care (at a minimum, to those who are shut-in, sick, elderly, or grieving) in collaboration with lay leadership
- Participation in wider church activities such as conference and association meetings
- Engaging in study and prayer to increase faith and improve skills to lead, teach, preach better
- Providing on call coverage during the weekdays and back-up call coverage after hours (lay leadership will take after-hours calls and relay messages that require pastoral input) with schedule to be determined
- Perform other mutually agreeable duties as outlined in agreement addendum or discussed with lay leadership

Core Competencies:

(List three core competencies that you imagine could be foundational in your next minister's relationship with the church. For example, a church seeking a pastoral care minister might hope to call someone who is caring, sensitive and sociable, while a church seeking an executive minister might want an organized, detail-oriented and time-conscious person.)

- Empathy: Loves human interaction with congregation and community members of all ages, whether senior shut-ins, or children, or while meeting new people from the larger community. Love is fundamental to our faith and is the glue that binds our Congregation. It is critical to our path forward, as will be apparent throughout this Profile.
- Spirituality/Inspirational: Thoughtful, relatable, inspiring sermons that incorporate scripture and are relevant to contemporary daily living. Social media content, monthly newsletter articles, and other messaging are also important to reaching people of all ages. Our Minister's "Message" is critical to our Congregation, both in its content and as "walking the talk."
- Leadership: Capacity to provide and promote leadership within our committees and congregation, across the two congregations, and in the greater community. Strong self-discipline and organizational skills. We do not expect our Minister to do it all, but we do expect she/he to work closely with lay leadership to mobilize our Congregation to accomplish necessary and new things.

COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis (from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/Housing Allowance): Offering total salary and benefits of \$82,000 - \$104,000 (\$41,000 -

\$52,000 Southwick share) commensurate with experience and skills and subject to negotiation as mutually negotiated between Minister, Southwick Congregational and First Congregational Church of Westfield.

Benefits: Per above.

What is the expected living situation for your next minister Flexible and negotiable.

Comment on the residential/commuting expectations for your next minister. Our expectation is that our next minister is located such that they can readily a) meet the needs of regular duties including worship service on agreed-upon Sundays, pastoral outreach and church meetings; b) provide opportunity to engage in the larger Southwick community; and c) not result in excessive “wear and tear” on Minister. If candidate relocates for this position; we have a strong expectation that he/she settle in either Southwick or Westfield. If already residing within a 45- to 60-minute maximum commute, then relocation would not be a condition of employment.

State any incentives: Negotiable within overall package.

Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference: Hampden/Hampshire weekly clergy gatherings; Hampden Association gatherings; Interfaith Council of Greater Springfield; programs of the Southern New England UCC Conference including two annual Super Saturdays; Clergy Communities of Practice; and Clergy Coaching

If applicable, describe how your church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister’s bi-vocational employment: We look forward to collaboratively establishing a coordinated schedule with Minister and First Congregational Church of Westfield. We are seeking a shared full-time minister, not a bi-vocational minister. Our priorities are:

- 1) weekly worship for agreed-upon number of Sundays each month
- 2) pastoral care of those in hospitals, rehab facilities, and our shut-ins
- 3) funerals, weddings, and special services
- 4) monthly all-church meetings and the annual meeting
- 5) development of initiatives/outreach ideas

Being physically present in our church office, other than to meet with individuals when needed or scheduled is not currently a priority.

We have already begun making adjustments in the time since we have last had a settled fulltime pastor (approximately three years). When our most recent interim minister needed to decrease her weekly hours as a result of a health condition last year and then after she ultimately resigned last August, we have had

to prioritize the weekly tasks to best meet the needs of our congregation. We are now sharing an interim pastor with First Congregational Church of Westfield and continue to refine these priorities.

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

Describe the ministry goals you envision your next minister co-collaborating with the congregation to achieve.

We are optimistic and hopeful for the future of our Southwick congregation. We are confident that God has a continuing purpose and plan for us to be a beacon of Christian love and service in our community. We are eager to go forward with a settled pastor that will not only lead and inspire us in worship, but will also help us discover, innovate, and implement God's plan in post-COVID, 21st century Southwick. We pray that our settled pastor will help us sustain joy in who we are, challenge us to grow and adapt to change, and help us to better serve our congregation and broader community.

While we acknowledge our challenges, we are frustrated/don't understand why we attract so few new members from the GenX and Millennial generations. We are astute enough to know that this is a national trend faced by most mainline faiths. We are also steadfast in the belief that our congregation has something special to offer others in pursuit of greater spirituality and Christian service. Our most recent settled pastor instituted several good faith initiatives to attract new members with limited success, but these were not sustainable long term. We refuse to give up and are eager to try again under the leadership/mentorship of our next settled pastor.

In the spirit of full disclosure, the candidate needs to know that we have experienced frustration and sadness in the past 10 years, perhaps akin to the ancient Israelites "wandering in the wilderness." We mention this not to complain or whitewash, but rather to provide a better understanding of who we are. Despite these disappointments, we remain confident that God has a bright purpose and future, and that we will find the right candidate.

We are committed to our small number of youth, to providing Christian education and guidance and to supporting their families in the role of their larger Christian family. We are sad that there are so few young families and collectively dream of someday again being a magnet to them. We look forward to collaborating with our new minister for fresh ideas to assist our lay leaders in reenergizing our youth program with the ultimate goal of becoming a comfortable destination for our youth, and their friends and families in the broader community.

We have a significant number/percentage of our congregation who are shut-ins, physically fragile or otherwise unable to attend church. We have a strong, continuing commitment of ministry to this group through regular visitation, phone calls, notes, and being there to provide Christian comfort when they need it, whether during sicknesses or as they near the end of life. We recognize that this will be a shared responsibility between our Minister and lay leadership. Especially for those in the hospital/hospice, suffering with acute pain and/or near end-of-life, there is a strong need for ministerial prayer and compassion.

We have had many funerals for longtime, beloved, and “Greatest Generation” members, indeed up through the time of this profile submission. Each is sad in its own right as we mourn the loss of our special, much loved Christian friends. This has also created a strong, worrisome trend toward fewer members and less “worker bees” to do the necessary work to maintain our church life in addition to all the other challenges that go with decline.

Describe how your vision of the minister you are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.

We seek a minister who can balance serving our congregation by encouraging/facilitating outreach to the individuals and families in our larger community. We are proud of our existing mission and outreach, especially in light of the size of our church, that includes support of the Southwick Food Pantry, the Samaritan Inn in Westfield, and the Nehemiah House in Granby, and the joint effort with the Southwick Police Department in December 2020 to sponsor an Adopt-A-Family for Christmas. We know that we must look outward even more than ever if we are to be a sustainable congregation, and we could use additional energy/creativity on accomplishing this from a settled pastor and also through our relationship with Westfield First Congregational Church. We seek a settled pastor with empathy, energy, and creativity who can be the face and the catalyst of our renewed outreach efforts without politicizing our community mission.

Southwick Congregational Church is ideally located in our historical town center. In fact, the town common is part of the church property, and our town’s Veterans’ Memorial is located there. Many town activities such as Memorial Day and Veterans’ Day ceremonies take place here. Town residents take pride in the iconic beauty of our church, and yet most have never been inside. This is extremely frustrating to us!

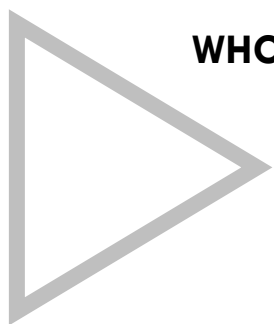
Our central location can be better utilized to increase our presence in the community. It could facilitate our settled pastor’s visibility in our community and increase his/her ability to interact with town leaders, emergency responders, senior center staff, rotary club members, scouts, and other town clergy in an effort to expand our community outreach.

Specify language requirements or culturally-specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation’s sense of calling.

Our church is reflective of our community and is predominantly a white English-speaking congregation with primarily conservative, traditional beliefs. “**All Are Welcome**” is what our church sign says, and we mean it. We had substantial conversations about this a few years ago, and there was universal consensus among our membership that this is who we are. Several of us have biracial children, grandchildren and in-laws, and they have always been made to feel welcome. The large majority of our congregants are indifferent as to a person’s sexual preference and/or gender identity, but also do not want to build our philosophy around anyone’s particular beliefs or identities. There may be a few that do not understand or wish for a “simpler time,” but they keep these thoughts to themselves.

Based on what you have learned about who your church is, who your church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, describe four areas of excellence from *The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry* that your next minister will display to further equip the congregation's ministry in these areas.

Our spiritual leader will demonstrate excellent communication skills, respecting the dignity of individuals and facilitating relationships among our congregants and within the wider community. He or she will strive to understand and minister to parishioners regardless of age or life experience and will be led by the power of the Holy Spirit to nurture the continued growth of our faith community.



WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." (Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

We are optimistic and hopeful for the future of our congregation here in Southwick. We are confident that God has a continuing purpose and plan for us to be a beacon of Christian love and service in our broader community. We are eager to go forward with a settled pastor who will not only lead and inspire us in our worship and church-related functions, but will help us discover, innovate, and implement God's plan for post-COVID 21st century Southwick. We pray that our settled pastor will help us sustain joy in who we are while challenging us to grow, adapt to change, and address needs in our community.

Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.

Two of our biggest challenges/opportunities in recent church memory are that of ministering to our congregation and community during this pandemic and also the processes leading up to, and including, our decision to embark on this quest to find a shared minister with First Congregational Church of Westfield.

2020 was a most challenging year for Southwick Congregational Church. We are proud of how our church has risen to the challenge of COVID in a manner that balances our spiritual needs with the public health imperative of personal and community safety.

Early on, after public gatherings were greatly limited and our church was closed, our Interim Minister began posting weekly sermons on Facebook. This continued until mid-August.

We soon recognized after the shutdown that for a congregation that was largely sheltered at home and isolated, there was a strong need for weekly fellowship in addition to sermon recordings. Starting in June, our Moderator instituted virtual coffee hours on Sundays at 11 am which typically last about an hour. The format is unstructured, but typically starts and ends with prayer, highlights portions of the in-person worship service and scriptures, allows time for updates to the prayer list, shares information on any church matters, and encourages informal conversation among all in attendance. Attendance at these virtual coffee hours peaked at around 20-25 people before we re-started in-person Sunday worship in September and presently continues to be attended by 10-15 people each week. These fill a continuing need, especially for those with pre-existing conditions and/or those who choose not to participate in Sunday worship services. We are especially proud that many of our Virtual Coffee Hour participants had never used Zoom before, but, with patient coaching and instruction, have become effective users.

Leadership conversations began in July about re-starting Sunday morning worship in accordance with COVID-19 requirements enacted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Town of Southwick. Our church Moderator, an expert in infectious disease control, developed a good working relationship with our Town Health Director to ensure that we met/exceeded all standards for safely reopening. There was a high degree of collaboration, creativity, and ingenuity among our Deacons, Building & Grounds committee, Music Director, and other volunteers to implement the recommendations by early September.

Our abbreviated, 30-minute worship format, mask requirement, social distancing, and no congregational singing or saying of prayers aloud are based upon current health protocols designed to keep everyone safe. Three volunteers installed hanging plexiglass shields in front of the lectern and pulpit and two plastic booths in the choir loft in which singers and musicians can perform safely. We make ample use of our large windows on the north and south of our meetinghouse to provide proper ventilation during services. Since re-opening in September, weekly attendance has been about 20-25. The modified format with necessary precautions has been well received by those in attendance and spotlighted in the local newspaper as a best practice. We will continue offering worship and fellowship in our current modified in-person and online formats until Covid transmission is no longer a threat to the safety of our congregation.

In early 2018, our church formed a Search Committee of seven dedicated members. This committee worked diligently from 2018 through 2020 to develop the initial version of this Profile. In 2018, the congregation commissioned the Search Committee to seek a part-time settled minister. In late 2019, the Search Committee held an All-Church listening session to give the congregation the opportunity to provide input to the profile. They encountered a setback when the format of the UCC Profile changed, but overcame and developed the current profile. After the church was shut down in March 2020, the Search Committee continued to move ahead despite not being able to meet in person. Our church is deeply indebted to the original search committee for all the work that they expended.

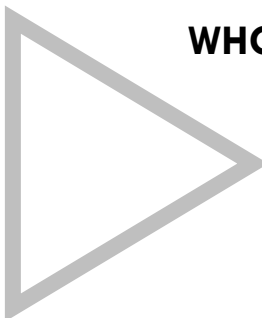
The Reverend Randy Hyvonen, who had served as Pulpit Supply at both First Congregational Church of Westfield and Southwick, was the first to suggest that the two Churches ought to look into partnering to call a full-time Minister. In late spring/early summer 2020, we received our first inquiry from First

Congregational Church of Westfield to gauge our interest in calling a shared minister. Quite frankly, we had not thought of nor considered sharing a minister until this point. Our Moderator introduced the concept to the leadership team, and two schools of thought quickly emerged:

1. One group was intrigued by the possibility of a partnership with First Congregational Church, thought we should explore the possibility, and then take it to our congregation for consideration.
2. The original Search Committee and some others thought we should proceed with the search process as originally commissioned, look for our own part-time minister, and, if that failed, then reconsider a shared ministry.

This difference of opinion among the leadership group was difficult, and compounded by the fact that we were still unable to meet face-to-face in the church. Church leadership ultimately agreed to undertake the following process:

1. In addition to providing written information on the risks and benefits of partnering with another church/sharing a minister to our congregation, a small independent study group led by the chair of our Christian Education committee, researched the pros and cons of partnering and reported back to the full congregation. This task was accomplished by late August and resulted in an excellent, thorough, impartial report.
2. The independent study report was presented to, and well-received by, the congregation in a zoom question and answer session facilitated by a non-biased, external UCC minister.
3. A confidential, mail-in ballot vote took place over the next 10 days. Two independent tellers ensured that the balloting process was secure and accurate. We had excellent participation from our congregation with 84 returned ballots, 74 in favor of exploring a shared ministry with First Congregational Church and 10 in favor of continuing to search for our own part-time minister.
4. After the results of the vote were announced, our church formally disbanded the original Search Committee after expressing our immense gratitude for their perseverance, dedication, and love of our church. We formalized our intentions to explore sharing a fulltime minister with First Congregational Church of Westfield and more recently appointed members to serve on our new joint Search Committee.
5. Our new Southwick Search Committee contingent has refined our original profile based on the great foundational work of the previous Search Committee, input from our UCC Associate Conference Minister, and updates necessitated by the pandemic and our new relationship with First Congregational Church.



WHO ARE WE NOW?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

11-YEAR REPORT

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

CHURCH FINANCES

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation's life of faith.

For example, what beliefs and commitments are stated in your congregation's purpose statement or membership vows? How is God most often described in worship liturgy? In what ways would you describe the Holy Spirit in your midst?

The object of this church shall be to bind together followers of Jesus Christ for the purpose of sharing in the worship of God and in making His will dominant in the lives of people, individually and collectively, especially as that will is set forth in the life, teachings, death, and living presence of Jesus Christ. Our membership vows include a confession of faith and covenant. We have a faith, government, and fellowship article in our bylaws that provide us guidance for our worship service.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

1. Supportive, loving congregation. Abundance of small-town warmth.
2. Strong work ethic, robust working church committees, and the ability to get things done. Prior to the pandemic, we successfully hosted multiple well-attended events such as church dinners, the Holly Bazaar, and other activities.
3. Community support. We provide meeting space for outside groups such as the scouts, AA, Overeaters Anonymous, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) groups, etc.
4. Music. We have had a historically strong music program with organ, piano, voice choir and handbell choir. We love our music program, including our summer music which features individuals and small groups from our congregation and from our community.
5. Love for our seniors and our children.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

In the days before COVID:

- Starting around 9, the Church is open and folks are gathering. The voice or bell choir is setting up and then rehearsing. Deacons are preparing for worship and perhaps caucusing on some issue that needs attention.
- Starting around 9:30, parishioners begin arriving, often our more senior members who just appreciate the feeling of repose and comradery of being with fellow Christians. As more gather in the pews, the chorus of joyous voices gradually gains strength. It is the sound of Christian friends coming together.
- At about 9:45 our historic Foote Brothers steeple bell begins tolling its call to worship to the village of Southwick as it has done since 1824.
- Around 9:55 our amazing organist begins the prelude and the voices fade and then cease. We are joined by our Minister who takes her/his seat on the platform along with the Deacon of the week.
- The formal part of our worship service begins at 10 am with candle lighting, announcements, prayer joys & concerns and the Call to Worship.
- Worship proceeds as detailed in the Bulletin shown as final exhibit in the Appendices. It includes Opening Prayer, Lord's Prayer, readings from the Old/New Testaments/Gospel, Sermon, Pastoral Prayer, and benediction.
- Our Congregation loves its hymns! You will find that they tend to enthusiastically sing all stanzas whether 3, 5 or whatever.
- Traditionally our minister has conducted a "Children's Moment" on the platform steps, typically centered on one or more of the readings. With fewer children, this has come to be done on an "as needed" basis depending on whether children are present.
- The Sacrament of Holy Communion is offered on the first Sunday of each month. Traditionally, it was offered both in the pews and by the Congregation filing to the altar. In our COVID protocol, we are using pre-packaged pods that are available as members enter Church and then self-administered while seated in the pew. Our Board of Deacons is responsible for preparing Communion.
- The choirs recess for the summer, but we have traditionally had a wonderful Summer Music program featuring musicians from our Church and the greater community.
- At the conclusion of the formal worship service, our organist plays a postlude, the candles are extinguished and the Minister stands at the back of the church to deliver the Benediction.
- Fellowship continues after the worship service with a coffee hour in our old fellowship hall with delicious baked goods, snacks and beverages provided by our members. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with newcomers, visitors and old friends.

Good preaching, in our opinion, is scripture-based and laced with humor where appropriate, and relevant stories pertinent to our current lives, leaving us with a feeling of spirituality that “fills us up” for the week’s challenges.

Our sacraments of baptism and communion are conducted “by the book.” Each baptism ends with a beloved custom. When the baptismal liturgy is complete, the choir and congregation sing as the minister carries this new little Christian soul through the aisles to meet his/her new church family. While we have not had an adult baptism in recent memory, the minister would escort the newly baptized individual through the Church. There have been no public baptisms since the beginning of the pandemic.

Describe the educational program/faith formation vision of your church.

Traditionally, our Church has had a robust Christian Education youth program including Sunday School, Youth Group, Confirmation classes and participation in Church on key Sundays and services. These include Children’s Sunday (June), Advent (3rd Sunday), Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, and Procession of the Palms (Palm Sunday). A declining youth population and the pandemic have negatively impacted nearly all of these programs, but we are strongly committed to their continuation and/or revival in an appropriate manner in the near future. Our last Pulpit Supply Minister had begun a confirmation class for two of our youth when the pandemic hit. She completed it with virtual assignments. The two youth were confirmed in a safe, socially-distanced ceremony outside of the church last summer with their parents in attendance. As indicated in our Constitution, once confirmed, our youth have full participatory and voting rights in the congregation. There is much potential and opportunity to better involve them in the work of the church going forward.

Our past ministers have historically conducted periodic Bible study groups for our adult members. Our current Interim Minister has recently re-established this practice virtually, and it has been a welcome addition to our regular church activities. We believe that there is opportunity to utilize our social media (Facebook and our website), Zoom, and perhaps other available platforms (YouTube, Instagram, etc.) and other means to better reach our population, especially those who are unable or unwilling to attend in-person church activities.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

For example, how are decisions communicated in your church? How are teams or committees organized? Where does your church struggle for vision?

• When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?

Prior to the pandemic, all of our church committees (Building and Grounds, Christian Education, Deacons, Finance, Flowers, Memorial Gifts, Missions & Outreach, Music, Nominating, Pastoral Relations, and Security) met on the second Thursday evening of each month for at least an hour, followed by an all-church meeting that lasted approximately 45 minutes. Our executive leadership

meeting, made up of the church moderator, the minister, the committee chairs, and the treasurer, then convened immediately after for typically 20 to 30 minutes. Significant additional time was spent between monthly meetings performing duties relating to each committee's mission. Our committees are truly "working" committees.

Since the pandemic, most committees have not been formally meeting, communicating as needed via email, phone calls, or zoom meetings as issues arise. The executive leadership team has continued to meet on a monthly basis, more often if needed, via zoom for between 60 and 90 minutes.

Decisions made in these meetings are communicated to our congregation in several ways:

- 1) weekly announcements at the beginning of our in-person weekly worship service
- 2) weekly virtual coffee hour
- 3) informational articles in our monthly publication, *The Gold Dome*
- 4) emails to our members

Feedback is solicited from our membership through phone calls, emails, in-person conversations before and after weekly worship, and at the virtual coffee hours.

• Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?

As outlined previously, the actions we initiated to keep our church family safe as a result of the pandemic is our most recent example of how we work together effectively, efficiently, and expeditiously as a congregation and as good citizens of our town. Our leadership team worked closely with the town's health director to operationalize the guidelines recommended by the town, state, and federal public health experts, first when closing our building to in-person worship and meetings, and then when reopening safely. We continue to closely monitor the compliance of our worship services and meetings against the newest guidelines and epidemiological evidence.

In December 2019 the Southwick Building Inspector denied our occupancy permit until pertinent safety issues were addressed. The deficiencies identified were the need for updated emergency lighting and illuminated exit signs throughout the church, sticking exit doors, problems with a set of concrete steps, and building floor plans. Our wonderful Building & Grounds Committee quickly took the lead on rectifying these issues, doing much of the work themselves, but also hiring outside contractors when warranted. By January 1, 2020, all concerns were addressed, and the permit was issued.

• Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure, bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance?

Yes. *2020 Annual Report* attached.

- **Where does your church struggle for vision?** We have been struggling with a vision for our future, starting well before the pandemic and continuing to the present.

We have had many funerals for longtime, beloved, and “Greatest Generation” members, indeed up through the time of this profile submission. Each is sad in its own right as we mourn the loss of our special, much loved Christian friends. We have had far fewer “New Member” Sundays. This has created a strong, worrisome trend toward fewer members doing the necessary work to maintain our church, in addition to all the other challenges that go with decline. We have plenty of nostalgia for our past, while seeking to renew with new members, energy and vision for the future.

Around 2009, our beloved pastor of about 20 years tenure retired. The following is an account of our subsequent journey:

- We were fortunate to retain an interim minister who served us for about two years and was much-loved by all.
- Around 2011, we concluded our search and called a settled pastor who very quickly proved to not be a good fit for our congregation. Within weeks of her arrival, she had offended a significant number of members, and there was much resulting turmoil among us. In fairness, there was also a minority who supported her and would have preferred that she continued as our pastor. After a unanimous vote of our Executive Leadership Committee, we asked her to resign prior to her being installed as our pastor.
- We then hired another interim minister who was also well-liked among our church members. He served our congregation well. Unfortunately, because of serious health issues, he had to resign. He was replaced by yet another interim who was also widely liked and respected.
- In 2012, we called another settled minister who was duly installed and served us for two 3-year contracts (6 years). In 2017, when his contract was expiring, the Executive Leadership Committee negotiated in good faith to renew it, but, in the end, could not feasibly meet his financial demands as these far exceeded anything that was sustainable for us.
- From 2018 until 2019, a member of our congregation, who was also a retired minister, became our interim minister. She became ill and resigned summer 2019.
- We were then served by another interim who was widely liked. We sought to continue his service, but he stepped down in early 2020 for personal reasons.
- The previous interim minister/member of our church volunteered to step back in at that time as Pulpit Supply and served for another 6 months until the end of her

contract in August 2020. She announced at that time that she no longer wished to fill this role and subsequently moved her membership to another church(s).

- We re-opened our church for in-person, covid-safe worship services in early September, utilizing two of our congregation members, Pastor Kirsten Allhusen and Member in Discernment (MID) Flo Pitoniak, along with various church members to lead our modified worship services. This has worked very well, and Kirsten and Flo continue to lead worship on two Sundays a month.
- Starting January 2021, we began sharing Interim Minister Julie Olmstead with First Congregational Church of Westfield. She is leading two to three worship services per month, has brought fresh ideas to our church, and has been joyfully embraced by our congregation.

11-YEAR REPORT

(add here the 11-Year Report developed with the help of your conference staff, UCC Data Hub, and Mission InSite)

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST										
ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS										
Church#: 304350 Assoc: 376 Schedule: 0 Southwick Congregational Church Southwick MA 01077										
YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED	
2008	307	115	47	0	1	0	11	1	-11	
2009	296	100	21	0	0	2	9	4	-11	
2010	277	93	25	3	0	4	4	22	-19	
2011	275	83	20	0	0	3	5	0	-2	
2012	257	93	32	0	0	9	11	16	-18	
2013	262	95	28	7	1	5	8	0	5	
2014	253	95	28	0	0	0	12	0	-12	
2015	207	90	28	6	2	4	8	50	-46	
2016	166	65	6	0	4	8	7	46	-41	
2017	164	55	15	0	3	1	6	0	-2	
2018	125	53	12	0	2	1	17	25	-39	
YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2008	\$101,572	\$0	\$5,340	\$8,904	\$14,244	\$1,937	\$16,181	5.26	\$117,753	\$91,461
2009	\$100,090	\$0	\$3,601	\$7,144	\$10,745	\$875	\$11,620	3.60	\$111,710	\$92,739
2010	\$9,868	\$0	\$3,170	\$6,920	\$10,090	\$1,926	\$12,016	32.12	\$21,884	\$93,284
2011	\$71,092	\$0	\$5,300	\$6,205	\$11,505	\$1,866	\$13,371	7.46	\$84,463	\$89,309
2012	\$116,329	\$0	\$3,775	\$1,071	\$4,846	\$955	\$5,801	3.25	\$122,130	\$103,427
2013	\$120,710	\$0	\$2,400	\$6,745	\$9,145	\$200	\$9,345	1.99	\$130,055	\$111,669
2014	\$131,990	\$0	\$2,400	\$6,504	\$8,904	\$0	\$8,904	1.82	\$140,894	\$106,026
2015	\$139,754	\$0	\$2,400	\$4,832	\$7,232	\$0	\$7,232	1.72	\$146,986	\$92,165
2016	\$141,087	\$0	\$0	\$2,626	\$2,626	\$0	\$2,626	0.00	\$143,713	\$87,985
2017	\$141,667	\$0	\$2,400	\$1,589	\$3,989	\$0	\$3,989	1.69	\$145,656	\$86,812
2018	\$141,667	\$0	\$4,800	\$2,005	\$6,805	\$1,010	\$7,815	3.39	\$149,482	\$85,646
% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		
2013-2018	-52.29	-44.21	-57.14	-76.92	425.00	17.36	-25.59	14.94		
2008-2018	-59.28	-53.91	-74.47	200.00	250.00	39.47	-52.23	26.95		

Please note: Zero values ("0" or "\$0") may reflect missing information in some years. Christian Education/Faith Formation refers to Church School Enrollment for all figures before 2007.

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	101	X
Number of active non-members:	27	X
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	128	X

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	70	X
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	20	X
Less than 5 years:	10	X

Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
10	6	2	3	8	11	23	34	31	X

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	5	X
Joint household with minors:	10	X
Single adults age 35-65:	20	X
Joint household with no minors:	30	X
Single adults over 65:	35	X

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	40	X
College:	40	X
Graduate School:	10	X
Specialty Training:	10	X
Other (please specify):		X

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	20	X
Adults who are retired:	70	X
Adults who are not fully employed:	10	X

Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

Approximately 70 percent are retired. Those employed hold a wide range of job positions including teachers, small business owners, health care professionals and engineers.

Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up.

Southwick is 96% Caucasian, and our congregation mirrors that. We know of no overt racism within our congregation but also understand that a person of color walking into our church for the first time may not readily feel at home. Several of us have bi-racial children, grandchildren, and in-laws who have attended worship with us and been lovingly welcomed by our members.

Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one on the near future (perhaps using, for example, the Welcoming Diversity Inventory)?

Not recently since a focused discussion with our congregation in 2011. At that time, our congregation was comfortable that we exhibited the behaviors as stipulated on our sign, "All Are Welcome."

Most recently, the committee in charge of hiring our new administrative assistant this year discussed the importance of interviewing for qualified candidates regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, gender preference, age, physical limitations, etc.

We regard diversity in our church as an area in which we can and hopefully will grow, but not as a "problem" needing to be solved.

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Complete the following chart. Please leave blank any fields that are not applicable to your congregation.

