

**First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ**

Of

Essex Junction, Vermont

2016 Annual Report



149th Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 29, 2017

11:30 a.m.

INDEX OF ANNUAL REPORTS

3	Warning for the Annual Meeting
4	Annual Report of the Church Clerk
5	President's Message
9	Senior Pastor
12	Associate Pastor
14	Christian Education Director
16	Christian Education Committee
18	Music Committee
18	Music Director
19	Deacons
20	Pastoral Relations Committee
21	Missions
23	Ushering
24	Heavenly Food Pantry
25	Hospitality
25	Human Resources Committee
28	Boy Scouts
29	Jamaica Bound Committee
30	Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop
32	Nominating Committee
36	Trustees
37	Finance Committee
39	Stewardship
40	Treasurer's Report
41	Auditor's Report
42	2016 Income & Expense Statement with 2017 Proposed Budget
47	2016 Income & Expenses for Restricted Funds
48	2016 Balance Sheet

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ESSEX JUNCTION
WARNING FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING
Sunday, January 29, 2017 11:30 a.m.

To the members of the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction,

GREETINGS IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST:

The annual meeting of the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction will be held in the Sanctuary of the Church, at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, January 29, 2017 to take action upon the articles below.

- ARTICLE I:** To hear and act upon the report of the Church Officers, Committees and Recognized Groups of the Church.
- ARTICLE II:** To elect all Church Officers and Committee members required by the By-Laws of the Church and others as may be necessary.
- ARTICLE III:** To act and vote upon the proposed budget for 2017.
- ARTICLE IV:** Shall the members authorize the Finance Committee in conjunction with the Church Council President to borrow money and sign notes pledging the credit of the Church, if needed, to meet the current expenses of the Church?
- ARTICLE V:** To transact any other business which may properly be brought before this Annual meeting.

On behalf of the Church

Andrea Sharp, Church Clerk

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHURCH CLERK

Active Membership as of January 1, 2016: 474

Received by Letter of Transfer	0	Removed by Death	11
Received by Rite of Confirmation	0	Removed by Letter	
Received by Reaffirmation of Faith	12	Removed by Request	1
Reactivated by Deacons	<u>2</u>	Moved by Deacons to Inactive or	
		Affiliate Member	<u>24</u>
Total Added:	14	Total Subtracted:	36

Active membership as of December 31, 2016: 452

Inactive membership as of December 31, 2016: 122

Non-member participants (adults & youth): 333

Total members/participants: 907

SERVICES

Communion: Regular:	24	Weddings:	10
Other:	7	Funerals:	14
Off Site:	8	Baptisms:	7

MEMBERS RECEIVED

Constance Johnson
Sara Kellogg
Matthew Kellogg
Donna Dulaney
Heather Stein

Sarah Metcalf
Christine Czarny
David Dewey
Robert Deal
Terry Stein

Claire Deal
Paul Hyde
Marilyn Hyde
Sean Palmer

COVENANT MEMBERS LOST BY DEATH

Kathleen (Kay) Stewart
Marilyn Sharp Rublee Walcott
John Forrest Kirsch
Stephen Joseph Wark

Phyllis Nelson Gray
Marjorie Faunce
F. Robert Ennis
Jennifer McClintock

Emily Jean Packard
Nancy Hutchinson Potvin
Richard Clarence Shepard

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The best way to describe the work of the Church Council over the past 12 months is to call it the “year of the projects”. Much of what the Council focused on was project-oriented from the stewardship of the Church and our properties to the creation of a new international mission program.

So much has happened this year to improve the Church structure and our other properties that it is hard to believe it could have all gotten done in such a short period of time. A huge amount of thanks goes to the Trustees and Chair Kevin Meilleur, to all who helped lead these projects and to the many volunteers who contributed their time and energy.

Starting with the Church, one of our most pressing challenges from a structural standpoint that had been with us for years was the need for renovations to the steeple. Just finding a qualified contractor was a challenge but the work was completed topped off by a new weather vane featuring a dove – a symbol selected by the congregation. What a relief it has been to have this project completed safely!

We also completed several of the technology improvements that were needed to improve the quality of our audio/visual capability. Monitors were installed in the choir loft so that for the first time ever, Members of the choir can actually watch the service from the same vantage point as the congregation and see all that is going on in front of the altar.

A new sound system was installed that has significantly improved the quality and availability of the audio portion of the service. New microphones in the choir loft and in the front of the Church allow all of these audio components to be picked up for our feeds in Fellowship Hall and for streaming purposes. And new speakers have improved the quality and distribution of sound throughout the sanctuary.

New carpet has been installed in the heavy traffic areas of the Church --- pretty much everywhere carpet has been except under the pews. The old carpet not only looked shoddy but it was becoming a safety hazard as well. The Trustees and the carpet installers did a great job of matching colors and getting the job done quickly.

By the time you read this or certainly by the Annual Meeting, the renovation of the kitchen should be underway. It has taken a lot of work by the Trustees to arrive at a preferred design, identify appropriate appliances, obtain needed permits and line up contractors to do the work. Renovation of the kitchen was determined to be one of the highest priorities of the Members.

We also approved and installed baby changing stations in our bathrooms providing a much more comfortable and functional facility for moms and dads with young children.

Of course, there is almost a constant list of small maintenance items to be addressed and much of the credit for completing these tasks goes to the Trustees and to Members like Lester Nutting and Ed Guild who work tirelessly to keep the Church heated, fix leaky faucets or broken door locks. When you see them, thank them for their service because with a structure as old as our Church we cannot afford to fall behind on maintenance issues.

Major improvements to the Parsonage became a priority this year as Mark and Karen decided to buy a home in the Village and vacated the property. Again, with the work of the Trustees and many volunteers some nagging problems with the structure as well as some major improvements were made in the

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SENIOR PASTOR

2016 Annual Report of Senior Pastor Rev. Mark Mendes

Being the church these days is like fixing an airplane while in flight.

While speaking to the Vermont Conference Minister Lynn Bujnak, she said the aforementioned words and they have ruminated in my mind ever since. The church is changing so quickly as it responds to the all too familiar decline in numbers, giving and influence. And since members always respond well to change, the result in many churches is a heartwarming spontaneous rendition of Kum ba yah!

The decline is a bit scary. Every year in our country 4000 churches close. Every year 2.7 million church members become inactive [36 in our church in 2015]. In 1900 there were 27 churches for every 10,000 people and in 2000 there were 11 churches for every 10,000 people. Half of all churches in the last two years did not add one new member [we added 29 this year]. Only 17.7 % of Americans are in church on any given Sunday. When I was a kid our family attended most Sundays, maybe taking one off a month to do some special family activity. When I first arrived here, there were many families that made it a point of coming most Sundays, meaning we could count on a certain number of kids in Sunday School and use a curriculum that built on itself since there was a core consistent group. No more. Now, we continue to get more kids than most churches in the state, but they are not the same ones each week. Worship, curriculums, leader recruitment, name and face recognition, financial support, wider volunteerism, simply getting to know our members; all of these essential elements of shaping church life must change to the new normal. We are trying to fix the plane as she rolls and dives and sputters. It is hard work but we are called to share Christ's message of love.

The irony is that when society most needs Christ's message, many are moving away from it. When stability and values are craved to uphold civility and respect, people no longer share a core set of values. When our children fall prey to a world that is ever increasing in chaos, greed, self-absorption and division, the one long standing institution in our culture that has sought to correct those societal wrongs is severely weakened and unknown. When darkness looms, the light is hidden under a bushel. I know some of you will say that the church participates in some of those negative aspects of life and deserves what it gets, and I would agree to a point. However, that is only looking at the negative side; a significant portion of the church and every day Christians have consistently sought to do good by feeding, clothing and housing people, offering safety for those in danger and standing for peace in the midst of war. Just think of how many of the social institutions in Chittenden County were started by the church. Just think about how many towns have a food pantry in some local church. What happens to towns and our country when churches disappear? What happens when the church's voice is silenced or sidelined so effectively as to be non-existent? I cannot help but think that families, towns, states and nations will not quite be as kind, forgiving and accepting of others. Some would say we are already in that milieu and suffering from it.

This extended reflection comes about as I report on some of our own declining numbers: worship attendance, youth group participants, Sunday School children and overall membership. There is plenty of good news to report at First Church, but it should be read within the proper context of the wider church and culture. There are fewer people in worship and fewer kids in Sunday School but we had record numbers for VBCamp [55] and Christmas Eve Services [600+] which tells me that more families are associated with our church but attending inconsistently. We moved 36 members to inactive but were able to attract 29 great new members with energy, ideas and a willingness to participate. Despite societal pressures to be mean and cranky, our well represented church questionnaire [200 responded] returned unbelievably high numbers of satisfaction with every aspect of church life [85-90+%]. Despite a consistent decline in non-profit giving across the secular and religious spectrum, we had a 4.25 % increase in our giving with 29 new

pledging units – the highest amount of pledged income ever to our church!!! Despite crumbling church buildings across our country, we have upgraded our facilities in significant ways this year: steeple, kitchen, sound, technology, carpet, windows, new roof at Sawyer House, parsonage upgrades, etc. We have partnered with more non-religious community organizations than in the past. We have initiated a new international Mission Trip to Jamaica. We have covenanted as a Discernment Partner with Devon Thomas as he moves forward with his ordination process in the VTCUCC. We are a busy church on the move, healthy, vibrant, active, and ever looking for ways to live out our faith in Jesus Christ. In the midst of constant adjustments and plenty of Kum ba yah moments, our airplane is cruising along nicely as anti-aircraft guns explode around us. We should just be thankful that we have been able to stave off the forces of diminishing returns and still keep our focus on the future horizon. Our horizon includes the possibility of a Capital Campaign to expand our ongoing ministries and care for and update some of our well used facilities: a decision and discussion that the congregation will determine.

We started this year with Ryan returning from his sabbatical and end the year with his departure after seven years of very good ministry. He will be deeply missed and long remembered. We should feel proud in the ways that we have shaped, trained and supported his growth in ministry. He has grown in his ability to preach, teach and lead. The time we offered him to participate in the wider United Church of Christ was his invitation to his new job as the Executive Director of Silver Lake Conference Center in Connecticut. Let us wish him well as he, Abby and Keadyn begin a new adventure in their lives.

