



2024 Annual Report
presented in Johnson Hall
Annual Meeting February 4, 2024

Revised 2/04/2024



PASTOR'S REPORT

2023 Review



I am so hopeful about the future of our church, and I believe years from now we will look back on 2023 as a really important year for us. For the last few years, we have had a tendency to think about what was – not just at our church but in society in general.

Before COVID, there was....

Before conflicts over racial justice protests, there was...

Before divisive political debates, there was....

Whether we realize it or not, we have all been through a collective grieving process. The world has changed. Church has changed. Life as we knew it has changed. And all of that can feel like a loss. There are things that have changed that will never go back to what they were. It's important to name those losses and to appropriately grieve them. But there comes a point when we have to turn the corner and begin to look at what is ahead. I believe 2023 is the year we turned that corner.

In February, we completed our strategic planning and visioning process and our church unanimously and enthusiastically approved our new mission statement and priorities:

FCC of Milton is an open Christian community for all to belong, grow, and engage the world in acts of service and justice.

1. **Belong.** As a community of faith, we will provide opportunities for fun, for relationship building, and for spiritual and intergenerational connections that cultivate diversity and value all people for who they are.
2. **Grow.** We will provide a nurturing environment where all people can pursue personal growth and deepen their faith and spirituality, wherever they are on life's journey.
3. **Engage.** We will provide and communicate ways to connect our members and participants with opportunities to engage in acts of community service, stewardship of the earth, and social justice in collaboration with other churches and organizations.

These are more than just words on a page. Here are some of the ways we are already living into this mission and these priorities:

Belong

1. We restarted the strawberry festival and had a great turnout and made more than \$10,000 to support the ministries of our church.
2. Caroling on the Common was once again a great success as we welcomed many families into our space for a night of great music and fun.
3. A mental health team formed to help our congregation imagine how we might be more welcoming, inclusive, and affirming for those with mental health challenges.
4. A LGBTQ inclusion team formed to help our congregation continue the journey of being an open and affirming space for the LGBTQ community.
5. We regularly saw new faces in worship with some becoming an active part of our community.

Grow

1. We re-launched our Sunday school program with age appropriate classes and saw our Sunday school average attendance nearly double in the Fall.
2. Joe Bradley and Paula Goodrich started a contemplative prayer small group.
3. We had an overnight middle school youth retreat with seven kids attending.
4. Youth group average attendance grew to 8 in the Fall from 4 last Spring.
5. We had two rounds of Nourish (one in the Spring and another in the Fall) for a time of intergenerational fellowship and spiritual growth opportunities.

Engage

1. A racial justice team formed coming out of our visioning process to help our church imagine ways our congregation and our members can be racial justice allies.
2. Rainbow Youth Alliance continued to meet providing a meaningful, safe, and affirming space for an average of 12 LGBTQ teens.
3. Our Board of Benevolence once again planned important service projects, including the collection of hygiene bags and coats.
4. Each month, members from our church delivered bag lunches to Father Bill's.

We are already living into our priorities and I hope and expect we will do that more and more in the year ahead.

Staffing

In 2023, we also welcomed two new staff members to our team. Katy Fazio joined us as our Minister of Children and Families, and Simone Lara came on board as our Office and Communications Administrator. After a few years of significant staff transitions, we now have a strong team in place and I'm hopeful we can have some staffing stability. We all owe our gratitude to Alex Barber who so capably served as our interim Office Administrator during the search process. Finally, I want to express my deep gratitude for all of our staff members – Dr. Matthew Larson, Lori Connelly, Simone Lara, Katy Fazio, and Kevin Harnden. I feel so incredibly fortunate to be able to work with such talented, committed, and wonderful people.

On a Personal Note

2023 was also the year that the congregation voted to call me as your settled pastor with my installation service taking place in December. I am so grateful to be on this journey with you and cannot begin to express how deeply thankful I am for all your love, support, grace, and kindness you have shown to Mary Page, Nina, Julian, and me.

The Year Ahead

We are in a strong position to have a great year in 2024. My hope is that we will continue to find more and more ways to live into our mission and priorities. We have been invited to enter into conversation with our friends at East Congregational Church about possibly consolidating with them. After spending two years doing Nourish, Maundy Thursday, and Summer worship together, we know we enjoy doing things together. Church Council has voted to appoint a team from our congregation to enter into conversation with them to imagine what we might be able to do together. As with our visioning process, this will be an open and transparent process and no decisions will be made without

congregational input and a congregational vote. I have no doubt that if we lean into our mission statement as we discern God's call for our congregation, we will find this to be a helpful and meaningful process regardless of the eventual outcome.

I also want to express my gratitude to Blair Stowe who will be our interim Minister of Children and Families for the first part of this year while Katy is on maternity leave. Blair is an ordained United Methodist minister, has served as the pastor of several different congregations, and is currently a PhD student in theology at Boston University.

In Memory

Finally, we give thanks to God for the life of Linda Bent who died last year. She was an instrumental part of our congregation, and especially our choir, and we cherish her memory and all that she meant to our church.

In Closing

I am so proud of the work this church has done in 2023. After a time that has been hard for nearly every church, we came together around our new mission, and we saw growth in our worship attendance as well as our youth and children's programs. I believe we are set up to have a great year in 2024. I close by echoing the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Phillipians, "I thank my God for every remembrance of you, always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R.G. Wilson-Lyons".

Rev. R.G. Wilson-Lyons

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MISSION STATEMENT

First Congregational Church of Milton is an open Christian community for all to belong, grow, and engage the world in acts of service and justice.



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.

2024 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 4th, at 11:30 AM in Johnson Hall 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, 2023.
- 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 2024 fiscal year or to take any action thereon.
- Article IV: Discuss East Congregational church's request to explore a possible consolidation.

To transact any other business that may legally be raised.



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

2023 CHURCH STATISTICS SUMMARY OF CHANGES AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023

Members.....229

Deaths.....1

Linda Bent – January 20, 2023

New Members3

Mike Shaw – May 14, 2023

Barbara Mason – June 4, 2023

Erika Swan – June 11,

Baptisms..... 7

John Hart – June 4, 2023

Cameron Hart – June 4, 2023

Charlotte Catrambone – October 21, 2023

Daphne Gorman – November 26, 2023

Theodora Gorman – November 26, 2023

Phoebe Gorman – November 26, 2023

Callista Gorman – November 26, 2023

2024 NOMINATIONS REPORT

Serving February 5, 2024 – February 4, 2025

Moderator:	Frank Wilson	2000
Clerk:	Nancy Barber	2021
Treasurer:	Nicole Rukstalis	2022
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
Phil Richenberg	2024
Nathan Hornbach	2024
Grace Dickerson	2023
David Follett	2023
Alexander Hasha	2022
Barbara Levy	2020
Candice Brown	2019
Ann Riley	2017
Nancy Barber	2017
Steve Paxhia	2015
Doug Stewart	2015
BOARD OF TRUSTEES	
Jamie Roth	2024
Susan Ferrari	2023
Jeff Smith	2023
Nicole Rukstalis	2021
Paula Goodrich	2021
Jaymee Mannix	2021
Kate Kibbee	2020
Heather Baker	2019
Carter Fahy	2018
MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE	
Barbara Smith	2023
Niels Krejci	2019
Patricia Morissette	2017
DIGITAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE	
Barney Morissette	2024
Mike Shaw	2024
Mike Baker	2016
Niels Krejci	2015
Doug Gaff	2014
SOCIAL COMMITTEE (inactive, looking for members)	

BOARD OF BENEVOLENCE	Serving Since
Miles Regnier	2024
Adria Hasha	2024
Elizabeth Keiper	2024
Mary Riley	2023
Erika Swan	2021
Marshall Levy	2021
Anne Regnier	2021
Mavis Anderson	2020
David Follett	2019
Betsy Disharoon	2017
BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	
Nicola Khanna	2024
Niels Krejci	2023
Janine Solomon	2023
Deirdre Merrill	2023
Libby Dunphy	2023
Emily Gorman	2022
Donna Manzi	2017
Adam Ochs	2014
MUSIC COMMITTEE	
Alexander Hasha	2021
Patricia Morissette	2021
Brenda Gaff	2014
PASTOR PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE	
Nancy Barber	2024
Deirdre Merrill	2022
Niels Krejci	2017
DELEGATES	
Betsy Disharoon	2024
Nathan Hornbach	2024
STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE	
Frank Wilson	2014
USHERS	
Bill Pepe	2015

First Congregational Church of Milton

2023 Financial Overview

Total church revenue received in 2023 was \$238,410. This was favorable to the budget by \$24,450. The Centre School revenue, reported in non-operating income, was \$330,351, which was \$13,407 favorable to the budget of \$316,944.

Total 2023 expenses were \$421,071 compared to a budget of \$539,970 for a favorable variance of \$118,899. With revenue higher than the plan and the expenses favorable to the plan, the net income for the year was \$106,150, which was \$125,216 favorable to the planned net loss of \$19,066.

Church giving revenue in 2023 was \$173,403. This was \$17,403 favorable to the planned revenue of \$156,000. The rental income was \$65,007 in 2023, which was favorable to the plan by \$7,047 related to the Climate Action Grant of \$2,500, the fees for the weeklong summer program of Nature and Neighbors, an anonymous group increased the amount of their monthly donation because of the support they felt from FCC, and one-time rentals that had not been forecasted. Transfers made into the Fidelity account for giving in the amount of \$5,959, coupled with market appreciation of \$46,508 resulted in an ending balance of \$365,260. In addition, a money market account was opened at Citizens Bank with easy access to transfer funds as needed. The account was funded with \$25,000 and another \$100,000 was later added for a balance of \$125,000.

