



2021 Annual Report
presented on Zoom at the
Annual Meeting February 6, 2022

Revised 2/03/2022



ACTING PASTOR'S REPORT



This past year has been a year of transition for our congregation, as we've gradually begun to come back into the building as more and more people in our community have been vaccinated. On May 16, 2021, our youth group started meeting in person back in the Youth Room. We restarted in-person worship on Sunday, June 13, and slowly incorporated singing back into the service. In October, we re-started Sunday school.

On May 23, we celebrated Emma Brewer-Wallin's ministry as our student minister for the last two years. After graduating from Harvard Divinity School, she is now serving churches throughout the Southern New England Conference as the Conference Minister of Environmental and Economic Justice. During her time with us, Emma had a great impact, especially with our small groups, by increasing our awareness of how to do the work of outreach and justice. We were truly blessed by her time with us.

The largest transition, however, was saying goodbye to our pastor, Rev. John Allen, as he accepted a call to serve as senior pastor at First Parish in Brunswick, Maine. Our congregation was truly blessed by John's leadership, his incredible preaching and his warm and pastoral spirit. During his tenure, our church saw significant growth — especially among families with children — became a more active presence in the community, and launched a capital campaign that transformed our basement into a youth room we enjoy today. On September 26, our congregation joined together to celebrate John's time with us. We are grateful for the message of God's love and grace that he both spoke and demonstrated through his sermons and actions that we carry with us even as we miss him, Molli, Cora, and Lydia.

In October, I accepted the role of Acting Pastor as the congregation enters into a strategic visioning process before calling the next settled pastor. I am deeply grateful to John for his help with the transition, to our staff and church leaders, who have been wonderful to work alongside, and to all of you who have been so kind and supportive of me as I've moved into this new role.

2021 Significant Milestones

The year 2021 continued to be hard for all of us. We wrestled with questions of safety about COVID-19, and I'm deeply grateful to the Board of Trustees for their diligent work to make sure we are able to gather together in the safest way possible. In spite of these challenges, we also had much to celebrate.

Thanks to Candice Brown and several other volunteers from our congregation, we were able to move Caroling on the Common outside to the Town Gazebo (*photo at right*). With kids roasting marshmallows in fire pits while wearing glow sticks, we sang along as the Milton High School Holiday Choir led us in familiar Christmas carols. We even had an impromptu concert, as two children grabbed the microphone at the end. After such a long time of isolation, it was great to gather together with people from our church and the larger community to have fun together and to celebrate.



Sunday school got off to a slow start, but soon we were averaging more than 10 children each Sunday morning. We really had a boost when Alex Barber agreed to direct our children's Christmas pageant — 17 kids participated. In what may have been my favorite Sunday since we reopened, we celebrated, laughed and were moved as our kids shared with us the Christmas story through their pageant, "Christmas Gifts." They reminded us that the true gifts of Christmas are faith, peace, hope and love. Our church owes our deep gratitude to Alex for a job well done.

Our congregation, once again, stepped up in service to the larger community. Our coat and clothing drive brought in more than 1000 items to share with those in need, while our food drive filled the altar with bags of groceries. I'm grateful to our Board of Benevolence members as they continue to lead the way for us in serving the larger community.

In June, we celebrated Confirmation Sunday in an in-person, outdoor service. Maya Egan, Lydia Geering, Sophie Roth, Wesley Morissette and Madeline Regnier all completed their confirmation class and took the vows to become full members of our church. This group of confirmands showed not only deep commitment to our church, but also great perseverance to complete confirmation during such a challenging time.

Our youth also led us in worship for our Youth Sunday Worship on May 16. Maya Egan offered a sermon on care for the Earth, and Sophie Roth and Lydia Geering performed musical pieces on the piano. Many of our youth participated by offering readings.

Finally, our livestream worship continued to be a vital way of worshiping, by providing an alternative worship experience for those who are not yet ready to resume in-person worship or find online worship more meaningful. In 2021, we had more than 4500 views on our YouTube page, and, even after restarting in-person worship, we continue to have 35 to 50 views on the livestream each week.

The Year Ahead

Starting 2022 in the midst of another COVID-19 surge is not how I envisioned beginning this year. We will continue to be diligent in looking at our COVID-19 protocols to make sure the safety of all in our community remains a significant priority as we plan worship and ministry. Even so, I still believe 2022 is a year of great potential for us. In January, we welcomed Hannah Smith-Erb as our new Minister of Children and Families. Hannah is a first-year seminary student at Boston University School of Theology and a member in discernment of the Maine United Church of Christ. She brings a wealth of new energy and ideas that will make our Sunday school and children's ministry more vibrant and meaningful.

Finally, as we've learned from finding new ways of doing church during the pandemic, we do not have to be afraid of the unknown, or of trying new things. In the coming months, our church will, in earnest, begin its strategic visioning process around the question, "Who is God calling us to be going forward?" This church has a long history of faithfully responding to God's call at different times and seasons in its history, and I'm confident we will continue to do so no matter what 2022 throws our way.

I am honored to serve as your pastor and grateful to be on this journey with you.

Respectfully submitted,



Rev. R.G. Wilson-Lyons

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MISSION STATEMENT

First Congregational Church of Milton is a growing and energetic church family. We constantly seek ways to be not only Jesus’ hands and feet, but also his voice, ears, and heart. We worship Christ at our center. We celebrate God’s presence through study, children’s programs, prayer, and music. We build community through small groups and fellowship, and by overcoming challenges together. We serve each other, our neighbors, and the world through outreach. We welcome all to our growing congregation.



WELCOMING STATEMENT

We affirm our faith in Jesus Christ and in the Church that he has called into being, which by his grace and mercy welcomes all.

We encourage all who join us — regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or social, economic, physical, or mental condition — and confess their faith in Jesus Christ to share fully in all aspects of our church life and leadership.

We believe relationships between individuals, groups, and nations must be based on love, justice, commitment, and mutual respect. We strive toward such relationships in our church, homes, and community.

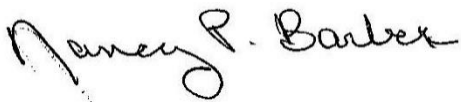
We are especially grateful for the gift of children in our community. We promise to help them grow in faith and to teach them love, respect, and value for themselves and others.

2022 ANNUAL MEETING WARRANT

To: Members of First Congregational Church of Milton, Massachusetts

GREETINGS: You are hereby notified that the Annual Meeting of First Congregational Church of Milton, Massachusetts, will be held on Sunday, February 6, 2022, 11:30 a.m., via Zoom, to take action on the following articles:

- Article I: To hear, and to act upon the reports of the officers, standing committees, organizations, and delegates of the church for January 1 to December 31, 2021.
- Article II: To elect officers, church boards, standing committees, delegates, and representatives for the ensuing year.
- Article III: To adopt the budget proposed by the Board of Trustees for the 2022 fiscal year, or to take any action thereon.
- Article IV: To present to the congregation the proposed process for strategic planning.
- Article V: To transact any other business that may legally be raised.



*Nancy Barber, Church Clerk
(original, signed warrant on file with clerk)*

2021 CHURCH STATISTICS SUMMARY OF CHANGES AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021

Members.....218*
Households.....112

**Includes 23 inactive members (est.)*

New Members2

by letter of transfer
Rev. Jeffrey Johnson

by affirmation of baptism
Joseph Bradley

Members Removed by Transfer.....2

Deaths.....0

Baptisms..... 3

August 15 Paul Richard Swan
September 12 Charles Thomas Hart
September 19 Cecelia Mae Turgeon

Members Removed by Request.....0

2022 NOMINATIONS REPORT

Serving February 6, 2022 – February 5, 2023 These nominations are presented by the Nominating Committee, Frank Wilson and R.G. Wilson-Lyons. All nominations were made in consultation with the current chairs of each board and committee.

Serving Since		
Moderator:	Frank Wilson	2000
Clerk:	Nancy Barber	2021
Treasurer:	Cathy Arnold-Matejka	2017
Historian:	Jamie Roth	2016

*Newly nominated members being voted on at this meeting are indicated in **bold**.*

CHURCH COUNCIL is the current chair of each committee, as well as the moderator, treasurer, clerk, and pastor.