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? <i>(list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)</i>
Adult Groups or Classes	1	Bible Study led by Interim Minister
Baptisms <i>(number last year)</i>	2	Pastor and Deacons
Children's Groups or Classes	5	Pastor and Christian Ed
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	75	Pastor, Deacons, & Both Choirs
Church-wide Meals, 5 Events	100-150 each	30+ volunteers at each event
Choirs and Music Groups	11/10	Choir and Bell Choir Directors
Church-based Bible Study		See above
Communion <i>(served how often?)</i>	45	Pastor and Deacons, Monthly and on Maundy Thursday
Community Meals	1	Missions and Outreach ongoing food/money donations to Food Pantry
Confirmation <i>(number confirmed last year)</i>	2	Pastor and Deacons
Drama or Dance Program	NA	
Funerals <i>(number last year)</i>	8	Pastor, Funeral Home, Funeral Coordinator, and Family Members
Intergenerational Groups	30	Christian Ed Committee and Congregation Members
Outdoor Worship	3	Ash Wednesday (Interim Minister, Deacons, Moderator)
Prayer or Meditation Groups	10	Pastor
Public Advocacy Work	NA	

Retreats	NA	
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	NA	
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)		Pastor, Wedding Coordinator, Couple
Old Worship Time (time slot: 10:00 a.m.)	50	Pastor, Deacons, Moderator
New Worship Time (time slot: 10:30 a.m. to be reevaluated in 6 months)		To be worked out with First Congregational Church of Westfield as part of our partnership
Young Adult Groups or Classes	0	
Youth Groups or Classes	1/1	Christian Ed Chair / Pastor
Other	200	Mission Outreach, Concert, Music Committee

Additional comments:

Our church is open to the community as a safe place to meet for a small fee to cover heat and custodial services. For example, we have three Twelve Step groups who meet here weekly. In 2019 we were able to open our doors to two senior groups who were unable to meet at the town's Senior Center. In early 2020, the groups were able to return to the Senior Center, but we are grateful we were here when needed. We also provide weekly meeting space for the local Boy Scout Troop and Cub Scout pack, as well as occasional Girl Scout meetings.

Since the pandemic, all groups using our building are required to sign an agreement that they will ensure that their members are free of covid signs/symptoms, remain in their assigned rooms, disinfect after themselves, and limit their attendance to remain within current public health guidelines.

List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers. Indicate those with current United Church of Christ Three-Way Covenants (i.e., serving in a congregation) or Four-Way Covenants (i.e., serving in a ministry beyond a congregation).

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Rev. Kirsten Allhusen	No	No	Christian Education Committee, Lay preaching	No

If one or more previous pastors or retired ministers currently hold membership in the church, describe their role(s) in the life of the congregation: As described above.

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staff person serves as head of staff.

Staff Position	Head of Staff	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Interim Minister	Rev. Julie Olmsted	Part time, equally shared with First Congregational Church of Westfield	Moderator, Chair of Finance, Treasurer	Started 1/1/2021
Administrative Assistant	Charnelle Harris	Part time	Chair of Finance	Started 2/3/2021
Custodian	Christopher Robin Roberts	Part time	Chair of Buildings & Grounds	2 years
Voice Choir Director	Roberta Kowal	Part time	Chair of Music	40+ years
Bell Choir Director	Patti Wood	Part time	Chair of Music	15 years

REFLECTION

Reflection: After reviewing the congregational demographics and activities above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's overall ministry?

Our congregation reflects the community in which we are located in terms of racial and economic demographics. However, we are predominately older and past the active child-rearing

phase of our lives. We are sometimes tempted to take a “glass half empty” view of this reality due in part to remembering our classrooms filled with children. Also, we are well aware that there are many unchurched families in our town. We seek to change our view of our reality to “half full,” by finding new ways of community engagement and service.

CHURCH FINANCES

Current annual income (dollars used during most recent fiscal year)

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$ 87,846
Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i>)	As needed
Endowment Draw (<i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”</i>)	As needed
Fundraising Events	\$ 10,037
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$
Grants	\$
Rentals of Church Building	\$ 2,732
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$ 15,000
Support from Related Organizations (<i>e.g., Women’s Group</i>)	NA
Transfers from Special Accounts	\$
Other (specify):	\$ 1,805
Other (specify): Association Dues	\$ 540
TOTAL	\$117,960

2020 Budget and Actual Expenses with Proposed 2021 Budget

1.		2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2021 Proposed Budget
2.	REVENUE			
3.	Pledges & Contributions	\$ 85,250	\$ 83,723	\$ 86,000
4.	Bldg Use/Rent	2,310	1,245	2,300
5.	Cash offerings	3,000	716	3,000
6.	Fund Raisers	10,000	1,943	10,000
7.	UCC Dues Offering	500	20	500
8.	Other	1,000	1,431	1,000
9.	Parsonage (net)	12,500	15,000	15,500
10.	Total Revenue	\$ 114,560	\$ 104,078	\$ 118,300
11.				
12.	EXPENSES			
13.	<u>Minister & Other</u>			
14.	Salary/housing allowance	\$ 38,800	\$ 15,000	\$ 38,800
15.	Expenses	2,000	550	2,000
16.	Annuity	-	-	6,000
17.	FICA	2,000	1,020	2,000
18.	Health Ins	-	-	3,000
19.	UCC Life, disability	700	-	1,000
20.	Continuing Ed	-	-	-
21.	Worker's Comp	2,000	1,079	2,000
22.	Pulpit Supply	3,000	2,015	-
23.	Total	\$ 48,500	\$ 19,664	\$ 54,800
24.	<u>Office & Admin</u>			
25.	Office Administrator	\$ 14,500	\$ 12,244	\$ 16,640
26.	PayChex	732	850	1,000
27.	Payroll Exp Sec	1,600	2,514	1,273
28.	Substitute Secretary	-	-	-
29.	Church/ Office Supply (includes Gold Dome)	3,500	2,832	3,500
30.	Copier Service Contract	2,600	3,167	3,000
31.	Total	\$ 22,932	\$ 21,607	\$ 25,413
32.	<u>Music</u>			
33.	Committee Expense	\$ 450	\$ 180	\$ 450
34.	Organist / Choir Director Salary	17,000	17,000	17,000
35.	Org / Choir Dir Payroll Exp	1,150	-	1,150
36.	Substitute Organist	750	-	-
37.	Bell Choir Director Salary	1,900	-	1,900
38.	Total	\$ 21,250	\$ 17,180	\$ 20,500
39.	<u>Christian Ed</u>			
40.	Total	\$900.00	\$ 162	\$900.00
41.	<u>Maintenance</u>			
42.	Custodian	\$ 9,235	\$ 9,184	\$ 11,000
43.	Payroll Tax	765	761	842
44.	Custodian Supplies	400	75	500
45.	General Maintenance	2,400	4,056	2,400
46.	Grounds Maintenance	5,800	760	4,000
47.	Total	\$ 18,600	\$ 14,836	\$ 18,742
48.	<u>Utilities & Insurance</u>			
49.	Fuel / Natural Gas	\$ 5,500	\$ 3,248	\$ 5,500
50.	Telephone	2,000	2,137	2,200
51.	Electricity	2,800	2,308	2,800
52.	Water & Sewer	1,150	842	1,150
53.	Insurance (Building)	10,000	7,617	12,500
54.	Total	\$ 21,450	\$ 16,152	\$ 24,150
55.	<u>Special Projects</u>			
56.	Pastoral Search Committee	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
57.	Other Special Projects / Ad. Tactics	\$0.00	0.00	5,000
58.	Missions Outreach Committee	\$ 5,170	\$ 750	\$ 5,170
59.	Stewardship	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
60.	Association Dues	2,500	2220	1640
61.	Total	\$ 7,670	\$ 2970	11810

^{62.}	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 141,302	\$ 92,571	\$ 156,314
^{63.}	Variance {Plus + or (minus -)}	\$ (26,742)	\$ 11,507	\$ (38,014)

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 35%

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church?
No

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e., does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? *(indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year)*

- ☒ Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)
- ☒ One Great Hour of Sharing
- ☒ Strengthen the Church
- ☒ Neighbors in Need
- ☒ Christmas Fund

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage?

Through annual pledges designated to Missions and special offerings for the above contributions.

What is the church's current indebtedness? None
Total amount of loan debt: None\

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget.

No building program underway. We have a proactive Building and Grounds Committee that monitors our church and parsonage to ensure that necessary repairs are completed. When a major project becomes necessary, we would fund through special fundraising and Memorial Gifts.

If the church has had capital campaigns in the last ten years, describe: None

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe: None. We did explore the potential for a Capital Campaign in 2016, and had garnered congregation support, but the effort was abandoned with the resignation of our settled pastor at the time.

Describe the prominent mission component(s) involved in the most recent (or current) capital campaign. N/A

Does your church have an endowment? No

What is the market value of the assets? N/A

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances? As needed under certain circumstances.

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? 0

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: None

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last? Our congregation has discussed, and is fully committed, to withdrawing from savings to fund our annual expenses, including our share of a settled minister's salary and benefits, as necessary, for at least the next 3 years. Note that with \$219,000 of various savings, as shown below, we could fund deficits for 6+ years at our current level of operating deficit. We fully expect to get back on track with fundraisers when permitted by the Southwick Board of Health.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates: We manage our savings and other available funds conservatively, embracing our role as stewards of past donors and future congregants. When the time comes for major repairs and updates to our 200-year building, we will need to rely primarily on these funds.

Other Assets

Savings & Memorial Gifts Accounts

Name	Bank	As of:	Balance
Capital	Berkshire	12/31/2020	\$ 58,056
Real Estate	Berkshire	12/31/2020	\$ 16,454
United Church Funds		12/31/2020	\$ 47,147
Non-Profit Money Market	Westfield	12/31/2020	\$ 7,701
Non-Profit Basic	Westfield	12/31/2020	\$ 4,113
Various CDs	Westfield	12/31/2020	\$ 85,945
Total Savings Assets			\$ 219,416
2020 PPP Receivable			\$ 11,000
2021 PPP Receivable			11,000

Does your church have a parsonage? Yes

Fair market rental value of the parsonage: \$1,300

How is the parsonage used? Rental Income

Street / City / State / Zip: 490 College Highway, Southwick, MA

Finished square footage: 1,844

Number of Bedrooms & Bathrooms: 3-4 Bedrooms, 1 ½ Baths

Assessed real estate value: \$114,000

Available for minister residence: Negotiable

Expected minister residence: No

Condition of structure, systems and appliances: Good

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs: Building and Grounds Committee.

Describe all buildings owned by the church: Church, parsonage, and land upon which they are located at Southwick's historic center.

Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church: N/A

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? Our sanctuary is accessible via a well-designed ramp from the street side. Our Old and New Fellowship Halls are accessible from the parking lot through the New Fellowship Hall. There are bathrooms at this level although not specifically built to meet ADA code. Over the years we have had individuals in wheelchairs attend church suppers, and bathroom access has not been an

issue. Our Sunday School rooms and church office are not accessible as they require stairs to access.

Reflection: After reviewing the church's finances and assets described above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's mission and ministry?

Our Church undertakes a transparent and communal budget process annually as required by our Constitution:

- At the December All-Church Meeting, all committees are requested to submit proposed budgets for the coming year.
- These numbers are finalized in January based on prior-year actual receipts and expenditures and projected expenses.
- From this input, the Finance Committee develops a proposed budget for the coming year.
- This proposed budget is submitted to all members for consideration at the Annual Meeting in February. The Finance Committee Chair leads the members through the budget, answering questions and taking suggestions for consideration.
- Members at the Annual Meeting approve the budget, including any amendments proposed for consideration.
- The Finance Committee monitors the budget monthly throughout the year.

Our congregation is justifiably proud of our robust fundraising activities including Henrietta's Thrift Shop, June Strawberry Supper, November Chicken Pie Supper, Christmas Cookie sale, Souper Sunday sale, Holly Bazaar, September tag sale, and more. These are not only a significant revenue source, but also an opportunity for fellowship within our congregation and for community engagement.

As our membership has slowly declined, our church has experienced a continual squeeze on our operating resources. For the last 3 to 5 years, we have functioned with a part-time minister in order to stay within the confines of our budget. We have had much discussion and have strong consensus among our congregation that partnering with First Congregational Church of Westfield in calling a full-time settled pastor is our best road forward. We have faith that God has a bright future in store for our church and that the right minister can help lead us there. We seek a minister who will help us discover our path and work with us toward that bright future. We commit our energies, our budget, and our other financial resources to undertaking that 4-way partnership between God, our minister, First Congregational Church of Westfield, and ourselves.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.

Southwick Congregational was established in 1773 as a spin-off from First Congregational Church of Westfield back in the days when walking, riding an ox cart or riding a horse to Westfield was a hardship for residents in the “Southerdly Part” of Westfield, especially in the winter and other inclement times. The “Southerdly Part” residents petitioned the General Court in Boston to split from the Town of Westfield and personally committed to hire a Minister and build a Congregational meetinghouse. This was approved effective November 7, 1770, establishing the Town of Southwick. In 1773, they hired their first Minister and erected a Meetinghouse about a mile south of our current church.

That Meetinghouse burned to the ground in 1823, and was eventually replaced with our current Meetinghouse in the center of Southwick. What an undertaking and commitment that must have been for a small farming town at that time! It was designed by Captain Isaac Damon of Northampton who was a noted builder of churches throughout western Massachusetts and Connecticut. Of special note is the amazing acoustical properties of the domed roof in our sanctuary which still amplifies and blesses the music of our voice choir, bell choir and organ. We are incredibly proud of our historic building in the center of Southwick. It shows with the meticulous maintenance and updating undertaken by members over the years, including restoration of the steeple and gold dome about 10 years ago.

Reference: *Southwick Congregational Church History, 1773-1973*

Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past.

The 2020-21 Covid-19 pandemic will certainly be a major event in future histories of our church. In its initial weeks, as we all prayed for the virus to pass over family, fellow members, and the global community, we wondered about the future of our church. We became aware of the additional risks of singing and speaking aloud in the church setting and the epidemiological events occurring elsewhere across our nation. With heavy hearts, we closed our beloved meetinghouse. Even though our interim minister began posting her sermons on our Facebook page, our lay leadership recognized that reconnecting with our members through some sort of fellowship had to occur quickly. So, we instituted Zoom coffee hours on Sunday mornings at 11 am. This was soon followed by discussions of safely reopening the church within guidelines imposed by the town, the Commonwealth and the CDC for those who wished to attend in person. This has already been described elsewhere, but is a contemporaneous, defining experience for our congregation.

Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. “Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement....” Describe your congregation’s values and practices when it comes to conflict.

On a Sunday before church in June 2015, our settled pastor stood in the parking lot handing out his letter of resignation to parishioners on their way into services. He was upset about pushback regarding his scheduling of a funeral to conflict with a pre-scheduled church supper. This event precipitated a divide within the leadership, and ultimately the congregation, between those willing to accept his resignation and those who wanted him to stay. A contentious church meeting followed a week later during which a great deal of anger was voiced by both sides.

Eventually, we accepted an offer by the Hampden Association Committee on Ministry to conduct a Situational Support Consultation between the congregation and the minister. The next several months were tense within the congregation, with some volunteering to take on new duties to others’ resigning from existing duties. Ultimately the consultation ended, and the minister withdrew his letter of resignation and served through the end of his contract in December 2017.

Today, the core membership of the church has healed their wounds, certainly aided by the departure of this minister in 2018. Unfortunately, some members left when he did, and attrition continued. There was embarrassment within the Southwick community as the minister had publicly characterized our congregation as being “not warm and not welcoming.” The ultimate lessons learned from this episode are the resiliency of the congregation, the importance of time and subsequent experiences in overcoming disagreements, and the willingness of key leaders to continue to work hard to persevere as a Christian community.

We have no established policies, protocols or structures for dealing with conflict. Clearly when the conflict involves the minister, this sets up a very difficult situation. It is recognized that an active Pastoral Relations Committee that formally meets with the pastor at least quarterly is a must for identifying and resolving issues and finding solutions in real time. We are open to developing a Conflict Resolution Protocol with our new Minister as one of our first projects together.

We have a robust All-Church meeting process in which we are all quite accustomed to voicing our concerns, processing divergent opinions, and working towards consensus. This is our Congregational heritage and something that we take for granted. Usually, the final resolution is strongly shaped by those regarded as having the most expertise/experience in the issue being discussed.

One example from 2018 is the establishment of a Safe Church policy. This had been promised by the past settled minister but never completed. Our chair of Christian Ed raised this issue at a

subsequent All-Church Meeting and was quickly supported by our part-time interim minister. The interim minister quickly volunteered to do most of the work, building upon what she had done at a previous church. Another member volunteered to help, resulting in a work committee of three. The policy was brought back several months later, discussed, and readily adopted by the Executive Committee with minimal change.

Another example is the development of a Secure Church program in 2019 of in response to publicized violence against church congregations. The chair of Building and Grounds advocated for this program. This generated much discussion because of the profound changes that it might require. The All-Church meeting authorized a committee to research the issue with six members quickly volunteering. Funds were also appropriated for commissioning an outside expert to conduct a security survey. He presented his report findings and an extensive list of recommendations. Afterwards the committee approved a list of initial “low hanging fruit” items that would be easy to implement without impacting worship and other activities in a substantive manner. These had been completed by late 2019 and were already in place at the time of the COVID-19 lockdown.

Ministerial History

MINISTERS

Abel Forward 1773-1786	Thomas R. Barbour 1946-1949
Isaac Clinton 1788-1807	Dexter B. Rice 1949-1956
Dudley Rossiter 1816-1816	Earl F. Mathewson . . 1956-1963
Calvin Foote 1820-1830	Edward H. Dodge . . 1964-1968
Ellridge G. Howe 1831-1832	
Thomas Fletcher 1836-1845	
Henry Cooley 1846-1853	
James A. Clark 1855-1858	
Erastus Colton 1858-1861	
Thomas H. Rood 1863-1864	
David Beals Jr. 1865-1868	
H. A. Ottman 1869-1871	
Timothy Lyman 1871-1873	
C. M. Perry 1873-1877	
Richard Knight 1878-1883	
I. E. Sumner 1884-1885	
A. G. Beebee 1886-1887	
I. P. Smith 1888-1889	
David L. Kebbe 1890-1895	
Harry O. Hannum 1896-1899	
Dr. L. S. Crawford 1900-1902	
Charles A. Lovell 1902-1905	
Melvin James Allen 1906-1910	
Sampson Nicholls 1910-1912	
Frederic K. Brown 1913-1915	
J. H. Greenley 1915-1917	
William H. Dockham 1917-1923	
Dr. A. J. W. Myers 1923-1928	
W. F. Kelloway 1928-1929	
C. W. Collins 1929-1930	
Milo S. Hinckle 1930-1934	
Lawrence Nyberg 1934-1936	
Kendig B. Cully 1936-1938	
D. R. Brownell 1939-1940	
George Stoneback 1940-1941	
Roger Biddle 1941-1944	
Everett O. Pearson 1944-1946	
	 Dr. William Tolley . . 1968-1979
	 David D. Wright . . . 1979-1992
	 Dr. Lorrie Dunham 1994-2008

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Jeff Erb, Interim Minister	2009-2010	Yes
Marianne McCullagh, Called Minister	2011	Yes
Tim Carlton & Bill Duffee, Pulpit supply Ministers	2011-12	Yes
Bart Cochran, Settled Pastor	2013-18	Yes
Susanne Hayes, Interim Minister, then pulpit supply	2018-19, 2020	Yes
Randall Hyvonen, Pulpit Supply	2019-20	Yes

Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

- Get to know each other well up front.
- Talk some more after an initial meeting of the minds.
- Establish mutual expectations, boundaries and dispute resolution protocol early on.
- Robust Pastoral Relations Committee that meets quarterly and more often if necessary.
- Agree to disagree when necessary.
- Everyone remain focused on our mission of being God's light in the community of Southwick.

Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination?

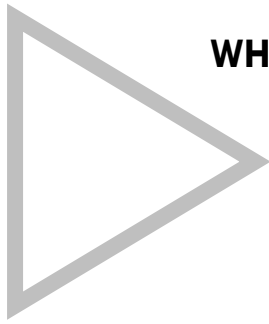
Yes. We voted to ask a new minister who had not yet installed, to resign and she did. It had become quickly apparent that this individual was not a good fit for our congregation, and vice versa.

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Yes, as previously described.

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?

Yes, the individual who resigned at our request.



WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

COMMUNITY VISION

MISSION InSite

COMMUNITY VISION

How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?

Our congregation has a big heart and stretches to help others. Specific efforts during the past 2 years include:

- Southwick Crop Walk – we are part of a coalition than has annually produced this event for many decades. Our church is the kickoff location. At the conclusion, the Cigal Family and other volunteers use our Fellowship Hall and grounds for a celebratory picnic.
- Nehemiah House. [Home | nehemiahhouse \(nehemiahhouse4women.org\)](http://nehemiahhouse4women.org)
- The Westfield Soup Kitchen
- The Samaritan Inn
- Our Community Food Pantry. [Our Community Food Pantry; Serving Southwick, Granville & Tolland : Who We Serve \(community-food-pantry.org\)](http://community-food-pantry.org)
- Big Y Gift Card collection given to the Police Department to be distributed as needed
- Assistance to a grandmother who unexpectedly gained custody of her four grandchildren who had nothing except the clothes they were wearing. Our congregation donated beds, bedding, clothing, toys, and more to this family in dire need.
- Donations to Puerto Rico hurricane relief and care packages to the military

Describe your congregation’s participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ (association / conference / national setting).

Currently we do not have delegates to our conference. We hope that our new settled pastor will become active in the Hampden County Association events and programs for ministers and inspire our church to be more active in the wider UCC.

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at ucc.org.)

Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

We certainly support and adhere to the following, but are unsure as to whether we have ever received these formal accreditations.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☒ Accessible to All (A2A) | ☐ Just Peace |
| ☐ Creation Justice | ☒ Global Mission Church |
| ☐ Economic Justice | ☐ Open and Affirming (ONA) |
| ☒ Faithful and Welcoming | ☐ WISE Congregation for Mental Health |
| ☒ God Is Still Speaking (GISS) | ☐ Other UCC designations: |
| ☐ Border and Immigrant Justice | ☐ Designations from other denominations |
| ☐ Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M) | ☐ None |

Reflect on what the above statement(s) mean(s) to your community. Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future?

Yes, we are an evolving congregation. We welcome new ideas and endeavors.

Describe your congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities (with other denominations and religious groups, local and regional).

In the past, we have held ecumenical services with other local churches. We also participated in healing services with the local Methodist Church.

This has been largely dormant for a few years. We look forward to reinvigorating this effort.

If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities? Think of the range of activities from time spent gathering, to governance, to time spent going out.

Mission Statement: Southwick Congregational Church is a faithful Christian presence in the community of Southwick since 1773, and we look to the future. We are a diverse and loving congregation joyfully serving, teaching, and sharing with one another according to the gifts we have been given.

The appropriateness of this Mission Statement was debated at an All-Church meeting in late 2019. There were many ideas but no consensus, and ultimately it was agreed to keep it as is for the sake of time required to complete this profile. It is something that we should revisit once we have a settled minister and more quality time to devote to revisiting this.

The Statement is sufficiently broad and is consistent with how we presently commit our limited resources. Our range of activities pre-pandemic were as follows: weekly events, Sunday worship service, fellowship, hand bell and voice choir rehearsals, pastoral search when needed,

bimonthly youth events, annual events, monthly all church and committee meetings, event planning (weddings, funerals, etc.), dinner planning and execution, etc.

Reflect on the scope of work assigned to your pastor(s). How is their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time?

We are fully committed to developing mutually-agreed upon expectations with First Congregational Church of Westfield as to how our pastor will spend her/his half time. As previously discussed, our priorities are Sunday worship; ongoing outreach to our shut-ins and others with special pastoral needs; and working with us to have a more visible and meaningful outreach to the community at large. We further understand that we will need to expect and encourage our pastor to be flexible enough to provide additional support that may exceed 20 hours/week sometimes for First Congregational Church of Westfield and at other times for Southwick Congregational based upon unexpected events such as funerals, critical illnesses, etc.

MISSION InSite

Comment on your congregation's MissionInSite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area. What trends and opportunities are shown?

The Town of Southwick has experienced substantial housing growth in the past 25 years, but the rate of population growth is much smaller due to both fewer children per household and the development of three major senior housing villages on the north side of town. Specifically, our population gained 218 between the 2010 and 2020 Censuses. We are predominately a Caucasian, middle income working community with a substantial component of retired seniors (21.7% 65 years and older). Depending on the economy, there is a significant influx of new families moving here for the quality of our schools, for more "country" living style, and for retirement. For more detailed Census profile, see:

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/profile?g=0600000US2501365825>

How do your congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to your church, and b) other neighborhoods with which your church connects?

Ethnically and by household income, we largely mirror our community. The average age of our congregation is older than that of the larger community. In a smaller town, we regard the town and surrounding communities as our "neighborhood." The physical location of our meetinghouse is in the center of the business/municipal district of town in which there is limited residential activity within about a quarter mile radius. There is one public housing complex about 500 feet east of our Church. It is noteworthy that we have a significant portion of our membership that lives in Westfield and to a smaller extent, West Suffield, Connecticut.

How are the demographics of the community currently shaping ministry, or not?

The importance of pastoral care for our seniors certainly shapes our ministry. Shut-ins, critical/terminal illnesses, bereavements and nearing end-of-life are critical. We have a strong commitment to serving them. We provided a mid-day service at the Cottages at Southwick (formerly The American Inn) and we would like to explore re-starting that post-pandemic. We are also very interested in using digital communications channels to better serve our seniors who are unable to come to Church.

We are frustrated by our lack of success in attracting younger families and those moving into Southwick. This is something on which we definitely want to work with our new settled minister.

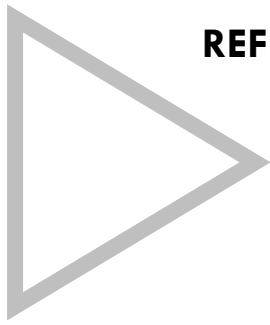
What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for?

We are certainly recognized for our historic meetinghouse on the Town Green which is among the top iconic images of the Town of Southwick. We are appreciated for hosting suppers, the CROP Walk, the Boy Scout Troop, and various other community events.

What do new people in the church say when asked what got them involved?

- 3 M's - Music, Message, Munchies
- Family feeling
- Felt good here
- I attended a baptism and knew this was the church for me
- The people
- Feeling of extended family
- Provides support when life gets difficult
- Lessons and sermons teach about our faith
- Reinforces my faith
- Gives a boost
- Sermons give me something to think about
- Sharing faith stories

(From a congregational survey done in 2018)



REFERENCES

Name up to three people who have agreed to serve as phone and written references. Advise the three references: “The contact information you provide may be shared publicly. Please use contact information that you feel comfortable giving to candidates so they can reach you with their questions.”

Make sure they are not members of your church but are persons who know your church well enough to be helpful to candidates seeking more information. Request a letter from each reference in answer to the four prompts below. Attach the letters (up to three) as desired.

REFERENCE 1

Name -- Randall Hyvonen, retired UCC minister and active member of First Congregational Church, UCC, South Hadley, MA

Telephone: 413-538-4674 Email: rlhyv@yahoo.com

Relationship to Southwick UCC: served as part-time supply minister for several months at the end of 2019 and early 2020

Describe some areas of strength in this church’s ministry:

The church consultant Lyle Schaller once remarked that small membership congregations are like cats ...they always land on their feet. Southwick UCC is such a “cat.” Like so many other congregations in this era, they have grown smaller, resources have shrunk, and they find themselves needing to adapt. They have shown strong determination to do so as they have worked on what it would mean to share a minister with another congregation. The lay leadership has done good work in this process, and they arrived at a solid decision with broad ownership of members. The members show this same ownership of all aspects of their ministry – good attention to stewardship, strong support of congregational mission efforts, good sense of community with one another, a well-developed system for safety (safe church practices even before Covid-19 and new plans to accommodate the pandemic in the past months), and related to safety the trustees have worked hard to maintain a beautiful, historic building that sits at the center of the town. The membership is willing to have its building be a site for broader community usage. Beyond all this, the congregation continues to have a fine music program with good quality and diversity – choir, soloists, large bell choir. Finally, even though the

congregation is small, it pays strong attention to its young people and the youth leaders work hard to provide interesting learning and social opportunities.

Describe some areas for improvement in this church's ministry:

As the congregation enters shared ministry, there are many opportunities for broadening important parts of its mission and ministry. Some possibilities include sharing of musical gifts, broadening of youth ministry, exploring new avenues for mission in which members can feel that their efforts make a big difference for others. All such steps can in turn lead to potential growth in membership – a goal that would be affirmed by all!