We should also seek to turn our great loss in Ryan's departure into an opportunity to shape our future staff to best meet the needs of an ever changing church landscape. I would very much like the church to enter into a time of discernment concerning the staff configuration. Whether we move forward with a traditional two full time ordained ministry staffing configuration or seek to shift to a leaner more programmatically based approach should be discussed. There are positives and negatives with each approach but as a congregational church, we should open up the discussion and decide together.

In each of my Annual Reports, I also like to highlight our mission giving and affirm the many ways our church lives out her faith in Jesus Christ by helping those in great need. We have a tremendous food ministry in both our Food Pantry [80,000 lbs distributed last year] and our Essex Eats Out participation [free meal to anyone on the 1st Friday of each month]. We distribute a great amount of good, clean clothing at dirt cheap prices at our Heavenly Cents Thrift Store. We connect with prisoners and help families at Christmas time. We support local non-profit organizations and international communities. We take special collections and financially support the wider United Church of Christ. Not including all the non-monetary ways in which we help people, we gave \$47,718.27 or 12.129 % of our budget to others. In many ways, this is the most vital aspect of our ministry and I applaud all of you who volunteer. Thank you.

Let me also thank the administration of the church and so many of our members for supporting me and my family during what has been the most difficult year in our lives. Karen's cancer diagnosis was met with great love. Hundreds of cards poured in, meals of love were offered, compassionate leave approved, staff worked extra hours and prayers were lifted to God on our behalf. Never before had my professional life been actively and observably affected by my personal life. We are living in a new reality but Karen's clean CT Scan and healthy blood tests have allowed all of us to turn the corner and reclaim a sense of hope in our lives. We are all grateful for those of you who supported us.

Lastly, let me thank all of you who, in good counter cultural form, come to church -- the heart of our community life. Let me thank the 250 – 300 people who volunteer in some way to make our ministry a shining beacon in the midst of a dark world. Great appreciation also for a dynamic and incredibly

competent staff: Laurie, Jen, Catherine and Ryan. And finally thanks be to God whose Spirit empowers us all and instills within all of us a desire to love each other and our neighbor. May we fly with the wings of angels as we soar to new heights. Ever grateful to be engaged in ministry with you all, I am, as always, yours in Christ.

Senior Pastor’s Discretionary Fund Report

01/05/2016 05:00 PM	<i>First Congregational Church</i> Income and Expense Statement PASTORS FUND 02, January 2015 - December 2015	Page: 1
	Current Period	
INCOME	4000	
Transfer from Pastor Fnd	4031	\$3,000.00
TOTAL INCOME		3,000.00
EXPENSES	5000	
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE	5400	
Emergency Housing	5401	\$550.00
Emergency Utility	5402	1,247.06
Organizational Support	5404	25.00
Direct member care/suppor	5405	1,000.00
Miscellaneous	5406	50.00
Subtotal Administrative Expense	5400	2,872.06
TOTAL EXPENSES		2,872.06
EXCESS INCOME\EXPENSES		\$127.94

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR

We stand at the end of 2016 which, for the congregation here at First Church Essex Junction, has proven to be a year of transition. Following the departure of Rev. Ryan who, through much prayer and deliberation, chose to take on the position as director of the Silver Lake Conference Center in Connecticut, I was asked by Rev. Mendes and the Human Resources Committee to take on the role of Acting Bridge Associate until the congregation could deliberate on whether they wanted to pursue a search for a full time Associate Pastor or seek to hire a professional youth minister. This position as it originally stood encompassed half of Rev. Ryan's responsibilities. These responsibilities included assisting with planning worship, visitation and adult education. Rev. Ryan's other responsibilities were assumed by Ashley DuBois who took on the role of overseeing the church's youth groups. Without much need for deliberation, I gladly accepted the position and took on the role of Acting Bridge Associate on February 1st 2016.

Upon taking the role I assumed joint responsibility with Rev. Mark for leading the Wednesday night Searchers Group as we explored books such as Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow*, Markus Borg's *Heart of Christianity*, Sarah Miles' *Take this Bread*, and Richard Rohr's *Falling Upward*. In each interaction with the group I have continually been impressed with the thoughtful insight, honesty and commitment to God's goodness exhibited by the men and women who attended. I was pleased and honored to be able to engage with you all as you searched to absorb and apply the insight of these authors into productive action within our own faith community.

I also was blessed to be given the freedom to reach out and visit with as many members of the congregation who were willing to host me. Being able to meet, you the members of the congregation, allowed me the opportunity to both better know you and learn about this congregation. I feel this greatly aided in my ability to integrate myself into our faith community, both as a new minister and as a member who had only joined a few month before. By meeting you in your homes or over lunch, I have been blessed with the ability to hear what you value in the church and what you need from the church. This has allowed me to craft my own ministerial approach.

I also took over Rev. Ryan's once a month time to preach and have used this opportunity to hone my own preaching skills so that I could, hopefully, maintain the level of quality, insight and honesty from the pulpit that this congregation has come to expect. I also used the opportunity to ditch my notes.

Along with preaching comes leading the Tuesday morning Sermon Talk-back, which I have been attending regularly since I started as a member here. This is one of our larger groups at the church that allow the pastors a wonderful chance to elaborate on the message of the week's sermon and the members to engage the sermon in ways that are almost never offered in other congregations. These meetings have offered tremendous means to share in the fellowship of Christ by allowing the congregation access and clarification to what is said on Sunday.

On May 22 the congregation met in order to decide how to proceed with the AP search and decided that, instead of hiring a youth minister, they would start the search for an Associate Pastor. In light of this, I was asked by the Human Resources Committee and Rev. Mendes to continue my role as Acting Bridge Associate Pastor.

In July I traveled with Laurie Chipman, Erica Garvey, along with seven of our youth and three parents, down to Florida to participate in the week-long National Youth Event at Disney World. There I got to engage with our youth as a chaperone and representative of the church as the youth explored and shared what it is like to be young and a person of faith in this world and in this age. The youth engaged in workshops that spanned presentations by a young man who had escaped the violence in Aleppo, to human rights issues pertaining to migrant farmers, to issues pertaining to race such as Black Lives Matter and how our young people can be a force that will positively change the world. At the end of the week we then had an opportunity to spend the day at the Magic Kingdom.

At the end of August I was asked by the Human Resources Committee and Rev. Mendes if I would be willing to participate in a ministerial team with Erica Garvey in overseeing the church's youth program. Seeing this as an opportunity to build my skills in youth ministry, I accepted.

Together Erica and I have sought to maintain and engage our youth by emphasizing the values of fellowship, faith and fun. In October we had a successful evening trip to Mazza's Corn Maze. We also in November ran a craft station at the church's yearly craft fair, which was very well received by the children who came with their parents to the fair. We then hosted a pie baking evening where we baked twenty nine pies that we then sold or donated to members of the congregation. And while attendance has been few in number over the past months, we understand that this is a trend that has continued over the past few years. Our focus then is to find ways to engage the youth in manners that will be meaningful and memorable for them.

September also was the start of a confirmation year and, along with Rev. Mendes, I have alternated leading this group. I have found confirmation in particular to be a very rewarding experience. We have a large class this year because Rev. Mendes has expanded the age range of our confirmands. In my experience someone always learns something new during confirmation, and being able to aid in that process of discovery is always very rewarding for me. For me, one of the gifts of fellowship is being able to share your thoughts and opinions. I very much cherish that ability to learn from as well as teach our youth about the church and the way we see God here at First Church Essex, so that they may make the informed decision as to whether they wish to join as members of this church.

Lastly, on November 1st I, along with Rev. Mendes and Michael Bottamini, went before the Ministerial Standings Committee of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ where I was voted into official Member in Discernment status. This is not something that would have happened without the gracious and heartfelt support of this congregation. In addition to being accepted into MID status, I was licensed as an acting minister of this congregation and thus allowed the privilege of assuming full ministerial duties. A lot has happened in 2016, and though my time with you in this capacity here at First Church Essex will be short, I am thankful to the very bottom of my heart for the opportunities you have given me to both serve and grow here in Essex.

Devon Lee Thomas, Bridge Associate Pastor.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE VERMONT CONFERENCE MEETING

As Christians we are well aware that it is good, at times, to separate ourselves from our busy everyday lives to contemplate on the state of the world around us and the role we wish to play in it. As followers of Christ we believe that God is an important and ever-present force within the world compelling us toward good, and so reflection is a vital tool that helps us bring God to the places where God is vitally needed. This is a role our Conference Annual Meeting plays for the church. It is a vital time of reflection in which we can meditate as a Conference on the ways in which Christ calls us here in the state of Vermont and as citizens of this nation and world.

Having attended the conference on April 30th, I was asked to write a reflection for the congregation on what I found meaningful in my time there, and I do feel that there was a message that the Conference was trying to instill within us who attended. It was a message directed toward helping those who are in need, and doing everything we can to make positive change in the world. Now that may seem an overly generalized statement – but that was probably the Conference's initial intent.

The major topics of focus this weekend were on environmental justice, standing up for fairer employment practices here in the state, and the refugee issue here in Vermont and in the world, as well as budget and finance. For the purpose of holding your attention, I will skip budget and finance, but it should be noted we talked a lot about stewardship and money.

The discussion on environmental justice focused a lot on how severe the issue is and how environmental issues have a trickledown effect on other social issues such as poverty and health. For the meeting I was

asked to read *Laudato Si'* which was the encyclical letter written by Pope Francis. He wrote in his letter how we, as God's children, have a responsibility to the world, but also to one another, and that how we treat the world directly affects how we treat one another, and most often first affects the poor.

There was also a proposal that the church vocally stand up for fairer employment practices here in Vermont. So this would concern issues like whether a worker is seen as an independent contractor or an employee, or whether companies offer employees fair benefits. This is something we should be concerned about as a church.

Then lastly, the Conference advocates that we help bring in and find safe places jobs and benefits for as many refugees as possible. The problem with taking in refugees is not limited to the Middle East and Europe, but is also a global issue in which we all can play a role. Vermont has taken in a number of refugees as we in Essex are aware, but we can do more. The Conference encourages us as Christians to open the doors of our communities to refugees so that they can lead happy and fulfilling lives lending their presence and gifts to us, their friends and neighbors.