DIACONATE	Serving Since
Alexander Hasha	2022
Barbara Levy	2020
Candice Brown	2019
Jay Fundling	2018
Nancy Barber	2017
Ann Riley	2017
Jonathan Hall	2016
Steve Paxhia	2015
Doug Stewart	2015
BOARD OF TRUSTEES	
Nicole Rukstalis	2021
Paula Goodrich	2021
Jaymee Mannix	2021
Marc Robert	2021
Kate Kibbee	2020
Heather Baker	2019
Carter Fahy	2018
Niels Krejci	2017
MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE	
Niels Krejci	2019
Ashley Emerson	2018
Patricia Morisette	2017
Edith Neil	2017
Betsy Crowley	2016
Jenn Idell	Assoc. Mem.
AV COMMITTEE	
Adam Ochs	2016
Mike Baker	2016
Niels Krejci	2015
Doug Gaff	2014
SOCIAL COMMITTEE (inactive, looking for members)	

BOARD OF BENEVOLENCE	Serving Since
Maya Egan	2021
Erika Swan	2021
Marshall Levy	2021
Anne Regnier	2021
Madeline Regnier	2021
Mavis Anderson	2020
David Follett	2019
Betsy Disharoon	2017
Deirdre Merrill	2017
BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	
Alexandra Barber	2022
Emily Gorman	2022
Karina Lund	2018
Donna Manzi	2017
Adam Ochs	2014
MUSIC COMMITTEE	
Alex Hasha	2021
Patricia Morisette	2021
Brenda Gaff	2014
PASTOR PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE	
Deirdre Merrill	2022
Nancy Barber	2017
Niels Krejci	2017
DELEGATES	
Grace Dickerson	2020
Maya Egan	2020
STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE	
Frank Wilson	2014
FLOWER COMMITTEE	
Christine Paxhia	2021
USHERS	
Bill Pepe	2015

If you are interested in joining a board or committee, please contact the appropriate chair, Rev. R.G. Wilson-Lyons or Frank Wilson.

2021 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Total church revenue received in 2021 was \$187,268. This was favorable to the budget by \$5,648, but below 2020 by \$15,870. The Centre School revenue, reported in non-operating income, was \$158,907, which was \$1,311 favorable to the budget of \$157,596. The net result was an overall increase in revenue of \$6,959 in 2021 as compared to the budget, although representing a \$73,077 decline compared to 2020.

Total 2021 expenses were \$385,971 compared to a budget of \$401,872 for a favorable variance of \$15,901. With revenue slightly higher than the plan and the expenses favorable to the plan, the net loss for the year was \$39,796, which was \$32,860 favorable to the planned net loss of \$72,656.

Church giving revenue in 2021 was \$168,030. This was \$4,030 favorable to the planned revenue of \$164,000. Although favorable to the plan, the 2021 giving revenue was less than the 2020 giving revenue by \$21,061. The rental income was \$19,237 in 2021, which was favorable to the plan by \$1,617. GSEC did not return until December vs. a planned return in September, but that reduction in revenue was offset by the rental income from the carriage house, previously known as the parsonage. Transfers were made into the Fidelity account for giving and the capital campaign (\$27,893) as well as earning an overall 12.2% on our holdings.

Church operating expenses of \$228,448 were slightly unfavorable to the budget but substantially lower than 2020 by \$67,505. The planned repairs and improvements account for the church and carriage house was budgeted at \$15,030. This was closely managed and as a result only incurred costs of \$4,680 for needed gutters, resulting in a favorable variance of \$10,350. Church utilities were also favorable to the plan by \$6,044. The ongoing building maintenance, which was \$77,952, was \$21,407 unfavorable to the plan of \$56,545. These additional expenses related to the three new HVAC systems in The Centre School, an eviction and exclusion of raccoons and squirrels at The Centre School, lighting issues in Johnson Hall and the parking lot, and deferred maintenance at the carriage house.

Balance Sheet			
	As of 12.31.2021	As of 12.31.2020	Change
Assets			
Cash and Investments	\$542,401	\$436,513	\$105,888
Property and Equipment	\$4,557,988	\$4,557,988	\$0
Total Assets	\$5,100,389	\$4,994,501	\$105,888
Liabilities			
Benevolence	\$10,679	\$10,823	(\$144)
Capital Campaign Funds (Receivable)	(\$60,175)	(\$127,020)	\$66,845
Reserve Funds/ Youth Programs	\$159,672	\$117,496	\$42,176
Total Liabilities	\$110,176	\$1,299	\$108,877
Net Worth	\$4,990,213	\$4,993,202	(\$2,989)

Proposed B&G - Repairs and Improvements for 2022

Carriage House - 483 Canton Ave

Replace rotted sills on Canton Ave side of house	\$2,500	
Replace broken living room window (included with sills)	\$0	
Replace rotted sill on school side	\$1,500	
Investigate and repair leaking kitchen ceiling/bathroom issue	\$3,000	\$7,000
	<hr/>	

Church building - 495 Canton Ave

Replace old smoke detectors in church bldg	\$4,350	
Trip test of dry sprinkler system	\$1,380	
Flight Alarm needs to be at trip test	\$500	
BLDG INSPECTION: Relocate E-lights HH	\$4,300	
Trim tulip tree and large tree at parlor - both on roof	\$1,000	
Repair piano lid in case of dispute w tuner	\$1,200	\$12,730
	<hr/>	

Centre School building - 505 Canton Ave

Repair youth room from flood if not covered by insurance	\$11,000	
Eliminate dead/decaying trees at playground	\$2,000	
Replace chandeliers in Johnson Hall	\$3,000	
Replace exterior parking lot lights	\$1,500	
Replace vent cupola covers over pantry w/ electrician	\$3,100	
BLDG INSPECTION: Change exit signs to LED	\$2,400	\$23,000
	<hr/>	

Total cost projects		<hr/> <hr/>
		\$42,730

The pastor costs were \$95,960 as compared to a budget of \$104,950 for a favorable variance of \$8,989. This is a result of the current call for our Acting Pastor vs. the previous settled pastor's call and the savings in utilities because of the rental of the carriage house. Music expenses were \$44,806, which was on target with the budget. Christian education costs of \$16,756 were lower than the budget of \$26,622 for a savings of \$9,466. This was due to our Acting Pastor retaining Youth Minister duties, the delay in hiring a Minister of Children and Families, and not holding Sunday school for the majority of the year for a savings in teacher pay.

Although The Centre School had opened in August of 2020, they were operating at 50% capacity due to the state COVID-19 protocols. The revenue in non-operating income was \$158,907, which was the annual base rent. Due to the reduced enrollment, they did not show a profit. Therefore, we did not receive any revenue sharing from Bright Horizons; however, we anticipate that to resume in the fourth quarter of 2022.

We continued to allow Mel O'Drama and Kenny Academy of Irish Dance to hold their classes in the Youth Room, because the town after-school program has not opened. There was much discussion with GSEC and the various anonymous groups during the year to determine their interest in returning to in-person meetings. Two of the groups have continued to meet virtually. The Thursday evening group is currently using the Youth Room due to capacity limits in the parlor. In addition, the Milton Youth Advisory Council is also holding their meetings in the Youth Room.

It still remains critical to honor our contract with Bright Horizons stating that no church members or staff can access the 505 building during school hours. This has been tightly enforced as a result of the COVID-19 protocols imposed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care and Bright Horizons. Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Once again, I am compelled to offer a special thanks to Frank Wilson as he truly is “my partner in crime” when it comes to a roof leaking or a basement flooding. We dealt with plenty of those water issues in 2021 with the historic rainfall during the summer months of July and August, and then again in late October.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lori Connelly, Director of Finance and Operations

2021 Building Projects Completed

Although the church building had minimal activity during 2021, there are nevertheless many things that require attention, and most of them are behind the scenes. Here is a list of a variety of projects, large and small, without the extra explanations of the potential number of site visits, calls, follow-ups, or any number of other encumbrances encountered in getting things completed, with the main objective of keeping The Centre School (TCS) open and operating with as little disruption as possible. There are numerous individuals called upon to facilitate getting this work done in a timely manner. Thank you to all of the members that have participated in any of these projects.