Describe a significant experience you have had of this church's ministry:

After the youth leaders had led a group of youth on a “Polar Express” experience, they made plans for an innovative sharing of that experience as a part of a following Sunday worship service. I found it to be a creative way for the adults of the congregation to be involved in and supportive of its younger members. On another occasion, I attended a concert by the bell choir and was impressed not only by the quality of the music they produced but also by the large attendance from the broader community – it was an example of the congregation making itself known beyond its own members.

Anything else you wish to share:

The congregation wishes to be integral to life in the larger community. Post pandemic possibilities should be abundant, and I wish for them creative days ahead.

REFERENCE 2

David & Donna Breton Name / Former Church Moderator & Members

Telephone: 413-219-4373 Email: Toolcat52@aol.com

As a former member and moderator of this church I can say the biggest strength of this church are its members and those who choose to donate their time to serve in whatever capacity they can. Some members go above and beyond and serve on multiple committees. That's quite a commitment and they should be commended. Both Donna and I were happy to work with other church members while serving the various suppers. It was a great feeling.

I have been lucky enough to serve under two pastors. Both were good speakers on the pulpit. However, being a great orator is not the only thing that matters. For me, the ministry made me feel welcome, like I belonged to something spiritual. The next pastor has to make roots in town, reach out and meet people in whatever way possible and hopefully bring people back to the church. Reach out to the children and make church interesting and make it matter to them. This will be a hard task. A lot of churches are in the same boat. Dwindling memberships are a common theme in today's society. We both wish the search committee and the UCC great

fortitude, strength and wisdom in finding your next pastor because the people of this church do matter.

REFERENCE 3

Name: Rev. Jeffrey K. Erb

Position: Pastor, Union Church of Christ, UCC, 51 Center St., Ludlow, MA 01056

Phone: 413-323-9191 (home) or 413-530-8003 (cell)

E mail: jkerb@charter.net

Relationship to the congregation: Interim Minister from Sept. 2008--April 2010

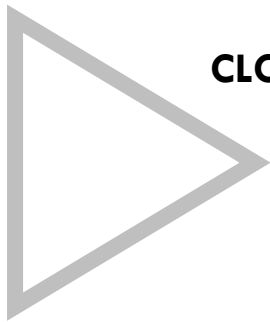
Describe some areas of strength in this church's ministry: The people of Southwick Church take pride in their church and are committed to its work in their community and the world. They keep the church facilities in good working order and their ministries intact. They are good to their employees and get along well with one another. They feel a part of their local and wider community fostering connections with outside groups and allowing them to use their facilities.

One of their greatest strengths is their music ministry. There is strong leadership in that area and both vocal and bell choirs are excellent, which bolsters the worship experience immensely.

As do most churches these days, the church struggles somewhat financially. However, their fundraisers help bring in revenue and boost morale and fellowship.

The time I spent as their Interim Minister was a delight. People were very warm, welcoming, cooperative, friendly, and accommodating. I enjoyed the time we spent together. The staff was easy to work with and the boards and committees functioned well. Leadership was capable and people respected each other's work and participation.

Anything else you wish to share: The church is full of competent, kind, and caring people. People are willing to pitch in and assume responsibility for making things happen and succeed. Personally, I had a wonderful experience as their Interim Minister.



CLOSING THOUGHTS

CLOSING PRAYER

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

CLOSING PRAYER

Include here any prayer or dream for the minister you imagine journeying toward you... a poem, for example, or a Scripture passage or a piece of music that is meaningful to your Search Committee:

Dear Lord, we stand before you, tasked to seek a new minister for our congregation. Not to keep us where we are, but to enlighten and lead us into a positive future. A future in which we can exemplify and live the life you want for us. A life that will draw new members to our Church and inspire us to better serve our community.

Give us the vision to discern the best person to lead us forward. One who will teach and challenge us. Enlighten us to understand our true needs and how to translate them into this new partnership. Ours and their growth to better serve you.

We are inspired by the words of this favorite hymn:

I the Lord of sea and sky
I have heard my people cry
All who dwell in dark and sin
My hand will save
I have made the stars of night
I will make their darkness bright
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?

Here I am Lord
Is it I Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night
I will go lord
If You lead me

I will hold your people in my heart. Amen.

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending suitable new minister for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile?

This profile is largely based on the dedicated work of our original Search Committee who met from 2018 through summer 2020 until the time that our congregation voted to explore a shared minister with First Congregational Church of Westfield. They sought input from:

- Our congregation, including one “listening session” in late 2019 and a written survey at an earlier time.
- Our interim pulpit supply minister.
- Former UCC Conference Associate Minister Jill Graham, a wonderful resource throughout.
- Our Finance Committee who developed our salary package and recommendations regarding our financial capacity.
- The five Southwick Congregational members of the newly-formed joint Search Committee have updated and finalized this profile. As part of that process, we have provided interim versions to our membership for comment and input.

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile: None

Signed: 

Name / Title: James N. Putnam II
Southwick Co-Chair

Email: Jim-Putnam@comcast.net

Phone: 413-537-6756

Date: April 22, 2021

VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

The congregation is currently in good standing with the association / conference named.

Staff Comment:

To the best of my knowledge, ministerial history information is complete.

Staff Comment:

To the best of my knowledge, available church financial information is presented thoroughly.

Staff Comment:

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:

Southwoods

First Published In
September 1996



Celebrating 250 Years

Southwick Congregational Church

As the folks of Southwick Congregational Church engage in plans to repair and refurbish the front of their historic, old meeting house, it would be interesting for all of us to learn more about the history of this structure. In future articles, other churches in town will be studied in the same manner.

The present Congregational Church building was constructed in 1824, between spring thaw and winter freeze, as was necessary for a building of that size at that time. In those days, it should be remembered, the Congregational Church and the town were not separate, as they are today. The Massachusetts Bay Colony, and continuing until 1833, was a from its inception theocracy, and there was only one church, the Congregational. Many may have thought that our Pilgrim forefathers and mothers would have extended religious freedom to other denominations in their new land after they, themselves, has experienced religious persecution in the old one, but that did not seem to be the case.

In a small town such as Southwick, this interlocking of church and state translated into the requirement that every town have and support a Congregational minister and meetinghouse. The



Church was governed spiritually by the Church membership and temporally by the Congregational Society. To become a Church member, one had to be elected or approved by a Church committee that determined that the candidate had undergone a suitable conversion experience.

However, every voting member of the district or town belonged to the Church Society because all were required to pay the ministerial tax to support the Church. (Women were not allowed to vote, in those days; not until 1860 were women accorded the right to vote for deacons of the church.) It was the male property owners and voters, regardless of their religious persuasion, who were held responsible for the financial support of the Congregational Church. Finally, in 1806, legislation passed excusing "dissenters" from paying this tax "if the dissenter lodged with the Town Clerk a certificate stating that the dissenter was a bonafide member of a religious persuasion other than the 'Standing Order'."

It is not clear if early Baptists, Methodists, and Episcopalians in town used the meetinghouse for their own services since they were paying for its upkeep. In any case, the town-wide tax for the Congregational Church was a source dissension among the different denominations. Finally, the Baptists built their own meetinghouse in 1822. It was located about where Dunkin Donuts and the Eagle Mart now stand. Then, in the summer of 1823, the original Congregational meetinghouse, on Bugbee Road, across from the Old Cemetery on College Highway, burned to the ground.

This event brought to focus, a strong disagreement among Church Society members as to where the new church would be located, whether in the southern or northern part of the town. According to the Church history booklet "Two formal Town Meetings were called, these met and adjourned to meet again;

a total of thirteen times; more than six months were to pass; the recommendations of both in-town and out-of-town committees were rejected; and at least one-half of the Congregational Society (especially those in the southern part of Southwick) withdrew and formed their own Episcopal Society before the issue of merely where to place the new Meetinghouse was finally decided."

The people who had wanted the new meetinghouse in the southern part of the town broke away from the Congregational Society and Church and built their own church in 1826, the present Methodist Church located at Gillett Corners. According to Maud Etta Gillett Davis in her *Historical Facts and Stories About Southwick*, "The so called Episcopalians living in town were probably instrumental in building the church, though the Methodists in town shared the expense and used the building from the beginning." An agreement was made that each denomination would have half the Sabbath to worship in this meetinghouse.

The people who had wanted the new meetinghouse in the northern section of town were the ones who created the present Congregational Church meetinghouse. Mr. Enos Foote of Southwick donated one half acre of land in the present center of town to the Congregational Society with several reservations and stipulations, one of which was as that he or his heirs be allowed use the basement of the structure for storage. This right was finally purchased by the Ladies Benevolent Society of the Church from his heir, Mr. John Boyle, in 1885-1888 for \$138.25.

If we could return to Southwick in 1824 before the new meetinghouse was built at the intersection of what is now College Highway and Depot Street, this is what we would see: on the Northwest corner of the intersection stood the Southwick Inn, not the present building but an earlier, lower, rambling building that burned in 1905. On the southwest corner, where the Southwick Public Library is now, was the house of Thaddeus Foote, a lawyer and brother to Enos. On the southeast corner, in the present Old Colonial Gift Shop, lived John Mills, also a lawyer and son-in-law of Enos Foote. His law office was located just across Depot Street, then called Mill Street, about where the town green and war memorial are now located. From his office there was an open field that stretched north to the home of Enos Foote, located just north of the present Congregational parsonage. Foote built this house in 1500, but it is remembered for its later owner, Matthew Field. The house burned to the ground in 1928.

It was this open field that was given for the location of the new meetinghouse. The money for the structure was raised by subscriptions and came to about \$5000. The builder chosen

was Captain Isaac Damon of Northampton. He was a contractor and builder with a Good reputation, as he had already designed and built the Congregational Church meetinghouse at Court Square in Springfield, Mass. In 1819. Other structures he built included the meeting house on the hill in Simsbury, Connecticut, the Center Church building in New Haven, and the Northampton Congregational Church meetinghouse.

He was also a bridge builder and his structures spanned the Connecticut, Penobscot, Mohawk, Ohio, and Hudson Rivers. "The committee showed great wisdom in their choice of builder," says the Congregational Church history.

Imagine in the spring of 1824 watching skilled workmen assembling from many communities in western Massachusetts to construct the Congregational meetinghouse. "Materials were contracted for, stone was quarried, hardware forged and fashioned, and lumber sawed. From New Hampshire came the huge logs from which were made the beams that support the structure. These logs were floated down the Connecticut River to the mills near Holyoke, there sawed to the desired proportions, the timbers were then carted overland to Southwick."

Construction of the meetinghouse began on May 2, 1824. Teams of horses pulled scoops that removed the earth for the cellar hole. Blocks of stone, pre-cut and dressed, were set in place for the foundation. Skilled craftsmen, Mr. Jones and Mr. Miller of Springfield and Mr. Alvord and his two sons of South Hadley were recorded as masons for the construction.

Timbers were prepared in the old way by cutting tenons and mortises (interlocking connections) and drilling holes for the wooden pins and iron bolts with auger bits. Each joint was numbered so that every beam of the frame would be put in its proper place.

The timber frames for each wall were assembled on the

ground. Tenons were fit into mortises and these were secured with hardwood pins that had been presoaked in brine to shrink them. The pins fit in ugly at first, but after they had swelled from the moisture in the air, they would hold firm "for all time" up until this very day.

Early on the morning of June 11, 1824 workers gathered to raise the frame. It took three days with horses and oxen straining at the winches to raise the frames into place with "sweating men" driving home pins and tightening nuts on bolts. By evening of June 13, 1824 the setting sun gleamed through the upright framework of the new meetinghouse.

Then carpenters, masons, and pew makers set to work to complete the meetinghouse. Special struts and structure had to be built to support the round, domed ceiling of the meetinghouse. Mr. Shepherd and Mr. Whitmarsh of Springfield and Mr. Daniels of New Haven, pew maker, completed the pews and altar and other work in the sanctuary. "On the floor of the Sanctuary were 48 white boxlike pews with hinged doors. There were two aisles with double pews between the two aisles and a section of single pews extending from the aisles to both the north and south walls. In front was a small platform upon which sat a large pulpit. Flanking the small platform on each side was one wood-burning stove with a short stove pipe thrusting into the two chimneys in the east wall of the Sanctuary. The pews extended 12 deep from near the stoves and platform to the west wall so that in order to get from aisle to aisle in the rear one had to enter the Narthex. Today, only the seats in the balconies remain exactly as they were the day the Meetinghouse was completed.

Erastus Hunt and his apprentice, Erastus Bardwell, fashioned the four graceful pillars for the front portico. Much later, in 1950, when the original pillars and steps of the Church had to be replaced, two letters and other papers wrapped in coarse brown paper describing the building of the Church, were found under the north column. They had been put there by the workmen and included, among other things, a list of the work-

men, the minister at the time. Rev. Calvin Foote, the statement "No accident happened of any consequence" during the raising

of the church, and the conclusion, "To the people of Southwick who may be living when these columns shall be removed and others erected instead, these few lines are respectfully dedicated by their friend one of the workmen. Amasa Wade, Sr. of Williamsburgh, Mass."

When the new pillars were constructed, a metal box containing copies of a letter dated March 15, 1765, the papers found in the pillar, a newspaper account of the findings of these papers, a list of members

of the Church at present, and a list of the officers of the Church for that year were placed under the south pillar.

The originals are "in safe keeping in the bank," according to the church history booklet.

By November, 1824 the Congregational Church meetinghouse was ready for its dedication service. The Portico Narthex with steeple, and the Sanctuary were all that were built of the present complex at that time, and nothing would be added for one hundred years. The first addition, the Parish House or Old Fellowship Hall, was completed in 1924, and second, the New Fellowship Hall, was dedicated on March 17, 1957.

A photograph of this Church has been included in at least one book of old New England meetinghouses, because, as was well put by the Church history regarding the dedication ceremony, "The building stood on that day, as it does now, one of the finest examples of a traditional New England meetinghouse to found anywhere."

Sources used in this article: Thanks to Geneva Baillieul for permission to use her line drawings that illustrated the Southwick Congregational Church History. 1773- 1973 (Southwick Congregational Church History Committee, 1973), Also used: Historical Facts and Stories About Southwick (Maud Etta Gillett Davis, July, 1951) and Southwick Massachusetts 1770-1970 Bicentennial



The Congregational Church early 1890's. Architect Isaac Damon designed the Southwick Congregational Meeting House. Over three days, July 11th, 12th, & 13th 1824 the building was raised.

Southwick Congregational Church Annual Report FY 2020



248th Meeting
of the
Southwick Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
February 11, 2021

SOUTHWICK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IS A FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN PRESENCE IN THE COMMUNITY OF SOUTHWICK SINCE 1773, AND WE LOOK TO THE FUTURE. WE ARE A DIVERSE AND LOVING CONGREGATION, JOYFULLY SERVING, TEACHING, AND SHARING WITH ONE ANOTHER, ACCORDING TO THE GIFTS WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN.

UCC STATEMENT OF MISSION

As people of the United Church of Christ, affirming our Statement of Faith, we seek within the Church Universal to participate in God's mission and to follow the way of the crucified and risen Christ.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are called and commit ourselves:

- To praise God, confess our sin, and joyfully accept God's forgiveness;
- To proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our suffering world;
- To embody God's Love for all people;
- To hear and give voice to creation's cry for justice and peace;
- To name and confront the powers of evil within and among us;
- To repent our silence and complicity with the forces of chaos and death;
- To preach and teach with the power of the living Word;
- To join oppressed and troubled people in the struggle for liberation;
- To work for justice, healing, and wholeness of life;
- To embrace the unity of Christ's church;
- To discern and celebrate the present and coming reign of God.

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

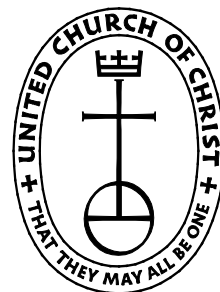


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Moderator's Message

2020 has definitely been a challenging year for us. During this worldwide Covid 19 pandemic, our congregation and our community have experienced loss, sickness, isolation, disruption, emotional and physical trauma, and insecurity. We have lost loved ones from our own families and friends and from within our church family. While they are no longer with us physically, we will always feel their presence among us and continue to honor their memory.

I have been in awe of the resilience and perseverance of our congregation throughout this epidemic. You have been quick to assist our church family and our broader community when needs have arisen; you continue to support our church with your prayers, your gifts, and your talents; and you have amazed me with your flexibility to try new ways to worship and to maintain the “connections” among our congregation members.

2021 will be an exciting one for our church family. We have welcomed Pastor Julie Olmsted as our interim minister and Charnelle Harris as our new administrative assistant, and we have begun exploring our relationship with First Congregational Church of Westfield as we embark on a joint search for a shared fulltime minister. I remain optimistic that our scientists, infectious disease experts, and health professionals will continue to make progress toward defeating the virus so that we can once again hug each other and worship God together in our beautiful sanctuary.

Love, hope and prayers to all,
Terry Putnam, Moderator

247th Annual Meeting Minutes
Southwick Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
February 9, 2020

The meeting was called to order by Moderator Terry Putnam at 11:40 a.m. An opening prayer was led by Kirsten Allhusen followed by a moment of silence to remember those who have passed on this past year within our congregation and the community.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to dispense with the reading of the Call to the Annual Meeting.

A count was taken around the room with 35 voting members attending – a quorum is 15.

The Moderator entertained a motion from the floor to accept last year's Annual Report from the 246th Annual Meeting, which was seconded, and with no discussion was passed unanimously.

Nominating Committee: Patti Wood brought forth Bob Franzen to be nominated to the Pastoral Relations Committee. A motion was made to approve this addition which was seconded and passed unanimously.

The Moderator asked for any additions to each committee's Annual Report or questions regarding content. Kristy Johnston from Christian Ed wished to thank everyone for all their support this past year for the Polar Express youth trip. Eric Nitsch representing the Security Committee stated that the Southwick Police are patrolling our parking lot during our worship service. Joyce Hamilton from the Thrift Shop is looking for a helper.

Treasurer's Report: Ted Orson, Treasurer, mentioned the church has done a good job of using its resources and funds from fundraising. We ended 2019 with a positive figure, not a deficit, due largely to lower ministerial expenses. He urged us to think about our old building's future and the costs to maintain it. We budget very close to what current costs are and hope for the best. According to the history of all Southwick churches, they have had ups and downs and some consolidations and some financial ebbs and flows. It is important to get more participation from our members. Our mild winter so far has kept costs down regarding heating and plowing costs. Regarding our Special Funds, the Hoffman Fund has had good growth over the past year. The Moderator agreed with Ted's thoughts and appreciated how we all have been able to stretch our funds for the good of this church. A motion was made to accept the Treasurer's Report, which was seconded, and passed unanimously.

No Auditor's Report was available.

Review of Proposed 2020 Budget:

Melanie Nitsch designated Finance Committee member, Jim Putnam, to lead the discussion. Jim thanked the various committees and stated it was a difficult process to put the budget together.

- **Revenue** – With total expected revenue of \$114,930, Jim mentioned the three cornerstones to revenue for our church – pledges and contributions, fundraisers, and income from the parsonage rental. Diane Orson requested that the parsonage income be more specific in the budget by separating out total income from the parsonage from the total expenses of the parsonage.

Finance will discuss this in the March meeting. A motion was made to accept the total Revenue package which was seconded and passed unanimously.

- **Expenses** –

- Minister – At the January All-Church Meeting a vote was taken to have the total ministerial package at \$50,000. Bob Franzen stated Conference guidelines state a package should be \$50-55,000 for a part-time pastor in our area. It was noted this is based on 75 pledging units for a congregation where we so far have 59 pledging units. A possibility would be to negotiate the number of hours for a part-time pastor and the Pastoral Search Committee will have the flexibility to negotiate figures with a new candidate. The Moderator informed the group that Rev. Susanne Hayes will return to our pulpit on March 1st with the title of “Enhanced Pulpit Supply.” She will be paring down some of her duties, i.e. office hours only on demand, but will try to continue visitations as much as possible.

Melanie Nitsch made note that there was no line item in this budget section for funding for a worship leader for Thursday services and the once-a-month services at the American Inn. There was discussion about how stopping these services would limit our outreach to the community, also perhaps we should investigate what the spiritual needs are of those that would like to continue these services, but also how these services at the current time have very few attendees. A motion was made to suspend these services for the time being until a new settled pastor is hired, and at such time these services can be re-visited. This motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

A motion was made to approve the “Minister” expenses section at \$50,000, which was seconded and passed with a majority vote, with one vote opposed.

- Office & Administration – This section was basically level funded except the addition of a new payroll service. A motion to approve was seconded, and with no discussion was carried unanimously.
- Music – The committee is continuing to bring the organist/choir director and bell choir director salaries up but states they are still significantly under current market amounts. A motion to accept this total amount of \$21,250 was seconded and passed unanimously.
- Christian Education – The group expects to have \$900 in expenses this year and has \$750 pledged to Christian Ed in the budget. This is a very hard-working committee for our youth and a motion was made to accept this portion of the budget, which was seconded and passed unanimously.
- Maintenance – This section of the budget is a major expense challenge due to the upkeep requirements of this old historical building – as reflected in increased maintenance costs due to expected projects to be completed in the upcoming year. Our custodian also received a mandated minimum wage increase this year. A motion to approve this section of the budget was seconded and with no discussion was passed unanimously.
- Utilities & Insurance – Jim Putnam stated this section of the budget has our least controllable expenses. With the addition of all the LED lighting now in the church, a question was raised as to whether this is saving us any money on our electric bill. Ted Orson responded that he

has not noticed any significant change. A motion to approve this section of the budget was seconded and passed unanimously.

- Special Projects – Mission Outreach funds that are pledged as part of our Revenue in Pledges and Contributions are debited out at this part of the budget as the Mission Outreach Committee has these funds at their disposal for their missions work. A motion to approve this section of the budget was seconded and passed unanimously.

Jim Putnam reminded us that with our expected expenses totaling \$145,802, and with total revenue expected at \$114,930, this will lead to an expected deficit in our 2020 budget of \$30,872 – but perhaps our deficit will be smaller this year since we have not hired a settled pastor yet. We have been reminded by Bob Bates, an attendee at the meeting, that it is important to ask a potential candidate why they want to be here, and hope that it is God's will, and we all need to ask for prayers for God's will to be done. A motion was then made to accept the proposed 2020 budget in its entirety which was seconded and passed by a majority show of hands.

New Business:

- Roxanne Cook is organizing a "Paint and Pizza" event for April 18th from 3-5 pm and will involve painting on wood rather than canvas.
- A future fundraiser will be decided for September/October instead of the previous Community Day.
- Andrea Warriner mentioned the Boy Scouts were not represented this year at our Annual Meeting and hoped they can be included for next year.
- Patty Banasik mentioned we will hopefully have a New Member Sunday possibly right after Easter in April of this year.

Moderator Terry Putnam closed the 247th Annual Meeting of the Southwick Congregational Church at 12:55 p.m. All in attendance joined hands for the singing of "Blest Be the Tie That Binds."

*Respectfully submitted,
Melanie Nitsch, Clerk*

CHURCH RECORDS 2020

2019 MEMBERSHIP	101	(Membership reported in the 2020 UCC Yearbook)	
<u>MEMBERS RECEIVED</u>	4		
Letter of Transfer	1	Lorraine Bates	7/26/2020
Reaffirmation of Faith	1	Robert Bates	7/26/2020
Confession of Faith			
Confirmations	2	Ezri June Johnston	9/6/2020
		Richard Michael Pitoniak	9/6/2020
<u>MEMBERS REMOVED</u>			
Due to Inactivity	18	Still members, moved to inactive	
Transfer to Another Church	2	Andrea Warriner	5/27/2020
		Dan Warriner	
By Death	3	Robert Keeney	1/9/2020
		Marion Vecchio	2/12/2020
		Patricia Fuller	4/26/2020
		Roxanne Cook	12/19/2020
		Betty West	12/21/2020
		Connie Johnson	1/4/2021
By Request	2	Peter Michael Hayes	10/6/2020
		Rev. Dr. Susanne Hayes	10/6/2020
<u>2020 MEMBERSHIP</u>	<u>82</u>		
Baptisms			
Weddings			
Non-Member Deaths	7	Judy Pratt	1/14/2020
		Bob Jennett	2/7/2020
		Roy Benson	4/6/2020
		Terrence Welch	6/13/2020
		Danielle Loiko Sklarski	12/20/2020
		Edmund Dowd	12/20/2020
		Tom Brzezinski	1/15/2021
Non-Member Weddings			

Submitted by the Office Administrative Assistant

COMMITTEES & MEMBERS FOR 2020

<u>Office</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Started</u>	
Moderator	Terry Putnam	2018	
Clerk	Melanie Nitsch	2014	
Treasurer	Theodore Olson	2013	
Assistant Treasurer	Julie Chase	2013	
Auditor			
Board of Deacons	Patty Banasik	2016	
	Flo Pitoniak	2016	
	Dawn Turgeon	2019	
	Lee Zinnack	2019	
Board of Ushers	Charlie Rood, III	2011	
	Robin Sklarski	2020	
Buildings and Grounds Committee	Bob Franzen	2017	
	Eric Nitsch	2019	
	Mike Pitoniak	2018	
Christian Education Committee	Kirsten Alhusen	2017	
	Meredith Crosler	2018	
	Kristy Johnson	2017	
	Norma Cagney	2019	
	Ann Ottalagana	2018	
	Emily Pitoniak	2018	
Finance Committee	Melanie Nitsch	2018	
	Jim Putnam	2018	
	Robin Sklarski	2018	
	(ex-officio)	Karen Brzezinski	2011
	(ex-officio)	Julie Chase	2012
	(ex-officio)	Ted Orson	2013
	(ex-officio)	Virgil Paggen	2014
Flower Committee	Roxanne Cook	2016	
Fund Raising Committee	Robin Sklarski	2018	
	Patti Wood	2014	
Historian	Karen Brzezinski	2013	
Librarian			

Memorial Gifts	Karen Brzezinski	2011
Mission / Outreach Committee	Roxanne Cook	2016
	Donna Sullivan	2017
Music Committee	Lynn Coach	2015
	Jenn Hall-Cotto	2018
	Diane Jennett	2016
	Joyce Paggen	2013
	Joe Sullivan	2017
Nominating Committee	Patti Wood	2015
Pastoral Relations	Roxanne Cook	2011
	Dennis Day	2015
	Bob Franzen	2020
Pastor Search Committee	Roxanne Cook	2018
	Bob Franzen	2018
	Diane Orson	2018
Chaplain	Donna Sullivan	2018
	Joe Sullivan	2018
Clerk	Lee Zinnack	2018
Security Committee	Patty Banasik	2019
	Kristy Johnston	2019
	Eric Nitsch	2019
	Ted Orson	2019
	Flo Pitoniak	2019
	Jim Putnam	2019
	Terry Putnam	2019
	Robin Sklarski	2019
UCC Delegates		

Bolded names are chairs or co-chairs

Submitted by the Office Administrative Assistant

BOARD OF DEACONS 2020

The Board of Deacons continued to minister to the spiritual needs of the church and the community. Along with the interim pastor, the Deacons planned and supervised our church services, particularly in the preparation and assistance with the administration of the sacraments, supported the interim pastor in her pastoral works, welcomed new members with outdoor and virtual recognition ceremonies, assisted with baptisms and ceremonies of confirmation, and tried to assist all who became known to us within the church and community.

To begin 2020, the board of Deacons had 4 members. In October of 2020, Lee Zinnack resigned after 25 years of service. Her commitment to Southwick Congregational Church and its spiritual growth throughout the years is commendable.