Now, having reviewed what was discussed, I would like to briefly provide my take on the issues. As Christians, we are committed to reaching out to others as Christ did. We should always be mindful of the environment, the civil rights of people, and the suffering and safety of others. However, if we are going to do this we need to have the infrastructure needed to do it. I learned at annual meeting that nearly forty percent of the churches in Vermont are undergoing a search and call for clergy. In my time here I was also astounded by the number of churches that had less than twenty members. From my perspective the church in Vermont is in need of some serious attention, and I would like to have spent more time brainstorming this than just learning how to ask for money. The Church does not just need money. We need people, we need their passion, compassion and companionship, we need their creativeness their intelligence and, yes, also their money, but, the church is not defined by the amount of money we have. Its power is the strength of its community. So while I personally find each of these issues very important, I would prefer to move forward with them as I move forward with my brothers and sisters in building up the church here in Vermont. I would like to see our community here in Essex grow, and I would like to see our community in Vermont grow. I would also like to see issues of workplace equality, the environment, and refugee issues handled well here in Vermont first before moving on to the bigger picture.

Annual Meeting is a wonderful look at the bigger picture, but I do not feel that is where our attention should be focused now. But the message of Annual Meeting was strong. There are issues that we need to address as Christian, here, now! How will we handle them?

Devon Thomas Bridge Associate Minister

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

This year I have been more intentional about using the new language for Christian Education programs for our children and youth that has been around for about three years in the UCC. Faith Formation is showing up for all our children and youth programs on Sundays along with our words for 'Sunday School' class time. We continued to use curriculum that is Bible story based for our preschool up through 2nd graders and used a curriculum that follows the lectionary for those in 3rd grade and above. This means that our older children are hearing the same stories, for the most part, as the scriptures that are read in worship so that families can continue to have great conversations throughout their week. On our First Sundays and Group Activity days we focus on putting different ages together and strive toward an intergenerational setting on all these days to help grow and deepen our faith. Vacation Bible Camp program does this very well for a full week every morning. Our Faith Formation programs would not exist without volunteers who come and help to feed our children and youth with God's love in action. We continued to welcome new families to First Church through all our Faith Formation programs in all age categories. We had a total of 10 new families for preschool up through sixth grade that brought 18 new children to our programs. All our

programs hinge on volunteers, like yourselves, and the participation of children and youth. And like all the area churches around us, our numbers slipped a little this year and we saw our regular families a little less often. I continue to hear from many of our families how they struggle with their busy schedules and finding time to keep church life a part of their lives. This is why I added our 'Take Out Church' boxes to our resources to help families with their faith when they were away (boxes are always available to be taken out from my office). I pray that in the coming year we will see families of First Church frequent our doors more often as they continue to realize that church life is something they miss and want to have in their lives, especially for their children and youth.

Our Junior Youth Group, for 5th & 6th graders, had another great group this year. Many of them moved up to join the Junior High Youth group in September and helped to grow the Junior High numbers this year. We also had a few new fifth graders join the junior youth. The junior youth continued to have a mission focus here at the church along with enjoying a meal together, sharing and playing games. They have great energy! This year they enjoyed restocking the first aid kits around the church building, sketched and colored in a backdrop for VB Camp, put together a bag of fruit and candy for each recipient on the Giving Tree and more. They, along with some of our junior high youth, continue to help sell the Fair Trade Coffee & Chocolate between services on the second Sunday of the month as an outreach, which they are really enjoying. I would like to thank the parents who have been very faithful in supporting our youngest program and for bringing their energy and providing us with our meals. Youth today are pulled in all sorts of directions even at this early age and needing to start choosing what activities they are a part of. Youth group is one place there they are given more time to unwind, share and unload their concerns and worries of the world and be supported by their peers. It is here in youth group that they truly begin to bond and deepen their faith. Being a part of a youth group can be very transforming for many youth and the place that also lets them destress. If you have a youth who has not been active in youth group yet (or as active as they could be) and questioning whether to join in, please support them and encourage them to take this leap of faith.

I had a wonderful time again this year directing the youth in the Christmas pageant and was blessed to have Pastor Ryan back this year to work beside as well as blessed to have another Karen Mendes' original script. It is a joy to see our youth come together and in four weeks of rehearsals (that only happen once a week) present a pageant to all of you with such depth and talent. I would like to thank all of you for being such a supportive congregation to all our youth at First Church, embracing and encouraging. Without many of you getting involved in youth programs, they would not exist and we would have no youth. As we continue to welcome new families among us each year with their children and youth, we need to remember the importance of an active congregation who stays connected to our children and youth by their presence, gifts and service is a vital congregation. Volunteers who take the time to get to know the children and youth, walking their faith journey with them, however old you are, are essential. We are down in our number of volunteers the last two years, so if you have taken a year off lately, I hope this coming year is the year you will volunteer again. Faith formation happens at its best when several ages all come together and live and breathe the love of God, for it's the relationships that we form that hold us together and move our faith along on our journey.

Our Vacation Bible Camp had its 5th exciting program this year for the children & families in our area, *G-Force – God's Love in Action*, and was our biggest camp so far. We had over 80 people in the building during the second week of August with 55 of these being participants and the other 26 being volunteers. VB Camp has grown a little each year and it's thanks to you, the congregation here at First Church, and your support of the program by word of mouth to our community, volunteering and all your donations. We welcomed 8 new community families to the program, our most in a year so far, and they brought with them 16 kids to enjoy our fun filled week. The energy that is in the building during our week of camp is truly

contagious! The children, the youth, the college youth adults and the adults all feed off of each other and the Spirit moves and First Church comes alive. I look forward to what 2016 will bring. Blessings to you all!

I continue to gather with my Community of Practice circle for Christian Educators in our area who have smaller congregations than us. They continue to work on rebuilding or building a children and youth program and they are faced with many hurdles. But no matter what the church size, we all continue to put in many hours gathering volunteers for all our programs. My time of serving on the planning team for N.E.A.U.C.E. (New England Association of United Church Educators) came to an end this year and I look forward to attending this great event in 2016 as a participant and reconnecting with CE leaders all around New England. I still continue to serve on the Board of Directors for Covenant Hills Christian Camp as their financial officer, even though this board is going through changes now that NE UMC Conference has decided to suspend programming for the summer of 2016, so my role may soon change. With CHCC news came the forming of an Outdoor Ministries Task Force for the VT UCC Conference, which Ryan and I both sit on, as we plan 2 weeks of summer programming for our UCC kids in VT (watch the newsletter and bulletin starting in January for more information).

May the Spirit of our loving God continue to be with us on our faith journeys, nudging us along and guiding us as we support the children and youth on their faith journeys.

Laurie Chipman

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Christian Education Committee (CE) has been blessed with another productive year due to church members volunteering their time, the funds provided by members of our church, and to the outstanding work of our staff members.

The three youth groups in our church have had a busy and productive transition year. Ashley Dubois was hired to work with the youth for the first half of the year and she did a wonderful job of pulling everyone together and keeping our Junior and Senior high members engaged. The second half of the year has been led by a team of Devon Thomas and Erica Garvey. Attendance and interest have remained steady. Our youth have engaged in many fun and mission related activities exploring faith and belief including working on contributions for the Easter baskets, providing Easter breakfast, assembling rice and bean bags for the JUMP program, hosting a Halloween party for younger children, and baking pies for Thanksgiving. Certainly, a highpoint of the year for youth participants was attending the National Youth Event located in Walt Disney World, Florida.

Sunday Faith Formation continues to engage our children and youth in activities to support and develop their faith. Our children and youth are actively engaged in activities, discussions, reading, projects, and music, with many of our Church members volunteering their time as leaders, as helpers, as participants with the youth in Holy Spirit Café, as Bible Partners, or as volunteers for activity days. The Cherubs and Joyful Noise groups are singing monthly, with practice now occurring as part of their classroom activities. The Faith Formation offering this year is going to the King Street Youth Center in downtown Burlington. Totals at the end of 2016 are over \$770.

The Adult programs continue to be a vibrant part of our church. Tuesday morning Sermon Talk Backs continue to engage many in lively discussions of the sermons and issues of faith. The Wednesday Night Searchers Group continues to explore faith through discussion centered on books, movies, and topics. JOY

(Just Older Youth) meets monthly to have a program or engage in a fun activity. The Noontime Book Group meets monthly to share their thoughts and perspectives on a book they all read. The Women's Spirituality Group meets monthly for interesting programs and supportive fellowship. First Church Bridge Club provides fellowship around the enjoyment of the game of bridge and also meets monthly.

The CE Committee continued to support special events this year including Pretzel Sunday, an Ice Cream Social, Rally Day, Vacation Bible Camp and the Christmas Pageant. This last summer's Vacation Bible Camp was attended by 51 happily engaged participants, with over 25 leaders and helpers. Take Out church boxes continue to be used and recycled and are always available from Laurie's office.

Faithfully submitted by
Jenny Bourn, Marlene Frank and Mary Winslow
Co-chairs Christian Education Committee

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MUSIC COMMITTEE

Music is such a wonderful part of First Congregational Church of Essex Junction. Thank you for the music leadership, Catherine McMaster, Rick Dooley, Carolyn Harris, Kim Hamilton, Bill Bickford, and others. Thank you to Sanctuary Choir, Heavenly Harmony, Men at First, Finally at First, Currier Bell Choir, Cherub Choir, and those who provided music during the summer Sunday Services.

The Praise-a-Paloosa was a success on Saturday, February 6, 2016. Ascension Church Praise Band, Grace Methodist Praise Band, Smokey Newfield Project and Finally at First all played a set. Plans are progressing for this event to take place in February, 2017. Joe's Big Band played their annual concert, it was well attended.

The Easter Season 2016 worship services music included Currier Bells, Sanctuary Choir, Finally at First.

Catherine McMaster started a summer music program, crash course for all individuals who would like to sing, in 2016. She offered some basic music instruction after church and then assembled all participants to sing in church one Sunday. This program was a success and we hope to offer it another year.

The Festival of Choirs at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Essex, Saturday, December 3, was a great event. Four FCCEJ choirs participated, Men at First, Heavenly Harmony, Finally at First and Sanctuary Choir.