Jan '21

Called HVAC contractor about part for the parlor heating issues from Nov 2020.
Hired new heating contractor – solved same day.
Installed “used” humidistat in piano.
Resolved kitchen inspection issues and received certificate-dirty fridge and freezer; no sanitizer.
Replaced blower motor, capacitor, and high limit switch in TCS lobby heater to cease burning smell.

Feb '21

Closed TCS early due to snow and ice storm.
Managed snow and ice all month.
Replaced blower motor, capacitor, and high limit switch in JH left side heater due to lack of heat.
Inspected thermostats in rm 115/116 and needed to replace – one room was hot; one room was cold.
Repaired leaking classroom sink.
Installed wireless Night Eye backup alarm for the sump pump.

Met with plumbers to assess ejector pump problems.
Contacted ejector pump vendor for maintenance contract.
Contracted with Baystate Wildlife for an eviction and exclusion of raccoons and squirrels in TCS ceiling (photo below).
Installed one-way doors, mesh, flashing, and foam to allow animals only an option to go out.



New critter proofing

Mar '21

Installed mesh fencing on track where large tree branch fell on the fence and broke it.
Replaced broken fence section between track and carriage house.
Replaced rotted shed ramps in the track area.
Repaired another leaking classroom sink.
Installed new fence section taken down by tree branch.

Apr '21

Replaced recessed lights in Johnson Hall with LED.
Analyzed the cost to replace lights and ballasts in the dome lighting and determined it would be cost effective to replace with LED fixtures.
Climbed – me personally - into the belfry to inspect for critter sightings and noted none.

May '21

Inspected fire suppression system in kitchen – semi – annual requirement.
Inspected ejector pump – contract.
Turned on sprinkler system.
Inspected fire alarm system at TCS – requirement.
Replaced flush valve, O-ring, and vacuum breaker on leaking classroom toilet.
Repaired belt and serviced riding lawnmower.
Repaired and installed screens on classroom windows.

Jun '21

Replaced fan motor and capacitor in HVAC on large side JH.
Repaired leaking coils in attic of rm 111.
Replaced thermostat wire in HVAC on small side JH.
Replaced faulty circuit board in air handler of TCS foyer HVAC unit.
Prepped for compressor to be installed in HVAC on large side JH.
Replaced condensing unit in HVAC on small side JH.
Repaired leaking pipe in center of youth room.
Replaced a broken toilet bolt and reset the toilet in a classroom.
Replaced lockset on secondary set of doors in the lobby of TCS.
Spread mulch on the property.
Applied a solution – over the weekend – to the sandbox to eliminate an ant situation.
Replaced humidistat in piano with a “new” one.

Jul '21

Handled a flood in the basement under the parlor over the 4th of July weekend – HISTORIC rainfall in July.
Repaired holes in the wall and repaired them again with a stronger product.
Handled a minor flood in the youth room to the left of the double doors.
Cleaned the gutters on all sides of the building and requested an estimate for gutter repair work.
Met with plumber and Thayer Nursery regarding the flooding issues at the parlor basement.

Aug '21

Handled another basement flood under parlor.
Handled minor youth room flood again.
Met with gutter company on estimates provided.
Investigated water in creepy basement – ground water.
Investigated a stream that was made in the dirt from the ground water that caused a stream to the basement under HH.
Repaired the swell box of the organ because it had reversed direction.
Rebuilt flush valves due to dry rot on toilets in two different classrooms.
Repaired lock on playground door in room 113.
Installed compressor in HVAC on large side JH.
Replaced thermostat in room 113.
Investigated critter activity in fireplace at the carriage house.
Sealed hole on exterior side of house at the chimney.

Sep '21

Took apart downspout at youth room and removed debris causing a back-up of water – Jon Pratt.
Inspected building at TCS by town – requirement.
Removed large beehive above youth room door.
Evacuated TCS when the fire alarm sounded – caused by a smoke detector in JH.
Contacted animal control about visiting fox to parking lot and told he lives there and we should do a lesson plan on foxes in natural habitats.
Rebuilt flush valve due to dry rot on toilet in ladies room bathroom in TCS lobby.
Cleaned condensate drains in HVAC units above rooms 111 and 112 where the ceiling tiles were leaking.

Contacted dumpster company for an extra pick-up because it was overflowing, and dirty diapers were on the parking lot for the animals.
Took apart downspout at right corner of church to remove debris.
Trimmed overgrown tree branches and ivy along playground fences.

Oct '21

Removed dead pine tree at corner of garage.
Conducted walk through of vacated carriage house.
Replaced broken window in master bedroom.
Repaired dining room ceiling from prior water damage.
Replaced missing cabinet knobs.



Mason McCullough gets to the root of things

Repaired trash barrel cabinet door.
Painted the bedroom walls.
Repaired and refinished upstairs hardwood floors.
Repaired the garage stairs.
Replaced and installed smoke detectors.
Re-keyed all exterior doors.
Washed the foyer window.

Installed missing light bulbs from fixtures.
Power washed mold on exterior of house.
Cleaned the gutters at the carriage house – Matejka team.
Investigated leak in pantry of kitchen in JH.
Inspected TCS for fire code – requirement.
Removed and disposed of old furniture and air conditioners.
Trimmed the trees and overgrown shrubs (*see photo on left*).
Shingled the shed roof in the track area – Matejka team.
Investigated potential solutions for glue on piano lid.
Inspected fire alarm system at TCS – requirement and suggested a trip test of the dry sprinkler system.

Nov '21

Installed new passage doorknob on basement door at CH because it locked on the wrong side.
Replaced light bulbs/ballasts in TCS parking lot lights.
Replaced light bulbs under portico at TCS.
Replaced light bulb over the front doors of the church.
Replaced tumbler on lockset on closet door at TCS.
Replaced blown off siding around the building.
Pulled remaining poison ivy at the carriage house.
Met pest control to assess continued damage at the chimney – further evidence of siding eaten-added steel wool to the area.

Dec '21

Replaced burnt out light bulbs in classrooms and lobby of TCS.
Replaced blower motor in basement furnace because no heat in sanctuary.
Serviced boiler in church basement.
Serviced boiler in carriage house.
Snaked the master bathtub drain.
Raked and bagged leaves around the property.
Installed gutter sections on TCS secondary entrance, youth room corner, and door to nowhere at lobby.
Installed gutter along the back of the carriage house and along the garage.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lori Connelly, Director of Finance and Operations