Church operating expenses of \$249,860 was favorable to the budget by \$109,924 primarily due to a delay in the planned projects as the unplanned daily issues needed to be addressed. These are delineated in the 2023 Building Projects Completed report. The pastor costs were \$92,510 as compared to a budget of \$88,652 for an unfavorable variance of \$3,858. This was the result of the adjustments made in the compensation structure for R.G. as our Settled Pastor. Music expenses were \$53,946, which was favorable to the budget by \$8,714. This is a result of the organ repair planned for 2023 that is starting this month, and the soloist compensation was \$2,560 less than the budget. Christian education costs of \$24,756 were lower than the budget of \$28,875 for a savings of \$4,119. This was due to a new curriculum that is substantially less than budgeted and a lower scholarship expense, as compared to the budget.

The non-operating income was \$330,351 in 2023. This is comprised of the base rent of \$166,952 that we receive from Bright Horizons for management of The Centre School. The amount Bright Horizons paid in revenue sharing during 2023 was \$163,399, which was \$13,398 greater than budgeted.

Non-operating expense represents the final cost of the Capital Campaign. The campaign generated \$451,770 from donors and \$8,450 of other income for total income of \$460,220. That was offset by the cost of renovations of \$501,760 for a shortfall of \$41,540. This was expensed in December 2023 to close down the campaign.

Mel O'Drama and Petrocelli Academy of Irish Dance continued to use Huntington Hall and the Studio for drama and dance classes. The Town of Milton continued to run the after-school program, the Wildcat Den, but had fewer participants during the spring months. When they re-opened in September, the attendance numbers were much lower again than they saw in 2022. They replaced the Coordinator to begin in September after the previous Coordinator resigned. The new hire only lasted less than two months before she left, and they notified FCC that the program would be closed. They quickly identified a recent graduate who had worked while in high school at the Wildcat Den and was attending college locally to be the temporary Coordinator. That allowed them to re-open within two

weeks. GSEC continued to meet weekly on Sundays, and still have not requested their pre-COVID-19 schedule which used space on most weekday evenings. One anonymous group continues to meet virtually, one group is still using the youth room due to the number of participants that gather weekly, and the third group continues to meet in the parlor. A new anonymous group started using Huntington Hall on Friday nights in December. In addition, Milton Early Childhood Alliance continues to have office space on the second floor of the church building. Other groups utilizing the youth room included the Milton Youth Advisory Council, the Rainbow Youth Alliance, and a Mid-Life Men's Group. It is extremely satisfying to successfully manage the relationships with the variety of tenants and their unique requirements and schedules during any given week.

Thanks to Kate Kibbee for another year of service as the Chair of the Board of Trustees. With her professional Human Resource expertise, she has continued to provide guidance needed related to employee or employer questions or concerns as well as providing assistance with the hiring of staff. I would also like to acknowledge her meeting facilitation skills which is by far the most efficient I have witnessed.

Another reminder this year that our contract with Bright Horizons, which allows them access to the space in the 505 building from 7:30 a.m. until closing at 5:30 p.m., still needs to be honored. They are more sensitive than ever given the tragedies that have been experienced at schools across the nation. They are on heightened alert to know everyone that is in the building at any given time during school hours. I focus much attention on honoring the contract and maintaining a very positive working relationship with the management, whether they are in the building, as is the Director, Assistant Director, and the teachers, or at the corporate offices. So, I thank you for your continued cooperation on this issue.

Frank Wilson, you once again have been a great partner in dealing with the many random, both large and small, issues that come up. Although, after an incident, we typically sigh and acknowledge that "nothing is easy." That seemed to be more prevalent this year for some reason. At least the timing of the burst pipe was fortuitous with it happening during the service and it being spotted after the service. We were able to stop it before it was too bad and deal with "the real fun" after the Annual Meeting. Thanks for always being just a call away.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lori Connelly, Director of Finance and Operations

Balance Sheet

	As of 12.31.2023	As of 12.31.2022	Change
Assets			
Cash and Investments	\$789,040	\$569,996	\$219,044
Property and Equipment	\$4,557,988	\$4,557,988	\$0
Total Assets	\$5,347,028	\$5,127,984	\$219,044
Liabilities			
Benevolence	\$15,749	\$14,822	\$927
Capital Campaign Funds (Receivable)	\$0	(\$42,140)	\$42,140
Reserve Funds/ Youth Programs	\$116,474	\$93,154	\$23,320
Total Liabilities	\$132,223	\$65,836	\$66,387
Net Worth	\$5,214,805	\$5,062,148	\$152,657

Proposed B&G - Repairs and Improvements for 2024

Carriage House - 483 Canton Ave	2024 Budget	
Install railings on the back deck to bring up to code	\$7,500	
Remove and trim dead trees/limbs on property	\$5,900	
Repair water damage in LR ceiling from 12.18.3 wind/rain - est	\$5,000	
Repair water damage in kit ceiling from 12.18.23 wind/rain - es	\$5,000	\$23,400
Sub-total 483		
Church building - 495 Canton Ave		
Replace old smokes with addressables in church bldg -est	\$15,000	\$15,000
Sub-total 495		
Total 483/495		\$38,400
Centre School building - 505 Canton Ave		
Install barrier arm gate for back entrance	\$13,500	
Electrical work to install barrier arm gate	\$3,000	
Excavation of sidewalk to bury wires	\$2,000	
LED light replace-remaining rooms/halls	\$10,000	
BLDG INSPECTION: Change remaining exit signs to LED	\$750	
Replace chandeliers in Johnson Hall - est	\$4,000	
Replace exterior parking lot lights - est	\$2,500	
Insulate attic - need to revisit cost - est	\$54,000	
Snake downspouts on Centre School - est	\$5,000	
Excavate around building for grade issues	\$35,000	
Replace 2 bathroom doors to classrooms - est	\$5,000	
Repair sinking brick under portico - est	\$10,000	\$144,750
Sub-total 505		
Total project cost for 2024		<u>\$183,150</u>

2023 Building Projects Completed

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 the members that have participated in any of these projects.

Jan '23

Reacted to COVID-19 status change from yellow to red by CDC requiring a flurry of communication to members and tenants
Communicated to all tenants that masks were again required, the capacity limits of their respective spaces, and no food was allowed
Managed the fallout from tenants' clients regarding masking
Managed two funerals both during school days which required heavily monitoring parking/parking lot access
Coordinated the use of First Parish's parking lot
Hired cleaning company last minute for one of the funerals because our sexton contracted COVID-19
Thanks to Niels and Matthew for replacing the chandelier lights in the sanctuary
Met plumber to assess leaking toilet in classroom bathroom at TCS – replaced flush valve
Met with Bright Horizons management to review inclement weather policy
Received kitchen permit from Board of Health
Met with new Director of the cleaning company and discussed recurring issues

Feb '23

Received call from Frank that there was a frozen pipe in the youth room that burst 20 minutes before the annual meeting
Instructed Frank where to shut the water off so it would stop leaking

Feb '23

Attended the annual meeting via zoom and texted the plumber
Met Frank at youth room with sledgehammers to open the wall for the plumber after annual meeting
Jay Fundling arrived with daughter Josie to assist



Frank & Josie

Met the plumber later to replace the pipe so we could open TCS on Monday
Called remediation crew and waited for them to come that night to remove water; leaving fans for drying
Called insurance company to file a claim; met adjuster to review damages
Found water on the floor in the kitchen/pantry hallway later that afternoon – it was a frozen sprinkler head

Feb '23

Contacted the sprinkler company and met them Sunday night to replace the sprinkler head and a chrome pendant BEFORE it burst
Met with contractors to determine best move forward; contractor that I hired suggested moving the shut-off closer to a heat source
Met with the plumber and contractor to discuss relocating the shut-off and plumber concurred we should move it closer to a heat source
Opened the wall to create access for plumber to install another shut-off
Plumber installed a shut-off valve
Insulated, installed blue board, plastered, and painted within a two week period
Wildcat Den was closed for two weeks, and the third week was school vacation
Contacted locksmith to investigate the red door not closing properly
Installed a new closer mechanism which had an oil leak
TCS called because two classroom doors were not closing properly
Installed new closers on the two classroom doors
Pastor Jean called to say the sanctuary was freezing during their service
RG and Matthew programmed the thermostats so it would warm up before their arrival and cool down after they left
Tip of the brace that holds the music rack up broke off in Matthew's hand
Piano tuner ordered part and installed it
Piano in TCS lobby was "hacked" – someone opened the locking mechanism with a knife to access the piano to be able to play – and it belongs to BH
"Door to nowhere" has been left open numerous times over the course of the month so checking frequently
Contacted Monday night anonymous group to see if they were ready to return to in person; not yet
Showed another anonymous group the parlor for potential use; another venue was chosen

Feb '23

Challenged by traffic and cars entering the wrong way and cars parking in the wrong direction
Challenged by cars parking in front of the youth room blocking parents from passing to pick up children