FCCEJ is still in search of a youth choir director. Laurie Chipman and the Christian Education Committee have worked out a program of music as part of the weekly children's program. The Music Committee will work with Christian Education Committee to ensure music is an integral part of the youth education.

The Potpourri has been rescheduled for March, 2017. We would like many people to participate in this event, so please sign up. More information will be posted after the first of the year.

We encourage anyone interested in participating in the music program in any way to talk with one of the Music Directors or any member of an active music group.

We look forward to another active year.

Judy Larrabee Pomainville

Chair, Music Committee

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

It seems the older I get, the faster time goes by. You hear this so much, but it really is true. Another year gone, but the music here at First church continues to fill our worship services with the joy and talents of so many people.

Rick Dooley and F@F are just wonderful. The music they bring each week lifts my heart every Sunday.

Bill Bickford and the MAF are so talented, they have such a spark and seem to have so much fun each time they sing.

Carolyn Harris and the Currier Bell Choir ring in lovely music. It is always a joy to hear them.

Kim Hamilton and the Cherubs are singing their hearts out every few weeks. Their enthusiasm is contagious, love seeing them standing in the front of the church.

Jessica Moos has stepped in to help with the older children. Watching her makes me think, she's having just as much fun as the kids.

Heavenly Harmony, I know I have said this before, but you have the voices and the sound of angels.

The Sanctuary Choir, you continue to amaze me. You inspire me every week. The choir loft truly holds a family.

I would like to thank all of these people, along with folks that provided special music throughout the past year. All have made our worship services special.

Keep in mind there is always room in any of these groups. All you have to do is speak to me or one of the directors.

So looking forward to 2017.

Yours in Christ, Catherine

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEACONS

During 2016, the Deacons supported the spiritual life of the Church by supporting the following activities:

As always, the Deacons assisted in Sunday worship services, by welcoming folks to service, delivering prayers of invocation, reading scripture, and assisting in Communion, Baptism, New Member, and other special services/events. We met monthly to discuss and plan various aspects of worship services with Rev. Mark, and other aspects of our Church life that relate to the Church's spiritual well-being (such as sending out cards and letters to members of the Congregation who could benefit from that outreach, as well as sending flowers to every member on their 80th birthday).

All of the Deacons served as the Local Church Discernment Committee (LCDC) for Devon Thomas from November 2015 to October of this year, providing input, guidance, and feedback to him as he engaged with Rev. Mark in exploring ministry. Devon was hired as the Bridge Associate Pastor for our Church in February, with the full support of the Deacons; the Deacons continued to support Devon as he carried out his assigned bridge ministerial duties. In May, the Deacons requested that Church Council consider nominating Devon to the VT Conference for entry into their formal Minister In Discernment (MID) process (a period of focused study and engagement with the Conference, required for full ordination). After their own independent review, Council voted unanimously to make that nomination. In October, Devon made a presentation to the VT Conference Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee (MSSC) as required by their MID application process, describing his journey of faith to ministry and his experiences and growth in ministry while being associated with our Church. His presentation was very well received, and the MSSC voted to accept Devon into the MID process! Devon's success in achieving this career milestone reflects well on him, and also on the support and challenges he has experienced and will experience in working with all of us here at First Church.

At the Special Meeting of the congregation in May, the Deacons presented a list of key factors/tradeoffs for the respective support models under discussion (full time associate pastor, versus a programmatic support model). This was done in order to ensure a common base of understanding for all attendees, so as to facilitate the discussion, consideration, and ultimate decision of the membership.

We continued to develop the differentiation between the worship styles of the first and second services, and created a notice in the weekly bulletins to ensure everyone (particularly visitors and new members) is made aware of that differential in service style.

We supported Rev. Mark's proposal to introduce special services at the 2nd Sunday of every month, and helped him plan the services. The special services provided so far this year (October – Peace Sunday; November – Social Justice Sunday; December – Friendship Sunday) were very well received, and we look forward to continuing the series for the remainder of the program year.

In addition, working with Rev. Mark we changed the form and format of Lenten services, to provide more varied worship opportunities that were more appropriate for the various aspects of Lent (Palm Sunday, Special Healing Service, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, prayer vigil, Easter).

This Advent, the Deacons coordinated with the Christian Education committee for an Advent kick-off event. This included a soup/casserole lunch, followed by the CE Advent Family Event in the Fellowship Hall while Deacons and volunteers decorated the Sanctuary for the season. The event was well received.

Throughout the year, the Deacons coordinated their schedules to ensure the Deacon attending new member meetings would be the designated Deacon on Duty on whichever Sunday the new members were accepted into membership. The idea is to help make the new member service more meaningful to the new members by including the Deacon they had gotten to know at the new membership meeting,

The Deacons are especially grateful to Beth Volker for her leadership of the Called to Care Ministry, which matches up folks desiring a home visit with teams of Church members willing to call on them periodically. We would like to thank her, and the entire Called to Care team, for all their work on behalf of the entire Church in this important ministry.

The Deacons generated a preliminary proposal for a Communications Policy for the church, applicable to communications made on our collective behalf from Church property. This initial proposal was greatly improved upon by the Communications Committee; the committee's recommended process was adopted by Church Council at its December meeting.

Respectfully Submitted

Rick Dooley, Chair, Deacons Committee
Mark Chadurjian, Co-Chair, Deacons Committee

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

According to our by-laws:

1. The Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) shall consist of five (5) Regular Members, one of whom shall be the Vice-President, who shall act as the Chairperson of the PRC.
2. The PRC seeks to identify and support the needs and concerns of the Pastors, and to support and maintain an open and productive relationship between the Pastors and members of the Church by facilitating communications between the Pastors and members.
3. The PRC shall meet at least four times a year. It may receive information in confidence, and its meetings will ordinarily be closed to persons other than those the PRC chooses to invite. In its role of facilitating pastoral communications, absent some extraordinary circumstance, the PRC will seek to share all such information with the Pastors.

The five Regular Members of the Pastoral Relations Committee include: one unfilled slot, Michael Bottamini, Sue Wood, Kevin McCullen and Tom James, VP, Chair. The Pastors are not members of the Committee. The Pastoral Relations Committee has had the good fortune of not being required to meet often in 2016. We communicated, as necessary, to determine the health and actions of church and committee were appropriate.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The Missions Committee has again experienced a year of productivity, meaningful discussion and educated decision-making. This is my first year on the committee and it has been a valuable experience for me. We continue to remain committed to donating money to deserving entities and organizations and furthering the mission goals of First Congregational Church of Essex Junction.

This year, our budget was generously increased by \$1500.00 after approval was given at the Annual Meeting. This has allowed us to make an even more significant impact with our donations on the local, state, national and international levels. We started off our year of donations with an \$80.00 donation from proceeds of the Alternative Giving Fair, held in December 2015, being given to the church youth for their participation in the National Youth Event held in Summer 2016 at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. We almost immediately followed up this donation with another \$1250.00 to the youth participating in the National Youth Event. Other organizations we have supported this year include: \$1200.00 to Ecumenical Lunch Bunch (a summer lunch program here in Essex Junction), \$500.00 to House with a Heart (formerly called Ghar Sita Mutu), \$500.00 to Lucy's House (an organization that helps pets who are abandoned), \$1000.00 to JUMP (Joint Urban Ministry Project), \$350.00 to Essex CHIPS' Healthy Snack program, \$500.00 to the UCC Disaster Ministries Emergency USA for aid during the Louisiana floods, \$600.00 to RAINN (Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network) and lastly, another \$600.00 to the UCC Disaster Ministries Emergency USA for aid during the North Carolina floods. We have also given \$2100.00 to the Summer 2017 Jamaica Trip helping to allow another group of ambassadors from our church and possibly beyond our walls, to travel to Jamaica and aid a community in the many needs they have including building repairs and literacy needs. The next Calcutta night to benefit the Jamaica trip for 2017 will be on March 11, 2017.

The Missions Committee also continues to support the UCC 5 for 5 Special Collections, and events held to benefit JUMP (including the Red Tent Project, which is consistently full in the Marvin Lounge).

The Mission Possible committee is a branch out from both our committee and the Christian Education Committee. It is important to mention that that group continues to do some very valuable, hands-on mission work. They continue to do work with the Vermont Foodbank, Dismas House and Vermont Respite House to mention just some of their contributions. If you are interested in being part of that active team of individuals, please let us know.

Our committee is also involved in forming a Social Justice/Advocacy group that would work with those types of issues within our community in an active way. We have individuals who have volunteered for this group already, but if you have an interest please contact our committee.

It is imperative to mention other mission work within our walls that occurs on a daily basis. Our Food Pantry, Thrift Shop and Essex Eats Out volunteers serve tirelessly to help the less fortunate in our community and beyond. Please thank them when you see them or better yet, volunteer your time and talents to help them out on a regular basis! They would love to have you!

The efforts of our church community to make the world a kinder, more inclusive place for others is so important. If you would like to join us or help out with any of the above mentioned activities, please let us know.

Respectfully submitted, Kelley Charland
Missions Chair: Sandy Tallman satbtv2aol.com

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE USHERING COMMITTEE

The 6 members of the Ushering Committee are responsible for finding Church volunteers to Greet and Usher for both services each Sunday - a total of 520 people for a full year.

Each member of our committee is responsible for filling spaces with faces for 2 months.

- Last year we had only 5 members, so some members filled a few extra Sundays! Next year we anticipate having a few vacancies – so if you are looking for a way to participate on a committee that will be very manageable, consider contacting the Nominating Committee to sign up!

Activities in the past year:

Over the past year we have been striving to accomplish our mission with the following objectives from our Strategic Plan in mind:

2.A. **Opportunities to meet and develop connections:** People in our congregation have opportunities to meet and develop connections with each other and with the congregation as a whole ...

4.E. **Sanctuary:** The sanctuary is a respectful and inviting spiritual space...

Opportunities to usher and greet provide our congregation with relatively easy ways to contribute to our welcoming community. Ushers and Greeters are important in creating a positive and friendly first impression for those attending our worship services. It is a fun and easy way to help provide an enjoyable, safe, and welcoming experience at our church!

The commitment is only slightly longer than the service itself, and can provide the opportunity to engage with new and old friends alike.