2022 BUDGET

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	FY	FY	Fav/(Unf)	% Change
	2022	2022	2022	2022	2022	2022	2022	2022	2022	2022	2022	2022	2022	2021	22 Bud v	22 Bud v
Revenue	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Actual	21 Act	21 Act
4000 - Church Revenue																
4120 - Giving Revenue	36,833	10,833	10,833	10,833	10,833	10,833	10,833	10,833	17,833	10,833	10,833	17,837	170,000	168,030	1,970	1%
4600 - Tenant Revenue	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800	3,650	3,650	3,900	4,800	4,800	4,800	54,400	19,237	35,163	183%
Total 4000 - Total Church Revenue	41,633	15,633	15,633	15,633	15,633	15,633	14,483	14,483	21,733	15,633	15,633	22,637	224,400	187,267	37,133	20%
Operating Expenses																
5300 - Pastor																
5310 - Salary w Social Security	5,875	5,875	5,875	5,875	5,875	5,875	5,875	5,875	5,875	5,875	5,875	5,875	70,500	66,499	(4,001)	-6%
5320 - Benefits/Annuity	638	638	638	638	638	638	638	638	638	638	638	638	7,656	18,256	10,600	58%
5315 - Student Minister	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,500	2,500	100%
5340 - Professional Expenses	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	87	1,000	0	(1,000)	#DIV/0!
5350 - Mileage	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	3,000	750	(2,250)	-300%
5360 - Pastor's Discretionary Fund	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	60	500	120	(380)	-317%
5365 - MEALS	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	60	500	0	(500)	0%
5370 - Utilities	0	350	0	0	350	0	0	350	0	0	350	0	1,400	4,160	2,760	66%
5375 - Equity Plan Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,375	3,375	100%
5380 - Substitute Ministers	300	0	0	300	0	0	300	0	0	0	0	0	900	300	(600)	-200%
Total 5300 - Pastor	7,226	7,276	6,926	7,226	7,276	6,926	7,226	7,276	6,926	6,926	7,276	6,970	85,456	95,960	10,504	11%
6200 - Church Operations																
6215 - Director of Operations	3,828	3,828	3,828	3,828	3,828	3,828	3,828	3,828	3,828	3,828	3,828	3,828	45,936	43,377	(2,559)	-6%
6220 - Church Administrator	2,663	2,663	2,663	2,663	2,663	2,663	2,663	2,663	2,663	2,663	2,663	2,663	31,956	30,720	(1,236)	-4%
6225 - Sexton	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	10,800	6,103	(4,697)	-77%
6210 - Administration	1,850	1,840	1,505	1,150	1,430	1,500	1,342	1,552	1,292	1,477	1,397	1,177	17,512	16,936	(576)	-3%
6211 - Marketing	0	0	0	400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	800	1,200	1,126	(74)	-7%
6212 - Deacons	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	50	200	80	(120)	-150%
6235 - Church Utilities	1,455	3,005	1,155	855	955	555	495	1,195	495	555	1,495	1,215	13,430	14,932	1,502	10%
6240 - Insurance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20,132	0	20,132	17,506	(2,626)	-15%
6245 - Building and Grounds	5,865	14,667	8,152	5,830	3,427	3,442	5,090	2,852	3,892	4,355	3,002	4,617	65,191	77,952	12,761	16%
6246 - B&G - Repair/Improve 483/495	0	3,000	0	4,380	5,550	4,300	0	1,000	0	1,500	0	0	19,730	1,290	(18,440)	-1429%
6247 - B&G - Repair/Improve 505	0	11,000	0	3,100	0	0	3,000	2,000	3,900	0	0	0	23,000	3,390	(19,610)	-578%
6250 - Social Committee	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	50	200	0	(200)	#DIV/0!
6251 - Membership Committee	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	50	200	178	(22)	-12%
6255 - Dues	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	175	4,380	0	4,555	4,530	(25)	-1%
6260 - Resources / CONSULTANT	0	0	50	5,000	0	50	0	0	50	0	0	50	5,200	0	(5,200)	#DIV/0!
6265 - FICA/Medi (all)	850	900	900	900	950	950	950	950	950	950	950	950	11,150	10,328	(822)	-8%
Total 6200 - Church Operations	17,311	41,703	19,203	28,906	19,603	18,238	18,168	16,840	18,320	16,603	38,947	16,550	270,392	228,448	(41,944)	-18%
6300 - Music																
6310 - Minister of Music	2,887	2,887	2,887	2,887	2,887	2,887	2,887	2,887	2,887	2,887	2,887	2,887	34,644	33,298	(1,346)	-4%
6320 - Soloists	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	800	0	0	0	1,500	1,500	1,200	10,000	8,160	(1,840)	-23%
6325 - Tuning and Repairs	0	0	590	0	0	185	0	0	275	0	315	185	1,550	1,625	75	5%
6330 - Supplies/ Sheet Music	277	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	250	0	100	0	627	374	(253)	-68%
6340 - Substitute Organist	0	0	0	0	0	0	300	450	600	0	0	0	1,350	1,350	0	0%
Total 6300 - Music	4,164	3,887	4,477	3,887	3,887	3,872	3,187	3,337	4,012	4,387	4,802	4,272	48,171	44,807	(3,364)	-8%
6400 - Christian Education																
6410 - Youth Minister	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14,250	14,250	100%
6420 - Minister of Children and Families	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	15,600	1,520	(14,080)	-926%
6430 - Teachers	250	250	250	250	250	250	150	150	500	500	500	500	3,800	581	(3,219)	-554%
6440 - Curriculum	0	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	500	0	(500)	#DIV/0!
6445 - Supplies, etc.	75	75	75	75	75	25	25	25	75	75	75	75	750	405	(345)	-85%
6450 - Scholarships	0	0	0	0	0	8,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,000	0	(8,000)	#DIV/0!
Total 6400 Christian Education	1,625	2,125	1,625	1,625	1,625	9,575	1,475	1,475	1,875	1,875	1,875	1,875	28,650	16,756	(11,894)	-71%
Total Operating Expense	30,326	54,991	32,231	41,644	32,391	38,611	30,056	28,928	31,133	29,791	52,900	29,667	432,669	385,971	(46,698)	-12%
Net Operating Income	11,307	(39,358)	(16,598)	(26,011)	(16,758)	(22,978)	(15,573)	(14,445)	(9,400)	(14,158)	(37,267)	(7,030)	(208,269)	(198,704)	(9,565)	-5%
Other Income/Expense																
7000 - Non-Operating Income																
7200 - School Building Rental	13,461	13,461	13,461	13,461	13,461	13,461	13,461	13,461	13,797	13,797	13,797	13,797	162,876	158,907	3,969	2%
7201 - Additional School Revenue	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	45,000	0	45,000	0	45,000	#DIV/0!
Total Other Income	13,461	13,461	13,461	13,461	13,461	13,461	13,461	13,461	13,797	13,797	58,797	13,797	207,876	158,907	48,969	31%
Other Expense																
8000 - Non-Operating Expense																
8400 - Contingency	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	837	10,000	0	(10,000)	0%
Total Other Expense	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	837	10,000	0	(10,000)	0%
Net Other Income/Expense	12,628	12,628	12,628	12,628	12,628	12,628	12,628	12,628	12,964	12,964	57,964	12,960	197,876	158,907	38,969	25%
Net Income/ (Loss)	23,935	(26,730)	(3,970)	(13,383)	(4,130)	(10,350)	(2,945)	(1,817)	3,564	(1,194)	20,697	5,930	(10,393)	(39,797)	29,404	N/A

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

The Board of Trustees helps to manage and allocate the assets and funds of the church. We participate in the financial, personnel and operational decisions together with Acting Pastor R.G. Wilson-Lyons and Director of Finance and Operations, Lori Connelly. We act as stewards of the funds, balancing costs against benefits, all with an eye towards God's plan for us as both his children and members of a larger community.

Personnel

In staff management news, in September 2021 we said farewell to Rev. John Allen and welcomed Rev. R.G. Wilson-Lyons as our Acting Pastor. Additionally, we said farewell to Acting Coordinator of Children's Ministry Molli Allen and are welcoming Hannah Smith-Erb as Minister of Children and Families beginning in January 2022. Lastly, we also said farewell to Emma Brewer-Wallin, our student minister, this summer. Acting Pastor R.G. Wilson-Lyons has continued his role as our youth minister.

We welcomed the return of Board of Trustee member Nicole Boyson Rukstalis, and want to express our sincere thanks to Vicki Pezzini, who served on the board since 2019, but moved from Milton in 2021.

COVID-19

Throughout the year, the trustees worked with John, R.G. and Lori to ensure compliance with state guidelines for mitigating the risk of COVID-19 transmission. These mitigation efforts continued the suspension of in-person, indoor church services until June 2021. Since then, indoor, in-person services have continued with precautions, including mandatory wearing of face coverings, contact tracing, sanitizing stations and encouragement of social distancing of worshipers. The Centre School was able to operate in 2021, although enrollment was not as robust as pre-pandemic levels. Other paying tenants (Mel O'Drama and Kenny Academy of Irish Dance) recommenced their use of the building in mid-2021. The Trustees had originally set its 2021 budget with the expectation of all tenants operating at pre-pandemic levels starting in September 2021; however that did not occur, resulting in less funds available.

Budget

Summarizing our financial situation for 2021: We showed a net loss of about \$39,800 versus a net loss for 2020 of about \$59,700. The year had been budgeted to have a net loss of just under \$72,700. Some building maintenance costs were deferred in 2021 with the continued absence of profit sharing from The Centre School; the church received no profit sharing in 2021. Based on budget projections, it appears that 2022 will result in an overall profit for The Centre School, as the church is anticipating receipt of some profit sharing during the fourth quarter of 2022.