Mar '23

Installed flexible baseboard in youth room from flood
Installed window trim in youth room after the flood
Installed a bulletin board in a classroom in TCS
Managed numerous occasions of doors not being locked – red door, "door to nowhere", youth room door
Emptied grease trap in kitchen; truck drove in the wrong way and got stuck
Inspected beeping fire panel – there was a dirty smoke detector in the school
Replaced smoke detector which was dirty and reset fire panel
Followed up on cost of the church smoke detectors; cost skyrocketed during COVID-19
Needed to contact the Town regarding high school students working at the Wildcat Den parking in the back parking lot
Cleared out the base where the posts on the gate go into the holes at the track to keep the gate shut
Met plumber to assess leaking toilet in classroom bathroom at TCS – replaced flush valve

Apr '23

Investigated a stench in the kitchen pantry; called bug man and he suggested running water in the slop sink for a period of time to clear anything that smells from the grease trap
Repaired minor issues with the fences at both playgrounds
Replaced chipped tiles in classroom 115 at TCS that were creating a tripping hazard at the playground door

Apr '23

Cleaned up broken glass at the dumpster that resulted from a broken car window
Inspected beeping fire panel – there was a dirty smoke detector in the school
Replaced smoke detector which was dirty and reset fire panel
Investigated kitchen ovens that were reported to not be heating up to temperature – the technician said the ovens were heating to temp – I witnessed them at temp
Identified that the two igniters on the stove top were not working – we should never use matches/lighters
Ordered and replaced two igniters on the stove top and discovered the old ones were badly burned
Received a new picture of the church/school building at sunset from a neighbor that we are able to use

May '23

Met electrician to do a number of projects which included: replacing attic lights, the light between MECA and the historical room, lights in RG's office, lights in the studio, lights in the back stairwell, back stairwell hallway, and at the youth room door
Notified of ants in the youth room which arrived due to crumbs from the after school program and then pizza
Inspected by pest control at his next visit; no ants
Spoke to tenants regarding the need to clean up food
Investigated compressors running at night at TCS and found two original exhaust fans with worn out bearings
Determined the most cost effective measure was to replace the units vs replacing only the bearings
Contacted dumpster company for an additional weekly pickup due to excessive trash in dumpster

May '23

Paid for BOH permit that we never paid for before due to confusion with both town and church offices
Requested Certificate of Liability to hold Strawberry Festival which was never required before
Frank, with Doug Stewart's assistance, spent a day cleaning out the refrigerator, freezer, and pantry
Needed to get new ServSafe Certificate which was set to expire three days prior to the Strawberry Festival to be compliant
Hired cleaners to clean the kitchen
Expedited physical kitchen inspection prior to Health Agent leaving her position so we could hold Strawberry Festival
Replaced carbon monoxide detectors in basement
Replaced flame rod and hot service igniter on the boiler in the parlor basement
Cleaners were in at TCS to strip and wax the floors and clean the carpets over Mother's Day weekend which started Friday night to be completed Sunday morning
Received a call on Saturday afternoon that the power went out in the building
Investigated and found some outlets working and ejector pump alarm was sounding
Could not identify a breaker issue and electrician was out of town
Searched for an "emergency electrician" who I found would arrive within two hours and found that one phase of our three phase system had failed
Cleaners continued with extremely long extension cords and adjusted their cleaning plan
Needed to ensure the classroom refrigerators were plugged into operational outlets so we did not have spoiled food on Monday
Electrician returned Monday morning with a part and even though he replaced it, there was no power

May '23

Called Eversource and found that the transformer at Library had corroded connections causing the problem
Inspected beeping fire panel – there was a dirty smoke detector in the school
Replaced smoke detector which was faulty in the sprinkler room. This happened before so I asked that it be relocated so it was not below the bathroom floor drain where it had leaked into the sprinkler room smoke previously
Turned on sprinkler system and replaced two rotary heads and six node batteries
Notified of leak on the pressure valve of the well
Contacted well company and they changed out the coupling where it was leaking
Notified by tenant on Saturday morning of alarm sounding in the building
Arrived to find the ejector pump alarm piercing through the building and disarmed it
Converted all ceiling light fixtures in room 116 to LED – was told by supplier fluorescent bulbs were not available

Jun '23

Serviced the ejector pump and no issues
Instructed to run faucets twice per week given usage
Notified that GFI outlet in TCS kitchenette had blown and Frank saved the day in time for lunch
Contacted dumpster company for an additional weekly pickup due to excessive trash in dumpster and Strawberry Festival was in two days
Notified of a broken bolt on a classroom bathroom toilet seat and it was flushed down the toilet; called Frank
Purchased a bolt that didn't fit; returned to purchase a toilet seat but it was the wrong shape/style; returned with the old one to purchase a new one and success
Notified by RG of leak in the youth room on Father's Day, but couldn't identify from where

Jun '23

Worked with plumber to find the leak thinking it may be the slop sink
Notified of a toilet leak in a classroom bathroom, but it was actually a leaking faucet that made a puddle near the toilet
Replaced the faucet using a new faucet with ADA blades and caulked the back of the sink at the wall
Met with contractor and found that water was coming from the kitchen and opened the ceiling in the youth room to follow the water tracks
Contacted Pastor Jean who said his wife found water on the floor under the sink when they arrived
Converted the four lobby bathroom lights to LED
Replaced the carpet in the secondary entrance vestibule to the school where the seam was unglued
Received a call at 7:15am from TCS that the red alarm box in a classroom was beeping
Contacted alarm company for them to come ASAP and while on the phone with alarm company and texting TCS to get the location of the issue, it was reporting "normal" and then TCS realized it was a TOY beeping!

Jul '23

Purchased new washing machine at carriage house which had been anticipated to be replaced
Investigated a gas smell at the carriage house near the gas dryer
Determined it was more cost effective to replace it than to replace an exhaust hose on a 20 year appliance
Purchased new dryer at carriage house
Replaced a corroded washing machine connective valve found during installation

Jul '23

Plumber noticed water heater at the carriage house was rusting on the outside from the inside out



Water Heater

Discussed with Frank whether to wait and see or do the water heater proactively; ordered water heater

Investigated overflowing condensate pipe in mechanical room

Raised the pipes by a foot to allow more pressure to keep the water flowing in the correct direction

Received call from TCS at 7 am to report a beeping fire alarm

Contacted alarm company for a battery issue
Replaced battery to main panel causing the beeping

Strategized about converting lights to LED in another classroom during July 4 week – low attendance

Converted all ceiling light fixtures in room 114 to LED; there were more lights than room 116 and he needed to return to lower the brightness

Changed out one regular LED fixture for an emergency LED in each lobby bathroom

Inspected fire alarm system and again discussed replacing the smoke detectors in the church building when the cost goes back to pre-COVID-19 levels

Jul '23

Sump pump alarm alerted me on my phone on Sunday July 16 that the sump was overflowing

Went to church to investigate – the rainwater was coming in where the wall meets the ceiling
Placed buckets under the ceiling as that is all that could be done at the time and the water in the sump recessed

Received a call at 7 am to open TCS because person opening was running late; went over to open TCS

Notified that power went out at TCS/church; called Eversource; they were unaware but would send someone out within two hours
Contacted plumber; he was on his way to install water heater at carriage house - did he need power to do it?

Plumber dropped off water heater

Went to another job to get a generator to complete the installation

Discussed with Doug Gaff the ability to monitor power outages which are frequent on the property

Notified TCS door code stopped working; reset the codes; thought it was related to the power outage that just happened, but it was operational the day after the power outage

Aug '23

Received a video of a torrential downpour of the toddler playground during a historic rainfall

Called TCS and the water levels were already dissipating – as quickly as it began to creep
Received a call that the parent code was not working; worked for two days then stopped; reset; all good

Received a quote from a new vendor on the gate

Clutter cleared the sanctuary with Matthew and made a list of potential improvements

Met with a number of contractors on the potential improvements

Inspected TCS for emergency light and fire extinguisher testing - requirement

Aug '23

Called electrician to connect an e-light with no power
Determined there was power at the box; batteries were dead
Contacted alarm company on incorrect assessment and to return with batteries; he suggested I use an electrician because it would be less expensive

Sep '23

Pleaded my case with electrician because these needed to be working for TCS building inspection
Searched for the batteries required, travelled to Brockton, replaced the batteries
Inspected the property for termite activity - requirement
Identified some minor activity and reset the bait station
Sprayed outside the carriage house for ants
Informed of a piece of asphalt breaking off of the "sidewalk" at the entrance to the playground and the earth had slipped away
Contacted landscaper - aggregate will be used to support the asphalt with loam and plantings for rainwater absorption
Received another new picture of the church/school building at sunset with an incredible blue sky from a neighbor that we are able to use
Updated and changed TCS parent and teacher codes
Attempted to complete application for building inspection of TCS with challenges at Town Hall-new staff, new system, property unidentifiable, fee was doubled-worked through glitches
Inspected TCS building code - requirement
Removed "stuff" from sprinkler room and the electrical/ejector pump mechanical room - these are not storage areas
Notified of no air conditioning in rooms 115 and 116
Inspected the unit which was frozen, and blower seized

Sep '23

Removed the motor and wheel, installed new parts, changed the capacitor, and cold air again
Inspected TCS for fire code - requirement
Scheduled and conducted a fire drill with the Fire Safety Officer - evacuated 73 children and 14 adults in three minutes 22 seconds; all systems worked properly
Power washed TCS building before the new school year
Painted the three sanctuary doors
Contacted Bill Pepe for assistance with the service of the riding lawn mower that had a run in with the roots of the tulip tree
Installed a portable speed bump at the STOP sign at the youth room entrance