- In March, Dr. Rev. Susanne Hayes agreed to return to our pulpit for 6 months in an “enhanced pulpit supply” role. As we were planning for the Lenten season, the Covid 19 pandemic arrived. In order to keep everyone safe and under the recommendations of the UCC Conference and the CDC, our church services were cancelled for the foreseeable future.
- On Easter Sunday, our flowering cross was placed in front of the church. We invited the church and community to place flowers on the cross while socially-distancing and wearing masks. Our cross was beautiful!!
- With the arrival of “Zoom,” we were able to reconnect as a congregation through our phones and computers. In May, Terry and Jim Putnam invited all to a “Virtual Coffee Hour.” Being able to see our congregation was exciting and filled our spiritual needs.
- In August, through a Zoom ceremony, Robert and Lorraine Bates became members of our Church. Welcome Bob and Lorraine!!
- Covid did not put a halt to our confirmation class. Studies continued, and in September Ezri Johnston and Ricky Pitoniak made their confirmation. In a beautiful ceremony outside on the green, family and friends convened to witness and take part in confirming these two young adults.
- In September, Rev. Dr. Susanne Hayes resigned after six months of pulpit supply.
- With the help of Building and Grounds and our Moderator, we were able to restart church services in September. Our Sunday worship has changed from its traditional form, but each Sunday is exciting and refreshing. Covid has made all of us think outside of the box. Rev. Kirsten Alhusen agreed to do Communion Sunday each month. In order to keep everyone safe, individual prefilled communion cups and wafer were purchased. Flo Pitoniak, fellow deacon and theology student, filled the pulpit one Sunday each month. The Deacons welcomed many members of the congregation to the pulpit to deliver a Sunday message.
- The church directory was updated with the help of our Administrative Assistant and Virgil Paggen.
- Christmas in our church was simplified due to Covid restrictions. The “Tree of Remembrance” was placed on our altar throughout Advent. The Christmas Eve service was held earlier in the evening and battery-operated tea lights were handed out instead of candles. With the help of the

flower committee and many people of the congregation, Christmas plants were delivered to our shut ins.

- Thank you to my fellow deacons and many members for their dedication to the Southwick Congregational Church and for assisting the Board of Deacons.

Respectfully submitted,
Patty Banasik, Chair

BUILDING & GROUNDS REPORT 2020

This year was not busy for the B&G committee. The pandemic curtailed any functions being held inside the building. The everyday wear and tear on the building didn't happen. There were some small upkeep projects but even those were minimal.

The one big project was the rebuilding of the boiler room chimney. This was discovered because the sanctuary ceiling was getting water stained. Upon inspection we found the mortar between the bricks was failing because of age and the roof flashing wasn't holding up. The contractor tore the chimney down below the roof line and rebuilt it. They also worked on the other two chimneys. They should be good for another 40 years.

Our custodian, Chris Roberts, is doing a wonderful job keeping the church sanitized and clean.

Again, a special thanks to Russ Fox for taking the weekly trash and recycling to the transfer station. As a reminder to everyone, please separate the trash from the recycling. Empty boxes need to be broken down. Bottles and cans need to be separated from any other trash.

There wasn't a spring cleanup event in 2020 and it doesn't look good for 2021. So, mark your calendars for the spring of 2022 because there will be a lot of TLC needed!

The B&G committee is responsible for the following necessities. All these services cost money and are part of the B&G yearly budget:

- Snow plowing (DCW Property Management)
- Gutter cleaning (Pinette Landscaping)
- Fire extinguisher inspection (Massachusetts Fire Technologies)
- Pest management (Environment First)
- Church custodian

Thank you to everyone for your support of our wonderful building.

Eric Nitsch – Chair, Mike Pitoniak & Bob Franzen

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION REPORT 2020

Like many others, 2020 was a bittersweet year for Christian Ed. We started off the year with a vibrant start! We had a successful annual Valentine's Day fundraiser selling roses and homemade fudge made by our youth members. The Christian Ed committee would like to take this moment to remember Roxanne Cook who was a huge supporter and help for us during this event. Roxanne always made sure we had roses, supplies and helped our group create beautiful arrangements for our fundraiser.

In March we held our first pizza and a movie event in the old fellowship hall, featuring Breakthrough. We didn't have a huge turnout (only 15 people). However, those that did attend enjoyed it immensely.

We were planning on making this a regular event, but COVID would soon put a damper on things for our program. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we were unable to open the Sunday School classroom this fall, so the past few months have been rather quiet for our Christian Ed program. We are proud to announce the confirmation of Ricky Pitoniak and Ezri Johnston this past September. Please welcome them to our church membership community as they explore and expand their faith.

We are looking forward to a new year and hope that 2021 will allow us to reopen our classroom and begin new adventures with our sister church, First Congregational Church of Westfield.

Christian Education
Kristy Johnston, Chair
Kirsten Allhusen
Merideth Crosler
Ann Ottalagana
Emily Pitoniak

Respectfully submitted,
Kristy Johnston, Chair

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT 2020

After our Annual Meeting last February 9, 2020, COVID hit and all church activities, meetings, and services were suspended by law and for everyone's safety. All committee chairs worked behind the scenes to keep the church running, including the Finance Committee. No regular committee meetings were held in March or April but by May our Moderator had signed up for a church Zoom account, and regular meetings with the chairs of each committee via Zoom began on a monthly basis.

Through the efforts of the Finance Committee, the church applied for and received a Paycheck Protection Plan loan of \$11,000 in May. We used these funds to pay salaries for our employees and utility bills. It allowed us to protect our limited valuable financial resources and not have to consider staffing reductions.

With the church remaining closed to in-person services throughout the summer, the challenge of maintaining our pledges and offerings was a heavy concern. Due to the dedication and commitment of our members who mailed or dropped off their pledges and contributions, we were able to maintain a good financial status quo. In-person worship, which began in September with reduced attendance also helped with pledges being received.

Other challenges we have faced in 2020 were to hire a new Administrative Assistant for the church office due to the resignation of our previous one, keep the office running during this time, get things in order financially for the hiring of Pastor Julie Olmsted to begin as our interim in January 2021, apply for forgiveness of our PPP loan, and research whether the church is eligible for a new PPP loan that is being offered. The All-Church vote to pursue sharing a pastor with First Congregational Church of Westfield will help us significantly financially and provide us access to a full-time pastor.

I'd like to thank our Moderator, Terry Putnam, and Finance Committee members Robin Sklarski, Jim Putnam, Ted Orson, and Virgil Paggen for all their help throughout this past challenging year. Financially, in my opinion, and I think the numbers support this, we have fared better than expected! Special thanks go to Lorraine Bates for volunteering to staff the church office several times a week while we searched for a permanent administrative assistant. You are so much appreciated!

We are always in need of volunteers to help learn about our church's finances, stewardship, and Memorial Gifts accounts. Backup volunteers to those with the knowledge to share are so important. Please consider joining our finance team!

Respectfully submitted,
Melanie Nitsch, Chair, Finance Committee

FLOWER COMMITTEE 2020

Roxanne Cook, chair of the Flower Committee and longtime member who devoted her life to serving our church in multiple capacities throughout the years, passed away in December. We will dearly miss her dedication, tireless service, and commitment to our church.

MEMORIAL GIFTS REPORT 2020

Report Deferred

MISSION / OUTREACH COMMITTEE 2020

The 2020 Mission Outreach Committee began the year with three members. Those members were Roxanne Cook, Andrea Warriner, and Donna Sullivan.

In January, a Giving Tree was set up with tags suggesting donations to the Southwick Police Department and the Samaritan Inn in Westfield. The tree remained up through February and was a huge success. We were able to provide the SPD with a total of \$500 in gas and Big Y gift cards! We also brought a plentiful donation of gloves to the Samaritan Inn.

Missions also sent a \$500 check to the Salvation Army for the hurricane devastation in Puerto Rico.

In March, we delivered to the Food Pantry a total of 166 plastic Easter eggs filled with treasures. We also wrote a check in the amount of \$200 to be used in purchasing Easter hams for needy families. A total of 166 hams were purchased.

In April, in response to the global pandemic, Noble Hospital started a Tranquility Room. This was a room created to provide a supportive and peaceful environment/space for frontline workers to step away and reflect or to just rest for a few minutes. We donated \$200 in snacks and drinks to help with this cause.

The Care Package Project was started through Red Riding Hood's Basket to come to the aide of those in the community suffering from food challenge as the pandemic continued to grow. Missions and Outreach donated \$100 to this cause.

On July 15th, we sponsored a T-shirt day asking that SCC members wear their shirts, wherever that day happened to bring them, in an effort to create community awareness - this is who we are! On July 27th, we packed and delivered 65 dinner bags for the Westfield Soup Kitchen.

In October, a total of \$479 was collected from our church members and sent to Neighbors in Need. A check for \$250 from Missions funds was given to the CROP walk. Another 65-70 dinner bags were packed and delivered to the Westfield Soup Kitchen on October 23rd.

The collection box for food pantry items was also put back into the Narthex, and donations were collected and delivered once a week to the pantry. This was done through the end of December.

In December, a check was given in the amount of \$100 to the church committee who shopped for Christmas gifts for a needy family in town.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Sullivan

MUSIC COMMITTEE REPORT 2020

This has been a year of challenges and adjustments. It started with a very well- attended hand bell concert, which was enthusiastically received, and continued as normal with our dedicated organist/voice choir director, Roberta Kowal, and our dedicated hand bell director, Patti Wood, guiding the choirs that add ‘extra prayers’ to our worship services. March brought changes to our way of worship with the necessary closure of public gathering places. But services went on and, as necessary, technical adjustments were made, so did the music.

Committee communications this year were primarily via phone and email. The Damp Chaser on the Kawai piano has been regularly checked and water added when necessary. The Kawai and Everett pianos were tuned in late May as part of basic maintenance. The possibility of hiring someone to direct a group of interested bell ringers during the pandemic was explored. Logistics, necessary equipment handling, and ringer safety were factors in not continuing.

We thank Joe Sullivan for his leadership and support in setting up and running the fund-raising Calendar Raffles of the past two years (2018 & 2019) and for his role as Chairperson of the committee.

Thank you to all who work to keep the musical spirit of our church alive, vibrant, and meaningful. To the “Core Musicians” keeping it all together – Roberta Kowal, Terry Putnam, Joyce Hamilton, Bob Franzen, Eric Nitsch, Mike Pitoniak, and Steve Pitoniak – “Thank you.”

This committee functions as a support for the music programs and for the directors of these programs. It is here we determine policy and make budget recommendations. Just as new voices or new hand-bell ringers are always welcome to join the choirs, we welcome anyone interested in working on this committee to join us.

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Paggen, Chairperson
Lynn Coach, Jen Hall-Cotto, Diane Jennett

PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT 2020

Committee members:

Bob Franzen, Co-Chair

Lee Zinnack, Clerk

Donna Sullivan, Chaplain

Roxanne Cook, Co-Chair

Joe Sullivan

Diane Orson

2020 was a challenging year for the search committee. As the church profile was wrapping up, along came the Covid-19 pandemic. The committee continued meeting virtually with Zoom or together keeping socially-distanced. The UCC requested an addendum to the profile in the following areas: How the church is handling the crisis, the closing of the building, the safe re-opening, the innovation to use virtual services bringing God's message to all members not able to come to church.

In April, the First Congregational Church of Westfield asked us to entertain the possibility of yoking (sharing a pastor) with them. It was agreed to investigate yoking as a possible option since seeking a part-time pastor may be difficult. Investigation and discussions of the pros and cons continued over the next few months.

In July, the search committee polled the members of the church. The three polling options were: Seek our own pastor, seek our own pastor but consider yoking or another option should it prove too difficult, stop seeking our own pastor and explore the possibility of yoking with the First Congregational Church of Westfield. Most of the polling returns favored the yoking option.

A formal vote on the option to share a pastor was then required by the members of the church. The church constitution required members to be in physical attendance at a meeting to vote. However, due to Covid-19 public health concerns and restrictions, emergency voting procedures for church meetings were approved by the executive committee in August. The ten-day voting period ended in September and the congregation voted to pursue sharing a pastor, potentially with the First Congregational Church of Westfield. A new joint search committee with members from both churches will be formed in 2021. The original Pastoral Search Committee was disbanded at the following executive committee meeting.

Respectfully submitted

Bob Franzen

SECURITY COMMITTEE 2020

Report Deferred

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS 2020

A BIG THANK YOU TO THE GOLD DOME CREW!

To a very tireless group – Thank you for your continued efforts to edit, assemble, and mail out the Gold Dome!

Karen Brzezinski

Barbara Bardwell

Jim and Norma Cagney

Julie Chase

Joyce Dudgeon

Cynthia Lydiard

Patricia Martin

Virginia Orson

Jim Parent

Diane Rood

Charles Rood, Sr

Jane Thompson

And anyone else that I may have forgotten, thank you!

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Brzezinski

Henrietta's Thrift Store 2020

The Thrift Store at Southwick Congregational Church has been an on-going yearly fundraiser for the church for many years. It is comprised of gently used household items offered to the public and is currently open on Friday and Saturday mornings from 9 am - 12 noon. The store is located in the Old Fellowship Hall on the stage just off the main meeting area.

Newly-made crafts such as quilted and crocheted items are also offered from which the church receives a percentage toward the store's revenue. Many of these items were donated to the Open Pantry this year in lieu of our Mitten Tree. Because we did not have a Christmas Bazaar due to the pandemic, the store offered two tables of Christmas items (including a collection of Dickens Villages which are still available) and newly-donated household items for sale. We are always looking for more help to operate the store, either during the week or on the weekend. Many thanks to all those who have donated items to the store during the year without which we would not be able to continue offering this service to the community. Even though we were closed for 6 months during the pandemic, we still raised over \$700, making the store one of our most profitable fundraisers. All are welcome to come on down and visit the store. Current covid 19 guidelines and restrictions are in place.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Hamilton, Storekeeper

RELIGIOUS ED REPORT 2020

Report deferred

STEWARDSHIP RECAP 2020

Stewardship is a quest of discipleship blended with a measure of hope. Too often we focus on the negative and neglect the solace of soul-satisfying music and inspired words from the lessons of the Gospel. Stewardship and Family are a strong part of living a life well spent.

For over two centuries, our Church has been a refuge of rest and calm in a turbulent world while engaging us in faith and community. Our task is to maintain a viable treasury as we join with the Westfield First Church to call a settled, shared pastor.

Despite the upheaval created by Covid-19, Stewardship contributions for 2020 amounted to \$97,900. This exceeded by about 13% the amount pledged by 59 members. The outlook for 2021 is somewhat guarded since 22% fewer pledges have been received and the total pledged is down by about 14%. Thanks to everyone for your loyal and continued Stewardship support. We look forward with confidence to making Year 2021 a success.

Respectfully submitted,
Virgil Paggen

Treasurer Report 2020

2020 Budget Summary

1.		2020 Budget	2020 Actual
2.	REVENUE		
3.	Pledges and Contributions	\$85,250	\$83,723
4.	Building Use / Rent	\$2,310	\$1,245
5.	Cash Offerings	\$3,000	\$716
6.	Fund Raisers	\$10,000	\$1,943
7.	Parsonage Rental	\$12,500	\$15,000
8.	UCC Dues Offering	\$500	\$20
9.	Other	\$1,000	\$1,431
10.	Total Revenue	\$114,560	\$104,078
11.			
12.	EXPENSES		
13.	Minister and Expenses	\$48,500	\$19,664
14.	Office and Administrative Costs	\$22,932	\$21,607
15.	Music	\$21,250	\$17,180
16.	Christian Education	\$900	\$162
17.	Maintenance	\$18,600	\$14,836
18.	Utilities and Insurance	\$21,450	\$16,152
19.	Missions, Special Projects, & UCC Dues	7,670	\$2970
20.	Total Expenses	\$141,302	\$92,571
21.	Variance	\$(26,742)	\$11,507

SPECIAL FUNDS REPORT 2020

Capital Account #2000018285

Balance 1/1/19	\$58,055.63
Interest Earned	\$ 29.03
Balance 12/31/19	\$58,084.66

Root Estate Fund CD Berkshire Bank

Balance 1/1/19	\$16,388.46
Interest Earned	\$ 65.60
Balance 12/31/19	\$16,454.06

United Church Funds

Hoffman Fund	Original Investment \$25,000.00
(Value varies due to market changes) Currently (+/-) 12/31/20	\$47,146.87
Flower Funds	\$ 0
Music Bell Choir	\$ 2,133.81
Music Voice Choir	\$ 5,730.52
Youth Fellowship	\$ 3,121.83

2020 Budget and Actual Expenses with Proposed 2021 Budget

1.		2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2021 Proposed Budget
2.	REVENUE			
3.	Pledges & Contributions	\$ 85,250	\$ 83,723	\$ 86,000
4.	Bldg Use/Rent	2,310	1,245	2,300
5.	Cash offerings	3,000	716	3,000
6.	Fund Raisers	10,000	1,943	10,000
7.	UCC Dues Offering	500	20	500
8.	Other	1,000	1,431	1,000
9.	Parsonage (net)	12,500	15,000	15,500
10.	Total Revenue	\$ 114,560	\$ 104,078	\$ 118,300
11.				
12.	EXPENSES			
13.	<u>Minister & Other</u>			
14.	Salary/housing allowance	\$ 38,800	\$ 15,000	\$ 38,800
15.	Expenses	2,000	550	2,000
16.	Annuity	-	-	6,000
17.	FICA	2,000	1,020	2,000
18.	Health Ins	-	-	3,000
19.	UCC Life, disability	700	-	1,000
20.	Continuing Ed	-	-	-
21.	Worker's Comp	2,000	1,079	2,000
22.	Pulpit Supply	3,000	2,015	-
23.	Total	\$ 48,500	\$ 19,664	\$ 54,800
24.	<u>Office & Admin</u>			
25.	Office Administrator	\$ 14,500	\$ 12,244	\$ 16,640
26.	PayChex	732	850	1,000
27.	Payroll Exp Sec	1,600	2,514	1,273
28.	Substitute Secretary	-	-	-
29.	Church/ Office Supply (includes Gold Dome)	3,500	2,832	3,500
30.	Copier Service Contract	2,600	3,167	3,000
31.	Total	\$ 22,932	\$ 21,607	\$ 25,413
32.	<u>Music</u>			
33.	Committee Expense	\$ 450	\$ 180	\$ 450
34.	Organist / Choir Director Salary	17,000	17,000	17,000
35.	Org / Choir Dir Payroll Exp	1,150	-	1,150
36.	Substitute Organist	750	-	-
37.	Bell Choir Director Salary	1,900	-	1,900
38.	Total	\$ 21,250	\$ 17,180	\$ 20,500
39.	<u>Christian Ed</u>			
40.	Total	\$900.00	\$ 162	\$900.00
41.	<u>Maintenance</u>			
42.	Custodian	\$ 9,235	\$ 9,184	\$ 11,000
43.	Payroll Tax	765	761	842
44.	Custodian Supplies	400	75	500
45.	General Maintenance	2,400	4,056	2,400
46.	Grounds Maintenance	5,800	760	4,000
47.	Total	\$ 18,600	\$ 14,836	\$ 18,742
48.	<u>Utilities & Insurance</u>			
49.	Fuel / Natural Gas	\$ 5,500	\$ 3,248	\$ 5,500
50.	Telephone	2,000	2,137	2,200
51.	Electricity	2,800	2,308	2,800
52.	Water & Sewer	1,150	842	1,150
53.	Insurance (Building)	10,000	7,617	12,500
54.	Total	\$ 21,450	\$ 16,152	\$ 24,150
55.	<u>Special Projects</u>			
56.	Pastoral Search Committee	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
57.	Other Special Projects / Ad. Tactics	\$0.00	0.00	5,000
58.	Missions Outreach Committee	\$ 5,170	\$ 750	\$ 5,170
59.	Stewardship	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
60.	Association Dues	2,500	2220	1640
61.	Total	\$ 7,670	\$ 2,970	11810
62.	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 141,302	\$ 92,571	\$ 156,314

^{63.}	Variance {Plus + or (minus -)}	\$ (26,742)	\$ 11,507	\$ (38,014)
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ALL CHURCH COMMITTEE REFRESHMENT SCHEDULE 2020

March	Music Committee
April	Finance—closed due to covid
May	Mission/Outreach—closed due to covid
June	Open—closed due to covid
July	Open—closed due to covid
August	Open—closed due to covid
September	Board of Deacons—closed due to covid
October	Choirs—closed due to covid
November	Christian Education—closed due to covid
December	Building & Grounds—closed due to covid
January	Open
February	Open (Annual Meeting)

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;

The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.



- ✿ The flowers on the altar are in memory of Susan Sanders; our loving mother, sister, daughter, and wife, from the Bates' and Sanders' families.

Deacon for the month is Eric Nitsch.

If you would like a copy of sermons from past weeks, please pick one up from the rack in the narthex or view them on the website.

Contact information: Lyn Casey, Office Administrator, 413-569-6362

www.southwickucc.org, southwickucc@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/SouthwickCongregationalChurchUCC

Rev. Dr. Susanne Hayes can be reached at 413-562-6127.

Southwick Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

Southwick, Massachusetts

413-569-6362

Established - 1773



THIS WEEK AT SOUTHWICK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH		
Today 2/10/19	10:00 AM	Worship Service
	11:00 AM	C.E. Rose Sale
	11:00 AM	Pot luck Lunch
	11:30 AM	Annual Meeting
	3:30 PM	Overeaters Anonymous (OFH)
Monday & Wed	9:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Church Office Open
Monday	10:00 AM	Music Together (Music Room)
	6:00 PM	Daisy Troop (NFH)
	6:30 PM	Beyond Goals (Dickinson)
Tuesday & Thurs	11:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Church Office Open
Tuesday	10:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Rev. Susanne's Office Hours
	6:30 PM	Boy Scouts (NFH)
	6:30 PM	Bell Choir
Wednesday	6:30 PM	Cub Scouts (NFH)
	7:00 PM	Voice Choir (MR)
Thursday	6:30 PM	Mid-Week Service
Friday	8:30 AM – 12:00 PM	Church Office Open
	9:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Henrietta's Thrift Shop (OFH)
	6:00 PM	Overeaters Anonymous (OFH)
	7:30 PM	A.A. Meeting (OFH)
Saturday	9:00 AM – 1:00 PM	Henrietta's Thrift Shop (OFH)
COMING SOON		
Saturday	3/2 4:00 PM	Scouts Pasta Dinner
Wednesday	3/6 6:30 PM	Ash Wednesday Service
Saturday	3/9 5:00 PM	Scouts Blue & Gold ceremony
Friday	3/22 6:00 PM	Girl Scouts Sock Hop
Saturday	3/23 5:00 PM	C.E. Potluck

The Reverend Dr. Susanne U. Hayes, Interim Minister

Roberta H. Kowal, Choir Director/Organist

Patti P. Wood, Bell Choir Director

February 10, 2019

*Please stand if you are able

Prayer List – February 3, 2019

Our Search Committee	Andrea Warriner
Roxanne Cook	Eleanor Bates
Christy Fedor	Betty West
Kim Heath	Jeanne Stromgren
Roy Benson	Jane Webster
Becky Bliven	Robert Ruel
Christine Orr	Carey Danyow Bell

Friends and family of Arlene Hughes
Ginny Typrowicz; Diane Orson's friend
Laurie Morin; Andrea's sister-in-law
Bob King; Robin's friend
Bob Wright; Tom Wright's uncle
Elizabeth McGinnis; Kirsten Alhusen's Aunt
Frances Hurley; Patty Banasik's Mother-in-law
Larry Sanderson; Dan Warriner's cousin
Jerrett; Andrea Warriner's friend
Jodie Putnam; daughter of Jim & Terry Putnam
Ramona Turgeon; Dawn Turgeon's Mother-in-law
Veronica P.; Andrea Warriner's friend
Kristin T.; Andrea Warriner's friend
Susan Armitage; Dan Warriner's cousin
Tom and Mary Lu Klosowski; Janey Thompson's friends
Jim Rundall; Eric Nitsch's friend
Kathy Maindon; Elethea's Sister-in-law
Karen Schomer's son, Brendan & cousin, Jenni Snyder
Patti Wood's nephew, Matthew & co-worker's son, Jack

Nursing Homes/Assisted Living:

Aileen Hanson Barbara Machietto
Jean Lamoureux Elsie Gosselin Marion Vecchio

Serving in our Military at home and abroad:

Andrew DeWinkleer Josh Davis Dan Fare
Nicholas Potts Tyler Arnold Nolan Kononitz
Jody Miller Robert Goodman, III

Please also pray for all those unnamed who are suffering or in need of prayer in our community and worldwide.

CALL TO THE 2018 ANNUAL MEETING



The **2018 Annual Meeting of Southwick Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, of Southwick, Massachusetts**, will be held immediately following our service of worship **today, Sunday February 10, 2019**, in Old Fellowship Hall. Please try to be there to express your thoughts and to support our church.



Before the **Annual Meeting**, on **2/10/19**, everyone is invited to a...

POTLUCK LUNCH "COFFEE HOUR"

Please bring a simple food to share. If you are unable to, please don't stay away – we **will have enough for all!**

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE

First Congregational Church
Westfield, MA

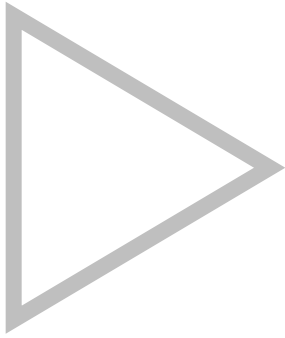
Julie Green Olmsted, Interim Minister

Southern New England Conference, Hampden Association

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE CONTENTS

- Position Posting
- Who Is God Calling Us To Become?
- Who Are We Now?
- Who Is Our Neighbor?
- References
- Consent and Validation

*“God is able to provide you with every blessing, so that
having all sufficiency in all things at all times,
you may abound in every good work.”
(2 Corinthians 9:8)*



POSITION POSTING

LISTING INFORMATION

SCOPE OF WORK

COMPENSATION & SUPPORT

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: First Congregational Church

Street address: 18 Broad Street, Westfield, MA 01085, www.churchonthegreen.org

Conference: Southern New England Conference UCC

Association: Hampden

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact: Rev. Terry Yasuko Ogawa, Area Conference Minister, Northwest Region. ogawaty@sneucc.org.

Additional ecumenical affiliations (e.g., denominations, communions, fellowships):

National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

The Fellowship of Northeast Congregational Christian Churches, Irven Gammon, Executive Director, 413-320-6955, execdir277@gmail.com

Summary Ministry Description:

In a short paragraph, reflect on where your church is going and what it might look like when you get there. What do you need to get there? Who are you seeking to join you on this part of your church's faith journey?

We are a congregation rich in spirit and commitment. Our numbers had been declining for several years. Recently, however, even in the midst of the pandemic, we have gained new members. We are beginning to feel a new spirit move among us.

Throughout the pandemic, members are finding creative ways to stay in touch and for our worship service to be accessible. First Congregational Church has a rich history and traditions have been an important part of who we are. In order to move forward, we acknowledge changes must be made. We envision ourselves as a church that embraces our history but also looks to the future. In order to meet the needs of all current and future members, we need to offer worship experiences that appeal to both young and old. Members should work together with a settled minister to provide both traditional worship services and alternative times and style of worship. Our physical space, in its central location in the city, has the potential to be used more extensively and we have already reached out to the

community to support its needs. Currently, several ideas are being explored with civic and non-profit groups. In addition, during the pandemic, Westfield Public Schools have used classroom space as a remote learning center. In this process we need to engage young people and families, who can take in and appreciate the wisdom of the elders while offering their own contemporary insight. In doing this, First Congregational Church will continue to be a home for all those seeking the gifts of Christ's love and direction.

Photographs:





Members are pictured here constructing a scale model of our church building to be used as a parade float for the City of Westfield's 350th celebration (2019)



Photo from our most recent Youth Group event. Our youth gathered at Ski Butternut for some tubing fun! (March 2021)

What we value about living in our area:

The Greater Westfield area offers both a professional and family friendly environment. This includes: a vibrant and welcoming downtown environment, high quality public schools, beautiful outdoor spaces (including Stanley Park, Grandmother's Garden and Amelia Park), several area hospitals, varied cultural enrichment opportunities, and access to many institutions of higher learning.

Current size of membership: 208

Languages used in ministry: English

Position Title: Minister

Position Duration (choose one, delete the other options listed):

Settled – a called position intended for longer-term ministry in which the minister moves church membership to the congregation and moves standing to related association

Compensation Level (*choose one, delete the other options listed*):

Full Time: to be shared 50/50 with Southwick Congregational Church

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes

SCOPE OF WORK

Within the Church, we are looking for a settled minister who will lead Sunday worship, observe the sacraments, perform weddings and funerals, and work with the organizational body of the church. We look to the settled minister to continue working with our deacons to coordinate visits with the sick and shut-in members of our congregation. Our diaconate is proactive in assisting with visitation. That said, we value a minister who considers direct and personal visitation an integral part of their ministry. Outside of the church building, we are looking for a settled minister who will visit and communicate with other community members in need: those in the Samaritan Inn (local homeless shelter), local nursing home residents, and community leaders. We would also like to find a settled minister who will help the congregation find other ways to reach out to the community, to fulfill our Christian charge to serve God in our greater community.