Buildings

With the limited funds available, we addressed the most critical deferred maintenance and emergency repairs including replacement of aging HVAC units, removal of trees, repair of damaged fencing and limited repairs to the parsonage. With the departure of Rev. Allen, the trustees leased the parsonage for a period of one year. We want to extend a huge "thank you" to Lori Connelly for her tireless work on all the projects during 2021.

Youth Room

During 2021, the Youth Room saw limited use by our youth group. Our tenants (Mel O'Drama and Kenny Academy of Irish Dance) used the room due to capacity limits in Huntington Hall.

Throughout 2021, after-school sessions by children from the town (called The Wildcat Den) were suspended due to COVID.

Youth Room Capital Campaign

December 2021 had been targeted as the end of the capital campaign for the Youth Room build-out. We are projecting that we will receive ~\$452,000 in gifts for our capital campaign, \$12,000 short of our goal. Construction costs exceeded the estimates we received by roughly \$60,000 for a total of \$496,000, leaving a shortfall of ~\$45,000. As a result, we have extended the capital campaign until June 2022. We are also pursuing a grant from the Copeland Foundation to help retire this debt going forward.

Seaglass Theater Company

The Trustees signed a long-term agreement with the Seaglass Theater Company to allow the organization use of the Sanctuary in return for future performances at the church and promotion of UCC-Milton. As part of the agreement, there is no monetary exchange.

As always, FCC of Milton has much to look forward to in the coming year, and the Board of Trustees is grateful for your support.

Respectfully submitted,
C. Carter Fahy, Chair

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

During 2021, the Stewardship Committee was mainly inactive until late October when Rev. R.G. Wilson-Lyons and Frank Wilson notified the congregation by email and the office notified them by USPS of the 2022 Stewardship Drive. R.G. dedicated a sermon on stewardship, and November 21 was targeted as pledge Sunday.

Three years ago, we began a program of electronic giving where members could pledge electronically causing monthly deductions from their bank accounts to FCC of Milton. The “pledge” is managed by the parishioner and can be increased or decreased as circumstances dictate. The pledge is recurring without an end date.

To date, we have 66 pledges for 2022 with 43 families participating in the electronic giving program. Total pledges to 2022 general fund is \$170,000. Pledges to benevolence is \$30,336. Lost pledges from 2021 is \$19,150 which includes \$9,600 from members who moved, and \$9,550 from those who reduced or canceled their pledges. New or increased pledges equal \$48,340.

In response to Rev. John Allen’s appeal in February 2021 for additional financial support due to the COVID-19 situation, \$5,700 was received and noted as such.

Goals for 2022 are to increase participation in the electronic giving program, and maintain an active stewardship discussion throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,
Frank Wilson, Moderator

SHOPWITHSCRIP REPORT

Due to remote worship, gift card purchases were significantly reduced in 2021.

The good news is net revenue from gift card purchases was \$1,750, thanks to seven folks who continued to order cards.

You can contribute to FCC of Milton, PAINLESSLY, by purchasing gift cards, receiving full value of the card and a percentage goes to the church (see below).

Examples: Milton Market Place 4%, Star and Stop & Shop 4%, Amazon 2%, L.L. Bean and Land's End 16%, and there are 500 other vendors available. — *Frank Wilson, Moderator*

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

The year began with a Church Council meeting on January 10 to discuss the Banner Committee report. The Council voted to recommend to the Trustees the report of the Banner Committee.

In August, we met to discuss the process, steps and time table to begin the search for a settled pastor.

In September, we met to discuss Rev. R.G. Wilson-Lyons being hired as our Acting Pastor. The council voted unanimously in favor of recommending Rev. Wilson-Lyons as acting pastor to the Board of Trustees.

In December, we met to discuss hiring Nickerson Consultants to assist the Church in formulating a strategic plan before beginning the search for a settled pastor.

Respectfully submitted,
Frank Wilson, Moderator

BOARD OF BENEVOLENCE AND SOCIAL CONCERN REPORT

The members of the Board of Benevolence and Social Concern consider it an honor to share the abundance of this congregation with our immediate and extended community. This congregation and community continued to step up and serve boldly with dollars, time and physical labor in record breaking ways.

The historically supportive efforts that continued were:

1. Providing hot meals and bagged lunches to Father Bill's & MainSpring in Brockton monthly.
2. Participating in two food drives for Interfaith Social Services (ISS): One in coordination with East Congregational Church; The other being our traditional Ingathering of Food at Thanksgiving with more than 50 bags donated.
3. Winter coat drive in January resulting in 480 coats donated to MANNA and Solutions at Work.

In addition, a fall clothing and coat drive brought in more than 1200 items donated to Solutions at Work. Plus, many individuals and families from the church participated in painting the exterior of a home in Mattapan with the Clergy and Laity Affordable Housing group this June.

The Southern New England United Church of Christ received the customary \$6000.

This year, the board deliberated with serious intention and prayer our goals in giving and interviewed the recipient organizations receiving our funds in order to maximize the benefits of the generously donated dollars. The following are the guidelines we developed:

Board of Benevolence Giving Values

Embody and reflect God's love by extending compassion into the world.

- In our giving and service, we seek a preferential option for the poor. We understand “the poor” to include those who lack physical resources, opportunity and/or physical and emotional safety. We seek to extend this preferential option to those who are marginalized and oppressed, especially those facing racial injustice and inequity.
- We seek to give in proportion to the needs of organizations – we value offering gifts that will make a difference for the mission of the organization.

Seek our own transformation and growth, as individuals and as a church, listening and learning so that our very lives contribute to the healing of the world.

- We will prioritize maintaining connections with organizations in order to understand from them what their needs are and how we might be supportive of their mission, whether through financial or in-kind donations, acts of service, or learning opportunities. We value maintaining these connections even if they do not need financial support at that time.
- We believe that an emphasis on local organizations will encourage our own transformation and growth by helping us to get to know our surrounding communities and see the needs of our closest neighbors.
- In our learning and service, we value opportunities to involve children and families from the congregation.

Inspired by the Spirit, and working with God toward the future that God imagines for our world.

- In considering the combination of organizations we give to, we value:
 - Few enough organizations that we can maintain connection with them and their missions.
 - Enough organizations that we touch a diversity of needs.
 - Enough flexibility in our yearly disbursements that we can respond to critical needs requested.
- In seeking to partner with God in our giving and service, we will ground our decision-making in prayer and a posture of discernment.

Our total disbursements for 2021 were \$29,945 to 15 organizations.

We welcomed two new members, Maya Egan and Erika Swan, and said goodbye to Susan Ferrari.

This board gained great satisfaction in assisting our congregation in sharing blessings of money and time during this past year of continuing challenges in the world.

Respectfully submitted,
Betsy Disharoon, Chair

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION REPORT

In 2021, the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic required that the church begin the year with remote Sunday services. This meant the suspension of Sunday school for our youngest members. As case numbers decreased and things began to open up, we began to offer Sunday School with board members and several wonderful volunteers running the program with a few dedicated teachers. The in-person participation level remained fairly low. So, as COVID cases increased again, we deemed it necessary to discontinue Sunday school until it was safer for our children. We ended the year on a high note, with the production of a wonderful Christmas Pageant under the direction of Alex Barber. It was a real treat and a fantastic end to the calendar year for our children.

We continued to have weekly youth group meetings, and when safely able, several outdoor gatherings and meet ups under the direction of Reverend Wilson-Lyons.

Reverend John Allen felt the calling to another church community, so we found ourselves in another time of flux. Luckily, we already had an amazing leader among us in Reverend Wilson-Lyons, who agreed to become our acting pastor. This has not prevented R.G. from continuing in his wonderful work as a leader to our youth, as he carries on in that role.

We continued our search for a Minister of Children and Families, in anticipation of the day that we will be able to reconvene our Sunday School full time. And while it did not happen in 2021, in the early part of 2022, we hired Hannah Smith-Erb as our Minister of Children and Families, and are thrilled to have her on board. We would like to thank the members of the Board who served during 2021 for their continued dedication over this past year: Adam Ochs, Donna Manzi, Karina Lund, Megan and Keith Rousseau, and Wendy Garpow.