This year was our first year using the sign up genius tool to record our volunteers.

We also continue to use the sign up sheet in the hall adjacent to fellowship hall.

Even with both of these tools in place, the committee still has to call to fill slots each Sunday.

This year we started the practice of having each committee take one Sunday a year to usher and greet for both services. The committees all decided on their own months as follows: Jan – Church Council for Annual Meeting, Feb – Christian Education, March – Deacons, Jun – Hospitality, Jul – Music Committee, Aug – Pastoral Relations Committee, Sept – Stewardship, Oct – Missions, Nov – Nominating. This practice both decreased the number of Sundays the ushering committee had to find volunteers for, and allows our congregation to better identify the members of each committee.

The Church wide survey revealed that members still wish to be contacted using all the methods of signing up to usher and greet (email, sign up genius, phone calls and bulletin board), so we will continue to use them all! Thank you for your input!

More Ushers & Greeters Needed:

We are always looking for new/additional volunteers!

Usher and Greeter responsibilities are posted on the church web site and in the usher's closet. This allows new and old volunteers alike to review the expectations for the services ahead of time.

>You can let us know of your interest by calling the church office anytime or by indicating "USHER" or "GREETER" in the Friendship book.

Sign up to Serve:

The easiest way to sign up is to do it online anytime by going to the following link:

www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0E4FACAE2DAAFE3-ushergreeter/23711231

You will be able to easily see what you've signed up for as well as see other opportunities to volunteer.

We are fortunate to continue to have members of our youth group usher and greet at 2nd service on the first Sunday of each month during the school year. We also have several other groups such as the Boy Scouts who volunteer to usher and greet on special Sundays throughout the year. And, a special thank you to the loyal group of Ushers and Greeters who cover the other weeks throughout the year. We are extremely grateful for their help, but more volunteers are always needed.

I want to thank the folks on the Committee who have worked faithfully to ensure that Greeters and Ushers are in place each week. Mary Ellen Grove will be completing her term on the committee and we thank her for her service.

Again - our heartfelt thanks to all who have volunteered to greet or usher this past year. Additional volunteers including singles, couples, and families are always welcome!

Respectfully Submitted, Maureen Evans, Chair

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HEAVENLY FOOD PANTRY

The Heavenly Food Pantry continues to provide food assistance to families living in Essex Junction, Essex and Westford. In 2015 each family left the pantry with over 100 pounds of food and hygiene products each month. A total of over 80,000 pounds of food went home with families throughout the year. We are grateful for the many individuals and businesses assisting the food pantry in their mission, either with food or monetary donations. Hannaford continues to be a major contributor by providing nourishing food through the Angel Food Program, as well as supplying the pantry with Hannaford Helping Hands boxes, purchased by customers at their store. Because of their generosity, families are able to go home with baked breads, deli items, cookies, cakes and pies.

Families coming to the pantry need only provide proof of residence in the form of a current bill with their physical address listed, as well as identification for every household member, including children. Because we distribute items that come directly from the USDA, we are required to have a family member sign a form stating that their household income falls below national mandated guidelines. The family is not asked to verify their income at the pantry, and all needing help are welcome!

Because the food pantry is set up much like a grocery store, volunteers are needed to assist families in their shopping experience. These volunteers range from “shoppers” who accompany families as they make their selections, to stockers who replenish supplies as they are given out, to registrars who coordinate the paperwork needed and people who load the families’ groceries into their vehicles. There are also many volunteers who help behind the scenes, purchasing items needed, handling correspondence with the Vermont Food Bank, acknowledging food and monetary donations, sorting food as it is donated, setting up the pantry on the day of distribution, and even public relations volunteers who go out in the community to give presentations to local groups and schools. Without these many people both from within the church congregation as well as the wider community, the Heavenly Food Pantry would not be the well-oiled machine that it is! A special thanks goes out to the Rotary Club, which provides a consistent number of volunteers to help with the expanded hours of the pantry.

Once again, thanks go out to Val Gabert for all the work she does to keep the food pantry strong. She makes sure that the pantry is always stocked with fresh and never outdated food to give to the families who visit. Our thanks also go to our church family, and the wider community who assist the pantry with donations of food and money. We thank the many organizations, schools and individuals who organized and held food drives throughout the year. Your generosity is very much appreciated!

Respectfully submitted, Mary Richer and Suzanne Reardon, Co-Directors

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

The Hospitality committee has been providing the coffee hour service between services and after the second service with both coffee and tea available. We are also looking at providing finger snacks and will be trying different methods of getting such snacks in 2016.

In addition, we have been working with the kitchen remodel group. The demolition is slated to start in early Jan 2016 so we have been packing out the cabinets and drawers to accommodate that work. As part

of the remodel, this committee has purchased a complete set of coffee cups that will match and should be easier for folks to hold.

We have also purchased a new electric chafing set with 3-1/3 pans for events like the Easter breakfast. We will also be experimenting with using the heating elements rather than the carafes for the coffee so we can leave it out during the worship services.

As a reminder, we will be suspending the coffee hours until the kitchen remodel is done and we are allowed back into the kitchen.

Respectfully submitted, Judy Hurst McCullen

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Human Resources Committee was created this year as the result of a change in our Church by-laws approved at the 2015 Annual Meeting. The function of the Human Resources Committee is to undertake annual reviews of our Senior and Associate pastors and to ensure that the Senior Pastor is conducting reviews of our staff. In addition, the Human Resources Committee has oversight over our Church Personnel Policies.

The members of the Human Resources Committee are the President, Vice President and the Chairs of the Music and the Continuing Education Committees and the Chair of the Deacons. These members are specified in the by-laws as the members of the Committee.

This year the Committee conducted reviews of both Mark and Ryan. The Pastors completed a self - evaluation using an questionnaire that is geared toward churches. Each member of the Committee also completed the same evaluation form. We then met and walked through the Pastors' version and the aggregated Committee version comparing our findings and discussing issues of both congruity and incongruity that arose.

The Committee found this process to be very helpful in opening a dialog around a variety of issues on how the Pastors serve the Church and the fulfillment they are finding in their roles. We had open, frank discussions that really helped both the Committee members and the Pastors better understand roles and expectations.

The Committee is now conducting a review of the Personnel Policies and will do that work into the beginning of 2016 before preparing for the next round of reviews.

The question from the Membership Survey most pertinent to the Human Resources Committee was "Please rate your overall satisfaction with the Church staff (pastors, music director, Christian Ed director, administrator)." The results showed that 89.26% of respondents were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with Church staff. Adding the category "somewhat satisfied" pushed the results over 90% positive. There were a number of comments from respondents for this question that will be utilized along with the survey results as part of the Annual Review of the pastors in 2016. Pastor Mark will also use these survey results and comments as part of his review of the staff.

Kevin Dorn

Human Resources Committee Chair

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOY SCOUTS

FCCEJ has chartered a Boy Scout troop for over 50 years. Unless you happen to visit the church on a Wednesday evening, or have noticed the sign hanging next to the Nursery door (in the Fellowship Hall), you may not have known. Starting in 2016, FCCEJ is also chartering Cub Scout pack 630! We are your Cub Scout pack and Boy Scout troop. Over the years, many members of FCCEJ have been members of Troop 624 and have served as leaders (many FCCEJ youth and adults have been, and continue to be, active members of Troop 635 in Essex Town.)

At present, Pack 630 and Troop 624 have about 56 youth members and over 25 adult leaders. What do the Pack and Troop do? The overall goals of Boy Scouting are character development, citizenship training, and personal fitness. At the Cub Scout level (grades 1-5), the boys work with Den Leaders and Parents to learn skills and participate in adventures and campouts. At the Boy Scout level (grades 6-12), the youth run the program. An elected group of youth, the Patrol Leaders Committee, sets the direction for the troop. The adults work to support the program the youth plan. But mostly, we camp. In any weather, and as often as possible!

In the past year the troop participated in two weekend Camporees in Vermont, and one in New Hampshire (an event of 5,000 participants at the Loudon NASCAR track). We had youth attend three week-long summer camps; NYLT (National Youth Leadership Training), Mt Norris Summer Camp, and a Technology week at Mt Norris. Our troop went bowling, rock climbing at MetroRock, participated in a Merit Badge day at UVM, held an overnight movie and game night at FCCEJ, competed in the Klondike Derby in Underhill, went camping and white water rafting in the Adirondacks and went winter camping in Eden, VT. Our Scouts earned over 100 merit badges in 2015. Two youth earned Boy Scout STEM Nova awards. Several of our Scouts serve as “Den Chiefs”, youth leaders assisting adults running Cub Scout dens.

In the past year, we have had three youth complete their Eagle Projects: Dakota Gorkun, Sullivan Martin, and Jonathan Compo. Dakota and Jonathan are now Eagle Scouts. Sullivan is in the process of completing the final paperwork and reviews. Dakota led a project to build agility course equipment for the Franklin County Humane Society. Sullivan’s project was building a “reverse dunk tank” for the Epilepsy Foundation. Jonathan led a group that remodeled the client waiting room for the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program. These projects involved hundreds of hours of fund-raising, preparation, and work by the Scouts and their parents.

The Cub Scouts took trips to visit the Army National Guard’s helicopters, went swimming at The Edge, climbing at Petra Cliffs, visited the Police, Fire, and Rescue, as well as hiking and camping outings. The pack youth logged 57 nights of camping, 120 miles of hiking, and over 200 hours of community service. Five Cubs earned religious emblems in 2015.

We owe a debt of gratitude to FCCEJ for providing us with a meeting place, members and leaders, and somewhere to store our Trebuchet!

As the “Chartered Organization Representative” for both the Pack and Troop, I am the liaison between the Church and the Scouts. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please feel free to contact me!

Yours in Scouting,
Kevin McCullen

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE JAMAICA BOUND COMMITTEE

In July 2015, the first international, intergenerational mission team departed Burlington airport for Kingston, Jamaica where our driver met us and transported us to the southeastern most part of the country. We were a group of ten – 5 adults and 5 teens, 5 women and 5 men. Our goal was to rehabilitate the Curtis Bottom Basic School, a small preschool, and to paint the waiting areas of the Port Morant Health Centre in the eight working days we had.