Speed Bump

Trimmed bushes and shrubs around the church for Welcome Sunday
Opened Wildcat Den with a new coordinator
Met with the Parks Manager, Administrator, Coordinator, Frank, RG, me to review the schedules of tenants, issues of safety concerns from last year
Dealt with a number of issues of people entering the sanctuary through opened doors; who left them open?
Confirmed with tenants their sanctuary access

Oct '23

Continuing issues with the sanctuary doors being left open or not shutting tightly
Investigated the front door light being out over the sanctuary door and replaced the bulb, but also need a new timer
Notified of youth room being in disarray when Town arrived – needed to be cleaned up before kids came
Investigated and repaired the exterior parking lot light at the youth room
Replaced ballasts in room 113
Shut off sprinkler system
Upgraded the WIFI in the church
Notified there was activity in the playground over the weekend because the tarp over the sandbox was full of sand and difficult to move for the children
Met the commercial appliance technician to assess the issue of the stove top not igniting and the igniters were replaced in the spring
Built up the base of the asphalt at the entrance to the playground with aggregate and added loam and plantings for rainwater absorption
Notified Wildcat Den closed on 10.25; coordinator quit
Met fire protection company for a review of the issues with the dry sprinkler system and whether they needed to shut off the fire alarm system or needed a fire detail to do the repairs
Washed the windows of TCS
Notified MECA needed to test water for DEP because MECA is a school; discussed with Town MECA is NOT a school, but still required to test the water
Replaced toilet seat in classroom bathroom 111/112
Piano lid at TCS pried open again; damage control
Notified sign boards in lobby of TCS were messed up from the previous night; more damage control
Updated parent code
Removed BIG spider and its bigger web at the entrance to TCS
Met gutter company for a quote

Nov '23

Replaced stove igniter again - defective
Notified a Coordinator was hired, and the Wildcat Den would re-open 11.6.23
Notified that a teacher found a pocketknife on the playground
Ordered new round tables to replace the old round tables that were breaking on the sides
Contacted HVAC company; no heat in JH small side
Investigated and determined the thermostat needed to be replaced
Replaced the thermostat in JH small side
Investigated smell in kitchen – ran water in slop sink and washed the smell away
Converted all ceiling light fixtures in room 111 to LED
Removed and replaced 4-inch butterfly valve and the velocity check valve day after Thanksgiving while TCS was closed and shut down fire alarm system
Monitored the alarm shut down of the fire alarm system by the alarm company
Conducted trip test of the dry sprinkler system
Replaced non-functioning door stops on doors at TCS
Repaired sink cabinets in three classrooms
Installed window lock on room 113 window
Installed shelf with new brackets in room 114
Installed toilet paper holder in ladies lobby bathroom
Repaired closet door in room 115
Investigated dead animal smell in the foyer/HH/stairway



Dec '23

Met new AA group to welcome them and reviewed the storage situation and door code access on Friday night
Contacted cleaning company regarding the dumpster overflowing again-tons of cardboard and no one knows where it came from-Caroling on the weekend

Dec '23

Investigated smell in studio – dirty diaper

Raked and removed leaves and branches from the property

Installed three astronomical time clocks for the parking lot lights

Installed two astronomical wall timers for the two front door lights (above sanctuary and red side door)

Investigated smell in the foyer – dead animal

Contacted two pest companies regarding dead animals in walls – it will smell until it doesn't – unless we randomly open walls looking for them

Repaired handrail on basement stairs at parlor

Discussed cleaning issues with manager again; cleaners leaving if anyone is in the building

Converted all ceiling light fixtures in room 112 to LED

Cleaned grease trap in pantry

Trimmed rhododendrons on driveway at carriage house

Cleaned gutters on church, TCS, and carriage house and ensured downspouts were cleaned out on Saturday

Replaced three fence posts and securely re-attached fence sections that fell down in the wind and rainstorm of 12.18.23 on Saturday

12.30.23



Fence Down

2024 BUDGET

	Jan 2024 Budget	Feb 2024 Budget	Mar 2024 Budget	Apr 2024 Budget	May 2024 Budget	Jun 2024 Budget	Jul 2024 Budget	Aug 2024 Budget	Sep 2024 Budget	Oct 2024 Budget	Nov 2024 Budget	Dec 2024 Budget	FY 2024 Budget	FY 2023 Actual	Fav/(Unf) 24 Bud v 23 Act	% Change 24 Bud v 23 Act
Revenue																
4000 - Church Revenue																
4120 - Givno Revenue	23,960	12,200	12,200	12,200	12,200	12,200	12,200	12,200	12,200	12,200	16,200	16,400	170,380	173,403	(3,053)	-2%
4600 - Tenant Revenue	5,357	5,357	5,357	5,357	5,357	5,357	4,157	4,157	4,557	6,957	5,357	5,357	62,684	65,007	(2,323)	-4%
Total 4000 - Total Church Revenue	29,307	17,557	17,557	17,557	17,557	17,557	16,357	16,357	16,757	19,157	23,557	23,757	233,034	238,410	(5,376)	-2%
Operating Expenses																
5300 - Pastor																
5310 - Salary w/Social Security	7,394	7,394	7,394	7,394	7,394	7,394	7,394	7,394	7,394	7,394	7,394	7,394	88,730	80,296	(8,434)	-11%
5320 - Benefits/Annuity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,479	9,479	7,965	(1,514)	-13%
5340 - Professional Expenses	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	1,000	68	(932)	-131%
5350 - Mileage	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	1,000	1,833	833	45%
5360 - Pastor's Discretionary Fund	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	60	500	100	(400)	-400%
5365 - MEALS	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	60	500	185	(315)	-170%
5370 - Utilities	0	250	0	0	300	0	0	250	0	0	200	0	1,000	953	(37)	-4%
5380 - Substitute Ministers	0	0	0	300	0	0	300	300	0	0	0	0	900	1,100	200	18%
Total 5300 - Pastor	7,540	7,890	7,540	7,940	7,940	7,540	7,940	8,190	7,540	7,540	7,840	17,169	103,109	92,510	(10,599)	-11%
6200 - Church Operations																
6215 - Director of Operations	4,158	4,158	4,158	4,158	4,158	4,158	4,158	4,158	4,158	4,158	4,158	4,158	49,896	47,407	(2,489)	-5%
6216 - Bookkeeper	0	0	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	10,000	0	(10,000)	N/A
6220 - Church Administrator	2,233	2,233	2,233	2,233	2,233	2,233	2,233	2,233	2,233	2,233	2,233	2,233	26,796	28,722	1,926	7%
6225 - Sexton	800	800	800	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	10,500	8,484	(2,016)	-24%
6210 - Administration	1,989	1,989	2,079	1,324	1,504	1,649	1,434	1,700	1,380	1,615	1,440	1,315	19,398	25,766	6,368	25%
6211 - Marketing	0	0	0	600	0	400	0	0	300	0	0	1,200	2,500	1,090	(1,410)	-123%
6212 - Deacons	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	1,000	255	(745)	-282%
6235 - Church Utilities	1,750	3,800	1,450	950	2,000	550	500	1,900	500	600	2,375	1,450	17,825	16,407	(1,418)	-8%
6240 - Insurance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19,500	19,500	16,435	(1,065)	-6%
6245 - Building and Grounds	7,998	15,473	9,423	8,148	4,598	4,148	8,354	4,054	5,329	6,704	6,354	5,654	86,237	69,867	(16,370)	-23%
6246 - B&G - Repair/Improve 483/495	0	5,000	10,900	0	7,500	15,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	38,400	4,377	(34,023)	-777%
6247 - B&G - Repair/Improve 505	7,000	5,000	3,000	19,250	5,000	37,500	10,000	4,000	0	0	54,000	0	144,750	11,770	(132,980)	-1130%
6250 - Social Committee	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	1,800	1,676	(124)	-7%
6251 - Membership/NOURISH	200	200	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	210	2,500	726	(1,774)	-284%
6255 - Dues	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	175	5,000	850	6,025	5,205	(820)	-16%
6260 - Resources / CONSULTANT	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	1,000	1,065	65	5%
6265 - FICA/Med (all)	775	775	775	775	835	835	835	835	835	860	850	850	9,825	8,608	(1,217)	-14%
Total 6200 - Church Operations	27,139	39,744	36,344	39,864	30,254	68,899	29,940	21,306	17,161	18,761	78,836	38,644	447,952	249,860	(198,092)	-73%
6300 - Music																
6310 - Minister of Music	3,098	3,098	3,098	3,098	3,098	3,098	3,098	3,098	3,098	3,098	3,098	3,098	37,177	35,976	(1,201)	-3%
6320 - Soloists	3,200	2,800	3,600	4,000	2,400	1,600	0	0	0	2,000	2,400	2,000	24,000	15,280	(8,720)	-57%
6325 - Tuning and Reeds	0	5,085	585	155	0	155	0	155	0	155	585	155	7,030	1,295	(5,734)	-442%
6330 - Supplies/Sheet Music	280	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	250	0	100	0	640	494	(146)	-30%
6340 - Substitute Organist	0	150	0	150	0	0	300	750	600	150	0	0	2,100	900	(1,200)	-133%
Total 6300 - Music	6,588	11,133	7,283	7,403	5,498	4,853	3,398	4,003	3,948	5,403	6,183	5,254	70,947	53,946	(17,001)	-33%
6400 - Christian Education																
6410 - Youth Minister	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
6420 - Minister of Children and Families	1,200	1,200	1,500	1,200	1,200	1,500	1,238	1,238	1,548	1,238	1,238	1,550	15,650	14,675	(1,175)	-8%
6430 - Teachers	1,100	1,100	1,375	1,100	1,100	775	300	300	1,375	1,100	1,100	1,375	12,100	4,335	(7,765)	-173%
6440 - Curriculum/Music Intern	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	540	631	91	14%
6445 - Supplies, etc.	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	1,680	2,115	435	21%
6450 - Scholarships	0	0	0	0	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,000	3,000	2,000	67%
Total 6400 - Christian Education	2,460	2,460	3,035	2,460	2,460	3,435	1,698	1,998	3,083	2,498	2,498	3,065	31,170	24,756	(6,414)	-26%
Total Operating Expense	43,887	61,227	54,302	57,667	46,152	84,827	42,976	35,497	31,832	34,302	95,357	65,152	653,175	421,072	(232,103)	-55%
Net Operating Income	(14,580)	(43,670)	(36,745)	(40,110)	(28,595)	(67,270)	(26,619)	(19,140)	(15,075)	(15,145)	(71,800)	(41,395)	(420,144)	(182,662)	(237,482)	-130%
Other Income/Expense																
7000 - Non-Operating Income																
7200 - School Building Rental	14,142	14,142	14,142	14,142	14,142	14,142	14,142	14,142	14,496	14,496	14,496	14,496	171,120	166,952	4,168	2%
7201 - Adult Centre School Revenue	0	0	60,000	0	0	37,000	0	0	28,000	0	0	43,000	188,000	163,399	24,601	15%
Total Other Income	14,142	14,142	94,142	14,142	14,142	51,142	14,142	14,142	42,496	14,496	14,496	57,496	359,120	330,351	28,769	3%
Other Expense																
8000 - Non-Operating Expense																
8400 - Contingency/Capital Campaign Mt	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	10,000	41,540	31,540	76%
Total Other Expense	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	833	10,000	41,540	31,540	76%
Net Other Income/Expense	13,309	13,309	93,309	13,309	13,309	50,309	13,309	13,309	41,663	13,663	13,663	56,669	349,120	288,811	60,309	21%
Net Income/(Loss)	(1,271)	(30,361)	56,564	(26,801)	(15,286)	(16,961)	(13,310)	(5,831)	26,538	(1,462)	(55,137)	15,264	(71,094)	105,149	(177,173)	N/A