Respectfully Submitted,
Adam Ochs, Chair

AV COMMITTEE REPORT

The AV team is responsible for running live church events and supporting our streaming ministry. Events include church services, special outdoor events, holiday performances, special music events, memorial services, and the children's Christmas pageant. We rotate responsibilities for running the church service week over week. The AV team is: Doug Gaff, Niels Krejci, Mike Baker and Adam Ochs.

2020 and 2021

Since this is the first AV committee report in a while, we will describe the past couple of years of operations. In March of 2020, in response to COVID-19, we switched to a fully remote church service until June 2021. The service was produced and streamed from the floor of the sanctuary (photo next page). While we've had livestreaming since the sound system was installed in Dec 2012, we invested in additional streaming upgrades as part of this switch to remote worship. We added two additional cameras and a video switcher to create a more produced experience for remote congregants. We also added a professional-grade audio meter to better control the broadcast sound levels, since YouTube places requirements on average and maximum sound levels for streams.

We began 2021 with this same fully remote setup on the sanctuary floor. When we were able to resume in-person services mid-2021, we moved our equipment back to the balcony, but we continued to use multiple video cameras for the livestream. We added an additional camera in the balcony to

show the choir singing. We also added an on-air light in the balcony to indicate when the church is streaming live.

Given the continued presence of COVID-19 variants, we still see a mixture of remote and live participation in Sunday worship. Our YouTube streaming stats for 2021 were:

133 subscribers, 4701 views, 992 hours of watch time, Average of 60 views per service

Also, during 2021, we hosted a couple of outdoor church services, one on the Town Green and one on the side of the church. While we were not able to host our annual indoor Caroling on the Common event, we did host a smaller event on the Town Gazebo, which included support from the AV team. On Christmas Eve, we hosted the family service outside with AV support, and we streamed the late service from inside the church.

Equipment

Most of our equipment continues to function well, but our sound board is approaching 10 years old, and is showing its age. Much like a computer, sound boards have a shelf life. Doug has replaced two circuit boards inside the sound board to keep it running, but we will likely need a capital investment in the near future to replace the sound board.



(above) When in-person worship was cancelled, the AV team streamed the 10 a.m. service from the sanctuary floor.

(left) The inside of the sound board during a recent repair.

Also, worth noting on the equipment front, in larger churches there are typically three or more people who would run a service like ours: one live sound engineer; one broadcast audio/video engineer; and at least one camera person. Given the limited space in the balcony and the limited number of volunteers, we only have one person each Sunday who runs everything. However, running the service has gotten somewhat complicated for a single person. To further improve our streaming ministry and to make it easier on the single AV engineer, Doug and Pastor John explored a more automated multi-

camera setup. Ultimately, we decided that the upgrades were cost prohibitive. We do hope to revisit additional streaming upgrades such as this in the future.

Upcoming Projects

We have several AV projects in the backlog, and we hope to tackle some of them in 2022. These projects include:

- Camera mounting improvements in the balcony
- Wiring an additional camera at the organ
- Installing two additional house mics to better record the congregation singing on the livestream
- Lowering the height of the two existing house mics, which currently pick up too much organ and house echo
- Installing a dedicated organ mic for the livestream
- Replacing several damaged microphone floor jacks on the stage
- Wiring sound into the kitchen for when we resume coffee hour

As always, we welcome your feedback on the live and streaming experience of the church service. Please feel free to talk to anyone on the AV committee if you need anything.

Respectfully Submitted,
Doug Gaff, Chair

DELEGATES REPORT

This year, Maya Egan and Grace Dickerson served as Delegates of this congregation to our wider United Church of Christ. A representative attended both the 2021 spring and fall Annual Gathering of the Southern New England Conference, our UCC Conference that re-formed its borders in January 2020. At the gathering, delegates from across Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut joined together in worship and conversation. Maya and Grace reflected from their experience a hope that this congregation would know that we are part of the United Church of Christ: not just many small circles, but one big circle — a church that is full of diversity and that is a powerful network of action and support. Maya Egan and Grace Dickerson will continue representing FCC of Milton at wider church events in 2022.

DIACONATE REPORT

It was an extraordinary year for First Congregational Church of Milton. As we coped with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, we received the news that Pastor John Allen had accepted a call to First Parish, UCC, in Brunswick Maine. The deacons along with the Church Council and Board of Trustees unanimously called Rev. R.G. Wilson-Lyons to serve as our Acting Pastor starting October 1, 2021. R.G.'s compelling messages and grace continue to be a blessing to our congregation. He has worked closely with the deacons to consider worship themes and sacraments. We are extremely grateful for his leadership as our church plans for the next season of our life together. Our efforts will now be directed towards working with the entire congregation on a visioning and planning process enroute to beginning the search process for our new settled pastor.

Until live worship resumed this summer, the deacons:

- Provided weekly recorded scripture readings for our worship services
- Discussed the format options for online church services

- Considered how sacraments should be administered during the pandemic
- Explored ways to connect with the people connecting with our church for the first time, and for providing online worship and small group activities for remote and local online worshipers

When in-person worship resumed, we returned to the pulpit, along with R.G., to lead the call to worship and read the weekly scripture passages. In December, we held our first in church communion in nearly two years. Alas, the rapid spread of the Omicron variant forced us to pause communion once again. In general, we are pleased that so many members have rejoined our Sunday worship services while online worship participation remains strong.

We welcomed Alex Hasha as a deacon in, and are thankful that Jonathan Hall agreed to serve another term. We thank Lisa and Vinnie Viola for their exemplary efforts as deacons.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Paxhia, Chair

HISTORIAN REPORT

The records of the First Congregational Church of Milton are valuable assets that contain information pertaining to the Church's mission, initiatives, activities, operations, heritage, and legacy. Stewardship of information assets is an important responsibility for all individual congregations and particularly for those who are record-creators for our church. Records with lasting legal or operational value, or those that document our Church's history and accomplishments, must be identified and preserved.

* *

During the past year, I continued to work on systematically documenting our records based on archival principles and best practices. This past year I inventoried boxes 48 through 54, with approximately 15 more boxes to complete.

In the spring, I worked with Reverend Allen to identify a topic for the Unity Sunday service with the First Parish Church.

Additional 2020 Historical Room Work

Accessions

Accessioned 4 transfers to the collection:

2021-001: FCC of Milton photos, 1993-2002 (41), received from Jean McKenney, 2/26/2021

2021-002: Board of Benevolence Minutes (2021), received from Betsy Disharoon, 5/19/2021

2021-003: Files of Rev. John Allen, 2015-2021 (23 electronic folders), 9/24/2021

2021-004: Board of Benevolence Minutes (2021), received from Betsy Disharoon, 11/22/2021

Arrangement and Description

Purchased Hollinger Letter Document Boxes for rehousing materials.

Created Initial Inventory of boxes 48 through 54

Reference / Outreach

- Provided information for the FCC of Milton Trivia Questions, January.
- Request for Music Committee reports were provided to Music Committee chair, March
- Request for documents for the Unity Service with First Parish were provided to both pastors, March.
- Request from research writing a biography of William Stoughton. Questions dealt with tracking down the communion cup made by Jeremiah Dummer in 1701. Reached out to First Parish for information.
- Participated in a reading of documents with the First Parish Historian for a video presentation on the Ex Parte Ecclesiastical Council of 1834, April.

Working with my counterpart at First Parish, we discussed the story of the split between the First Congregational and First Parish churches in 1834. Both churches have official documents relating to the split. For the Unity Sunday Service, we recorded a video of the two historians reading the letter from the committee informing Rev. Gile of their decision to part ways, and Rev. Gile's response.

In September 2021, I worked with the church office and Rev. Allen to identify his electronic records and to transfer the files to the Archives. Rev. Allen and I met to discuss what records, both physical and electronic, should be retained. In general, we follow the Congregational Library and Archives "Church Records Retention Schedule" guidelines and keep all designated permanent records they list. We discussed with the church office and Doug Gaff if we had the resources to preserve these records and how we can capture them. We decided to continue to use the Google Drive, as most of the records resided there. Official Transfer of the files was completed in September.