To raise the \$26,000 for this mission, the cost was divided into thirds among the team members, the church, and group fundraising. We are grateful to the Trustees and to Church Council for supporting this mission with monies from the Endowment Fund. As well, we thank all those who bought stock from team members to help us on our way. The first Calcutta was very successful and provided a big boost to our fund-raising efforts. We certainly appreciate all those who attended this festive event. It is our hope that the Calcutta will continue to offset a major portion of the expenses for this mission trip.

We partnered with many local businesses that donated gifts and painting supplies for the medical clinic or the school. The Rotary Club of Essex provided funds for travel as well as for books for the children's library. There were also multiple gifts from individuals within the church that were most appreciated by the children in Jamaica.

This experience has lasting ramifications for the team members. As we debriefed this trip upon our return, many talked about having a greater understanding of the consequences of poverty. We talked about the difference between “want” and “need”, each of us having a better appreciation for what “need” actually is. Some team members are engaging in additional volunteer work or are thinking about career trajectories that involve working with groups needing a “hand up”. By giving of our time, talent and treasure, we can be part of the solution.

Recap of Expenses

The cost of this mission was \$26, 338 or \$2639 per person, which included all of our transportation, meals, hotel, extracurricular activities, such as the Marley Museum, and building supplies. We also purchased 100 pounds of rice and 25 pounds of “peas” (beans) to donate to the clinic for distribution among those who are food insecure.

2017 Mission Trip

In the summer of 2017, we plan to take another intergenerational group to Jamaica and will be looking for team members. Youth need to be 16 at the time of the trip. If you are interested, please speak with Rev. Mark, Carolyn Rushford or Sharon Dettenrieder.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Dettenrieder

September 2015 marked the 20th anniversary of the opening of Heavenly Cents. At this time many of the current volunteers have worked in the shop for most of those 20 years, but the shop has welcomed several new people in recent months who have helped to keep the shop vibrant. At a time when resale shops are popping up all over, the shop has seen increased sales of over 10% this year, due to the dedication of all who work, both on a regular basis as well as our growing list of substitute volunteers.

We are proud to say that this is the first increase in sales since 2006! There is an ongoing effort to update displays and clean and tidy the shop. We even have a Facebook page! Like us and watch for special news and promotions in the coming year!

A special thanks need to go to three special ladies who have been an integral part of the shop for the last 20 years—Barb Blanchette, Louise Kolvoord and Bernie Currier. Without these ladies the shop would not have happened and we thank them for their creativity and energy.

Heavenly Cents is open three days a week-Tuesdays and Wednesdays 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Thursdays 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. If you are interested in volunteering, contact the church office. The shop could always use an extra hand!

The social aspect of the shop is as important as the sales aspect. We meet for pot luck dinners throughout the year for all ladies of the church, and have a special Holiday luncheon for all our volunteers in December. We recently had 28 people at JP's to celebrate 20 years at the shop! The relationships with our customers are quite strong as well, and we have many regular customers who come in to see us and share joys and concerns with us! We are a community within the community!

We accept donations of clean, in season items during the hours our shop is open. No need to call first; if you'd like a receipt for tax purposes, we would appreciate it if you could make a list of the items donated and bring it with you.

If you haven't done so yet, stop by sometime and check out the shop! You may find a real bargain!

Respectfully submitted,
Anita Guild

HEAVENLY CENTS THRIFT SHOP 2015

CASH BALANCE, JANUARY 1 \$6,339.11

INCOME:

SALES	\$10,060.89	
INTEREST	<u>5.69</u>	
TOTAL INCOME		<u>10066.58</u>

TOTAL CASH AVAILABLE \$16,405.69

EXPENSES:

CONTRIBUTION	\$6,420.00	
ELECTRICITY	278.87	
TELEPHONE	343.38	
SUPPLIES	222.26	
FLOWERS AND GIFTS	40.00	
WREATHS FOR CHURCH PROPERTIES	170.48	
HOLIDAY DINNER	402.50	
CHRISTMAS CONTRIBUTIONS	1,800.00	
MISCELLANEOUS	<u>40.27</u>	
TOTAL EXPENSES		<u>9717.76</u>

CASH BALANCE, DECEMBER 31 \$6,687.93

CHECKING	\$1,026.01
MONEY MARKET	<u>5,661.92</u>

TOTAL CASH BALANCE, DECEMBER 31 \$6,687.93

MISSIONS (CLOTHING) 180.00

Respectfully Submitted,
Anita Guild

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

We currently have 12 people who are joining a new committee or taking on a new role. However, we are much further away from filling open committee slots this year than we have been in the past at this time. While Trustees, Hospitality, Music and the Pastoral Relations have a full slate, and missions is just short one person of 12. The other committees are not in a good position yet.

Ushering	2 open slots out of 6
Stewardship	2 open slots out of 6
Nominating	2 open slots out of 6
Christian Education	2 open slots out of 12
Communications	2 open slots out of 6
Deacons	2 open slots out of 12
Church Officers	1 open slot (VP- Mark and Brenda handling calls)

The improvements we made to our process in 2015 were continued in 2016. These included better use of e-mail and committee descriptions for communication with candidates and an Excel tracking sheet that allowed us to quickly review both people’s responses from past calls (e.g. not interested, try again next year, busy with other activities at church, ...) and where they were already volunteering in the Church. While our efficiency was better, the number of people who said yes has not improved and we had an unusually large number of slots open this year. Five people left their positions before completing their terms and ten people chose not to serve a additional term that was allowed. This is a larger number than usual for both categories. Ten people also completed the allowed terms and could not re-up (two of the ten might have re-upped if we allowed the previous 8 year service exception).

Other challenges this year include the fact that the communications committee was new last year, some people are already signed up for the associated Associate pastor search committee and some people are likely to serve on the capital campaign.

We are continuing to make calls. The church is full of good people. The challenge is how many have other commitments that conflict with also serving on a committee and the number of positions we have to fill.

Sincerely, Carl Wermer 12/16/2016

General Church Officers

President	2017	Brenda Crocket
Vice President	2017	_____
Clerk	*2017	Alison Wermer
Assistant Clerk	2017	Beth Volker
Treasurer	2017	Ann Gray
Assistant Treasurer	2017	Dan Petherbridge
Financial Secretary	2017	Pat Seaver
Assistant Financial Secretaries	2017	Fred Babinger
	2017	Linda Bogardus
Auditors	2017	Rob Sinkewicz
	2017	Faith Truax

Champlain Association Delegates

2017 _____
2017 _____

Vermont Conference Delegates

2017 Dan Fortier
2017 Jackie Fortier
2017 Laurie Chipman
2017 George Mendes
2017 Ann Marie Sullivan

Committees

Christian Education

2017 Jenny Bourn
2017 Beth Birmingham
2017 Elaine Raymond
2017 Allison VanSteensburg
2018 Shannon McCullen
2018 _____
2018 Mary Winslow
2018 Tom Shearer
2019 _____
2019 _____
*2019 Donna Burnett
*2019 Sarah Kellogg

Communications

2017 _____
2017 Kevin Dorn
2017 _____
2017 Judy McCullen
2017 Andrea Sharp
2017 Tom Helmstutler

Deacons

2017 Rick Dooley
2017 Anne Harris
2017 Michael Bottamini
2017 Marie Johnson
2018 Lori Giannuzzi
2018 Lauren Starkey
2018 Gary Smith
2018 Betsy Weischedel
2019 Myrna Doney
2019 Erica Garvey
2019 _____
2019 _____

Hospitality

2017 Martha Houghton
2017 Jackie Parks
2018 Judy McCullen

2018 Mary Jane Lewis
2019 Anne Hewett
2019 Connie Marshall

Missions

2017 Sharon Dettenrieder
2017 Joanne Irwin
2017 Susan Kremer
2017 Sally Turner
2018 Kelley Charland
2018 Peter Firkey
2018 Sandy Tallman
2018 Judy Allen
*2019 Tony Marthaler
2019 Linda Lou Parker
2019 Maryann Carlson
*2019 _____

Music

2017 Mindy Bickford
2017 Charlie Kremer
2018 Judy Larrabee
2018 Brian Chipman
*2019 Laura Marthaler
2019 Laura Cunningham -
Firkey

Nominating

2017 Beth Warren
2017 Marsha Duell
2018 Carl Wermer
2018 Barb Smith
*2019 _____
*2019 _____

Pastoral Relations

2017 (VP)
2017 Tom James
2018 Carolyn Antone
*2019 Julie Leach
*2019 _____

Planned Giving

2017 Trustee Rep.
2017 Ann Gray – Treas.
2017 Stewardship Rep.

2017 Dave Johnson
2017 Matt McGearry
2017 Darryl Koch

Stewardship

*2017 Jessica Moos
2017 Maureen McKenzie
2018 Kathy Finnie
2018 Devon Thomas
*2019 _____
*2019 _____

Trustees

2017 Lester Nutting
2017 Cathy Shearer
2017 Bill Adams
2019 Kevin Meilleur
2019 Megan Barnes
2019 David Antone

Ushering

2017 Mary Jane Lewis
2017 Penny Williams
2018 Mary Anne Warren
*2018 _____
2019 Ann Marie Sullivan
*2019 _____

(*) Denotes new nominee.

The By-Laws require that the outgoing chairperson of each committee shall call a meeting of the new committee to elect a new chairperson and notify the Clerk of the name of this new chairperson.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEE COMMITTEE

The Trustees are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the buildings and grounds of First Congregational Church of Essex Junction. In 2015 the Trustees and other volunteers worked on the following:

- Oversaw completion of the steeple renovation. Strategic Plan Goal 4, Objective C.
- Painted, cleaned, replaced old drafty doors with new energy efficient doors, replaced light fixtures with energy efficient LED's, widened the hallway leading to the bathroom and had mechanical systems of the Parsonage cleaned inspected in preparation for renting the Parsonage. Strategic Plan Goal 3, Objective D, Strategic Plan Goal 4, Objectives A, B and D.
- Removed the unsafe mirror in the balcony and installed video monitors in the choir loft so that

Catherine and the choir are able to more fully participate and enjoy our worship services. Strategic Plan Goal 4, Objectives B and E.