Core Competencies: (NEEDS TO BE LIMITED TO THREE)

Compassionate and Scripture Oriented Life Path

Growth Driven

Organized

COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis (*from the Call Agreement Workbook, equal to Cash Salary plus Value of Parsonage/Housing Allowance*): Offering total salary and benefits of \$82,000 - \$104,000 (\$41,000 - \$52,000 Westfield share) commensurate with experience and skills and subject to negotiation as mutually negotiated between Minister, Southwick Congregational and First Congregational Church of Westfield.

What is the expected living situation for your next minister

We expect our new minister to live near-by with a housing allowance provided.

Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference:

- *The Southern NE Conference*
- *The Greater Springfield Interfaith Council*
- *The Westfield Clergy Group*
- *The Genesis Spiritual Life Center in Westfield*
- *First Congregational Church has also shared many Sunday services and with Second Congregational Church of Westfield and consider her a valued spiritual colleague.*
- *SNE Conference Resources including Clergy Communities of Practice and coaching*
- *Hampshire/Hampden Clergy Group weekly meeting*

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

Describe the ministry goals you envision your next minister co-collaborating with the congregation to achieve.

We look forward to having our next settled minister help the congregation to communicate openly and lovingly so that we can move forward to share a common vision that is vital to everyone.

We have entered into an agreement to share a minister with the Southwick Congregational Church and are excited about working with a new minister to explore the possibilities of this new adventure. This will include establishing alternate style and timing of services, honoring traditions, empowering work in the larger community, and speaking to the next generation.

Describe how your vision of the minister you are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.

It is important that the minister be directly involved in our greater Westfield community so that they can work alongside us to share our resources and talents with the larger world. We envision our next settled minister actively supporting us to further our involvement with The Westfield Soup Kitchen, Westfield Public Schools, The Westfield Athenaeum, and Westfield on Weekends, to name just a few.

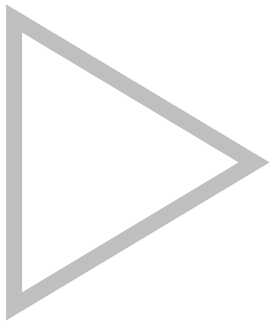
Specify language requirements or culturally specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation's sense of calling.

We speak English in all of our services and activities. Although the greater Westfield area includes individuals and families who speak other languages, public and civic events are presented in English. Within the greater Westfield community, Spanish, Russian and Ukrainian are the next predominant languages.

Based on what you have learned about who your church is, who your church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, describe four areas of excellence from *The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry* that your next minister will display to further equip the congregation's ministry in these areas.

From the myriad possibilities offered, our committee has selected 4 tasks from MARKS REVIEW RECAP SHEET that we felt were important to have our potential settled minister embody. They are:

- ***Demonstrated moral maturity, including integrity in personal and public life and responsibility to self, family, church, and community.*** *We chose this task because a recent minister was not forthright with us in his goals for the First Congregational Church.*
- ***The ability to take initiative in leadership, and to frame and test a vision in community.*** *We need someone to help us understand what our vision is, and how we can implement this in a non-divisive way.*
- ***The ability to perceive how a person's perspectives and interests shape communication, and to appreciate the virtues and limitations of those perspectives and interests.*** *We would like to develop a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the unique perspective each church member offers – a gift that each of us carries. As we navigate this reality, we are looking for a minister who will help to create a unifying vision for our church.*
- ***The ability to appreciate, practice, and pass on traditions of faith while interpreting them in light of the context of a diverse and changing world.*** *We are a congregation steeped in tradition, but we understand the need to appeal to the next generation of believers.*



WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” (Matthew 22:37 NRSV)

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

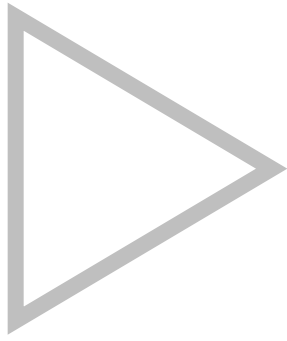
We have entered a crucial time in the ministry of First Congregational Church. The pandemic has forced us to step back in many ways and prepare for a rebirth, one that nurtures those of us who are already here, and those yet to come. How can we focus our new, yet still timeless calling? We can strive for acceptance and nurturing of the imagination of everyone who is still with us, an abiding love toward all who gather, a willingness to continually reach out beyond the walls of our building to all who are in need and struggle for truth, humility, sincere prayer and, finally, letting God lead us.

Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.

In the fall of 2020, as a response to the pandemic, our church reached out to the Westfield School Department to offer our facilities as a remote learning center. The center is up and running with over 20 students enrolled.

Our World Service Committee has adopted a local elementary school. We provide supplies, mentor students, have helped with painting classrooms over the summer, and adopted families for Christmas gifts.

When the pandemic has abated, we look forward to expanding these services.



WHO ARE WE NOW?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

11-YEAR REPORT

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

CHURCH FINANCES

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation’s life of faith.

We are a congregation that comes together on Sunday mornings to try to understand how God wants us to worship and serve God through the remainder of the week. In addition, we have a tradition of vibrant weekly Bible studies which are presently facilitated by our minister. We acknowledge that the Holy Spirit moves us in different paths during and after worship, and yet we are united more by God’s love for us than by our similarities or differences. Worship is a time to confess our shortcomings and begin again to walk humbly with our God.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

1. Members that Serve as an Example to the Greater World – *First Congregational Church has many members who give their time and resources to the church with no expectation of anything in return.*

In addition, our membership includes:

- *many active and retired public school teachers who spearhead various projects within the community. These include, but are not limited to, coordinating academic projects with a local, low income public school.*
- *active volunteers with The American Red Cross (one of whom regularly travels throughout the United States to help with disaster relief),*
- *members and officers of several charitable and cultural institutions.*

As Jesus taught his disciples, they represent walking, talking and behaving with compassion.

2. Traditional Style Music – *A dedicated group of choir members and Minister of Music are devoted to their craft. The choir sings as one, harmonizes beautifully, and provides the members and non-members of the church an extremely uplifting and beautiful experience for every service. Also, First*

Congregational Church has a wonderful Youth choir that has served in the spiritual, emotional, mental and physical growth for these children.

3. Social Activities which Improve the Community – *It is common for the congregation to coordinate social activities which benefit the community as a whole.*

Here are several examples:

- In 2013 we began mission trips which are sometimes local and sometimes serve the greater New England area*
- A large group of church members visit nursing homes to sing Christmas Carols during the holiday season.*
- Many members volunteer once a month at the Westfield Soup Kitchen to prepare a meal for the homeless.*
- Church and community members attend weekly Bible Study*
- Members join in various walks to support different causes like the Western MA Food Bank.*
- Our Annual Choir/Carol Festival in December draws hundreds of attendees from the community.*

4. Contributions to the Community and Beyond - *In 2019, First Congregational Church served as a hub for Westfield 350th Anniversary Celebration. Members also donate Christmas gifts to local families, actively support The Heifer Project, and provide food for both the Westfield Soup Kitchen and The Samaritan Inn.*

5. Sunday school/Ministry for children and youth – *First Congregational Church has an active Youth group who attends an annual retreat and helps with various church and community activities. First Congregational Church provides a Sunday school which is fun and welcoming to the children. They typically start class with several physically active games (ex. Gaga ball) for older groups or Biblically based Lego creations for the younger groups.*

6. Sunday Worship – *Members of First Congregational Church value the Word of God, sermons preached by the minister (our 2020 survey prioritized this), and the ritual of monthly communion.*

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers:

We find Matthew 11:28-30 an inspiration for our Sunday worship:

Come to me all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Prior to the pandemic, worship at First Congregational Church took place in our sanctuary – a very New England style space. The worship is traditional. The organ and piano in the sanctuary are used for the prelude, postlude and hymns. The choir provides an introit, anthem and choral amen at the end of the service. The Offertory is sung by one of the section leaders. A liturgist often assists the minister. The

scripture lesson and theme for the sermon are usually based on that week's Revised Common Lectionary. Children's Time is at the early part of the service so that children can then attend Church School. Communion is on the first Sunday of the month. The deacons prepare and serve the elements to members

From the spring of 2020 until Easter 2021, our worship service was held remotely. The pastor worked closely with the Minister of Music to implement this each week. The Minister of Music was instrumental in both editing the final service and posting it on YouTube and Facebook. Members assisted with recruiting and recording liturgists of all ages. When local regulations permitted, other members of the church assisted in setting up the sanctuary for live viewing (for those without internet access). These services helped our congregation to continue to worship together throughout the Pandemic.

Although there have not been many baptisms recently, they usually take place early in the worship service. Family members gather around the baptismal font in the front of the church. A deacon poses the questions to the parents. The minister then performs the baptism. While a hymn is sung, the deacon and minister walk the child through the sanctuary. Following that, the parents are provided with a certificate of baptism and a candle that has been lit from the candles on the communion table and are urged to relight the candle each year on the anniversary of the baptism.

In our discussions as a committee, and as we reached out to members of the church, we find ourselves reflecting on what Sunday morning means to us. We frequently hear that folks enjoy the peaceful and contemplative nature of church; a breath of fresh air as they prepare to begin their week, as well as something to ponder throughout the week. From the survey recently taken by members and friends of the church, the qualities of a good sermon would include being biblically based and spiritual, a message that can be applied to daily life, is challenging to the intellect, one that is memorable, and one that injects some humor. Folks also note the high quality of music performed by our organist and choir. But perhaps the most common reflection is experiencing a sense of fellowship and of being in community with one another. Members and friends of our church often stay after service for coffee hour, choir practice, and luncheons/shared meals.

Describe the educational program/faith formation vision of your church.

Our Christian Education director works with the Church School Committee to run the Sunday School and Youth Group programs. In the past the church school used the UCC recommended Cokesbury curriculum and alternatives. Upon her arrival, our latest director wrote and implemented her own curriculum. Using LEGOs as the medium in which to create the stories found in the Bible, our children have been empowered to engage with the Bible in a tangible way. This change in curriculum has been a huge success.

Our high school youth group is a lively community of young adults. We have gone on a winter retreat for the past three years at Monadnock Bible Retreat Center in Jaffrey, New Hampshire. This past January 2020, twenty-one youth attended, both members and their friends – our biggest year yet. It is the vision of the Church School Committee to empower our youth to "claim their seat at the table" in the leadership of the greater church. In the fall of 2020, they participated in remote Sunday morning

services each month. It is the hope that this trend be carried out in all parts of the life of the church, including encouraging youth participation in some of the committees and working toward the creation of a second service more engaging for the youth and young families (a sermon geared towards contemporary issues relevant to their young lives as well as incorporating more contemporary music). The struggle to maintain a youthful church is not just an issue particular to First Congregational Church. Our Sunday school consists of a small handful of children, our middle school youth group is nearly non-existent, and despite our solid high school group - it is a struggle to maintain a connection once our youth go off to college.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

Activities and initiatives in our church are communicated through emails, monthly newsletter and announcements from the pulpit. Decisions are made through the Church Committee and Congregational Meetings.

We use the provisions of our bylaws to determine committees and how members are chosen. Members of The Nominating Committee recruit new committee members each year, and they are affirmed at the Annual Congregational Meeting in February.

We do have challenges. Our church struggles between moving forward and honoring past traditions. Church leaders are more necessarily focused on the day-to-day operation of the church than on a vision of the future. However, this document and the engagement of a new settled minister will help us to focus more fully on that vision.

Various committees work to advance the missions of our church. Special circumstances sometimes demand added time. Based on attention to COVID-19 guidelines, attendance in the sanctuary discontinued and resumed many times. For example, when COVID-19 quarantines began in March of 2020, we initially used UCC guidelines to close the church building. In August, still following guidelines set up by our COVID-19 task force, people who didn't have internet access were invited to view the pre-recorded service in the sanctuary. Following discussion at the September 2020 Church Committee meeting, and continuing to follow COVID-19 guidelines, we again closed the sanctuary. Following current COVID-19 guidelines, our congregation began to meet live on Easter Sunday 2021.

11-YEAR REPORT

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS										
Church#: 304980 Assoc: 376 Schedule: 0 First Congregational Church Westfield MA 01085 										
YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED	
2008	293	131	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2009	293	131	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2010	269	131	44	0	5	0	10	19	-24	
2011	253	118	64	0	14	0	9	21	-16	
2012	253	118	64	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2013	232	110	48	3	13	0	7	0	9	
2014	232	110	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2015	232	110	48	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2016	238	115	30	3	0	11	8	0	6	
2017	238	115	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2018	238	115	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	
YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPP% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2008	\$249,230	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00	\$249,230	\$0
2009	\$249,230	\$0	\$2,738	\$0	\$2,738	\$0	\$2,738	1.10	\$251,968	\$0
2010	\$274,856	\$0	\$2,625	\$368	\$2,993	\$0	\$2,993	0.96	\$277,849	\$158,141
2011	\$272,000	\$0	\$2,750	\$735	\$3,485	\$14,000	\$17,485	1.01	\$289,485	\$158,637
2012	\$272,000	\$0	\$3,050	\$0	\$3,050	\$0	\$3,050	1.12	\$275,050	\$0
2013	\$275,226	\$0	\$2,900	\$300	\$3,200	\$16,095	\$19,295	1.05	\$294,521	\$166,175
2014	\$275,226	\$0	\$2,900	\$0	\$2,900	\$0	\$2,900	1.05	\$278,126	\$0
2015	\$296,752	\$0	\$3,045	\$0	\$3,045	\$0	\$3,045	1.03	\$299,797	\$160,387
2016	\$296,752	\$0	\$3,045	\$0	\$3,045	\$0	\$3,045	1.03	\$299,797	\$160,000
2017	\$296,752	\$0	\$3,045	\$0	\$3,045	\$0	\$3,045	1.03	\$299,797	\$0
2018	\$296,752	\$0	\$3,045	\$0	\$3,045	\$0	\$3,045	1.03	\$299,797	\$0
% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE		
2013-2018	2.59	4.55	-37.50	-100.00	-100.00	7.82	-4.84	1.79		
2008-2018	-18.77	-12.21	-14.29	0.00	0.00	19.07	0.00	20.29		

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	185	
Number of active non-members:	23	
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	208	

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	80.2%	
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	11.6%	
Less than 5 years:	8.1%	

Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
3	15	11	2	10	23	25	49	101	Yes

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:	5.8%	
Joint household with minors:	16.4%	
Single adults age 35-65:	8.2%	
Joint household with no minors:	44.7%	
Single adults over 65:	24.7%	

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	17.5%	
College:	40%	
Graduate School:	37.5%	
Specialty Training:	5%	
Other (please specify):	0	

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	38.75%	
Adults who are retired:	61.25%	
Adults who are not fully employed:	0%	

Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

Our church has a large population of members who work in education (as teachers or counselors). Other occupations include business/administration and trade work.

Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up. Most UCC congregations tend to describe themselves as “diverse.” Yet, the vast majority of UCC congregations are mono-cultural. What does diversity mean in your context?

Our racial makeup is nearly all Caucasian, with members drawing their ethnic heritages from European descent. We have a few members who were born outside of The United States and immigrated from England, Australia, and China.

Has your congregation recently had a conversation about welcoming diversity, or do you plan to hold one in the near future (perhaps using, for example, the Welcoming Diversity Inventory)? Please note the date. Comment after the exercise:

We have not addressed this topic in our congregation.

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Complete the following chart. Please leave blank any fields that are not applicable to your congregation.

**These numbers are for 2019*

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings? (list any and all worship planners, such as various lay leaders, pastors, musicians, other staff)
Christian Fellowship	12-20	Lay leaders
Baptisms (number last year)	1	Minister
Children’s Groups or Classes	10 on average	Church School/Youth Coordinator and Church School Committee
Christmas Eve and Easter Worship	Xmas Eve (early and late services combined) 176 Easter 182	Minister, Minister of Music and Church School Director

Church-wide Meals	80	Church School Committee
Choirs and Music Groups	20	Minister of Music
Church-based Bible Study	8	Minister
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	Once a month	Minister and Deacons
Lenten Luncheons	25	Church Members
Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner	150	
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	6 in 2020	Minister
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	4	Minister
Youth Retreat	21youth 5 adults	Church School Director
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	0	Minister and Minister of Music
Worship (time slot: 10:00 AM)	78	Minister and Minister of Music
Youth Groups or Classes	15	Church School Director
Mission Trip	14	Minister and Church Members

Additional comments: None

List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers. Indicate those with current United Church of Christ Three-Way Covenants (for example, serving in a congregation) or Four-Way Covenants (i.e., serving in a ministry beyond a congregation):

Name	Three- or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Roger Zimmerman	No		Ordained Minister	Y
Shirley Anderson	No		Ordained Minister	Y

If one or more previous pastors or retired ministers currently hold membership in the church, describe their role(s) in the life of the congregation:

Valued advisors

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staff person serves as head of staff:

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Interim Minister	n/a	$\frac{3}{4}$ time in 2020	Pastoral Congregational Relations Committee	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ years
Minister of Music	n/a	Part Time	Music Committee	33 years
Office Administrator	n/a	Part Time	Minister	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ years
Church School and Youth Coordinator	n/a	Part Time	Church School Committee	1 year
Custodian	n/a	Part Time	Property Committee	1 1/2 years
Treasurer	n/a	Part Time	Executive Committee and Budget Committee	20 years

REFLECTION

After reviewing the congregational demographics and activities above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's overall ministry?

Regular Sunday worship and special holidays are important to the congregation.

We are primarily an older congregation.

A large percentage of members have college or advanced degrees.

Fellowship activities and the choir have loyal participants.

Food brings people happily together.

CHURCH FINANCES

Current annual income (dollars used 2019 fiscal year):

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$126,137.76
Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i>)	\$13,071.04
Endowment Draw (<i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, "drawing down the principal"</i>)	\$0
Fundraising Events	\$5,037.15
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose	\$28,693.00
Grants	\$0
Rentals of Church Building	\$14,369.00
Rentals of Church Parsonage	n/a
Support from Related Organizations (<i>e.g., Women's Group</i>)	\$2,500.00
Transfers from Special Accounts -income from invested funds	\$34,911.00
Other (specify): carryover from 2018	\$36,500.00
Other (specify): special mission collections	\$4,435.00
TOTAL	\$265,653.95

2019 annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year): \$258,280.70

The 2020 Annual Report is attached at the end of the profile.

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage?

28 %

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church?

No

Is your church 5-for-5, for example, does it include each of the following contributions during the church year? (indicate those included during the most recent fiscal year)

- ☒ * Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM – Basic Support)
- ☐ One Great Hour of Sharing
- ☐ Strengthen the Church
- ☐ Neighbors in Need
- ☐ Christmas Fund

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage? (recommended 10%)

It is budgeted as part of missions, currently \$500.00

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: *\$0.00*

Reason for debt: *N/A*

Are capital and other payments current? *Yes*

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget.

No building project is currently underway.

If the church has had capital campaigns in the last ten years, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
2008-2011	Capital needs of building – roof, furnaces, windows	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00	All work completed under budget - \$100,000.00 held for future needs

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe: *None are underway or anticipated*

Describe the prominent mission component(s) involved in the most recent (or current) capital campaign: *The soundness of the church building is the foundation for the church's ability to continue its mission work.*

Does your church have an endowment? *Yes*

What is the market value of the assets? *\$518,006*

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances? *Regularly*

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)? *5% average of the past 3 years – the same as 5 years ago.*

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: *\$13,071.04 – similar to last 5 years.*

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last?

Assuming normal economic conditions, indefinitely.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

Since the church adheres to the standard benchmark for nonprofits of taking no more than 5 % annually, these calculations provide for both operating needs as well as the preservation of our endowment and invested funds for the future.

Other Assets

Reserves (savings): *\$36,215*

Investments (other than endowment): *\$1,988,324.00*

Does your church have a parsonage? *No*

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

Church and Fellowship Hall, Old Town Hall (historic brick building next door to church), parking lot nearby.

Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church: *None*

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

All spaces are accessible except the pulpit, the choir loft, the balcony of the sanctuary, the Tower room (choir room), and the 3rd floor of the classroom space.

Reflection: After reviewing the church's finances and assets described above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's mission and ministry?

Despite limited annual pledge income, the church uses its buildings and finances to support a full scale offering of worship activities, music, Christian education, missions and fellowship. The budget process is governed by our by-laws and is open to review and approval by the congregation. Major budget challenges and adjustments occur almost annually.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.

1. *We were a part of the founding of Westfield 350 years ago and enjoyed a major role in helping the city celebrate its 350th anniversary in 2019. We have been blessed since our founding with a relatively small number of settled ministers who have rendered faithful service to our church and have frequently distinguished themselves in the community and beyond.*
2. *The church split into First and Second Congregational Churches in 1856 and several members left and formed their own church (Christ the King) in 2002.*
3. *We began annual mission trips in 2013.*

Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past.

Presenting virtual services from March 2020 through Easter 2021. Decisions on live viewing necessitated constant conversation and revision. This struggle was managed by providing a high-quality recorded service, which could be viewed online or in the sanctuary. Live viewing adjusted as cases of COVID-19 rose and fell.

Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. “Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement....” Describe your congregation’s values and practices when it comes to conflict.

First, here is an anecdote from our recent history: The split in 2002 occurred when the pastor had a vision that conflicted with many members of the congregation.

Because of concern over the direction First Congregational Church was taking, several members met privately outside of the church property to propose a congregational vote on whether or not the minister should remain.

At a special congregational meeting, the membership voted by a majority (but narrowly missing the 2/3 required in the bylaws) to remove the minister. Subsequently, the budget committee met with the pastor to agree on a buy-out plan. Following the minister’s departure, First Congregational Church regained a sense of purpose. Attendance and financial giving rebounded.

A lack of vision led to this unfortunate situation, and a clear vision for First Congregational Church is something to which we aspire.

Now conflict in our congregation is typically handled in one of 4 ways:

1. Church Committee - *The Church Committee consists of Officers of the Church, Committee Chairs, and two Members at Large who serve as liaisons of the congregation. The Church Committee meets once a month and various issues are discussed and addressed.*
2. Internally between the individuals having the conflict – *some conflicts have been resolved through an informal mediator such as the Church School Director, Minister, or Committee member.*

3. The specific committee, such as Church School, Pastoral Congregation Relations, Personnel or Property, where the conflict should be addressed and resolved. Most committees meet once a month and have an agenda to discuss and resolve any conflicts/issues.
4. Avoidance or not addressed head on- There are and have been several members of the congregation who feel their voices are not being heard when it comes to conflict. These conflicts typically revolve around different belief systems held by various members of the church. The differences have evolved, over many years, between those who see social justice issues as a part of the church's mission and those who believe that such issues steer the church toward political involvement.

Ministerial History (include all previous ministerial staff for the past 30 years)

Staff member's name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/N)
Julie Olmsted – Interim Minister	Spring 2018-Present	Yes
Randy Hyvonen – Bridge Minister	Winter 2018/2019	Yes
Elva Pawle – Settled Minister	2004-2018	Yes
Fred Anderson – Interim Minister	2002-2004	Yes
David Teague – Settled Minister	1995-2002	Yes
Alan Macy – Interim Minister	1993-1995	Yes
Darrell Joiner – Settled Minister	1991-1993	Yes
Mel Williams – Interim Minister	1990-1991	Yes
Quentin Peacock – Settled Minister	1971-1990	Yes

Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

The relationship between the church and its minister is dynamic; each changes and learns from the other. Our church has adapted to the individual talents and abilities of its minister as the minister must to meet the needs and abilities of the congregation.

Our Search Committee, as representatives of our church, has learned that we need to more thoroughly explore who we are and where we are headed. When a settled minister was interviewed in the mid 1990s, the Search Committee of that time did not discuss theology (including the candidate's educational background) or pastoral style (autocratic, collaborative, laid back, or directive). We also did not thoroughly research our candidate's experience with past churches. We took his word for how things went in his most recent church.

To help learn who we are and where we are going, our current Search Committee created a survey tailored to our congregation, so that we would know more about how most of our congregants felt about vital issues. Although our role as the Search Committee is not to effect change, we can shine light on the issues of concern, as well as the abundant strengths of the congregation.

During the tenure of a settled minister, it is important to continue to look at who we are and where we are going. This is especially important to avoid becoming complacent and maintaining the status quo. A church should be dynamic and changing with the times.

Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination?

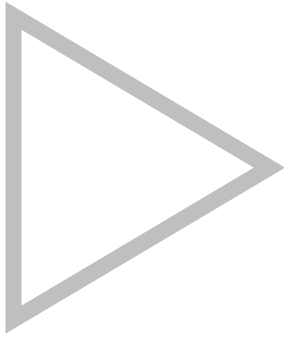
Yes. Following efforts by a significant majority of the congregation, Rev. David Teague accepted a voluntary termination to end his service. Additionally, Rev. Teague's standing in the UCC was removed.

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

Not to our knowledge.

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?

Not to our knowledge.



WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39 NRSV)

COMMUNITY VISION

MISSION InSite

COMMUNITY VISION

How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?

The committees and members of First Congregational Church participate in several activities and have relationships with several organizations both in the community and outside of the community. For example, during the 350th Anniversary Celebration of Westfield, in 2019, First Congregational Church opened its doors to the community to offer free lectures about the History of Westfield. The community was invited to talent shows, the annual Candy Cane Fair, the annual rummage sale and various dinners.

Additionally, the World Service Committee focuses on helping needy areas both within and outside of the United States. Members of First Congregational Church donate food and canned goods to the Westfield Food pantry. The church provides financial and mentoring support to Franklin Avenue Elementary School in Westfield, The Samaritan Inn, a homeless shelter in Westfield, and The Westfield Soup Kitchen. The deacons and other dedicated members visit the elderly, those who are confined to their homes or in nursing homes.

Describe your congregation’s participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ (association / conference / national setting).

In 2017, our Congregation participated in the Churches Alive program and used Mission Insite to gather statistical data on our Congregation and our geographical neighbors. One of the goals of the program was for the Congregation to be introspective about our history and how that rich foundation could be used to guide our future and engage with our neighbors.

Our Conference, the newly combined Southern New England Conference, puts on a day-long event twice a year called Super Saturday. This event consists of keynote speakers, performances, worship, communion, and multiple workshops. In 2018, church members Rachel Costigan Adams and Shirley Anderson attended the Super Saturday workshop event. Additionally, our Interim Minister, Rev. Julie Green Olmsted and church member Rachel Costigan Adams attended another Super Saturday workshop event in 2019. Most recently, a group of 7 people from our church were registered and set to attend the Super Saturday workshop event, however it was cancelled due to COVID-19. We look forward to attending again in the future.

Many local churches love to tell the story of what they are doing in the community to transform lives. Some have identified certain aspects of their witness into the wider community using language shared with other UCC congregations. (Find more information as desired at ucc.org.) Check any statements below that apply to your UCC faith community.

- ☐ Accessible to All (A2A)
- ☐ Creation Justice
- ☐ Economic Justice
- ☐ Faithful and Welcoming
- ☐ God Is Still Speaking (GISS)
- ☐ Border and Immigrant Justice
- ☐ Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M)
- ☐ Just Peace
- ☐ Global Mission Church
- ☐ Open and Affirming (ONA)
- ☐ WISE Congregation for Mental Health
- ☐ Other UCC designations
- ☐ Designations from other denominations
- ☐ * ☐ None

Reflect on what the above statement(s) mean(s) to your community. Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future?

Our Church has long maintained a dual affiliation with both the United Church of Christ (UCC) and the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches (NACCC). In 1989 a provision was added to our Bylaws which allowed individual members to affiliate with the UCC, the NACCC or with neither and, by so doing, "will cause that portion of the Church's membership to constitute Church affiliation with the respective denomination." Since that time, our Church has regularly sent delegates to the regional meetings of both. As a result, our Church has focused its outreach on its own mission program and local activities as described elsewhere in this profile. Results of our recent survey of members indicate a desire on the part of some to explore issues related to "open and affirming".

Describe your congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities (with other denominations and religious groups, local and regional).

Our church has a history of collaborating with other area churches for a Thanksgiving service. We also have shared summer services with Second Congregational Church and hope to do both of these in future years.

In 2017 several church members sponsored an educational evening on learning about the Muslim faith. In 2019, following a widespread attack on mosques in the United States, members also attended a service at a local mosque in support of the Muslim community.

Following the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, our congregation organized a prayer vigil on the local green.

Our former settled minister and present interim minister have both participated in an inter-denominational clergy group that meets regularly.

If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities? Think of the range of activities from time spent gathering, to governance, to time spent going out.

Our Mission Statement is: First Congregational Church of Westfield is a community united to worship and serve God. In faith we minister to all with unconditional love and acceptance by following the example and teachings of Jesus Christ. By using our unique gifts, we share the word of God and his salvation.