(photos) The newspaper clipping is dated 1957, and shows some of the silver pieces donated when the Village Church of Dorchester merged with FCC of Milton. The second image is from March 2021, showing the pitcher and cups, which are in the narthex.

There were several reference enquires to the Archives, both internal and external. In March, the church office was contacted by an outside researcher who was writing a biography of William Stoughton. The request was for information on the Communion Cup made by Jeremiah Dummer in 1701. After researching in the records, it was determined that we did not possess the cup in question. It seemed likely from the records that the First Parish retained the silver after the split of 1834. Our silver was on display at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and in 1957, we requested the silver back to be displayed at the Church's "Silver Treasure Exhibit."



Respectfully Submitted,
James Roth, Church Historian

FLOWER COMMITTEE REPORT

As we returned to in person worship, members of the congregation again sponsored altar flowers often in appreciation of a loved one. Because Sunday attendance is still diminished due to COVID concerns, the number of people sponsoring altar flowers decreased proportionately. As we enter 2022, we are facing increased flower prices due to pandemic related supply chain issues. We will need to evaluate the cost for various types of altar arrangements on a case-by-case basis until flower prices stabilize. We thank the congregation for understanding this situation.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Paxhia, Chair

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Mission: To support and welcome visitors, and to orient new members as we nurture the faith experience of all members.

The Membership Committee reaches out to our greater community and welcomes all visitors to our congregation. We plan and facilitate five large family events each year that make it easy for members to invite their friends and neighbors to visit our church and get to know members of the congregation. We look forward to welcoming visitors and to helping them get to know our congregation through introductions and connections to small groups of interest. A representative of the Membership Committee meets with new members during their new member classes. To help nurture families, the Membership Committee works with other committees on family friendly events for members of all ages. Due to COVID-19, the Membership Committee was unable to organize and host many of the events usually held during the year, but is looking forward to resuming events and gatherings as soon as we are able to do so safely.

December's **Caroling on the Common** event did occur with some changes. The night featured a concert with singers from Milton High School Holiday Choir at the Town Gazebo. Around 125 people attended the 14th annual free event for caroling, roasting marshmallows by the fires.

The Membership Committee welcomes your ideas for any in-person or virtual events that foster members and visitors. Previous events held have included: progressive suppers; pumpkin festival; special guest workshops; and plays.

Patricia Morisette currently is chair of the Membership Committee, which always seeks new members.

MUSIC MINISTRY REPORT

First Congregational Church of Milton's Music Ministry has experienced a remarkably successful 2021, considering the circumstances.

In Soloist News

Former soloist Erik Van Heyningen will join the roster of Frankfurt Opera Company as a MainStage artist; he will continue to appear in roles at Vienna State Opera Company, and is being considered for casting at Paris Opera and Bavarian State Opera.

Former tenor soloist Jesse Darden was cast in a brand-new opera by Ricky Ian Gordon called "Intimate Apparel." The piece is being co-produced by the Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center, and BroadwayWorld. The show was scheduled to open in March 2020, but the pandemic shut Broadway and Lincoln Center down; the piece is in production right now and is scheduled to open shortly. Jesse has also been invited to audition for the Metropolitan Opera as a Main Stage artist.

Emily Harmon was named one of 26 finalists for a spot at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in London. She was selected from thousands of applicants worldwide, and is spending the first two weeks of January in London for a comprehensive audition and interview process.

Gabrielle Barkidjija has been named a finalist for a spot at Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam. She will travel to The Netherlands for the final audition process sometime in the coming weeks.

Lorna Jane Norris joined the Voice Faculty at Berklee Conservatory, and has launched a very successful consulting career.

Angela Gooch continues on the faculties of Boston Conservatory, Longy Conservatory and Boston University.

As for Me

Some of you may not know that, at the start of the pandemic, I received a Grammy Award for Best Opera Recording; as a result of that honor, I am in the process of being promoted at Boston University. I continue my work as Music Director for Seaglass Theater Company, where we've won many accolades and grants for our virtual programming throughout the COVID-19 crisis. We also commissioned and produced a highly successful and critically acclaimed new opera called "Whaling Women," the story of six real Massachusetts women who shaped the whaling industry and helped create the massive 19th-century New England economy. The production boasted a female composer and an all-female orchestra. This year also marks my 20th anniversary here at FCC of Milton.

Despite all the successes of the past year, life dealt me a significant blow. In April, I suffered a non-arteritic anterior ischemic optic neuropathy, which is a stroke in the optic nerve. I have permanently lost the lower half of my vision in my right eye. I have been able to adjust my practice regimen and how I process music in order to mask my visual limitations (I can no longer peripherally see my hands or feet), but I have multiple eyeglass prescriptions and am highly affected by light. So, if you ever see me wearing sunglasses at church, that is the reason.

The soloists and I continued to produce recorded music through the spring and summer; thankfully September saw a return of about two thirds of our remarkable choir and soloists to live participation in worship. The choir sings masked in the balcony (believe me, this is incredibly difficult), and a maximum of two soloists are allowed to sing at the piano without masks for no more than four minutes. You might recall that I programmed music written exclusively by women for 2020, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment. When the choir was no longer permitted to sing, and as soloist participation on Sundays became more and more limited by COVID-19 restrictions, I stubbornly stuck to my plan and researched more music by women for the soloists and me to present in lieu of the choir. It has been a rewarding venture, and in light of the continuing distractions of the pandemic I have extended the presentation of Music by Women through June 2022.

I came to this church in September 2002; I am amazed and humbled that this is my 20th year as Minister of Music. I am so grateful to have had such a faithful and talented choir; I also take immense pride in the consistently world-class quality of our soloists, past and present, and enjoy seeing them do incredible work in the broader artistic world. I look forward to returning to mask-free singing, the ability to present performances in the sanctuary for an audience, and deciding on a new musical theme to begin in September 2022. I have some interesting ideas, and one or two radical ones.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Matthew Larson, Minister of Music

PASTOR PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Pastor Parish Relations Committee met four times in 2021. The first was general discussion and the second, third and fourth were regarding preparation for our final service with Rev. John Allen. John accepted the settled pastor's position at the First Parish Church in Brunswick, Maine.

The September 26, 2021, service included a video of special moments during John's ministry at First Congregational Church of Milton, an outside reception following the service (to meet COVID-19 protocols) and a presentation of a journal with those moments and more from the six years of his ministry.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Barber, Member

SOCIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

The activities throughout the year were cancelled, or redesigned, to keep our members and community safe during the COVID-19 pandemic

SMALL GROUPS REPORT

Three small groups continued to meet regularly, in person and via Zoom in 2021: the Men's Group; the Senior Bible Study Group; and the Spiritual Book Group. A new Midlife-Men's Group formed.

We have hope for this ongoing cycle of welcoming people to join a group, groups coming to a natural end, and new groups forming as the church community continues to grow more connected in the year ahead.

YOUTH GROUP REPORT

As the year began, youth group was still not able to meet in-person, inside as we strived to be as safe as possible, especially before the youth were able to be vaccinated. However, we still met on Zoom on Sunday evenings (though a bit of Zoom fatigue set in), sledged in the snow at Milton Academy and hiked at Blue Hills. During the summer, we canoed the Charles River and had a swimming party where we welcomed incoming 6th and 7th graders to youth group.

We were able to start back meeting in person in May, and continued to do so on Sunday evenings for the remainder of the year, where we focused our time on fun, developing friendships and spiritual formation. We have a good group of six to 10 kids regularly attend our 8th to 12th grade youth group meetings.

The youth group also participated in two service projects throughout the year: painting a home with CLAH (Clergy and Laity for Affordable Housing) and sorting clothing donations with Cradles to Crayons.

Our high school students have been once again teaching Sunday school and their presence, energy, and commitment has been invaluable as we restarted Sunday school.

We were able to go on our two-night youth group retreat at Craigville Retreat Center in Cape Cod during September.

In closing, I would like to specifically think all those who have chaperoned our youth group events: Mike Baker, Adam Ochs, Wendy Garpow, Deirdre Merrill, Ann Riley, Jamie Roth and Barney Morisette.