- Installed baby changing tables in 3 restrooms and made each restroom gender neutral. Strategic Plan Goal 4, Objectives A and B.
- Installed new carpet in aisles, on the altar, in the Narthex and stairways leading to the sanctuary. Strategic Plan Goal 4, Objectives A, B and E.
- Purchased a new portable sound system and installed a new permanent sound system in the sanctuary. Strategic Plan Goal 4, Objective E.
- Had faded lettering on the sign repainted and cleaned overgrown shrubbery from around base of sign. Strategic Plan Goal 2, Objective Q.
- Apron at the Main Street entrance to the parking lot repaired by the Village of Essex Junction. Strategic Plan Goal 2, Objective R.
- Addressed numerous routine/ongoing maintenance needs. Strategic Plan Goal 4, Objectives A, B, D and E.
- Continued to plan for renovation of the kitchen. Strategic Plan Goal 4, Objectives A, B, F and G.
- Compiled a list of Buildings and Grounds items and associated/estimated costs as part of a Capital Campaign. Strategic Plan Goal 4, Objectives G and H.

None of the work we do could be done without a tireless group of volunteers and staff. Thanks to the crews that mow our lawn and make the many miscellaneous repairs required, we save thousands of dollars each year. Like my predecessors before me, I would like to give a special thank you to Lester Nutting, for his diligence and assistance on an inordinate number of projects.

The congregational survey contained 2 questions related to the Trustees.

- 1) I approve of the job our Trustees do in maintain the buildings and grounds.
 - a. Of 177 responses, 97.74% agreed with that statement. The Trustees continue to try and identify and prioritize, within the limited budget we have, completion of necessary work.
- 2) Please list up to three buildings/grounds related projects you would like to see completed.
 - a. The overwhelming desire, with 46 respondents, is completion of the kitchen renovation, followed by restrooms (25 responses), painting the sanctuary (22 responses), repaving and striping the parking lot (20 responses) and replacing the sanctuary windows (13 responses).
 - b. The balance of the responses, were in regards to various other projects that are on the Trustees list of things to do as soon as funds become available.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Meilleur, Trustee Chair

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

According to our by-laws:

1. The Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, the Vice-President (who shall serve as Chairperson of the committee), the Chairperson of the Trustees, and the Chairperson of the Stewardship Committee. One (1) member of the Finance Committee, to be selected by the Finance Committee, shall serve as an ex-officio voting member of the Planned Giving Committee.
2. The Finance Committee shall have the care and custody of and be responsible for all the funds and securities of the Church. The Finance Committee shall maintain overall financial accountability of the Church with the assistance of the Church Auditors.

3. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for developing the annual budget of the Church, including (i) submission to Church Council for its approval for presentation for approval at the Annual Meeting, and (ii) consideration and approval by the Regular Members at the Annual Meeting. The Finance Committee shall also be responsible for administering the approved annual budget. In carrying out this latter responsibility, the Finance Committee may delegate authority to individuals, Committees or Recognized Groups to spend within their respective budgets. Individual groups may do so unless officially notified by the Finance Committee of an overall change of the Church's financial condition. Neither the Finance Committee nor its delegates shall pledge the credit of the Church beyond the Church's then current budget. In addition, the Finance Committee shall be responsible for periodically reviewing and revising the financial policy of the Church.

Strategic Plan –Relevant Goals

Strategic Goal 6: Provide sufficient resources of money and staff. We will address the short- and long-term financial and staffing needs of the church and provide the resources to achieve those needs while fostering a mindset of abundance.

Objective A. Well-defined process for budget planning: We have a well-defined process for budget planning and development. The responsibility for execution of this process is also well-defined and the processes are being performed. Those with the potential to submit budget inputs are trained and supported in their budget planning efforts.

- Primary Responsibility: Church Council
- Secondary Responsibility: Budget
- Associated Staff: Senior Pastor

Objective B. Programs receive financial support: All FCCEJ programs receive sufficient financial support to realize our ministry.

- Primary Responsibility: Church Council
- Secondary Responsibility: Budget, Stewardship
- Associated Staff: Senior Pastor

Objective F. Appropriate reserve: The annual budget includes an appropriate reserve account to fund normal maintenance and repairs of property, as well as repair and/or replacement of equipment and supplies.

- Primary Responsibility: Church Council, Budget
- Secondary Responsibility: Trustees
- Associated Staff: Senior Pastor

Objective G. Supplies and equipment budgeted: Supplies and equipment to support a professional organization are budgeted and funded.

- Primary Responsibility: Budget
- Secondary Responsibility: Church Council
- Associated Staff: Senior Pastor, Church Administrator

Survey Results:

The Finance Committee related question asked during the recent survey was, "I would be interested in being informed during the process of creating the annual budget." 52% strongly agreed, agreed or agreed somewhat, 34 % had no opinion or were undecided and 14 % disagreed somewhat, disagreed or strongly disagreed. While the question captured interest level, we didn't specifically ask whether folks feel informed about the process. Are the 52% who are interested, members of committees who do know the process or does this number represent those who are interested and uninformed? The comments that clearly relate to this question were as follows.

"I trust the Budget Committee to make wise choices. I am happy with what is presented."

"I put my trust in the people who volunteer to serve. I personally feel that if someone wants to be up to date about how the budget is formed, or is concerned that it is not being done right, they need to step up to the plate and say "yes" to nominating so they are in on the process."

Simply put, the process is as follows. Each committee submits a proposed budget to the Finance Committee. The Stewardship Committee launches a campaign encouraging the congregation to "Pledge", to predict what they believe their personal contribution will be for the upcoming year. The Finance Committee compares the "pledged" amount from the congregation, the total requested amount from the committees and compares the trends in income and spending over recent years. If pledges fall short, budgets are cut. This year, the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction received enough in pledges and anticipated "loose offering" to cover the requested budgets.

Another point of clarification that has come to our attention, the current "Finance Committee" is the former "Budget Committee". When the Strategic Plan was written, these financial responsibilities belonged to the Trustees' Budget Sub-Committee. According to the new bylaws, adopted during the 2015 Annual Meeting, these responsibilities were delegated to a stand alone committee, the "Finance Committee".

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Crocket, Chair of Finance Committee
Ann Gray, Treasurer
Dan Petherbridge, Assistant Treasurer
Pat Seaver, Financial Secretary
Kevin Meilleur, Chair of Trustees
Alison Wermer, Chair of Stewardship

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

As chairperson of the Stewardship committee it has been a pleasure to work with the committee educating our congregation about the joys and responsibilities of stewardship.

The ongoing Hannaford cards sales have generated more than \$4,600 since its inception.

Each spring we encourage members to pay the dues assessed our church, called the per Capita dues.

We also have our annual spring Claussen gift card sales which realize around \$200 each year.

More and more people are using Bill Pay for church-related giving. With this increase, there has been less of a summer lull in contributions which is better for church finances.

This year our Affinity Program with TD bank brought us more than \$ 1100.00. Anyone, church member or not, who has an account at TD bank can indicate they want to be part of this program at the bank. There is no cost to the account holder and free money flows to the church.

Coming up in 2017 we are looking at a program offered by Amazon.com called AmazonSmile. Once again this is free money to the church at no cost to the consumer. After FCCEJ is registered with the program, online shoppers at Amazon.com simply go through AmazonSmile, choose FCCEJ as the designated charity, then shop as usual at Amazon.com. Our church will receive 0.5% of the sales.

Free Money!! We will let you know if we decide to join this program.

Finally, I want to thank all of our church family for a fantastic pledge drive. The average pledge for 2017 is almost \$1500. We have 18 new families pledging this year. Both of these are milestone numbers. Our church was formed in 1867, 145 years ago. As Rev Mark has said, the past, present and future of the church resides in each of us. We cannot separate what we do today from what has gone before. And what we do today has a profound impact on First Church's future. It is up to each of us to be good stewards of this institution during our tenure so that 145 years from now it will still be an example of dynamic Christian fellowship and outreach in our community and the world.

Faithfully yours,
Alison Wermer

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Found on the following pages are the Income and Expense Statement (which includes the proposed 2016 budget), a report of Income and Expenses for Restricted Funds and the Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2015.

Budgeted income for 2015 was \$398,937.99 (102% of budget). Interest income was \$417.18 for a total income of \$399,355.17. Total 2015 budgeted expenses were \$405,347.12 (103% of budget). This resulted in a deficit of \$5,991.95 at the end of the year.

The endowment policy has a provision that allows up to 5% of the average fund balance over the previous 12 quarters to be used to support special projects as petitioned by church committees. This year, the Church Council voted to use \$20,000 of endowment income, per the endowment policy, for requests made by committees. Therefore, total unrestricted income (budgeted and endowment monies) was \$418,937.99 with corresponding expenses of \$425,347.12. The projects supported by the \$20,000 were:

- Jamaica Mission trip -- \$5,600
- Changing tables and unisex signs for bathroom -- \$1,000
- Monitor for choir loft -- \$1,822.40
- Capital reserve fund -- \$11,577.60

Primarily due to the above practice, over the past several years, the principle (book value) of the endowment has not grown, but remained relatively level; a bit under \$400,000.

Approximately \$13,000 for pension and health insurance expenses that should have been paid in the fourth quarter of 2014 was not paid until 2015 due to a late invoice from the company. If this bill had been paid in 2014, expenses for 2015 would have decreased by approximately \$13,000 which would have resulted in a 2015 year-end surplus of about \$8,000.

Overall income and expenses were generally in line with their budgets. On the income side, pledges, building use income, loose offerings and fund raisers were over budget, and initial offering, per capita offering, and Christmas offering raised less funds than budgeted.

Expense items that were over budget were postage, copier, maintenance, utilities, and building insurance. In other areas, cost savings were recognized which helped to keep the overall expenses on budget.

Restricted funds by their very nature are not budgeted. The revenue and expenditures are outlined with their corresponding prior year values for comparison. The balance in each of these funds can be found on the balance sheet.