We have one worship service on Sunday which most of our members attend three to four times per month, in addition to Bible study and youth group activities. Excluding the Church Committee, there are twelve standing committees that govern church activities. This involves countless hours of individual work, both within and outside of the church.

Cumulatively, our congregation spends less time on community service than on worship or governance. But the time and financial investment in outreach activities is substantial.

We believe, as Paul did, that we should do good, as far as we have the opportunity, to all people, especially to those who belong in the household of faith.

As best we can ascertain, this approach is congruent with the ideals of our mission statement.

Reflect on the scope of work assigned to your pastor. How is her community ministry and her ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on her time?

Our current Interim minister spends time supporting and maintaining a connection with the diaconate (supporting and coordinating visitation for all those who need support), the moderator (helping to keep the inner workings of the church running smoothly), and the Church Committee (keeping a pulse on the needs of the church at large). In addition, the Interim Minister supports whatever committee or individual that reaches out to her in need. (examples include generating ideas for Mission Week during COVID-19 and creating online services with the Minister of Music during COVID-19).

Within the greater Westfield community our Interim Minister has also been extremely active:

Prior to COVID, she led twice monthly "Meditation/Inspiration" classes for the local homeless shelter, as well as Quail Run, a Retirement Community in Agawam. She developed relationships with the director of the homeless shelter (Samaritan Inn) and other vendors/community members, the local newspaper and various stores and businesses in the downtown area.

She participated with the local ministers' Interfaith Support Group as well as a monthly meeting with area Interim Ministers. She attended community events such as the Annual Interfaith breakfast at Westfield State University, and the Springfield Rescue Mission Pastors' Appreciation Luncheon (which our church subsequently has supported). Along with other church members, she attended a gathering at the West Springfield Mosque to show solidarity when it was vandalized.

Rev. Olmsted attended the UCC Super Saturdays and brought along other church leadership to learn and share new ideas with the congregation. She facilitated numerous "discernment gatherings" to help bring together diverse points of view (religious and political) and always urged us to include those who were unlike ourselves, stressing the possibility of "church" to show the world we can live and work for good and in peace with one another, regardless of our differences.

Rev. Olmsted spearheaded a fundraising campaign for our Mission Week during the pandemic in summer, enrolling teams of people to ride bikes, run, swim, dance and golf, collecting pledges to help the Food Bank in our area. Almost \$5,000 was raised, despite the pandemic.

We would fully support our new settled minister in similar outreach efforts and work with them to generate new ideas.

MISSION InSite

Looking at data from between ¼ mile radius of the church expanding to a 5-mile radius there are several interesting trends:

Single parent households are a large portion of the surrounding area. Close to the church there are more small businesses and as you move away from the church it becomes more residential. The educational level within these areas ranges from 11.7% - 21.6% of people with bachelors' degrees and from 4.6% - 12.1% with graduate degrees. About ¼ of the people give to religious organizations and about 10% of people give to social services. Close to the church a very small percentage of seniors are aging in place but that expands to over 27% in the 5-mile radius.

An area to look into is the single parent households – and untapped opportunity to reach out to the community.

Looking at the education information, it compares well with the education level in the congregation – a large portion of adult members are educators themselves. Westfield is also home to Westfield State University and in the general area there are many public, private and community colleges. The church can look into this untapped opportunity.

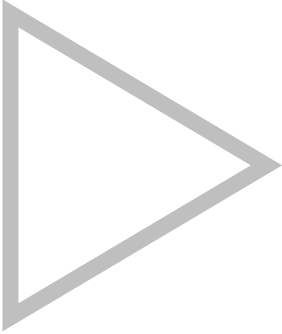
Membership in the church draws mostly from the outer radius of the Mission InSite data. A larger assisted living complex is in the 5-mile radius and many members live there.

As a church in the center of a downtown area, there are many mission opportunities. A homeless shelter is nearby and a group home for homeless teens is very close. The church has reached out to both organizations to provide meals and supplies.

Westfield's population is a mixture of white, Latina, African American, and a variety of immigrant people from Ukraine, Russia, Nepal and several other countries. Many of the immigrant people came to this country for religious freedom and have formed very strong churches. A settled pastor would want to reach out to these clergy as part of a body of area clergy to address needed social issues. The local elementary school with whom we have a successful partnership includes a large student body of Latina and African American families.

In the last year or so, the church and its facilities have become more visible in the community. We were host to a lecture series on the history of the city for its 350 anniversary and we are currently providing a space for remote learning for students in the community. It was the hope to introduce more lecture series for the community but that has been put on hold during the pandemic.

Many different factors draw new people to the church. Some of these include the music program, having the doors open during worship time, and different community programs and activities such as church suppers and rummage sales.



REFERENCES

Chris Tolpa
Franklin Avenue School
22 Franklin Ave.
Westfield, MA 01085
413 572-6424
c.tolpa@schoolsofwestfield.org

To whom it may concern:

If I were asked to script a mission statement for First Congregational Church, it would definitely entail the following sentence:

First Congregational Church is committed to seeking out families in need and providing them with the social, emotional, and financial support to help them thrive in their daily lives.

Two years ago, First Congregational Church reached out to our school, Franklin Avenue Elementary. They recognized the needs of our educational community, an inner-city school in a suburban setting. We are a Title I school where 46% of our students are minority, 66.7% of our families are economically disadvantaged, and 74.4% of our students are high needs. We serve free breakfast and lunch, and our staff understands that caring for the whole child is our number one priority.

First Congregational Church and Franklin Avenue Elementary forged a partnership to ensure our most vulnerable citizens were given an opportunity to prosper.

My adjustment counselor and I presented the demographics and needs of our students and that very day walked away with monetary donations for a family who had just lost their house and were in need of a storage facility to store their belongings. Soon afterwards, our students and teachers were provided school supplies due to the efforts of the Church's donation drive. The Church's kindness continues to expand and grow.

With a financial award, we were able to purchase t-shirts to proudly display our motto, HEART: honor, effort, attitude, responsibility, and teamwork. Students and faculty wear these shirts every HEART day to build community and show our school spirit. Through their generosity, we were able to purchase paint, and last summer, First Congregational Church volunteers painted many of our classrooms and hallways in our 1953 building. Our school community returned this past fall to a cleaner, brighter learning environment.

Knowing the isolation and financial hardships that some of our families experience, our efforts this year focused on the social and emotional aspects of our school community. Church members have become mentors to our students, providing emotional and academic support during their weekly visits. Dorothy Biggs is our liaison, and through her coordinating efforts, First Church provided child-care once a month to our parents so that they could run errands, knowing that their children were well cared for. The Church established a family movie night so that families could come together in a social gathering, free of charge. These types of opportunities are important to our caregivers who are often single parents, grandparents, or heads of households who work long hours just to make ends meet.

As a long-time resident of Westfield, I am acquainted with many of the members of First Congregational Church. Our children play sports together; I work with many of them in the field of education; and my family has forged many friendships with members throughout the years. First Congregational Church is to be commended for its inviting atmosphere, its willingness to embrace people for who they are, and its commitment to community. We at Franklin Avenue are blessed to have such an honorable partner to count on.

Sincerely,

Chris Tolpa
Principal

Harry Rock
243 North Road
Westfield, Ma 01085
Home:568-9926 Cell:564-9863

To whom it may concern,

My name is Harry Rock and I have been asked to write a recommendation for the First Congregational Church of Westfield, Massachusetts to be shared with prospective pastors who might be interested in joining this historic institution! I have lived in Westfield for almost 30 years now. I originally moved to Westfield from New Jersey to become the executive director/CEO of the Westfield YMCA. I had planned on staying for about five years before moving on to the next larger YMCA in a bigger city. However, I ended up staying in the role for 16.5 years because I fell in love with the city and have lived here for almost 30 years. My wife and I embraced the family culture, the positive values, the supportive lifestyle of the residents, and the overall high quality of life. I left the Y to take a position with the national YMCA organization as the head of YMCA studies at Springfield College for nine years until my retirement three years ago. At that time, I was asked by the mayor of Westfield to chair the Westfield 350 Committee to plan and deliver a comprehensive yearlong celebration in 2019 to commemorate the founding of the city in 1669. During that time many of the volunteers I worked with were parishioners and leaders within the First Congregational Church. We also held a number of our historic lectures in the church sanctuary, often with over 300 and 400 people in attendance. It was the perfect setting for gathering hundreds of community citizens for a lecture!

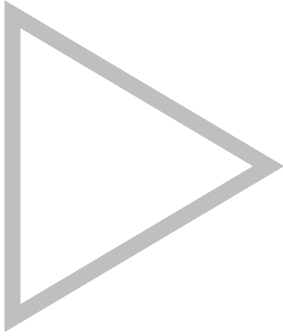
I have nothing but good things to say about this church. I feel that any minister/pastor should strongly consider joining this church for a number of reasons which I will document below.

1. The church was originally founded in 1679 and remains the oldest institution in the city.
2. It has occupied its current location since 1860, maintaining a commanding presence in the city for all to see because of being adjacent to Park Square Green. The iconic tall spire is visible from many different locations and is widely recognized as belonging to the First Congregational Church.
3. This church has a devoted and dedicated group of parishioners all focused on keeping the church well financed, well led and well maintained. I have worked with many of the church volunteers on numerous boards and committees throughout the city so I can speak to their willingness to be involved and support other projects and initiatives city wide.
4. The church is always ready and willing to open its doors to other groups to help provide meeting space in a collaborative measure.
5. This church is not immune to the struggles of organized religion in general with a decrease in the number of people belonging, attending and supporting the functions of the church. However, for the right person who is energetic, passionate, focused and inspired, there is no reason for this church not to continue to thrive and see a return with the numbers of worshippers it once enjoyed, along with its contribution to the city.

This is a wonderful church with a rich history and legacy! It is positioned physically and organizationally to continue to be the spiritual leader within the city. Take a strong look and consider a bright future for yourself here in Westfield!

With respect and warm regards,

Harry Rock



CLOSING THOUGHTS

CLOSING PRAYER

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

CLOSING PRAYER

Proverb 3: 5-6

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
And do not rely on your own insight.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
And he will make straight your paths.*

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending a suitable new minister for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile? *(for example, church council or consistory, transition team, etc.)*

Search Committee, 10-year Church Census, All Church Survey, Moderator, Interim Minister

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile: *None*

Signed:

Name / Title / Date:

VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

The congregation is currently in good standing with the association / conference named.

Staff Comment:

Yes

To the best of my knowledge, ministerial history information is complete.

Staff Comment:

Yes

To the best of my knowledge, available church financial information is presented thoroughly.

Staff Comment:

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature:

Name / Title:

Email:

Phone:

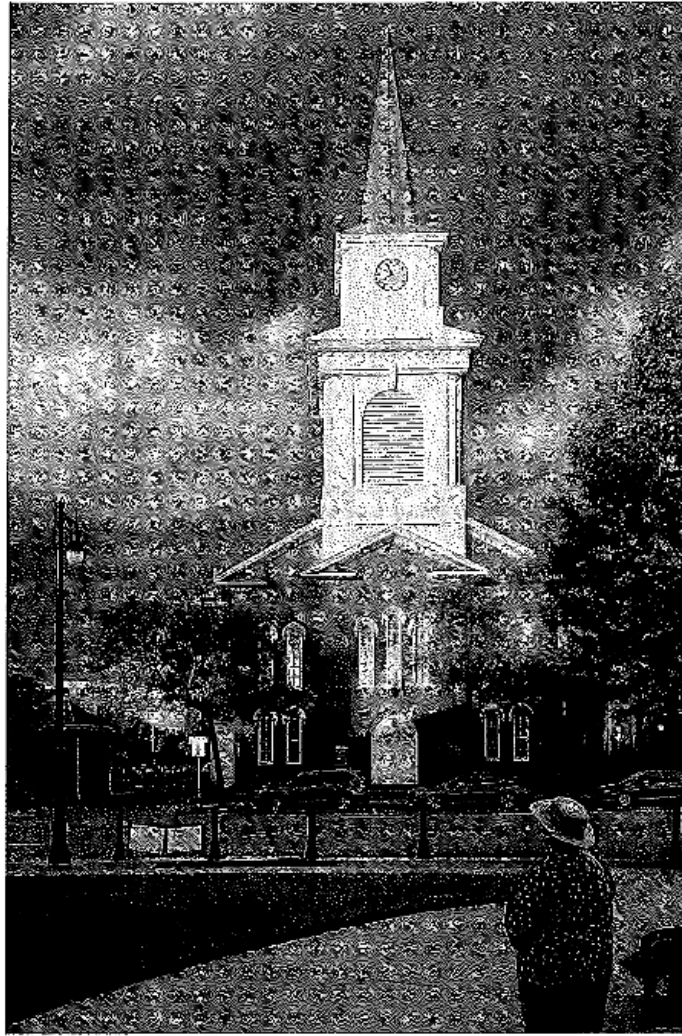
Date:

This document is created through support to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) and is only possible through the covenantal relationships of all settings of the United Church of Christ.

"Jesus answered them, 'Have faith in God!'" – Mark 11:22

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**





2020 Annual Report

First Congregational Church
Of Westfield

18 Broad Street

Westfield, MA 01085

413.568.2833

www.churchonthegreen.org

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Officers, Committee Chairs and Representatives 2020

Officers	
Pastor	Rev. Julie Olmsted
Moderator	Mayme Lajoie
Clerk	Michelle Downs
Treasurer	Cindy LaPlante
Committees	
Budget Committee	Doug James
Church School Committee	Gail Ives
Delegates: MACUCC	Jim Yesu
NACCC	Bruce Dunlop
Diaconate	Carol Whalen
Membership/ Fellowship Committee	Joyce Bard
Music Committee	Martha Roman
Nominating Committee	Tom Samwell
Pastoral Congregational Relations Committee	Phil Zych
Personnel Committee	Jim Yesu/ Dan Koehne
Property Committee	Bob Brownlee
Special Decorations Committee	Tom Lorenzen
Stewardship Committee	Tom Samwell
Trustees of Invested Funds Committee	Steven Pierce
World Service Committee Chair	Darlene Biggs
Representatives	
Christian Fellowship	Judy Lyon
Church Use	Martha Roman
Continuing Education	Cindy LaPlante
Covid Task Force	Michelle Downs
Historian	Steve Pierce
Members at Large	Bob Brownlee & Jim Salzer
Safe Church	Michelle Winer
Search Committee	Janet St. Jean
Ushers:	Tom Samwell, Jim Kinney

Staff

Pastor	Rev. Julie Olmsted
Minister of Music	Allan Taylor
Church School Director	Rachel Bilodeau
Office Administrator	Peggy Corchinski
Treasurer	Cindy LaPlante
Custodian	Janet Kedzierski

Attendance for 2020 Church

Jan. 5	79	Apr. 26	75 FB	Aug. 16	14SC 68FB	Dec. 6 NA
Jan. 12	61	May 3	76 FB	Aug. 23	66 FB 12SC	Dec. 13 FB
Jan. 19	55	May 10	85 FB	Aug. 30	11SC	Dec. 20 FB
Jan. 26	79	May 17	47 FB	Sept. 6	13SC	*Dec. 24 5:30 FB
Feb. 2	75	May 24	87 FB	Sept. 13	14SC	*Dec. 24 10:00 FB
Feb. 9	69	May 31	78 FB	Sept. 20	SC20	Dec. 27 FB
Feb. 16	92	June 7	86 FB	Sept. 27	SC16	
Feb. 23	75	Jun. 14	75 FB 15 SC	Oct. 4	SC39	
Mar. 1	74	Jun. 21	66 FB 11 SC	Oct. 11	SC40	
Mar. 8	Not taken	Jun. 28	67 FB 14 SC	Oct. 18	SC37	
Mar. 15	64	Jul 5	66FB 11SC	Oct. 25	SC71	
Mar. 22	72 FB	Jul. 12	49FB 12SC	Nov. 1	SC37	
Mar. 29	77 FB	Jul. 19	21 FB 11SC	Nov. 8	Closed	
Apr. 5	91 FB	Jul. 26	82FB 19SC	Nov. 15	closed	
Apr. 12	105 FB	Aug. 2	57 FB 10SC	Nov. 22	Sc 16	
Apr. 19	72 FB	Aug. 9	64FB 12SC	Nov. 29	NA	

FB Face Book SC Sanctuary Viewing

Due to the Pandemic the church was closed and no in church attendance was taken

2020 Annual Report of the Clerk/Registrar

New Members: **7**

Cailyn Crean	10/25/2020
Robert Crean	10/25/2020
Ella Hamel	10/25/2020
Casey James	10/25/2020
James Salzer III	10/25/2020
Sam Yesu	10/25/2020

Transfers/Resignations: **3**

Sharon Connors 9/1/2020
Rev. Susanna Hayes 12/16/2020
Michael Hayes 12/16/2020

Baptisms: **1**

Riley Paige Desjardins Daughter of Grace Templeton and Gary Desjardins 08/16/2020

Deaths: **10**

Catherine Ward	01/14/2020
Mary Jane Pierce	01/21/2020
Mildred E. Billings	02/26/2020
Helen Seher	02/15/2020
Sandra Jasmin	03/21/2020
Judith Klaubert	04/12/2020
Gloria Barnes	07/14/2020
Frank Pollard	09/24/2020
Helen Blaha	10/22/2020
Ruth Hannum	11/04/2020

Weddings: **0**

New members (6) - Transfers & Resignations (3) - Deaths (10) = Loss of (7)

December 31, 2020

Michelle Downs, Clerk

2020 Annual Report of the Pastor

It has been a challenging year for the country, the world, and for First Congregational church. With the arrival of the Pandemic, there were immediate, unforeseen, and difficult changes to make. There have been sad and confusing moments. There have been disagreements and some misunderstandings. But, through it all, everyone has endeavored to keep the church and its mission to thrive as followers of Jesus, alive and active. It will be good to review the various activities and accomplishments of the church this past, unprecedented year, 2020.

Confirmation – In January we began Confirmation classes with seven students. It was great to gather in Fellowship Hall, with students, their family members and chosen mentors. We had classes every other week and all were looking forward to that special day when the Youth of First Church stepped up and took their place as full members of the church and Disciples of Christ. Of course, we finished our classes on Zoom (a new term for all of us, now all too familiar). We had a glorious “drive-by” parade with the families and our CE Director Rachel (also a student) in the church parking lot, with balloons, big signs, the color red everywhere, and well-wishing passers-by circling the lot, honking and blowing “holy kisses” out the windows. We finally got to have that wonderful Sunday inside the sanctuary, and I am grateful for that, to be sure.

Ash Wednesday was a part of our Confirmation, as well as the entire church. It was cozy, intimate, held in the chapel upstairs. This launched our Lenten journey, which turned out to be unlike any other we have experienced.

COVID-19 Hits – Our last “normal” Sunday was March 15, 2020. The church and the community were in lockdown, due to the Coronavirus. Plans went immediately into alternate ways we would continue worshipping together. My daughter Grace and I put the iPad on a music stand in the living room of my home. We did “live-streaming” when I really didn’t know what that was. Everyone understood we were novices, while we continued experimenting with ways to provide more professional, clear and meaningful ways to deliver Sunday services. Later we tried to have the service in the sanctuary, when the COVID numbers were low in the summer. We also wanted to make sure that folks who preferred to watch at home were able to do so. This really didn’t work, as the video and audio were poor. We worked on alternatives. We had meetings and discussions. Finally, we “met in the middle” with a TV viewing for folks who did not have internet access in the sanctuary. At this time, with numbers sky-high, we are back to strictly on-line worship. I want to thank Allan Taylor for his time, talent, patience and excellent choices in music. If it were not for his masterful skill and equipment, I daresay our worship would be severely compromised in quality and inspiration. In these dark and uncertain days, we had a beautiful Holy Week (Thank you, Deacons), as well as Easter service (with our soloists socially distanced), and the Flowering of the Cross, which was placed outdoors for all to see and enjoy. In summer, we had drive-by birthday celebrations, kept up with the phone calls and outdoor distance visits.

Mission Week continued, in the face of big obstacles. We raised almost \$5,000 for the Western Mass Food Bank, through contributions from those inside and outside the church, supporting our various sports challenges, all outdoors, including walking, running, dancing, swimming and golfing. God bless all those who participated, and many thanks to Judy Lyon, whose commitment and enthusiasm never wavered.

We had just begun to make some exciting and community-based changes when COVID hit. We had a couple of Lenten classes based on the book, “Plenty Good Room” in the Fellowship Hall, with my husband Jeff demonstrating some of the spirituals characterizing the African American struggle and faith. We were in the middle of our Lenten lunches. We had Discernment meetings where changes were discussed. There was a spirit of new life in the air. An alternative worship service was imminent. Plans were

discussed to make a corner in the Hall for folks from the community to come in, warm up and have a piece of pie. Bob Brownlee put down the rug for this and it fit beautifully. The Parlor was perhaps to be turned into a Community Room, to be used in exchange for a donation to the church. All these things that did not happen are a sorrow for some, including me.

Shared Ministry has been a shining light through all of this. Randy Hyvonen called me one quiet afternoon and shared his vision of becoming partners in ministry with Southwick Congregational church. He had gotten to know both congregations and felt that this might be a golden opportunity for everyone. You have had several opportunities to gradually get to know the members there, through some offerings provided, such as Bible Study and the First Wednesday services. Leadership from both churches have met and reports from those in attendance reflect a good deal of enthusiasm for this new endeavor.

I am praying for and excited about this new possibility for church vitality for both churches. As I write, I am the middle of my second week as Interim for both of you. Please pray for me and this new thing that God is doing. In the next few months, you will have a bright, young, innovative and energetic settled pastor that will guide you into a positive and fruitful future.

God bless you all,

Pastor Julie

2020 Annual Report for National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

In the last year, in connection with the Search Committee's plan to involve both the United Church of Christ (UCC) and the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches (NACCC) in the search process, our Church formalized its affiliation with the NACCC. An application was made and in June I participated, on behalf of the Church, in the Annual Meeting of the NACCC at which we were affiliated.

This action ratifies the longstanding dual affiliation of our Church stemming from Article IV of our Bylaws, adopted in 1989, which allows members to affiliate with the UCC, the NACCC or with neither. Since that time, our Church has regularly sent delegates to meetings of both denominations.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven D. Pierce

2020 Annual Report of the Historian

The past year was most significantly affected by the COVID virus which made its appearance in March and impacted the rest of the year, reducing our normal activities in many ways. Nevertheless, our Church maintained its focus on Christian worship and continued to play a role in many important aspects of the lives of our Congregation.

As I noted in an article for the monthly newsletter in the spring, our Church has weathered other storms before including the closing of the Church for many months after the steeple crashed through the roof in the late 19th century as well as closures around the Spanish Influenza after World War I and fuel shortages during World War II.

Happily, the same spirit evidenced itself in 2020. The office staff improvised where necessary and showed indomitable spirit in keeping operations and communications going. Interim Pastor Julie Olmsted and Minister of Music Allan Taylor collaborated on putting the Sunday worship services into a virtual format. Cindy LaPlante and several others worked to set up the sanctuary in a way that complied with governmental dictates so that those who wished could watch the services together. We were able to celebrate the new confirmands at a live service in the sanctuary and other members were contacted as needed by telephone and occasional "drive-by" visits to stay in touch. And a giant rummage sale was conducted in the fall out of the Old Town Hall.

Despite the loss of so much normal activity and personal interaction, the Church was pleased with the results of the fall stewardship drive for 2021 that demonstrates a continuing commitment on the part of our Congregation to persevere through this challenge.

In the fall, the Church received the resignation of Rachel Bilodeau, our Church School Director, who is pursuing divinity studies in which we wish her success. In her time in that capacity, Rachel made great strides with the young people of the Church and managed to stay in touch with them despite the challenges of not having regular Church School for most of the year.

Near the end of the year the Church regretted the resignation of Peggy Corchinski, Office Administrator for the past many years. Peggy's extraordinary dedication to our Church and her cheerful and patient demeanor in moving operations forward in a positive way will be long remembered and appreciated. We wish Peggy and her husband, Rob, the very best of health and happiness in the years to come.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven D. Pierce, Historian

2020 Annual Report of PCRC

The Pastoral Congregational Relations Committee's (PCRC) purpose is to facilitate open communication and resolution of major issues of concern within the congregation. It functions as a liaison between the pastor and the congregation and conducts an annual review of the Pastor.

In 2020, we have had few issues of concern that have been brought to us. With the church closure in March, everyone has focused on working to continue to be connected even though we have had intermittent worship in the sanctuary. We are thankful for the cooperative performance of this congregation.

Phil Zych, Committee Chairman

2020 Moderator's Annual Report

The beginning of my final year as moderator began with many events scheduled as years before. It is always a comfort to know what is ahead. We looked forward to the corn beef dinner which for many years was a big fundraiser and a fun event for those creating the meal and those who attended to eat it. It has become a social event to look forward to. However, this year it marked the end of everything "as usual". The pandemic hit!! The state ordered all social events discontinued to hopefully curtail the spread of a devastating illness. Following state requirements, we discontinued all activities.

Our resourceful members created a Covid 19 team to instruct us. Under their strict guidance, we began to move forward. At that time all, "usual" activities were cancelled. March 15th was our last live church service with Church School ending then too. Christian Fellowship was cancelled and our involvement with the soup kitchen was discontinued. Lenten luncheons were cancelled and life at First Congregational Church as we knew it had stopped.

Being creative New Englanders, it takes a lot to keep us down. New technology soon had the membership looking for ways to accomplish our Christian goals. Birthdays were being celebrated with 'drive by' parades. We practiced social distancing, wearing masks and no longer hugging each other as the main way of greeting. Why would we do these limiting contacts?

We were told this was the only way to limit the spread of this illness. Also, we were warned that the elderly were very much at risk. That included most of our congregation, myself included.

As I write this report, I am proud of the way that we have continued to worship while being safe. Services were taped and put on face book.

Zoom is a way of being together safely yet continuing the necessary work of the church. It is always comforting to see a person's face even if you can't hug or kiss them.

This year was a special time for me with Cailyn and Bobby Crean, my twin grandchildren, being part of the confirmation class along with five others. The congregation recognized this accomplishment by doing a 'drive by' in the church parking lot. Times are different but celebrations still happen!!

To support the youth and include them in church life, we have called on them to help in areas that provide for members who are shut in by covid-19 restrictions. They have worked to pack and deliver sunshine baskets, served at the Soup Kitchen, helped with the rummage sale, delivered flowers and been on call for activities.

In church, services with Pastor Julie in the pulpit returned on June 18th but were again closed as the pandemic spread. We returned to taped services and included a showing in the sanctuary for those who chose to attend. Events that have happened annually and were missing include the all church picnic, Halloween party for the youth, the Holiday Faire and our fabulous concert that was free to the community. We are hopeful that this coming year will see these events return.

I did not foresee all the issues we would address in three years. In February of 2018, we had a fully active program with regular Sunday services, church School in full swing, dinners and meetings attended by the church members and the community. Pastor Elva Pawle, as our full time pastor, announced that she would retire in August. After years of service she would be missed. Since that time we have experienced many changes. In March of 2019, we called Pastor Julie Olmsted to be our fulltime Interim Pastor. She presented challenges to our faith leading us to grow with God and to plan for a settled pastor.

Next we asked her to serve three quarter time. Now, as we begin 2021, we are joining Southwick Congregational Church and are asking Pastor Julie to serve creatively in both churches, half time in our church and half time in Southwick. These changes have not come easily. We have always wanted to continue the traditional programs that for many years have been the basis of our church life. As we move to the future, we look to changes that serve our community and our church family.

Presently, as we plan for January 2021, we are under strict guidelines to limit groups to very small numbers. This promises a more healthy and safe environment. We are hopeful that, with a vaccination becoming available, the restrictions will begin to be lifted and we will again be able to meet for social gatherings.

I thank you all for your encouragement and support over the last three years. May 2021 be a rebirth of activities for our congregation.

FroG (forever rely on God)
Mayme

2020 Annual Report of the Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee, with the help of Pastor Julie Olmsted, Treasurer Cindy LaPlante and Moderator Mayme Lajoie, presented a successful Stewardship program to the congregation. This group of committed church members organized this program in a manner to best present our message to the congregation, in this most difficult year of covid-19.

We started the month of October 2020, with Mayme Lajoie speaking to the congregation from the pulpit on Sunday October 4th. Steve Pierce Spoke from the pulpit on Sunday October 11th and Tom Samwell spoke from the pulpit on Sunday October 18th. These three long time members spoke affectionately from their hearts and minds about their commitment to First Church, times spent with fellow members, memories made over the years and their wish to continue our ministry and missions' programs in the congregational way.