FCC BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

This past year was a productive one for our church. Working with the Director of Finance and Operations, Lori Connelly and our minister, R.G. Wilson-Lyons the Trustees participated in the financial, personnel and operational decisions of the church. With the generous pledges, gifts and other income we received, we have allocated funds to support the operations of our faith-based programs and maintain our sanctuary and physical plant. A detailed accounting may be found in the 2023 Financial Overview and other financial statements provided in this annual report.

Staffing: We were grateful to Alex Barber who continued to work with us temporarily in the office until we welcomed Simone Lara as Administrative and Communications Assistant in September. We posted a bookkeeper position at the beginning of last year to hire someone to assist Lori, however we had no success. In recognition that the building projects have become so numerous, and in an effort to alleviate Lori's workload, the trustees entered in to an agreement with the company YPTC (Your Part-Time Controller). YPTC is a company that specializes in helping non-profit organizations with bookkeeping, accounting, financial reporting and financial management. YPTC will provide short term staffing to review and document our processes and provide bookkeeping & reporting, which will also address any internal audit concerns. At the end of November, 2023 our Minister of Children and Families, Katy Fazio notified us of her need to take a maternity leave in January, 2024. We hired two assistants (Jacqui Louis-Gaines and Maria Santana) to the Christian Education staff to add more adults as teachers, to assist our Minister of Children and Families with curriculum development, Fellowship One Sunday school administration duties and to fill in during Katy's leave in January of 2024. Unfortunately, Maria left her position with us at the end of December. We hired Blair Trygstad Stowe in December to cover for Katy, Minister of Children and Families during her leave. We also welcomed R.G. Wilson-Lyons, who was acting Pastor, as our called pastor in June, with his installation held in December. Lastly, Lori Connelly, Kevin Harnden, and Matthew Larson remain on staff with us as stalwarts of the FCC Team!

The 2023 Board of Trustees members were: Heather Baker, Carter Fahy, Susan Ferrari, Paula Goodrich, Kate Kibbee (chair), Jaymee Mannix, Marc Roberts, Niki Rukstalis, and Jeff Smith. Marc Robert and Kate Kibbee will be stepping off the board in February of 2024.

Budget: Summarizing our financial report for 2023: We showed a net profit of about \$106,150.00 which was favorable to the plan by \$125,216.00. The year had been budgeted to have a net loss of \$19,066, however The Centre School provided an unexpected increased amount of profit-sharing for a total of \$163,399.00. (\$150,000 was budgeted for 2023). This "profit" is allotted for 2023 projects to be completed in 2024. We also opened a high yield savings account to earn more interest on the money we will be paying back to our Fidelity account. As a reminder, 153K was taken from our Fidelity account in order to renovate the basement to build the new youth room. In addition giving was up \$17,400.00 from our original budget. Thus, we were able to show a profit for the year of 2023.

Although, December 2021 had been targeted as the end of the Capital Campaign for the Youth Room build-out we received additional payments on pledges in the 2023 year. We were not able to collect \$12,000. This in addition to going over budget on costs, left us with a deficit of \$41,540.00 overall and closed out the Capital Campaign in 2023.

Buildings: We were able to address some of the most critical items on our deferred maintenance and repair list including several Centre School upkeep and upgrades, repairs to the Wildcat Den due to the flooding 2023, unexpected maintenance items and general repairs for the safety of the building. A

detailed list of all projects and repairs can be seen in the finance and operations report. We want to extend a huge “thank you” to Lori Connelly for her planning and implementing of all the projects during 2023!

The Wildcat Den (after school program for the children of Milton Public Schools) in the Youth Room in 2023 was sporadic due to the flood and town’s staffing turnover and lower attendance. Most of our FCC and community groups, as well as our paying tenants and new tenants are back and using space in our church and buildings bringing our numbers back to pre-pandemic levels. We continue to offer space at a nominal donation fee to several community anonymous addiction groups and the Town of Milton.

Thank you to Lori Connelly, Frank Wilson, all of the Trustee board members and to this congregation for their support and hard work. We are looking forward to working with you 2024!

Submitted by,
Kate Kibbee, Chair

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

The 2024 Stewardship Drive began on November 1 with a letter and email to the congregation by Frank Wilson and RG. November 19 was designated as pledge Sunday.

During the next four weeks R. G. dedicated a sermon to giving and what the Church means to you. Niki Rukstalis and Dave Follett spoke eloquently during worship detailing what the FCC means to them and why they generously support its programs. R. G. successfully challenged the leadership of the church to pledge by 11/12.

The advent of electronic giving 4 years ago significantly improved the Stewardship effort for both members and administration. To date we have 61 pledges totally \$162,668 for general fund and \$31,428 for Benevolence.

Thanks to all for your generosity.

Respectfully submitted,
Frank Wilson, Moderator

SHOPWITHSCRIP REPORT

The shopwithscrip gift card program continues to contribute significant revenue to the general fund despite limited participation by a handful of members.

The program is simple. A member purchases a gift card at face value and a percentage of the value of the card is donated to the FCC. EXAMPLE: a \$100 gift card to Milton Market Place, Star Market or Stop & Shop returns \$4.00 to FCC. HOW MUCH DO YOU SPEND WEEKLY FOR GROCERIES?

In 2023 the program generated \$1825 in profit to the general fund.

Please consider using this program to increase your 2024 donation to the Church at no cost to you!

Frank Wilson
Moderator

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

2023 was a busy year for the Church Council.

MARCH 9 meeting

We began on March 9 with a decision and the strong urging of Steve Paxhia to host the Strawberry Festival on June 10 after a 3 year absence due to the Covid pandemic. We decided to rename the event as "STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL AND BACKYARD BARBEQUE"

Steve had already lined up individuals to manage the different activities of the festival. Numerous other responsibilities were assigned.

APRIL 10 Meeting

Update on Strawberry Festival plans

RG Gave us an overview of his profile and why he would be honored to be our settled pastor. A lively discussion followed between R.G and council members. Following the discussion the Council voted unanimously to recommend RG to the congregation to be our settled pastor.

MAY 19 Meeting

RG detailed the summer worship plans with East Cong. July services will be at FCC and August services at East. RG and Shelly will develop worship plans.

Strawberry Festival plans reviewed.

OCTOBER 17 MEETING

Profit from Strawberry Festival \$10,500. Most ever!

Alex Barber completed hand book covering all the details for managing the Strawberry Festival

Capitol campaign uncollectables in amount of \$12,500 to be written off.

A busy and productive year!

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 meaningful ways.