Respectfully submitted,
Reverend R.G. Wilson-Lyons, Youth Minister

YOUTH ROOM AND CAPITAL CAMPAIGN REPORT

In early 2020, this church celebrated the completion of the new Youth Room, as both a place for our youth to gather as well as a way to serve the larger community by providing space for the Wildcat Den, the town's after-school program for middle school students. Then, the pandemic hit, and all of our plans were put on pause.

Last spring, we reopened the space to our youth group. This fall, we were prepared to make the space available once again to the town for their after-school program; however, due to staffing shortages on their end, that reopening is still pending, but we have still found ways for the space to serve the larger Milton community.

Currently, in addition to our church activities, the space is being used temporarily by an Alcoholics Anonymous group, a children's drama club, an Irish step dance class and the youth leadership council (Milton Youth Advocates for Change) for the Milton Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition. Even without the Wildcat Den currently operating, the space is being used by community groups or tenants six days each week.

All of this is possible because of the generosity of so many of you in support of our Youth Room Capital Campaign. This church took a leap of faith as we borrowed money from ourselves to go ahead with the construction of the Youth Room before receiving all of the pledged money. To date, we have received \$433,135 and have remaining pledges of \$31,520 to collect. The total cost for the project was \$496,760.

This is an amazing accomplishment for our church. This campaign began in a pre-COVID-19 world and, in a time, when so many churches saw giving plummet, we were able to raise \$464,420 in pledges and gifts over three years for this project. We should be proud.

However, as you can see, even if all pledges come in, we will still be facing a shortfall in repaying the money we borrowed from ourselves. We will wrap up this campaign by June 30, 2022, and during these remaining months, we will invite those with outstanding balances to complete their pledges while seeking additional gifts to try to offset the loss. If anyone has not given to the capital campaign or if you have the capability of giving more, your gift would be greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. R.G. Wilson-Lyons, Acting Pastor

2021 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES from FEBRUARY 7, 2021

Frank Wilson, moderator, called the 2021 Annual Meeting to order via Zoom at approx. 11:10 a.m. According to names listed on the Zoom call, there were more than 50 attendees. The Rev. John Allen offered an opening prayer.

There was a review of nominations of boards and committees. Frank Wilson and the Rev. John Allen explained that normally there is a small committee formed to identify who may be good candidates to ask to join committees, chairs of each committee are asked to find candidates or the pastor/Frank as moderator may approach individuals. That process was not followed this year due to the unusual circumstances COVID-19 presented. In lieu of reading the names of all nominees, the moderator

asked for a motion to waive the reading. The motion was made and seconded and approved. Frank then moved for a motion to accept all nominees. It was made, seconded and approved.

A motion was made and seconded to not read each report within the Annual Report, but to accept them as written. This also was approved.

During this time, via 'chat' in Zoom, Heather/Mike Baker asked a question about the nominating of committee and board members, which was answered at this time. The question was asked if we could revisit the process of nominating committee/board members. Rev. Allen and Frank W. said that anyone interested in joining a committee is allowed to do so since there is not a 'long line to join'. The process was not followed this year but Frank and Rev. Allen did reach out to individuals. Heather Baker offered then that the language of a 'nominating committee' was incorrect. John Allen again explained that he did reach out to some committee chairs. Adam Ochs brought up that he was not aware of the process. Heather offered that in the case of the process not being followed, the Nominating Committee report was not written correctly. Frank then asked again for a motion to vote to accept the committee nominees. A motion was made, seconded and accepted. Frank thanked everyone who volunteers and joined committees and boards.

Carter Fahy, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, read the *Trustee's Report* focusing on the budget. "We survived ok." We budgeted a loss of \$40K and in actuality lost \$60K. We had a profit of \$45K in 2019. If 2020 went as planned, we would have broken even over the two years. Our loss was due to funding deferred maintenance from last year, COVID, and the shutdown of our number one source of income, The Centre School. The projection for 2021 is a net loss of \$75K on top of a net loss of the \$60K from 2020. We do not anticipate profits from The Centre School until 2022 because of the low enrollment due to COVID. A brief update on the BLM "permanent" banner installation was given. Carter and Rev. Allen are looking at alternatives to the existing banner. These options will be presented at the next Trustees meeting. Paula Goodrich asked re: the money aspect of the report: Do we have a plan in place to deal with the deficit that we are projecting for this year? Carter mentioned that we will flat line most expenses to mitigate the loss and we will defer some maintenance when we can. In addition, we are actively participating in the PPP program offered by the State to help cover employee salaries during COVID, we have roughly \$436K in investment and saving accounts. Rev. Allen offered that he has applied for a grant from the UCC. Carter, via Zoom chat, also mentioned that the reason the current BLM banner was not up was because it blew down in the storm. Paula also asked if the reduction in revenue had to do with the reduction in pledges, Carter said no, it was mostly due to building expenses and the lack of revenue from The Centre School. We were down 10 percent in pledge income. There being no further questions, a motion was made and seconded to accept the annual budget proposed by the Trustees. Frank Wilson thanked Carter.

Frank Wilson reported that there was very little to report on for the Stewardship Committee. Mike Larsson will be the newest member. For 2021 they will be reaching out more formally than last year.

Reverend Allen began summarizing his Pastor's report by a report on the opening of the Youth Room. There are an average of 23 to 24 school kids participating every day. This is a great accomplishment for us and the town, and a wonderful celebration of the space. He then thanked Doug Gaff, Niels Krejci, Mike Baker, and Emerson Dobrindt for volunteering and running the livestream Sunday services along with the deacons, as services continued uninterrupted during COVID. He also thanked Wendy Garpow and Betsy Disharoon for their work and leadership with our community service outreach, including the effort to supply Father Bill's with bagged lunches. Our church gave \$3,000 and participated in a fund drive to help households in our area to forgive almost \$300,000 worth of medical debt.

He thanked Brenda Lee, Kevin Harnden and Lori Connelly for their work in the front office, which is critical to the running of our church. On behalf of FCC of Milton, he said good-bye to Rev. Katherine Pater and welcomed Rev. R.G. Wilson-Lyons, who will be our new Youth Minister.

In closing, Rev Allen spoke about the challenge that faced our church this year around racial and social justice. As he reflected on the past six months, he could identify moments of beautiful and vulnerable sharing, with extraordinary honesty and is worth lifting up. He mentioned that we had moments that were not our best, and included himself in that. He asked that we lean into the best moments and speak honestly, and to meet each other with grace. Ask ourselves, what do we believe God is calling us to do and how will we respond or answer that call? He said he knew it had been hard, and we have damaged relationships with one another and the church. He went on to say that it has been difficult not being together (in person due to COVID), but he is grateful to be our pastor.

Frank Wilson asked for any questions. Paula Goodrich thanked Pastor Allen for his words during these challenging times and said that she was feeling a disconnect between the business side and the community involvement of the church. John replied that he understood the distinction and that the question is: How we use our money must be made with practicality – we need to make decisions considering that “Budget=Faith Factor” i.e., Scheduling time in the building, where we spend our money, where does he spend his time (as Pastor) or the church staff, The Centre School will be available to us in the future, both money and space.

Frank Wilson asked for any other questions, to which Steve Paxhia replied that he knew how difficult this last year had been for our three pastors and it is time to get back together, and “begged” everyone to do that and get behind them. (This may have been in reference to the both COVID and the banner issue, it was unclear at the time)

Rev. Allen acknowledged those members and friends of the church who passed away last year, Audrey Brown, Debbie Godfrey, Barbara Harnden, David Braithwaite, Herb Colcord, Shirley Paxhia and Mary Schmalz.

There being no other business, Frank Wilson acknowledged and thanked Kate Kibbee for her years as Church Clerk and to Pastor Allen who had to become production manager during the transition to remote services. Thanks was also given to all of those who have helped to keep up the church building and grounds which included Doug Stewart, Steve Paxhia, Niels Krecji, Vinnie Viola, Cathy and Tom Matejka, the McCullough boys and Eliot Bent. The Reverend John Allen closed the meeting with a prayer.

The 2020 (and first-ever Zoom) Annual Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathryn T. Kibbee, Clerk