On Stewardship Sunday, October 25th, Pastor Julie spoke, from the pulpit, on the spiritual rewards and the human gratification of pledging to the missions of First Congregational Church. Pastor Julie spoke with leadership, compassion and gratefulness, as she has done many times, for our congregation. The Stewardship Committee is reporting, that as of this Annual Meeting on February 14th, 2021 we have had 65 pledges returned from families within the congregation, pledging a total of \$112,000.00. The Stewardship Committee sends a heartfelt thank you to the congregation and all members and friends who have pledged their time, talents and treasures to First Congregational Church of Westfield and beyond.

Respectfully submitted by the Stewardship Committee
Steve Pierce, Jim Kinney, and Chairperson Tom Samwell

2020 Annual Report Of The Diaconate

The year 2020 has been a challenge for all of the members of our church and those who serve on church committees. The Deacons have had the added challenge of ways to continue traditions and at the same time try to stay in touch with our church members, especially those who have been isolated because of the Covid-19 pandemic. As I started my first year as Senior Deacon with Interim Pastor Julie Olmsted, the pandemic soon followed.

With the outstanding cooking and organization by Cindy LaPlante and help from several deacons and members, we were able to serve Lenten Luncheons on a take-out basis on several Fridays.

Easter presented many challenges but, with the help of Zoom, the Diaconate was able to conduct our annual Maundy Thursday Service and watch The Easter Service from Home. The Deacons were able to continue the delivery of Easter flowers to over 40 members.

As the pandemic continued, we were disappointed that we could not hold the annual Four Score and More Luncheon.

Thanksgiving found the Deacons delivering Sunshine Baskets to members and friends. This could not have been possible without the help of the Downs family; Steve, Michelle, Karenna and Kailey. Despite the church being closed for Christmas services, we continued the tradition of delivering poinsettias on the weekend before Christmas.

The Deacons' Fund received a boost from a luminaria display that was put on the Old Town Hall steps two Saturdays in December. Thanks to the generosity of our members and friends who purchased luminaria in memory or in honor of a loved one, we were able to double last year's display. The Deacons' Fund was used this year to help several families in their time of need.

One role the Deacons have once a month is to serve communion to our congregation. We truly missed not being able to do this and look forward to the day we can serve again. A highlight of this year was when a few of us had the opportunity to accompany Pastor Julie to a member's home for the baptism of their daughter.

A special thank you to Nancy Condon and Karen Lajoie who served as secretary and treasurer, respectively. We also received support from Mayme Lajoie, Deb Samwell, Martha Roman, Peggy Corchinski, Cindy LaPlante, Bob Brownlee and the Crean and Downs families in this years' endeavors. The dedicated, thoughtful and caring team of Deacons was always ready to take on each task and care for our members. Thanks to Bev and Cliff, Dan, Joyce, Barbara, Rita, Nancy, Karen and Ann for their part in meeting this years' challenges.

Respectfully submitted, Carol Whalen, Senior Deacon

2020 Diaconate Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance 1/1/2020	\$1,345.32
Deposits	985.00
Interest	.39
Service Charges	\$20.00
Expenses	\$546.97
Ending Balance 12/31/2020	\$1,763.74

2020 Annual Report of the Budget Committee

The Budget Committee is charged with developing a proposed annual operating budget, arranging an open congregational hearing on the proposal, and submitting the proposal with revisions as necessary for approval by Church Committee and subsequent submission to the congregation for vote at the Annual Meeting. It then administers the voted budget and provides recommendations to the Church Committee of ways and means of providing for unforeseen expenses. As can be seen in the attached final report, this year's budget played out far differently than that approved at our 2020 Annual Meeting. It was not by design that we ended 2020 with a positive cash flow of over \$44,000. Rather, this result was determined by the COVID pandemic as it affected both income and expenses.

Income actually exceeded that budgeted by \$24,000 primarily because: Pledges and other giving amounted to a modest (under the circumstances) shortfall of \$2600 (1.8%) from that initially projected and fundraising income was necessarily reduced by a similar amount. Income from directed endowment funds was curtailed by \$4800 since the related budgeted expenses did not materialize. However, these reductions were more than offset by a grant of nearly \$35,000 applied for and received under the Federal Payroll Protection Program.

Expenditures were held below that originally budgeted by \$20,000: With the exception of an unanticipated increase in insurance, all areas of spending were cut back, mostly by modest amounts. Yet some (as Missions and Outreach) were only trimmed while others (as Church School and Committees) were reduced quite severely as each budgeted area was impacted differently by the church's response to restrictions and protocols precipitated by the pandemic. I need to recognize the members of the Budget Committee with thanks, particularly for their role in our support of the Ministerial Search Committee and the development of the 2021 budget as we transition to a half-time ministry and plan for eventual return to less restrictive social protocols.

Douglas James Chair, Budget Committee
Members: Cindy LaPlante, Treasurer
Judy Lyon
Thomas Samwell, Chair, Stewardship Committee (Ex-officio)
Steven Pierce, Chair, Trustees of Invested Funds

2020 Annual Report Of Christian Fellowship

Because of the Covid 19 pandemic, Christian Fellowship met only 3 times in 2020 – January, February and March. All other programs had to be cancelled due to the restriction of social distancing. This was difficult for our members, as many look forward to gathering at the church.

Our program in January was “how to write and publish your own book” and featured our own church members Doug and Barbara James. They have published two books using Doug’s amazing photographs and Barbara’s witty verse. These books are fascinating to both children and adults. Doug explained how he uses his photography equipment and lots of patience to take photos of wildlife and scenery. Barbara then studies a photo and imagines what that bird is thinking. These thoughts are humorous while giving a message to the reader, young and old.

In February, we enjoyed a visit from Love on a Leash Therapy Dogs. The mission of the group is to show dog owners how to train their pet dogs to be obedient and safe around groups of people. The leader/teacher explained that they are certified therapy dogs. Classes are required for certification. She explained the difference between service dogs, emotional support dogs and therapy dogs. The group visiting us consisted of 10 owners and 12 dogs. The volunteers and their dogs visit nursing homes, schools, assisted living centers and Westfield State University. After their presentation, our group enjoyed visiting with the dogs and owners.

In March, our Church Historian Steve Pierce talked to us about the history of the church. He brought interesting articles including some of the silver collection, charts and items from our historical room upstairs. He gave us insight into the past events of the church and it’s interesting and sometimes trying times (like in 1886 when the steeple fell through the roof into the sanctuary). We saw a “pew chart” from 1910 which showed which family was sitting in which pew (pledging families “paid” for a pew on an annual basis). He touched on some of our ministers over the years.

All other programs for 2020 were cancelled. It was very difficult to do this, as many members attended and enjoyed the programs and the socialization. We hope that 2021 will find us gathering again.

Submitted by Judy Lyon

2020 Annual Report On Mission Week

Even though we had a challenge with the pandemic situation, our 2020 mission week was a success. Our “walk, run, bike, swim, dance or row” challenge was a big hit. Thanks to the organization and enthusiasm of our Pastor Julie, several church members raised an amazing amount of funds. A total of \$4576.67 was raised during the week and this was donated to the Western Mass Food Bank.

We also brought water and salads to go with pizza deliveries to Our House and The Samaritan Inn three days during the week. In addition, several masks were made and given to the deacons to distribute to church members in need. We appreciate all who took part in this mission week and we look forward to next year when we will be able to accomplish more projects in a safe and healthy way.

Submitted by Judy Lyon

2020 Annual Report Of The Church School Committee

The Church School started the year with a bang. We sponsored the second Silly Sock Sunday and collected socks for area shelters. Next, we had a "can" drive for the Westfield Food Bank. In February, we had our annual Pasta Luncheon – this is always a great time for food and fellowship. March is always Heifer Month and we did have our Pancake breakfast that benefitted Heifer. However, after that, many of the activities were cut short due to the Covid-19 pandemic. For the rest of the spring Rachel did up some Sunday school bags for the youth and planned an online Celebration Sunday with the youth. The presentation was fantastic – the children used Legos and created structures to represent their favorite Bible Stories and explained what the story meant to them. Cailyn Crean gave a wonderful sermon. Rachel also used zoom meetings to keep the youth together.

In September, we started the school year with an ice cream cone at the Summer House. About twenty-five children and adults met – it was a fun time to see church school parents and children. For the rest of the Fall – it was hard to do any activities. Many children are "zooming" so much with school that another meeting on zoom isn't fun. Scheduling outdoor activities was also difficult – trying to coordinate a time that would be good for adult leaders and youth was challenging. In December, we received Rachel Bilodeau resignation. She will be missed. She told the committee that she needed to concentrate on her studies at the Hartford Seminary. She had a great connection with the youth and has promised to stay in touch with them. She finished the year by coordinating another online service – The Family Christmas Eve Service was another wonderful presentation.

Respectfully submitted, Gail Ives

2020 Annual report of the Covid-19 Task Force

The Covid-19 Task Force was appointed at the March Church Committee Meeting. The task force members are Cindy LaPlante, Dan Koehne and Michelle Downs. After the service on March 15th, the church was closed by order of the state. The state allowed for return to in-person services in May, but our sanctuary remained closed until mid-June. In early June, the Church Committee and the task force started to discuss re-opening the church. The task force provided a list of recommendations for re-opening the church based on recommendations from the CDC and the SNEUCC. The task force has also monitored Covid-19 regulations issued by the state as well as both city and state Covid-19 numbers. The task force had help from many church members who screen parishioners (taking temperatures, seating attendees six feet apart, making sure people were wearing masks) prior to the service on the Sundays when the sanctuary was open. The task force appreciates the hard work of all church member and friends who have abided by the recommendations of the task force.

Submitted by
Michelle Downs

2020 Annual Report of the World Service Committee

This year the World Service Committee continued to focus on local missions. Our local missions included the Sarah Gillett Fund, Services to the Elderly, American Red Cross- local chapter, Friends of Franklin Avenue School, Kamp for Kids Kamperships (Behavioral Health Network), Kinship Fund, Our Community Table-operations and meal prep, Our House, Salvation Army-local chapter, Samaritan Inn and Westfield Food Pantry. Our national mission was the National Military Family Association. We had two international missions: Heifer Project and Helo Haiti.

We were able to hold our regular monthly mission activities in January and February. Unfortunately the COVID 19 restrictions affected our participation in many activities, such as our meetings, the monthly food collections and the Westfield Food Pantry walk. We continued to support Our Community Table soup kitchen throughout the year. However, due to COVID limitations, the dinners were take-out meals and there were restrictions on the number of people who could prepare and serve the bagged dinners. A small group of people, including Jean Zimmerman, Mayme Lajoie, Cindy LaPlante and the Crean family prepared the meals for our monthly soup kitchen donation. Due to COVID we could not continue the Drop & Shop programs and Family Movie Nights for children at Franklin Avenue, Highland and Abner Gibbs schools.

We conducted our Easter and Christmas mission offerings by mail this year since many of us could not attend church due to COVID. We thank you for your donations to our World Service mission.

This year we supported Franklin Avenue School by providing funds that purchased needed supplies, combination locks for their grade 4 students to be used in the spring and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) resources for their Project Lead The Way Modules. The teachers also used some of the funds to purchase 500 HEART postcards that they sent to their children to let them know that their teacher was thinking of them during the COVID lockdown. The principal also purchased paint which their custodian used to brighten some of the classrooms. The teachers were grateful to have a freshly painted room which helped to create a nicer remote teaching environment. Unfortunately, our congregation members were unable to participate as mentors this year.

In late November, given the continuing COVID crisis and its subsequent economic effects, we gave donations of \$150 to the following local missions to assist with purchasing food: Our Community Table, Westfield Food Pantry, Project New Hope of MA (Veterans Services) and Springfield Rescue Mission. In addition, we reimbursed the pastor for purchasing gloves, hats and other warm clothing for the residents of Samaritan Inn.

In December, we partnered with Franklin Avenue Elementary School to adopt a family who needed our support this Christmas. We were given a family who is currently fostering 6 children. Many thanks to Lisa Crean who purchased gifts for the children and collaborated with Principal Chris Tolpa to deliver them. Special thanks to all who donated to our Adopt-A-Family mission.

In spite of COVID 19, we were able to support our missions. As we reviewed our community's needs, we chose to add the Westfield Boys and Girls Club and the Springfield Rescue Mission to our local missions for 2021. The Westfield Boys and Girls Club delivers needed services to children, families and the community. During COVID they provided a safe place for 160 Westfield students to attend online classes. Springfield

Rescue Mission endeavors to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the hungry, homeless, addicted and poor by introducing them to Christ and helping them to apply the word of God to every area of their lives. Men from greater Westfield participate in their programs.

Thank you for your continued support.

World Service Committee: Darlene Biggs, Jean Zimmerman

World Service Proposed Budget for 2021		
Budget for 2021		\$20,276.00
Christmas Offering		\$2,000.00
Easter Offering		\$2,000.00
Endowment		\$16,276.00
Expenses for 2021		
Discretionary Fund	\$500.00	
Our Churches Wider Missions	\$3,000.00	
Local-80%	\$13,420.80	
American Red Cross	\$1,076.73	
Kamp for Kids	\$500.00	
Community Table—money for making dinners	\$1,076.73	
Community Table/operating costs	\$1,076.73	
Salvation Army of Greater Westfield	\$1,076.73	
Westfield Food Pantry/ Operating costs	\$1,076.73	
Samaritan Inn	\$1,076.73	
Our House	\$1,076.73	
Kinship Fund	\$1,076.73	
Sarah Gillett Fund, Services for the Elderly	\$1,076.73	
Friends of Franklin Avenue School	\$1,076.73	
Springfield Rescue Mission	\$1,076.73	
Westfield Boys and Girls Club	\$1,076.73	
National- 10%	\$1,677.60	
National Military Family Association	\$1,677.64	
International- 10%	\$1,677.60	
Heifer Project	\$838.80	
Hello Haiti	\$838.80	
		\$20,276.00

2020 Search Committee Annual Report

The Search Committee has spent the past several months crafting an exhaustive profile to be used by both The United Church of Christ and in advertising through The National Association of Congregational Christian Churches. In the early summer of 2020, we created and sent out a survey to the entire congregation, so that we could get a sense of how congregation members felt about vital issues in our church. We used this survey to guide us in our response to questions contained in the profile.

In the fall, we supported the larger church in deciding to share a settled minister with Southwick Congregational Church. As we move forward in our search, two smaller committees from each church will be working closely to attract and secure a minister who will help lead both of our congregations in the post pandemic 21st Century.

As we continue our search in 2021, we welcome the prayers and thoughts of all our members.

Search Committee, Westfield Congregational Church
Janet St. Jean, Chair
Sherry Balzano
Rachel Bilodeau
Greg Hamel
Steven Pierce
Martha Roman
Robert White

2020 Annual Report of Membership/Fellowship Committee

Due to the Corona virus pandemic, all Fellowship activities had to be cancelled/postponed until we can meet in-person again.

Joyce Bard, Chairperson

2020 Annual Report on Fundraising

This year a goal of \$5,000.00 was set by the Budget Committee to supplement the General Fund. With a shutdown starting in March, fundraising was limited. We did however manage to raise \$5,024.60

Church School Committee held its annual Pasta Dinner in February raising \$157.00

The Annual March Corned Beef and Cabbage dinner was very successful and made a profit of \$733.50. This was very different this year with most of the 120 dinners being take out.

The church's two rummage sales could not be held. However, thanks to lots of hard work a giant sale was held inside the Old Town Hall Building and \$4,134.10 was raised.

Thanks to all those who participated and spent many hours preparing.

2020 Annual Report of the Rummage Sale

When April arrived, we were aware that it was not possible to have our annual Spring Rummage Sale. We found that we were still accumulating donations meant for that sale. The church basement was full. What to do with those treasures?

At the suggestion of Bob Brownlee, Property Chairman, we considered setting up the sale in the Old Town Hall (OTH). This became the plan. Not an easy task. With three sets of stairs between the storage in the basement of the church and the OTH, I needed to recruit young help. Also the tables needed to be carried from the church to the OTH. While we were practicing social distancing we had to limit the number of people working. It took a lot of planning to accomplish these tasks. We did it.

The stored items and tables were carried across the span with the help of Joey, Cailyn and Bobby Crean and Silas and Sam Yesu. We are eternally grateful for the youth in our congregation. **Thanks.** With the items in OTH, the arranging for the sale was in full swing. Twelve rooms needed to be organized and priced for a sale that we hoped was to happen sometime in the future.

Finally in early September, a date for October was selected and advertised. Now we had a goal. October 8th, 9th, 10th and the following weekend. Would we be ready?

As the doors opened, temperatures were taken, names were recorded and social distancing was practiced. It certainly was a different procedure for our sale. Would it be a success?

The ending result was beyond my expectations. We ended with over \$4000 for the church. This exceeded what we would have made if we had had our regular two sales. Comments from participants congratulated the set up team with its organization and safe procedures. Many from the community visited OTH for the first time.

This would not have been successful without the help of Judy Lyon, Debbie Samwell, Jean Zimmerman, Rita Willard, Cindy Gaylord, Lynn Brownlee, Joyce Bard, Nancy Condon, Phil Zych and Joyce Piper. A special thanks to Janet Kedzierski.

We must not forget the many people, not all church members that donated items for this event.

2020 Annual Report of Our Holiday Faire

Sadly we were unable to continue the tradition of a Holiday Faire because of the changing restrictions on the size of gatherings. It was also pointed out that serving food, which has been a large part of this event, was discouraged.

The Faire has been a major fund raising event for many years (As long as I can remember). Over the years the name has changed. Most recently we changed it from the Candy Cane Fair to the Holiday Faire. We have had the reputation of a beautiful display and the offering of quality gifts. With everything so changed this year we did not continue the tradition.

In 2021, we will plan to offer a quality Faire for our community, if the present social limitations are lifted. Watch for opportunities to be part of this tradition.

Thanks to all.
Mayme Lajoie

Annual Report from the Music Committee

Following a very successful Carol Festival in December, 2019, the choir began the year strong. From January until March, the choir provided music for each of the church services. In January we welcomed a young man from Westfield State University to our bass section. He came to us from the Choral Scholar Program. Unfortunately, when the pandemic hit, live music was no longer an option, although our section leaders were able to provide the music for the Easter service and record some music for the Christmas services.

After a few trials, the church service has been recorded and posted on Facebook through our website. A huge thank you to Allan Taylor for the recording, editing and posting of these services. His work behind the scenes provides a wide variety of preludes, hymns, anthems and postludes. We renewed our subscription to St. James Press which provides choral anthems and a recording of each of the anthems. This has allowed us to provide an additional supply of choral anthems for the recorded services.

Our section leaders were paid through the Pay Check Protection Act through the spring of 2020. They appreciated this, but since the fall they have been "on hold" and we hope to see them all back once the choir can resume. Since singing is considered a "super spreader" it is not anticipated that the choir will be able to sing together again until possibly the fall of 2021. We look forward to that time.

Respectfully submitted,
Martha Roman
Chair, Music Committee

2020 Annual Report from the Church Use Task Force For Remote Learning Center

This fall when schools worked to return to the classroom during the COVID 19 pandemic, alternative placements were needed. First Congregational Church reached out to the Westfield Public Schools to offer our classroom space. Several members of the church gave a tour of the church school space to the Superintendent, School Safety/Title I Director and the Curriculum Director. They were very impressed with our space and it was decided to pursue a partnership between the church and school system. The school system, in partnership with the Westfield Gas and Electric Company, were able to install Whip City Fiber (at no cost to the church) so that the classroom space had internet access.

In November, the Westfield Public Schools opened a Remote Learning Center at First Congregational Church. The center is staffed by 5 tutors during the course of the day – roughly 7am – 5pm with about 20 students enrolled. The number of students attending varies based on in person days at their school. The students (grades K – 8) are children of Westfield Public School staff members and our church remote center allows those staff members to return to their positions. Spaces used include the dining room and classrooms on the second and third floor. The center is cleaned by Westfield Public School custodians according to COVID standards. The church is compensated for additional heat and electric use.

This is an exciting partnership and we welcome the staff and students to our space.

2020 Annual Report Of The Church Parking Lot

Brad Moir continues to rent the parking lot at 41Broad St. He pays us \$150.00 per month and sublets a few spaces to Roger Butler Insurance Agency. Our only expense is the insurance, which is grouped with the whole Church properties. Brad snow plows and cuts a small portion of grass near the sidewalk so it leaves us with little maintenance.

2020 Annual Report for the Nominating Committee

This past year the nominating Committee has worked diligently for what we consider a success, in filling the church's committee positions. We deem this vital in maintaining our church mission programs, in this most difficult year of covid-19.

The communications between the congregation and the nominating committee, for the most part, were performed through emails and phone calls, as face to face conversation were at a minimum. It is the consensus of this committee, that the church committees are represented with enough people to function in a positive direction moving forward to a time when we can be together again for Sunday Service and social gatherings.

Respectfully submitted by the Nominating Committee-Rachel Bilodeau, Bob Brownlee, and Chairperson Tom Samwell

2020 Annual Report of the Continuing Education Committee

The Trustees administer the award and collection of continuing education funds. They shall report their activity in writing at the Annual Meeting of the Church. Investment management of the funds is the responsibility of the Trustees of Invested Funds.

Each year we award Continuing Education funds from money invested in the Continuing Education/Scholarship Fund. Money is awarded as per the committee policies and procedures. One half of the money award is to be repaid within 8 years.

This year the Committee gave out three scholarship for a total of \$4,000.00.

Continuing Education Fund of First Congregational Church

Beginning Balance 1/1/2020 = \$179,235.39

Scholarships 2020 -4,000.00

Market gain 2020 17,001.21

Ending Balance 12/31/2020 \$192,236.60

Respectfully Submitted,

The Continuing Education Fund Committee
Cindy LaPlante
Phil Zych

2020 Annual Report of The Old Town Hall

In February, after two years of negotiations, a newly revised Purchase and Sale Agreement was forwarded to the Work Opportunity Center (WOC). This document included an agreed upon price and details for the purchase and sale of the Old Town Hall (OTH) and the addition of our Church parking lot at 41 Broad Street. We thought that at last we might be close to a closing, but in late summer the WOC withdrew from negotiations to purchase the building.

The three AA meetings, previously held in the Community Room on Thursday and Friday evenings and Saturday mornings, were discontinued in early 2020 due to COVID concerns. There was one user of the Community Room in November and December. It was a weekly rental to Love on a Leash Therapy Dogs which is a group that trains dogs for visits to nursing homes and assisted living facilities. This is the same group that entertained us at Christian Fellowship in February. At this time, their classes are on hold until at least February 2021 due to renewed COVID concerns.

The OTH building was successfully used for an October rummage sale. Items that had been stored in our Church basement were moved to the OTH first floor with the help of our younger members: Cailyn, Bobby and Joey Crean and Silas and Sam Yesu. In addition, many more treasures were donated by Church members and friends. Soon we had 12 rooms filled. Thanks to the help of many members of our congregation, under the direction of Mayme Lajoie, it was all organized and nicely displayed for sale. Over two weekends in October, again with the help of many, a successful sale was held. This was a nice contribution to the line item of Fundraising in our 2020 Budget.

I wish to thank Church members Rick Gaylord, Steve Pierce and Ray Zenkert for working with me to represent our Church in negotiations with The Work Opportunity Center. There were many meetings and ongoing communications over the last two years. I also offer special thanks to Lawyer Ray Zenkert for his contribution of time and expert Legal Counsel in meetings and with the ongoing changes to the Purchase and Sale Agreement. This behind the scenes work for the benefit of our Church should not go unnoticed.

At the present time, there are no definitive future plans for the Old Town Hall building.

Submitted by Bob Brownlee

2020 Annual Report of Old Town Hall Income

Invested Funds Beginning Balance 1/1/2020	\$214,093.52
Withdrawal for 2019 (For church budget)	-9,965.00
Market Change	20,307.57
Ending balance 12/31/2020	\$224,436.09

Withdrawals

Church Budget (5%)	\$ 9,965.00
Cost attributed to the church budget for 2020	\$3,113.81
Repairs	\$ 437.89
Utilities	\$ 1,014.15
Electric	\$ 649.23
Gas	\$ 1,012.54

2020 Annual Report of the Property Committee

This past year was unique. Although there were fewer church people using the building for meetings, dinners and Sunday worship, the maintenance issues were still ongoing.

In late December 2019, an issue with one of our two new (10 years old!) Lochinvar boilers occurred. A Lochinvar service representative was called in and thought that the problem was with the main computer board. Before ordering the \$600 part, our service tech, Mike Cross, switched the part in the two identical furnaces and found it did not solve the problem. Upon switching the fan assembly unit, he discovered that it was at fault. After ordering and installing that new part, our problem was cured. Luckily, the building kept warm with only one working boiler while Mike expertly diagnosed and resolved the problem.

Mike called to our attention that the two 250 gallon oil tanks in the sanctuary basement were full of oil and that a future minor leak could turn into a major problem. So in May, we fired up the old dual fuel H.B.Smith boiler, which can be used as a backup for the two Lochinvar boilers. It had not been run in 10 years but it fired right up and ran for two weeks. We then also used a credit that we had with the oil company and had the balance of oil delivered to the church.

In January, the fire escape exit from the sanctuary (near the piano) was repaired. The railing and one step had been damaged by a snow plow or large truck backing into it. Bob installed reflective tape on the repaired railing. Money for these repairs came from the committee's Building and Maintenance funds, which had been previously approved by the Church Committee.

Another major project accomplished in 2020, was our new kitchen range hood and associated kitchen improvements. These were necessary to meet the current required regulations for a commercial kitchen. Three bids for the hood were received and a contractor was jointly selected by our caterer and the church. Your Property Committee secured the services of a plumber, an electrician, a painter and an alarm contractor.

The hood contractor begged off on a prearranged date in August and then again in early September. Meanwhile, the other contractors came in as requested. The painters, Martins and Sons, covered peeling lead paint with 3/8" sheetrock and did an excellent job of patching and painting the entire kitchen. The electrical work, which not only included new circuits for the hood and control panels, but updating existing wiring and new exit signs was done by church members Ed LaPlante and Bob Brownlee at no cost to the church. Our plumber, Dave Ritchie, did an excellent job and his final bill came in below the estimate. Our alarm contractor, DAS Alarm Systems, completed their work when requested. And thanks to Judy Lyon's efforts and sewing skills, we have new curtains for the kitchen windows.

Our hood contractor, Visco LLC, did show up and sporadically completed his work on October 7th. Our caterer, Cathy of Peppermill Catering, was finally able to get back into our kitchen after weeks of disruption. New shelving and a stainless cart next to the stove were added for her expanding business. As of this submission, we are still working on a custom cabinet to be located to the right of the refrigerator and a new shelf for over the sink counter.

Many thanks go out to our custodian, Janet Kedzierski, for keeping our church spotless inside and out. Also, thanks to Rick and Linda Hauk who worked with Janet to keep our planters and church entry attractive. Martha Rheame, Norma Gary's daughter, kept the planter at the Academy St. entry a welcoming sight to all who entered. New committee member, Doug James, has assisted with his carpentry skills and installing and removing window air conditioners.

Your Property Committee: Bob Brownlee, Chair. Doug James, Judy Lyon, Merritt Andrews

2020 Annual Report of the Trustees of Invested Funds

The Trustees of Invested Funds are responsible for the protection and investment of the Church's Permanent Funds, Trust Funds and Endowment Funds. They are charged with selecting reliable investment managers and monitoring their activities and performance to provide income for the church both now and in the future.

Notwithstanding the economic challenges of 2020, the market value of our invested funds increased by 9%.

This year, \$79,191 was withdrawn in support of the church's operating budget. This included \$17,000 from the Stickle Charitable Trust for capital kitchen renovations.

There were several deposits totaling \$14,590 from the estate of Mary Noble and Memorial Gifts. As with all such gifts, the income will be used in conformance with the Church's Policy on Endowment Funds.

The Trustees recognize and appreciate the church's continued support of measured reliance on our invested funds in preparing the annual operating budget.

We welcome the congregation's questions and comments on the status and management of the funds at any time.