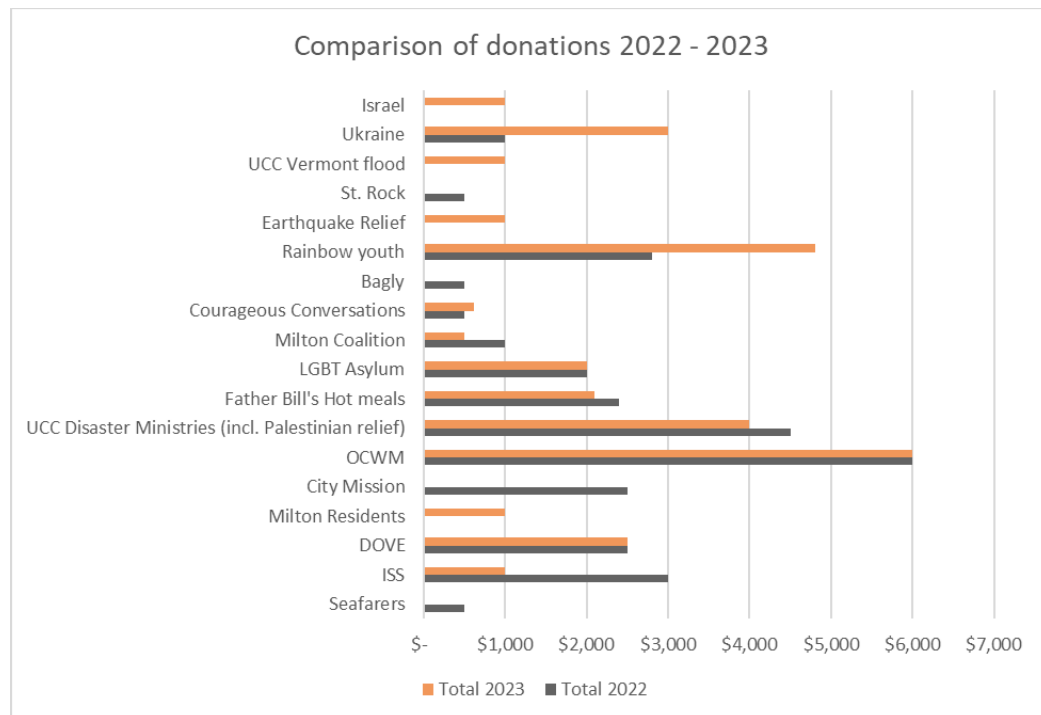
High level summary of activities and impact:

- Our total disbursements for 2023 were \$30,525 to 14 causes/organizations.
- We successfully had quarterly budget consensus. We met monthly excluding August and December. Starting January 2024, we meet every 4th Sunday of the month at 11:30am
- Annual Coat drive was successfully concluded in Q1 by delivering 311 coats to Solutions at Work in Dorchester (works with coat recipients at Haitian refugee church)
- We decided to shift for ISS to more physical donations over monetary donations and made the ISS/Donation box “a thing”, promoted different donation opportunities during the year (Baby products, hygiene products, Books, Coats,...)
- Father Bills/Mainspring: Anne Regnier is checking in with them monthly, as their needs change. They are requesting between 50-75 lunches and dinner for 115 and in December 150. That is up from providing dinner for 60, which was constant in the past. We as well recruited families to deliver in addition to BoB members to share the incredible experience of giving.
- Rainbow youth is going very well and we increased the hours for Eden and Eli to meet every week. They’re looking into creating a spiritual curriculum, which would help the youth explore what it means to be spiritual.
- Mid 2023 chair has transitioned from Betsy to Mary Riley & Erika Swan as Co-chair team.
- Betsy Disharoon represented FCCM attending SNEUCC Justice Summit in October.

Comparison of donations 2022 – 2023

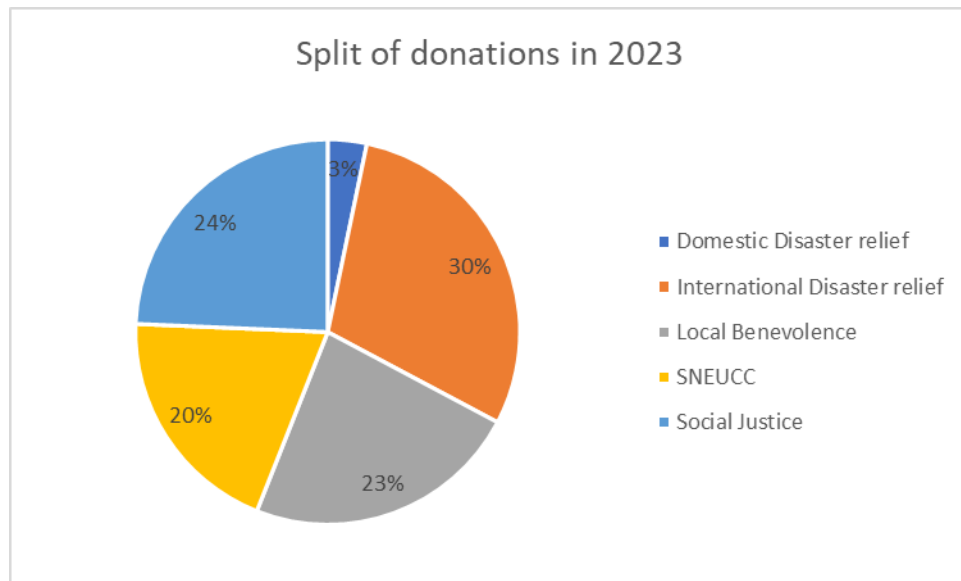
- We ended donations to Seafarers in 2023
- You can see the reductions in monetary donations to ISS as we are switching to in-kind donations
- City Mission got dissolved, so we discontinued donations there
- Reduced UCC Disaster Ministry overall and added Vermont Flood, Turkey Earthquake, Israel & Palestinian relief funds
- Doubled Rainbow youth in line with the growth & success of the program

- Slightly reduced Father Bills cost as some shoppers are donating warm meals
- Paused Milton Coalition until we know the CDC grant decision
- Slightly increased Courageous Conversations as we were a sponsor for the Juneteenth event at Eustis Estate
- We tripled our Ukraine relief support



2023 Donation Distribution

- We spent 33% on Disaster relief (3% domestic and 30% international)
- 24% of our budget went to Social Justice groups and events
- 23% went to local charities
- 20% is our annual contribution to the Southern New England United Church of Christ



	Total 2023
ISS	\$ 1,000
DOVE	\$ 2,500
Milton Residents	\$ 1,000
OCWM	\$ 6,000
UCC Disaster Ministries	\$ 4,000
Father Bill's Hot meals	\$ 2,100
LGBT Asylum	\$ 2,000
Milton Coalition	\$ 500
Courageous Conversations	\$ 625
Rainbow youth	\$ 4,800
Earthquake Relief	\$ 1,000
UCC Vermont flood	\$ 1,000
Ukraine	\$ 3,000
Israel	\$ 1,000
Total	\$ 30,525

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,
Mary Riley/Erika Swan

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION REPORT

2023 has been a wonderful year for Christian Education as we continue to grow since 2020. At the end of last year, Hannah Smith-Erb moved on to her new calling and we were lucky to have found an excellent replacement in Katy Fazio. Last year also saw us utilizing a single classroom model for our lower numbers of children participating in Sunday school. Thankfully we have seen a steady increase in families and children and

were able to open classrooms in the Centre School for usage in the Fall of 2023. The number of children participating on Sundays has been steadily increasing but remains lower than pre-pandemic levels.

Adam Ochs continued to direct the children in choir in 2023, as the number of singers has been steady or slightly increasing from last year.

Wacky Wednesdays continued its success throughout 2023, with East Congregational Church hosting every other week. Mike Baker and others offered their excellent food options. This has helped us maintain a great relationship with our neighbors across Milton.

During the summer months we were able to keep some great momentum with Katy organizing the planting and maintenance of the FCC Garden project. It involved plantings in the front lawn and at the parsonage with the help of our summer Sunday school attendees. We were also able to hire Eli Gaff as our Climate Hope Fellow to help run our summer programming with Katy. The summer program ended with a week-long kids' experience called "Nature and Neighbors."

The Board also made their contributions to an incredibly successful return of the Strawberry Festival. We ran the always popular teddy bear clinic, story time, and bouncy house. It was a record setting festival!

The youth group started the school year with an exciting get-away by the middle schoolers to Craigville Retreat Center on Cape Cod. This helped this growing cohort make some lasting memories and bond into a wonderful group.

We once again ended the year with a wonderful Christmas Pageant. It was a real treat and a fantastic end to the calendar year for our children!

Katy was happy to announce to the Board and the congregation that she would be expecting a new addition to her family, and we were all thrilled for her. However that meant we would need to find someone to take over her duties when she left for maternity leave. RG again led us in the right direction with a recommendation and we were thankfully able to bring on Blair Trygstad Stowe to lead our children while Katy was away. Blair has been a welcomed addition to our church family.

We would like to thank the members of the BoCE who served during 2023 for their continued dedication over this past year: Adam Ochs, Janine Solomon, Libby Dunphy, Emily Gorman, Deirdre Merrill, and Niels Krejci.

Respectfully Submitted,
Adam Ochs, Chair

DIGITAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE REPORT

Mission and Team

The Digital Ministry team consists of:

Doug Gaff
Niels Krejci
Mike Baker
Barney Morisette

Mike Shaw

The team is responsible for running live church events, supporting our streaming ministry, maintaining our church network infrastructure, and maintaining our church website. We also pick up other technical jobs around the church as necessary. Church events include Sunday services, special music events, memorial services, Caroling on the Commons, and the children's Christmas pageant.