Steven Pierce, Chairman
Richard Gaylord III

Fund	Balance 1/1/2020	Deposits 2020	Withdrawals 2019	Market Gain/Loss	Balance 12/31/2020
General Fund	\$ 473,334	\$ 10,455	\$ 22,764	\$ 48,724	\$ 509,749
Established Fund	\$ 1,403,180	\$ 1,849	\$ 42,289	\$ 132,442	\$ 1,495,182
Endowment Fund	\$ 518,006	\$2,286	\$ 14,146	\$ 48,480	\$ 554,626
Capital Campaign CD	\$ 111,810	\$ 0	\$ 0	824	112,634
Totals	\$ 2,506,330	\$14,590	\$ 79,199	\$ 230,470	\$2,672,191

2020 Annual Report of the Church School Director

We began the year with a Youth Group Winter Retreat to Monadnock in Jaffrey, NH. We had 20 youth and 5 chaperones in attendance, our highest number yet. For church school, we continued using LEGOs as a medium to engage with the Bible. We also used iPads and flat screen tv's to use Bible Story apps and games.

In February, we hosted a Youth In-House Team Building event. The youth shared a meal, participated in team building exercises and visioning exercises (why they attend church, what they wish to see). From this, we launched Sunday evening Youth Group supper gatherings on a bi-weekly basis for both high school and middle school ages.

Come March, everything was impacted due to COVID-19. It was at this time we shifted to online meetings, games/activities, and movie nights. The Church School also delivered activity bags to church school families. We ended our school year with Celebration Sunday with a remote recording and celebration as the church school kids showcased stories/lessons from the bible through LEGO creations.

In September we hosted an outdoor Welcome Back Sunday ice cream social at The Summer House. Families were happy to see each other after quite some time in quarantine, but we were sure to use masks and follow social distancing guidelines.

In the fall, opportunities were offered to families to informally meet at Stanley Park for nature walks and weekly bike rides on the rail trail.

The holidays quickly approached, and multiple families participated in the Advent Wreath lighting services at the direction of Interim Pastor, Rev. Julie Green Olmsted. Additionally, the Church School coordinated the annual performance of the Christmas Pageant. Despite COVID-19, the families of the church school provided a wonderful pre-recorded pageant titled "Christmas Letters" which offered a unique telling of the Christmas story.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Bilodeau

2020 Annual Report of The Personnel Committee

This year, 2020, Rachel Bilodeau stepped down as our Church School/Youth Director in order to concentrate on both her studies and work. Additionally, Peggy Corchinski resigned as Office Administrator to spend time with her family and friends.

Respectfully submitted,
James Yesu, Co-Chair
Daniel Koehne, Co-Chair
James Salzer

Proposed 2021 Officers, Committees and Representatives
(2021 Nominees in Bold)

<u>OFFICERS</u>						Term
<u>MODERATOR:</u>	Steven Pierce	1 year 3 terms	2/24			1
<u>CLERK:</u>	Michelle Downs	1 year 6 terms	2/22	Church School		5
<u>TREASURER:</u>	Cindy LaPlante	1 year	2/22			
<u>COMMITTEES</u>						
<u>BUDGET:</u>	3 years 2 terms, up to 5 Members					
	Nominees:					
	Continuing:	Judy Lyon	2/24F	Property/ Usher		1
		Doug James	2/23	Property/ Usher		2
		Chair of Trustees of Invested Funds				
CHURCH SCHOOL COMMITTEE:	3 years, 2 terms, up to 11 Members					
	Nominees:					
	Continuing:	Jennifer Backyoub	2/24F			2
		Lisa Crean	2/24F			2
		Debbie Yesu	2/22			1
		Jim Yesu	2/22	Personnel		1
		Linda Hauk	2/22	Usher		1
		Janet St. Jean	2/23			1
		Gail Ives	2/23			1
DELEGATES:	3 years, 2 terms					
MASS CONFERENCE UCC:		Jim Yesu	2/23	Personnel/Church School		1
NACCC:		Bruce Dunlop	2/23			1
DIACONATE:	3 years, 2 terms, at least 12 Members					
	Nominees:	Mayme LaJole	2/24	PCRC		1
	Continuing:	Karen Lajoie	2/22F			2
		Carol Whalen	2/22F			2
		Cliff Gamble	2/22F			2
		Joyce Bard	2/22	Membership/Fellowship		1
		Beverly Gamble	2/22	Music		1
		Daniel Kookne	2/23F	Personnel		2
		Rita Wilbard	2/23			1
		Barbara James	2/23			1
Membership/Fellowship	Nominees:					
	Continuing:	Rachel Blodeau	2/23			1
		Joyce Bard	2/24F	Diaconate		2
		Darlene Biggs	2/24F	World Service		2
MUSIC:	3 years, 2 terms, up to 7 members					
	Nominees:	Michelle Downs	2/24			1
	Continuing:	Martha Roman	2/23	Special Decorations		1
		Beverly Gamble	2/24F	Diaconate		2
		Graco Chan	2/23F			2
		Karen Lajoie	2/23	Diaconate		1
NOMINATING COMMITTEE:	1 year, 3 terms, up to 5 Members					
	Nominees:	Cindy Gaylord	2/22	Special Decorations		1
	Continuing:	Bob Brownlee	2/22	Stewardship, Usher		2
		Rachel Blodeau	2/22	Membership/Fellowship		2

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COMMITTEES CONTINUED					
PCRC:	3 years, 2 terms, up to 5 Members				
Nominees:	Mayme LaJole	2/24	Diaconate	1	
	Lynn Brownlee	2/24		1	
Continuing:	Gail Ives	2/24F	Church School	2	
PERSONNEL:	3 years, 2 terms, 4 Members				
Nominees:					
Continuing:	Daniel Koehn	2/23F	Diaconate	2	
	Jim Salzer	2/23F	Member at Large	2	
	Jim Yeau	2/22F	Church Sch./UCC Delegate	2	
PROPERTY:	3 years, 2 terms, up to 9 Members				
Nominees:					
Continuing:	Bob Brownlee	2/22	Member At Large/Usher/Nom	1	
	Doug James	2/23	Budget/	1	
	Judy Lyon	2/22	Budget/ Usher	1	
	Merril Andrews	2/22		1	
SPECIAL DECORATIONS:	3 years, 2 terms, up to 5 Members				
Nominees:					
Continuing:	Tom Lorenzen	2/22	Usher	1	
	Jim Kinney	2/24F	Usher	2	
	Cindy Gaylord	2/23		1	
	Martha Roman	2/23		1	
STEWARDSHIP:	3 years 2 terms, up to 5 Members				
Nominees:					
Continuing:	Jim Kinney	2/23	Special Decorations/Usher	1	
	Tom Samwell	2/22	Usher	1	
TRUSTEES OF INVESTED FUNDS:	3 years, 2 terms, up to 3 Members				
Nominees:					
Continuing:	Richard Gaylord	2/23		1	
WORLD SERVICE COMMITTEE:	3 years, 2 terms, up to 7 Members				
Nominees:	Tom Samwell	2/24	Stewardship	1	
	Nancy Condon	2/24		1	
	Shirley Anderson	2/24		1	
	Ann Mundy	2/24			
Continuing:	Darlene Biggs	2/24F	Membership/Fellowship	1	
ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATIVES					
CHURCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS AT-LARGE:	3 years, 2 terms, 3 Members				
Nominees:					
Continuing:	Jim Salzer	2/23F	Personnel	2	
	Bob Brownlee	2/24F	Property/Usher	2	
HISTORIAN:	Steve Pierce	3 years 2 terms	2/24F	Moderator/Usher	2
USHERS:	Head Usher and Assistant Head Usher are elected annually - no term limits				
Nominees:					
Continuing:	Tom Samwell	Head Usher	2/22	Stewardship, World Service	
	Jim Kinney	Assistant Head Usher	2/22	Stewardship, Special Decorations	
	Judy Lyon		2/22	Budget	
	Tom Lorenzen		2/22	Special Decorations	
	Judith McClure		2/22		
	Steve Pierce		2/22	Moderator/Historian	
	Shirley Anderson		2/22		
	Linda Hawk		2/22	Church School	
	Rick Hawk		2/22		
	Phil Zych		2/22		
	Bob Brownlee		2/22	Property/ Nominating	
				01/15/2021	

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
18 BROAD STREET
WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS**

FINANCIAL REPORTS

2020 INCOME REPORT F2
2020 EXPENSE REPORT F3-F4
2020 SAVING ACCOUNT F5
2021 PROPOSED BUDGET F6-F8

SUMMARY

RECONCILIATION CHURCH INCOME AND EXPENSES

INCOME ATTRIBUTED TO THE CHURCH BUDGET = \$296,190.14
INCOME FROM OTHER SOURCES (CHECK EXCHANGE & REFUNDS) = \$ 38,098.18
TOTAL INCOME = \$334,288.32
EXPENSES ATTRIBUTED TO THE CHURCH BUDGET = \$251,840.32
EXPENSES FROM OTHER SOURCES (CHECK EXCHANGE) = \$ 38,098.18
TOTAL EXPENSES = \$290,136.50
ENDING CHECKBOOK BALANCE = \$44,151.82

TREASURER'S CHECKBOOK BALANCE SHEET

BALANCE JANUARY 1, 2020 = .00
DEPOSITS = \$334,288.02
WITHDRAWALS = \$290,136.50
BALANCE DECEMBER 31, 2020 = \$44,151.82

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy LaPlante
Treasurer

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH							
18 BROAD STREET							
WESTFIELD, MA 01085							
FINANCIAL REPORT		2020	Amount	Balance	%		
December 31, 2020		BUDGETED			Received		
100% of year		AMOUNT	YTD			CHECK EXCHANGE:	
SUPPORT FROM THE CONGREGATION						candy cane fair	
PLEDGE 2019=		500.00	1,623.50	-1,123.50	324.70%	Refuge Proj	106.77
PLEDGE 2020=		120,613.00	116,479.50	4,133.50	96.57%	Church School	4,580.25
PLATE (CASH) =		7,500.00	8,215.40	-715.40	109.54%	mission trip	450.00
CHURCH SCHOOL		300.00	8.43	291.57	2.81%	Miscellaneous	2,961.34
CARRYOVER FROM 2019		2,370.75	2,295.75	75.00	96.84%	Concert Comm	40.46
2020 BUDGET CHALLENGE		23,300.00	23,300.00	0.00	100.00%	music special	650.00
Payroll Protection Program		0.00	34,787.00	0.00		walk run dance	4,576.67
CONGREGATION TOTAL		154,583.75	186,709.58	2,661.17	120.78%	Memorial Flow	941.05
GIFTS FROM TRUSTS						Soup Kitchen	588.05
FOWLER FUND		4,200.00	4,200.00	0.00	100.00%	Gaylord	99.99
SANFORD-HALL		8,022.00	8,022.00	0.00	100.00%	kitchen repair	18,041.95
STICKEL TRUST		17,050.00	17,050.00	0.00	100.00%	scholarship	4,000.00
TRUST TOTAL		29,272.00	29,272.00	0.00	100.00%	Search Comm	457.85
INCOME FROM ENDOWMENT FUND						heifer	358.00
PEOPLE AND PROGRAMS		3,032.00	242.52	2,789.48	8.00%	Mission	245.00
BUILDING AND MAINTANCE		2,975.00	2,865.00	110.00	96.30%	total	\$38,098.18
MUSIC ENDOWMENT		1,985.00	139.00	1,846.00	7.00%		
TOTAL ENDOWMENT		7,992.00	3,246.52	4,745.48	40.62%		
MISSION COLLECTIONS ETC							
CHRISTMAS 2019 OFFERING		2,000.00	2,057.00	-57.00	102.85%		
EASTER 2020 OFFERING		2,000.00	1,653.44	346.56	82.67%		
ENDOWMENT FUND		14,007.00	14,007.00	0.00	100.00%		
TOTAL MISSIONS 2020		18,007.00	17,717.44	289.56	98.39%		
RENTS:							
PARKING LOT		1,800.00	1,800.00	0.00	100.00%		
OLD TOWN HALL (COM. ROOM)		250.00	710.00	-460.00	284.00%		
CHURCH USAGE		10,000.00	9,017.00	983.00	90.17%		
RENT TOTAL:		12,050.00	11,527.00	523.00	95.66%		
MISCELLANEOUS:							
FUNDRAISING		5,000.00	5,024.60	-24.60	100.49%	Fundraising	
WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP		2,500.00		2,500.00	0.00%	spaghetti	\$157.00
MISCELLANEOUS TOTAL:		7,500.00	5,024.60	2,475.40	66.99%	corned beef ar	\$733.50
INCOME FROM INVESTED FUNDS:						oct rummage	\$4,134.10
INVESTMENT ACCOUNT (General Fund)		22,764.00	22,764.00	0.00	100.00%	faire	
KEMPER FUND		301.00	301.00	0.00	100.00%		
PARSONAGE FUND		2,343.00	2,343.00	0.00	100.00%	Total	\$5,024.60
OLD TOWN HALL		9,965.00	9,965.00	0.00	100.00%		
ROGER CLAPP		437.00	437.00	0.00	100.00%		
CAROL WITHERELL FUND		5,267.00	5,267.00	0.00	100.00%		
RUTH WARREN FUND		676.00	676.00	0.00	100.00%		
WHIPPLE		891.00	891.00	0.00	100.00%		
NESIN FUND		49.00	49.00	0.00	100.00%		
INVESTED FUNDS TOTAL:		42,693.00	42,693.00	0.00	100.00%		
GRAND TOTAL		272,097.75	296,190.14	-24,092.39	108.85%		
Check Exchange	\$38,098.18					CHECKBOOK BALANCE 01/01/2020	\$0.00
Refunds to Budget	\$0.00					DEPOSITS	\$334,288.32
						EXPENSES	\$290,136.50
						CHECKBOOK BALANCE 12/31/2020	\$44,151.82
		F2					

EXPENSES		2020 BUDGET AMOUNT	AMOUNT SPENT YTD	BALANCE	% SPENT	Actual Amount	Refund
PASTORAL MINISTRY;							
SALARY		23,500.00	23,500.00	0.00	100.00%		
SOCIAL SECURITY		3,633.75	3,633.60	0.15	100.00%		
HOUSING		24,000.00	24,000.00	0.00	100.00%		
PENSION		12,000.00	12,020.00	-20.00	100.17%		
TERM LIFE & DISABILITY		846.00	846.00	0.00	100.00%		
HEALTH INSURANCE		8,949.00	8,775.50	173.50	98.06%		
PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE		2,000.00	317.59	1,682.41	15.88%		
SUBSTITUTE MINISTER		600.00	75.00	525.00	12.50%		
PASTORAL MINISTRY TOTAL		75,528.75	73,167.69	2,361.06	96.87%		
STAFF:							
CHURCH SCHOOL COORDINATOR		13,100.00	13,350.00	-250.00	101.91%		
NURSERY SUPERVISOR		1,300.00	525.00	775.00	40.38%		
CUSTODIAN - SALARY		15,000.00	15,448.50	-448.50	102.99%		
MINISTER OF MUSIC - SALARY		27,853.00	27,853.00	0.00	100.00%		
- PENSION		3,342.00	3,342.00	0.00	100.00%		
SUBSTITUTE ORGANIST		600.00	0.00	600.00	0.00%		
SOLO/SECTION LEADERS		8,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	50.00%		
SECRETARY - SALARY		16,500.00	17,325.00	-825.00	105.00%		
TREASURER - SALARY		13,000.00	13,000.00	0.00	100.00%		
FICA (.0765 x Salaries) all staff		7,368.00	6,881.71	486.29	93.40%		
STAFF TOTAL:		106,063.00	101,725.21	4,337.79	95.91%		0.00
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES:							
POSTAGE		500.00	985.50	-485.50	197.10%		
TELEPHONE		2,800.00	2,848.17	-48.17	101.72%		
INTERNET EXPENSE		250.00	289.97	-39.97	115.99%		
SUPPLIES		1,000.00	429.89	570.11	42.99%		
EQUIPMENT - REPAIR		500.00	368.85	131.15	73.77%		
- SERVICE CONTRACTS		1,500.00	785.08	714.92	52.34%		
COPIER LEASE PAYMENT		2,150.00	2,148.00	2.00	99.91%		
ADMINISTRATIVE TOTAL:		8,700.00	7,855.46	844.54	90.29%		0.00
MAINTENANCE EXPENSES:							
SUPPLIES		1,300.00	851.60	448.40	65.51%		
UTILITIES		4,200.00	4,205.98	-5.98	100.14%		
FUEL		9,000.00	6,416.50	2,583.50	71.29%		
REPAIRS		3,500.00	4,159.62	-659.62	118.85%		
EQUIPMENT PURCHASE		150.00		150.00	0.00%		
PLOWING		1,500.00	360.00	1,140.00	24.00%		
EXTERMINATING FEES		170.00	170.00	0.00	100.00%		
BUILDING AND MAINTANCE		2,975.00	2,865.00	110.00	96.30%		
MAINTENANCE EXPENSE TOTAL:		22,795.00	19,028.70	3,766.30	83.48%	0.00	0.00
INSURANCE:							
LIABILITY & BONDING		25,000.00	26,815.75	-1,815.75	107.26%		
WORKER'S COMPENSATION		1,750.00	1,874.00	-124.00	107.09%	2,997.00	2,821.00
TOTAL INSURANCE:		26,750.00	28,689.75	-1,939.75	107.25%	29,812.75	2,821.00
		F3					

EXPENSES CONT. 2020		2020	AMOUNT	BALANCE	%	Actual	Refund
		BUDGET	SPENT		SPENT	Amount	
		AMOUNT	YTD				
MUSIC COMMITTEE							
INSRUMENTALISTS		1,250.00	0.00	1,250.00	0.00%		
COMMITTEE EXPENSE		735.00	139.00	596.00	18.91%		
		1,985.00	139.00	1,846.00	7.00%	0.00	0.00
MISSIONS & OUTREACH:							
Friends of Franklin Ave		1,200.51	1,201.48	-0.97	100.08%		
Heifer Project		825.35	825.35	0.00	100.00%		
Hello Hati		825.35	825.35	0.00	100.00%		
Kamp for Kids Kampership		1,200.51	1,200.51	0.00	100.00%		
Kindship Fund		1,200.51	1,200.51	0.00	100.00%		
National Military Family Assoc		1,650.70	1,650.70	0.00	100.00%		
OCWM		500.00	500.00	0.00	100.00%		
Our Community Table (Meal Prep)		1,200.50	1,200.50	0.00	100.00%		
Our Community Table (operating Funds)		1,200.51	1,200.51	0.00	100.00%		
Our House		1,200.51	1,200.51	0.00	100.00%		
Red Cross		1,200.51	1,200.48	0.03	100.00%		
Salvation Army		1,200.51	1,200.51	0.00	100.00%		
Samaritan Inn		1,200.51	1,200.51	0.00	100.00%		
Sara Gillett		1,200.51	1,200.51	0.00	100.00%		
Westfield Food Bank		1,200.51	1,200.51	0.00	100.00%		
Discretionary		1,000.00	709.50	290.50	70.95%		
Mission & Outreach Total :		18,007.00	17,717.44	289.56	98.39%		
COMMITTEE FUNDS:							
DIACONATE OPERATING ACCT		200.00	21.24	178.76	10.62%	CHECK EXCHANGE:	
PEOPLE AND PROGRAMS		3,032.00	242.52	2,789.48	8.00%	Concert Com	40.46
STEWARDSHIP		500.00		500.00	0.00%	Kitchen repa	18,041.95
DENOMINATIONAL DONATIONS		100.00		100.00	0.00%	Church Scho	4,580.25
MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE		250.00		250.00	0.00%	misc.	2,961.34
MARKETING		187.00	183.43	3.57	98.09%	memorial flo	941.85
COMMITTEE FUND TOTAL:		4,269.00	447.19	3,821.81	10.48%	Refuge Proj	106.77
						music specia	650.00
CHURCH SCHOOL						Soup Kitchen	588.05
CURRICULUM		1,700.00		1,700.00	0.00%	Gaylord	99.99
SPECIAL EVENTS		250.00	46.64	203.36	18.66%	scholarship	4,000.00
MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH		400.00		400.00	0.00%	heifer	358.00
YOUTH MINISTRY FUND		650.00	107.43	542.57	16.53%	search comm	457.85
CHURCH SCHOOL TOTAL:		3,000.00	154.07	2,845.93	5.14%	mission trip	450.00
						walk run	4,576.67
COST OF OLD TOWN HALL BUILDING						mission	245.00
ELECTRIC		600.00	649.23	-49.23	108.21%	total	38,098.18
FUEL		1,600.00	1,012.64	587.46	63.28%		
WATER/SEWER		1,200.00	1,014.15	185.85	84.51%		
MISC REPAIRS		1,800.00	437.89	1,362.11	27.37%		
TOTAL COST OF OLD TOWN HALL BUILDING		5,000.00	3,113.81	1,886.19	62.28%		
GRAND TOTALS		272,097.75	252,038.32	20,059.43	92.63%		
			\$290,136.50				
			290,136.50				
			0.00				
		F4					

First Congregational Church	Beginning Balance	Deposits	Withdrawals	Ending Balance
Savings Account 2020	January 1, 2020			December 31, 2021
January 31, 2020-December 31, 2020				
Budget Committee:Banner Fund	320.02			320.02
Budget Committee:Capital Campaign	122.11			122.11
Budget Committee: 2020 Budget Challenge	23,300.00		23,300.00	0.00
Budget Committee:Concert Committee	2,695.31	300.00	40.48	2,954.83
Budget Committee:Fowler fund 2020	8,400.00		4,200.00	4,200.00
Budget Committee:Fowler fund 2022	0.00	4,200.00		4,200.00
Budget Committee:Library Fund	78.83			78.83
Budget Committee:Mission Project (Lenton Lunch)	977.22	498.50	450.00	1,023.72
Budget Committee: Special Donation	1,050.00	950.57	848.44	1,150.13
Budget Committee: Pledge 2020	3,600.00		3,600.00	0.00
Budget Committee: Pledge 2021	0.00	7,100.00		7,100.00
Budget Committee:Refuge Kits	58.07	50.70	106.77	0.00
Budget Committee:SANFORD HALL FOR 2021	0.00	17,494.05		17,494.05
Budget Committee:SANFORD HALL FOR 2020	8,022.00		8,022.00	0.00
Budget Committee: Stickel Funds for 2022	0.00	20,000.00		20,000.00
Budget Committee: Stickel Funds for 2021	20,000.00			20,000.00
Budget Committee: Stickel Funds for 2020	17,050.00		17,050.00	0.00
Budget Committee:Working Capital	38,215.97	10,998.32	12,825.55	34,388.74
Church School:Bright Nights	183.60			183.60
Church School:Committee	2,230.96	583.00	1,138.39	1,680.57
Church School:Heifer	0.00	358.00	358.00	0.00
Church School:Youth Group	1,054.88	2,386.00	3,440.88	0.00
Church School: Confirmation Class	0.00	340.00	140.00	200.00
Diaconate:People and Programs	2,254.27		347.18	1,907.09
Flower Funds:Beals Flower Fund	41.02			41.02
Flower Funds:Gaylord Flower Fund	150.01		99.99	50.02
Flower Funds:Memorial Flowers	3,108.51	60.00	118.85	3,052.66
Flower Funds:Pratt Flower Fund	37.88			37.88
Invested Funds:Kemper Fund	0.00	301.00	301.00	0.00
Invested Funds: Parsonage	0.00	2,343.00	2,343.00	0.00
Invested Funds: Old Town Hall Fund	0.00	9,985.00	9,985.00	0.00
Invested Funds: Roger Clapp	0.00	437.00	437.00	0.00
Invested Funds: Memorial Funds	0.00	1,415.00	1,365.00	50.00
Invested Funds: Music Endowment	921.00	139.00	1,080.00	0.00
Invested Funds: Continuing Education	0.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.00
Invested Funds: Noble Estate	0.00	1,848.79	1,848.79	0.00
Invested Funds: Warren	0.00	676.00	676.00	0.00
Invested Funds: Whipple	0.00	891.00	891.00	0.00
Invested Funds: Nestn	0.00	49.00	49.00	0.00
Invested Funds:Carol Witherall Fund	0.00	5,187.80	5,187.80	0.00
Invested Funds: Stickel (Search Committee)	0.00	457.85	457.85	0.00
Invested Funds: Stickel (Kitchen Reno)	0.00	17,901.95	18,041.95	-140.00
Music Committee: Music Program First Church Mem	1,453.19			1,453.19
Music Committee: Music Scholarship	1,000.00	2,000.00	650.00	2,350.00
Property Committee:Carillon Fund	245.93			245.93
Property Committee: Building & Maintance	3,072.41		2,865.00	207.41
Women's Fellowship:Candy Cane Fair	5,894.92			5,894.92
Women's Fellowship:Coffee Hour Fund	75.25			75.25
World Service Committee: Mission 2020	2,032.00	15,610.44	17,642.44	0.00
World Service Committee: Mission 2021	0.00	1,985.00		1,985.00
World Service Committee:Soup Kitchen	3,849.11	1,212.50	638.05	4,423.56
TOTAL	149,499.48	131,723.47	144,504.37	\$136,718.58
	149,499.48			136,718.58
				\$0.00
		F5		

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH					
18 BROAD STREET					
WESTFIELD, MA 01085					
Proposed 2021 Budget		2021			
		BUDGETED			
		AMOUNT			
SUPPORT FROM THE CONGREGATION					
PLEDGE 2020=		500.00			
PLEDGE 2021=		112,000.00			
PLATE (CASH) =		1,000.00			
CONGREGATION TOTAL		113,500.00			
GIFTS FROM TRUSTS					
FOWLER FUND		4,200.00			
SANFORD-HALL		17,494.00			
STICKEL TRUST		20,000.00			
TRUST TOTAL		41,694.00			
INCOME FROM ENDOWMENT FUND					
PEOPLE AND PROGRAMS		3,194.00			
BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE		3,174.00			
MUSIC ENDOWMENT		2,140.00			
TOTAL ENDOWMENT		8,508.00			
MISSION COLLECTIONS ETC					
CHRISTMAS 2018 OFFERING		2,000.00			
EASTER 2019 OFFERING		2,000.00			
ENDOWMENT FUND		16,276.00			
TOTAL MISSIONS 2018		20,276.00			
RENTS:					
PARKING LOT		1,800.00			
OLD TOWN HALL (COM. ROOM)		250.00			
CHURCH USAGE		8,200.00			
RENT TOTAL:		10,250.00			
MISCELLANEOUS:					
FUNDRAISING		2,500.00			
WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP		0.00			
MISCELLANEOUS TOTAL:		2,500.00			
INCOME FROM INVESTED FUNDS:					
INVESTMENT ACCOUNT (General Fund)		23,200.00			
KEMPER FUND		226.00			
PARSONAGE FUND		2,381.00			
OLD TOWN HALL		10,119.00			
ROGER CLAPP		443.00			
CAROL WITHERELL FUND		5,659.00			
RUTH WARREN FUND		716.00			
WHIPPLE		952.00			
NESIN FUND		51.00			
INVESTED FUNDS TOTAL:		43,747.00			
GRAND TOTAL		240,475.00			
			F6		

EXPENSES CONT. 2021		2021			
		BUDGET			
		AMOUNT			
MUSIC COMMITTEE					
INSTRUMENTALISTS		1,250.00			
COMMITTEE EXPENSE		890.00			
TOTAL MUSIC COMMITTEE		2,140.00			
Mission & Outreach :					
Discretionary		500.00			
Our Churches Wider Mission		3,000.00			
American Red Cross		1,076.73			
Kamp for Kids Kampership		500.00			
Our Community Table (Meal Prep)		1,076.73			
Our Community Table (operating Funds)		1,076.73			
Salvation Army		1,076.73			
Westfield Food Pantry Operating Cost		1,076.73			
Samaritan Inn		1,076.73			
Our House		1,076.73			
Kinship Fund		1,076.73			
Sara Gillett Fund, Services for the Elderly		1,076.73			
Friends of Franklin Ave School		1,076.73			
Springfield Rescue Mission		1,076.73			
Westfield Boys and Girls Club		1,076.73			
National Military Family Assoc		1,677.64			
Hoifer Project		838.80			
Hello Hati		838.80			
Mission & Outreach Total :		20,276.00			
COMMITTEE FUNDS:					
DIACONATE OPERATING ACCT		200.00			
PEOPLE AND PROGRAMS		3,194.00			
DENOMINATIONAL DONATIONS		100.00			
MARKETING		187.00			
COMMITTEE FUND TOTAL:		3,681.00			
CHURCH SCHOOL		1,350.00			
CHURCH SCHOOL TOTAL:		1,350.00			
COST OF OLD TOWN HALL BUILDING					
ELECTRIC		600.00			
FUEL		1,600.00			
WATER/SEWER		1,200.00			
MISC REPAIRS		1,600.00			
TOTAL COST OF OLD TOWN HALL BUILDING		5,000.00			
Total expenses		240,475.00			
Total Income		240,475.00			
Difference		0.00			
			F8		