2023 Streaming Statistics

Here are the stats for 2023. Please note that during August, services were held at East Congregational Church and were streamed through their YouTube channel. As such, there are four Sundays for which we don't have an accurate view count and watch time. Also, we did not stream Caroling on the Commons this year given the complexities of mixing that service simultaneously for the live audience and for the stream.

	2021	2022	2023 (excluding August)
Channel Subscribers	133	151	160
Total Video Views	4701	3928	3609
Hours of Watch Time	992	705	564.3
Average Views Per Service	60	52	49

141 views – “Who We Are - First Congregational Church of Milton,” 10/30/2023

119 views -- "Devotion Delivers" Rev. Wendy Miller Olapade, 1/29/2023

106 views -- "Life Together--Service" Rev. R. G. Wilson-Lyons, 11/13/2023

94 views – “Strawberry Festival 2023”

92 views -- "A Mystical Exercise in Trust" Rev. R.G. Wilson-Lyons, 5/14/2023

88 views -- "Christ, the King" Rev. R.G. Wilson-Lyons, 11/27/2023

Our live stream is automatically recorded by YouTube as we stream. The majority of the view counts come from people watching all or part of the recorded service. The remaining views come from live viewers who watch the service as it's happening. In 2023, we saw an average of 5 live viewers each Sunday with a peak live audience of 16. One of the big differences with live viewers is that they tend to watch the entire service. Recorded viewers tend to skip around to music and the sermon.

Infrastructure Upgrades

In 2023, we made the following improvements:

1. New soundboard. Many thanks to the congregation for this much-needed upgrade! The new board is state-of-the-art, with better audio quality and much easier programming for Sunday service needs and special events.
2. Upgraded wireless microphone antenna system. We've consistently had reception issues on our wireless mics over the years. We added a high-gain antenna and installed an antenna distribution system to hopefully address this and give us more life out of our wireless mic system.
3. Permanent organ microphone. We installed a mic behind the decorative organ pipes to better capture the organ music on our stream. We don't amplify the organ during service, of course. This mic is just for the stream.
4. New sound desk furniture. We added a second small table to support the laptop and other peripherals.
5. Comcast internet improvements. We had a Comcast tech investigate our upload bandwidth issues and replace our cable modem. We hope to have more reliable streaming with this change.
6. Church office backup battery. We added battery backup to protect the critical network infrastructure in the church office from the somewhat regular power blips we've been having. The balcony system and all church wireless access points route to the office networking equipment.
7. Other miscellaneous fixes. We fixed some broken microphone plugs on the stage. We fixed a broken microphone mount. We added a hard drive for backup recording of the service if the stream is having trouble.

The mic plugs, organ mic, and wireless issues were in last year's annual report on our to-do list. We still have work to do on the house mics, as noted last year.

- Install two additional house mics to better record the congregation singing on the live stream.
- Lower the height of the two existing house mics, which currently pick up too much organ and house echo.

Future Operational and Capital Expenses

In this year's budget, we've requested a line item for small, ongoing operational expenses related to the digital ministry: consumables like tape and batteries, cable and cable repairs, and minor non-capital upgrades. These items have typically been donated in years past, and we want to make sure the congregation has more transparency in the operational costs of digital ministry.

Thanks to the upgrades over the past couple of years—video switcher, soundboard, and wireless reception—the system is in overall excellent health. Assuming the digital ministry mission stays as it is today, we don't expect major expenses in the next couple of years.

That said, we do want to point out upcoming investment areas. At some point in the next few years, we'll have to begin replacing our aging analog wireless microphones. This is a significant capital investment. For the 2025 budget, we will price out some systems and propose a budget line item that begins earmarking funds for a future capital project. This will enable us to avoid incurring the cost all at once, especially if there are equipment failures.

The other area of weakness is our video cameras. They are all consumer-grade, and while adequate, they aren't designed to last in a production environment. As with other older equipment, we'll keep them running as long as possible.

Finally, both Pastor R.G. and Music Director Matthew have asked about the feasibility of a TV or projector on the wall over the piano. The purpose would be to show images related to the sermon and to project music and lyrics. While there are currently no plans to add this, we wanted to highlight it as a potential future expense if the church requested it.



DELEGATES REPORT

“We did not have anyone representing our church as a delegate to the Southern New England Conference of the UCC’s annual meeting this year. We are planning to restart selecting delegates in 2024 with Betsy Disharoon and Nathan Hornbach serving.”

DIACONATE REPORT

2023 was a productive year for First Congregational Church of Milton. We began the process of implementing our mission plan. The Deacons strive to engage with visitors and encourage them to feel a sense of belonging. We work with RG in creating worship services that help our congregation

grow in their faith and spirituality. And we engaged with East Church to create meaningful worship opportunities on Maundy Thursday and fresh new joint summer services.

The highly successful Nourish Wednesday night in conjunction with East Church continues to evolve. Families enjoyed an economical home cooked meal. While the kids enjoyed the Wacky Wednesday activities, the adults engaged social justice discussions, spiritual worship programs with Reverend Joe Bradley, and bible studies.

We continue to be blessed RG's compelling messages and leadership. He has worked closely with the Deacons to consider worship themes. As a result, we have had several sermon series that have been very well received. The New Year's Eve brunch service included members from East Church and was very well attended.

We accepted Wendy Garpow resignation as a deacon and are thankful her contributions. We welcomed Nate Hornbach as he enthusiastically embraced his role as a new deacon!

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Paxhia

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 created inventories for 3 additional boxes of materials.

There were two internal reference enquiries to the Archives.

Accessioned 5 transfers to the collection:

2023-001: Council Meeting Notes, March 9, 2023, received from Frank Wilson, 3/10/2023

2023-002: Board of Christian Ed Meeting Minutes, April 11, 2023, received from
Libby Fundling, 4/16/2023

2023-003: Board of Benevolence Meeting Minutes, July 23, 2023, received from Erika Swan,
7/29/2023

2023-004: Music Committee Meeting Minutes, September 27, 2023, received from Brenda Gaff,
10/10/2023

2023-005: Board of Benevolence Meeting Minutes, September 24, 2023, and October 22, 2023,
received from Erika Swan, 10/24/2023

Respectfully submitted,

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

The Membership Committee is looking for members to restart its work. While the committee didn't officially meet this year, members from our church worked hard to have an amazing Strawberry Festival and Caroling on the Common.

MUSIC MINISTRY REPORT

The Music Ministry has had a busy and productive 2023. Our long-time soloist, Lorna Jane Norris, left us after many years of service following her husband's traumatic yet successful battle with cancer. She and her husband Ed Broms, former organist at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Milton, decided to make a complete lifestyle change and have moved to Wallingford, Vermont.

This past summer our alto soloist Emily Harmon was offered a position at the prestigious Glimmerglass Opera festival in upstate New York. She made such an impression there that she came away from the summer with professional management! Emily then won a place as Emerging Artist at Virginia Opera for the 2023/2024 season and was away for part of the Fall fulfilling that contract. In her place, we were fortunate to have Elaine Daiber substituting (as she will continue to do while Emily is back in VA this winter). Elaine is the former Director of the choir at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Milton.

We were also blessed to be able to hire Marcus Huber as tenor soloist, and Anthony Pilcher as bass soloist – both are recent graduates of the Masters program in Vocal Performance at Boston University, and each has distinguished backgrounds as performing artists. Marcus is originally from Lancaster, PA and comes to us from his previous position at The Church on the Hill in downtown Boston. Anthony hails from Buffalo, NY and previously worked as Bass Soloist at the First Baptist Church of Medford.

Along with our longtime soprano Angela Gooch, we now have 4 Section Leader/Soloists for the first time since 2002, the year I began working here! This has been a long-time goal of mine. I am grateful for all the ways this church supports our music ministry and that support is why we are able to have such amazing musicians as a part of our worship experience. In addition to the restoration of the 4th Section Leader/Soloist position, the Trustees have approved a long-overdue raise in pay for our professional singers – this increase moves this church back up into the median range for church vocalist positions in the Boston area (we were at the bottom of the pay scale for quite a while). It is a great relief to me that we are once again competitive; I am very grateful to the Trustees for solving these two crucial issues within the Music Ministry.

Spring and summer 2023 saw the completion of last year's musical theme, "Music of the British Isles." The Choir, soloists and I will present a Gala of music from this theme once we are able to identify a workable date; hopefully Lorna will be able to participate as well. The musical theme for the current year, which we started in September, is "Americana." This seems to be a favorite with musicians and congregation alike, and covers a wide variety of musical styles, including Black Spirituals, musical theater and pop!

The Music Ministry participated heavily in the Installation Service for R. G., where The Choir, soloists and I presented favorites requested by our minister, including a bring-the-house-down arrangement of “Bridge Over Troubled Water” by the soloists. It was a very moving and meaningful day for all of us, and we are so pleased to have been able to participate.

As we have for the past several years, the Choir and soloists spent some time before Advent decorating our beautiful Sanctuary for the Christmas season. Christine Paxhia also did a fabulous job providing poinsettias and amaryllis plants. This task is one of many group activities we enjoy, and I think it really makes a difference in the overall church experience to have such a festively decorated worship space at the holidays.

This Fall the Choir saw the addition of a new member, Linden Ochs. Since we don’t list these incredibly dedicated people in the bulletin, as a matter of interest I am listing The Choir membership here:

Soprano:

Angela Gooch, Section Leader and Soloist
Candice Brown
Brenda Gaff
Patricia Morisette
Linden Ochs

Alto:

Emily Harmon, Section Leader and Soloist
Elaine Daiber, Substitute Section Leader and Soloist
Paula Goodrich
Marianna Krejci-Papa
Lisa Viola

Tenor:

Marcus Huber, Section Leader and Soloist
Carol Bowen
Alex Hasha
Christine Paxhia

Bass:

Anthony Pilcher, Section Leader and Soloist
Matthew Larson
Adam Ochs

The Music Ministry at FCC Milton has grown steadily over the years in both quality and scope, from a choir of 9 with just 2 Section Leader/Soloists to the 16-member group with 4 Section Leader/Soloists that is the hallmark of a healthy and professional-level ministry. I sincerely hope we can continue to build upon this amazing collective in the coming years.

Dr. Matthew Larson, Minister of Music

PASTOR PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Pastor Parish Relations Committee did not meet during 2023 but are committed to restarting regular meetings with R.G. in 2024

SMALL GROUPS REPORT

We have several active small groups at the church that met during 2023 including the Men's breakfast, Spiritual Book Club, Women's Breakfast, Senior Book Group, the Midlife Men's Group, and the Knitters. There is a description of each group as well as information on how to join on our website.

Respectfully submitted,
R.G. Wilson-Lyons, pastor

YOUTH GROUP REPORT

Toward the end of 2022 and throughout the first half of 2023, youth group attendance dropped to only four regular attendees. In looking at the age demographics of our kids, we realized that our largest demographic is in the 5th-8th grade range. Therefore, this Fall, we decided to focus on this age group. While high schoolers are still welcome to attend (and do from time to time), the programming and lesson plan is now geared toward middle schoolers.

We kicked the Fall off with an overnight retreat at Craigville Retreat Center in Cape Cod with seven kids attending and our bi-weekly youth group meetings now have eleven kids regularly involved and an average attendance of eight. In addition to Sunday night youth group meetings, the group also participated in making brown bag lunches for Father Bill's and wrapping Christmas gifts for My Brother's Keeper.

In 2024, we are already planning for regular service projects, fun outings, and overnight retreats in addition to our regular youth group activities. Any student 5th grade through high school is welcome to join us.

Respectfully submitted,
R.G. Wilson-Lyons

2024 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES from FEBRUARY 5, 2023

Frank Wilson, moderator, called the 2023 Annual Meeting to order via Zoom at 11:40 am. The meeting was delayed slightly to deal with a burst pipe in the youth room related to the extreme cold over the weekend.

According to the Zoom statistics, there were approximately 37 attendees.

Acting pastor R.G. Wilson-Lyons offered an opening prayer.

Frank Wilson, moderator, asked for a motion to waive the reading of the committee reports which was offered by Jamie Roth and seconded by Kate Kibbe. All approved without further discussion.

There was a review of nominations to boards and committees. Frank then asked for a motion to accept all nominees. Nancy Barber made the motion and Mary Riley seconded. All votes were Aye. Frank Wilson suggested that anyone who is interested in joining a committee, please reach out to the nominating committee saying all participation is appreciated.

A motion was made and seconded to waive the reading of the Annual, Report and to accept it as written. This also was unanimously approved.

Frank Wilson then turned the meeting over to R.G. Wilson-Lyons for the Pastor's Report. R.G. opened with, "There's no going back. I think if I had to pick one sentence to describe where we are as a congregation, it would be that one. For the last three years, so many of us have been hoping for a return to normalcy." He continued by commenting the pandemic and cultural changes have altered the way people engage with their church communities, but that is not a bad thing. FCC Milton has done well adapting: Nourish, Intergenerational worship, small groups and other activities have resulted in keeping the church vital. The church may have at one time had 100 students in Sunday School but today, through Nourish, the Wildcat Den, The Rainbow group, Dungeons and Dragon nights and the youth group, we are serving a similar, if not higher, number of children where they need us. The visioning process has been active and productive in the last 6 months and is reaching its final stage of Action Planning which will be another leap forward. R.G. quoted Alex Hasha, member of the visioning committee, who said, he believes the Holy Spirit is about to unleash something here.

R.G. went on to point out the strong financial position of the church and to thank the staff and people on boards and committees for their time and effort. He closed by thanking God for the lives of Jean McKenney and Isabel Pinkus who died in 2022. They were both instrumental parts of our congregation for many years and we cherish their memories and all they meant to our church.

(R.G.'s full report is included in the 2022 annual report)

The next agenda item was the Stewardship report presented by Frank Wilson. As of the meeting, 56 pledges were in totaling \$156,000 to the general fund and \$35,000 to Benevolence.

Pledges to the general fund are down by \$10,000 while Benevolence is up \$6000 from 2021.

He emphasized monthly electronic giving has significantly reduced the Stewardship Campaign effort and greatly reduced the administrative workload.

Frank also reminded the congregation that you can painlessly increase your financial support of the Church by participating in the Scrips program.

Select one store you shop regularly. Example- Milton Market Place, Stop & Shop, or Star/Shaw and 4% of your spending goes to FCC. With the current prices of groceries those are substantial and painless ways to give to the church. Frank closed with thanks to all who have pledged to support our Church in 2023.

Kate Kibbee, chairperson of the Board of Trustees gave the Trustees report. She began by summarizing our financial report for 2022: We showed a net profit of about \$129,642.00 versus a net loss for 2021 of \$39,800.00. The year had been budgeted to have a net loss of \$10,401.00, however The Centre School provided an unexpected extra profit-sharing gain of \$51,228.00 at the end of the year (the church received no profit sharing in 2021) along with the PPE loan forgiveness of \$25,800. Also giving came in \$12,218.00 over what we had originally budgeted

Kate continued with a report of the building and grounds work done in 2022. Even with the limited budgeted funds available at the start of 2022, we were able to address the most critical items on our deferred maintenance and repair list including several Centre School repairs and upgrades, replacing and upgrading smoke detectors, maintenance on our ejector pump, replacing vent caps on the cupolas and minor repairs on the carriage house (A detailed list of the building projects can be found in the annual report) Finally, Kate extended a huge “thank you” to Lori Connelly for her planning and implementing of all the projects during 2022.

Kate asked if there were any questions and Brenda Gaff asked when the decision was made to rent the parsonage. Much discussion ensued. It was reported this had been done with the full support of the Trustees and that concerns expressed (impact on our 501C and tax situation, whether the rent was reasonable market value for Milton) were researched fully at the time to confirm our tax status was not impacted and that we are receiving full value based on opinions solicited by multiple Milton realtors. It was agreed the Church Council will discuss the long term use of the parsonage.

That discussion prompted a conversation about how COVID and other changes (fewer face to face conversations, fewer coffee hours, etc.) may have impacted the transparency around the work of the various boards and committees. Several ideas were suggested. Monthly updates from the pulpit during the announcements, written reports available to the full congregation were a couple of those suggestions. The consensus was in favor of trying to improve transparency. Frank Wilson agreed the Church Council would take up this subject and suggest the best solution.

The next order of business was to present the status and next steps of the visioning process. Karina Lund, Alex Hasha and Steve Paxhia each presented part of the update.

Karina reported on the work which has already been done since the process started in early Fall of 2022. The first step was the listening sessions held to hear what members and staff felt were the best aspects of the church and what they believed God is calling us to do next.

There were 9 sessions held. Participating were 54 adult members of the congregation, 5 staff and 13 youth. Based on the results from that work (full report can be found on the FCC website), the following was chosen as the church mission statement:

FCC of Milton is an open Christian Community for all to belong, grow, and engage the world in acts of service and justice.

The next step in the visioning process was researching demographics, prayer walks and 5 different groups who interviewed our greater community (churches, racial and social justice groups, environment and climate protection organizations, youth and municipal administrators). The various teams met to share their information and the results were reported out to the congregation.

The complete details of those results can be found on our website under the tab, “Strategic Planning 2022.”

Alex Hasha next described the final step of information gathering related to creating the action plans for our strategic plan. That will be an online survey encouraging each member to share thoughts on what is important and what is most interesting or compelling personally. Alex suggested the survey should be done with care to focus on areas where you feel most strongly and not to self-edit. The team truly wants your unedited thoughts. The survey will be sent to all the mailing list in the coming week and is requested to be returned by March 10th.

Steve Paxhia closed the visioning report by saying the plan is to receive the survey data by March 10th and hold a moderated session in lieu of our worship service probably on March 19th. At that time, we will meet in small groups to discuss and report on action plans in response to the data from the full visioning process.

Frank Wilson asked if there was any further business to be discussed.

Nancy Barber asked for a church audit of finances, processes and payroll. It had been our process to do this on a regular basis as is common for most businesses with budgets of our size and it is a good way to find and resolve any reporting, but particularly to support our very small staff who should not be left alone holding that burden. The general consensus (there was no formal motion or vote) was in favor and the discussion moved to how often this should happen, the cost and the best way to find the appropriate auditor. Steve Paxhia said he believed the UCC conference had resources and volunteered to reach out to them. It was decided that the Church Council would discuss and report back on the plans.

In closing the meeting, Frank expressed his deep appreciation to Lori Connelly, Alex Barber and Kevin Harnden for all their work.

There being no other business requested, Frank Wilson adjourned the meeting.

Respectively submitted,
Nancy Barber, clerk