The proposed budget for 2016 is relatively similar to 2015 with a modest increase in staff salaries and market adjustments for the Senior and Associate Pastor salaries and some relatively small increases in a few non-staff areas. The Associate Pastor expenses were budgeted as if Ryan were not leaving. Depending on the direction of covering the areas he serviced, the expenses may be shifted to other line items but the overall expenses are anticipated to be equal to or less than the budgeted amount. As in previous years the budget was balanced by adjusting the pledge income to meet expenses. History has demonstrated that we receive more in pledge income than was actually pledged, thus making this a reasonable adjustment.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Gray, Treasurer
Dan Petherbridge, Assistant Treasurer

2015 AUDITORS REPORT

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITORS

January 12, 2016

The operating statement for the year ended December 31, 2015 of the First Congregational Church appears to accurately reflect the receipts and disbursements for the period, as does the operating statement of the Thrift Shop and the Pastor's Fund. Based on reconciliations, tracing several deposits of the financial secretary and tracing several expense transactions including the posting of these transactions to the monthly operating statements, there appears to be no changes to the annual operating statement. These procedures were substantially fewer than those required for an independent audit, review or compilation. As stated in prior years, this audit is substantially less in scope than an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rob Sinkewicz


Bob Vincent

COMPUTER EXPENSES	5570					
Computer Hardware	5572	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ (500.00)	0.00%	\$ 500.00
Computer Software	5574	\$ 1,298.48	\$ 250.00	\$ 1,048.48	519.39%	\$ 250.00
Subtotal Computer Expenses	5570	\$ 1,298.48	\$ 750.00	\$ 548.48	173.13%	\$ 750.00
LEASED EQUIPMENT	5580					
Copier Lease	5583	\$ 4,947.80	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 747.80	117.80%	\$ 4,980.00
Color copies - BW overage	5584	\$ 316.86	\$ 50.00	\$ 266.86	633.72%	\$ 500.00
Postage Machine/Meter	5585	\$ 957.20	\$ 1,236.00	\$ (278.80)	77.44%	\$ 1,236.00
Parking lot use	5590	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ -	100.00%	\$ 500.00
Subtotal Leased Equipment	5580	\$ 6,721.86	\$ 5,986.00	\$ 735.86	112.29%	\$ 7,216.00
Subtotal Administrative Expense	5400	\$ 18,103.17	\$ 16,676.00	\$ 1,427.17	108.56%	\$ 17,906.00
BUILDING MAINT CHURCH	5600					
Building Insurance	5610	\$ 10,847.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 847.00	108.47%	\$ 11,500.00
Church furnishings	5615	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	0.00%	\$ -
Trustees Contingency	5620	\$ 813.08	\$ 500.00	\$ 313.08	162.62%	\$ 2,000.00
UTILITIES	5630					
Electricity - Church	5635	\$ 5,301.92	\$ 5,500.00	\$ (198.08)	96.40%	\$ 5,500.00
Water & Sewer - Church	5645	\$ 1,723.35	\$ 2,250.00	\$ (526.65)	76.59%	\$ 2,250.00
Fuel/Gas - Church	5655	\$ 7,850.53	\$ 8,000.00	\$ (149.47)	98.13%	\$ 8,000.00
Waste	5665	\$ 1,065.60	\$ 1,248.00	\$ (182.40)	85.38%	\$ 1,300.00
Subtotal Utilities	5630	\$ 15,941.40	\$ 16,998.00	\$ (1,056.60)	93.78%	\$ 17,050.00
BUILDING MAINTENANCE	5700					
Cleaning Supplies	5710	\$ 1,678.65	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 678.65	167.87%	\$ 1,000.00
Cleaning Service	5720	\$ 11,558.47	\$ 13,000.00	\$ (1,441.53)	88.91%	\$ 13,000.00
Snow Plowing - sand/salt	5730	\$ 3,874.90	\$ 4,200.00	\$ (325.10)	92.26%	\$ 5,000.00
Mowing/Snow blowing	5731	\$ 229.79	\$ 150.00	\$ 79.79	153.19%	\$ 200.00
Elevator Maint/Inspection	5732	\$ 2,376.56	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 376.56	118.83%	\$ 2,500.00
Repairs/Maintenance	5740	\$ 1,618.46	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 618.46	161.85%	\$ 2,000.00
Routine Maintenance	5745	\$ 7,018.42	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 2,018.42	140.37%	\$ 6,000.00
Subtotal Building Maintenance	5700	\$ 28,355.25	\$ 26,350.00	\$ 2,005.25	107.61%	\$ 29,700.00
BUILDING MAINT SAWYER	5800					
Water/Sewer - Sawyer	5810	\$ 1,030.87	\$ 1,250.00	\$ (219.13)	82.47%	\$ 1,250.00
Electricity - Sawyer	5820	\$ 481.65	\$ 1,450.00	\$ (968.35)	33.22%	\$ 1,450.00
Fuel/Gas - Sawyer	5830	\$ 2,138.94	\$ 3,500.00	\$ (1,361.06)	61.11%	\$ 3,500.00
Routine Maint. - Sawyer	5840	\$ 1,363.63	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 363.63	136.36%	\$ 1,500.00
Sawyer House Property Tax	5850	\$ -	\$ 1,375.00	\$ (1,375.00)	0.00%	\$ 1,375.00
Subtotal Building Maint Sawyer	5800	\$ 5,015.09	\$ 8,575.00	\$ (3,559.91)	58.49%	\$ 9,075.00
BUILDING MAINT PARSONAGE	5900					
Water/Sewer - Parsonage	5910	\$ 424.49	\$ 175.00	\$ 249.49	242.57%	\$ 400.00
Electricity - Parsonage	5920	\$ 781.85	\$ 570.00	\$ 211.85	137.17%	\$ -
Fuel/Gas - Parsonage	5930	\$ 1,253.33	\$ 685.00	\$ 568.33	182.97%	\$ -
Parsonage Property tax	5935	\$ 3,546.30	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 546.30	118.21%	\$ 7,200.00
Routine Maint. Parsonage	5940	\$ 713.27	\$ 1,500.00	\$ (786.73)	47.55%	\$ 1,500.00
Subtotal Building Maint Parsonage	5900	\$ 6,719.24	\$ 5,930.00	\$ 789.24	113.31%	\$ 9,100.00
Subtotal Building Maint Church	5600	\$ 69,191.06	\$ 68,353.00	\$ 838.06	101.23%	\$ 78,425.00
CAPITAL RESERVE	5960					
Capital Reserve	5961	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	100.00%	\$ 2,000.00
Subtotal Fixed Expenses	5010	\$ 366,747.87	\$ 354,393.66	\$ 12,354.21	103.49%	\$ 379,948.50
DEPARTMENTS/COMMITTEES	6000					

MISSIONS DEPARTMENT	6010						
Mission A	6015	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	100.00%	\$ 6,500.00	
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	6200						
Curriculum	6201	\$ 1,413.01	\$ 1,500.00	\$ (86.99)	94.20%	\$ 1,700.00	
Prof Expenses - CE	6202	\$ 307.16	\$ 500.00	\$ (192.84)	61.43%	\$ 675.00	
CE Supplies	6204	\$ 1,108.17	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 108.17	110.82%	\$ 1,000.00	
7th/8th Grade Youth Group	6205	\$ 748.54	\$ 700.00	\$ 48.54	106.93%	\$ 700.00	
Senior High Youth Group	6206	\$ 1,515.72	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 15.72	101.05%	\$ 2,000.00	
5th/6th Youth Group	6207	\$ 247.41	\$ 300.00	\$ (52.59)	82.47%	\$ 300.00	
Confirmation	6208	\$ 176.30	\$ 250.00	\$ (73.70)	70.52%	\$ 700.00	
Adult Education	6209	\$ 581.39	\$ 500.00	\$ 81.39	116.28%	\$ 500.00	
CE Resources	6210	\$ 197.69	\$ 450.00	\$ (252.31)	43.93%	\$ 450.00	
Vacation Bible Camp	6211	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ -	100.00%	\$ 300.00	
Mileage	6212	\$ 381.99	\$ 300.00	\$ 81.99	127.33%	\$ 300.00	
CE Program Enrichment	6213	\$ 776.40	\$ 500.00	\$ 276.40	155.28%	\$ 500.00	
CE - Other	6214	\$ 71.67	\$ 100.00	\$ (28.33)	71.67%	\$ 100.00	
CE Programmatic Expenses	6215	\$ 122.48	\$ 100.00	\$ 22.48	122.48%	\$ 200.00	
Subtotal Christian Education	6200	\$ 7,947.93	\$ 8,000.00	\$ (52.07)	99.35%	\$ 9,425.00	
MUSIC	6275						
Prof Expense - Music	6277	\$ -	\$ 250.00	\$ (250.00)	0.00%	\$ 250.00	
Organ Supply	6280	\$ 700.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 300.00	175.00%	\$ 400.00	
Piano Maintenance	6281	\$ 489.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 89.00	122.25%	\$ 400.00	
Organ Maintenance	6282	\$ 450.00	\$ 700.00	\$ (250.00)	64.29%	\$ 700.00	
Robe Maintenance	6289	\$ 310.50	\$ 300.00	\$ 10.50	103.50%	\$ 300.00	
Music All Ensembles	6292	\$ 1,046.63	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 46.63	104.66%	\$ 1,000.00	
Licensing	6295	\$ 446.00	\$ 750.00	\$ (304.00)	59.47%	\$ 750.00	
Subtotal Music	6275	\$ 3,442.13	\$ 3,800.00	\$ (357.87)	90.58%	\$ 3,800.00	
DEACONS	6300						
Communion/Worship Sup	6310	\$ 787.12	\$ 750.00	\$ 37.12	104.95%	\$ 250.00	
Paraments	6312	\$ -	\$ 75.00	\$ (75.00)	0.00%	\$ -	
Advertising - Deacons	6315	\$ 477.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 177.00	159.00%	\$ 475.00	
Evangelism	6330	\$ 1,060.47	\$ 800.00	\$ 260.47	132.56%	\$ 1,400.00	
Deacons - other	6340	\$ 179.56	\$ 50.00	\$ 129.56	359.12%	\$ 50.00	
Pulpit Supply	6350	\$ 300.00	\$ 500.00	\$ (200.00)	60.00%	\$ 300.00	
Subtotal Deacons	6300	\$ 2,804.15	\$ 2,475.00	\$ 329.15	113.30%	\$ 2,475.00	
HOSPITALITY	6400						
Hospitality Supplies	6410	\$ 974.17	\$ 1,000.00	\$ (25.83)	97.42%	\$ 750.00	
Fellowship Meals- Funeral	6420	\$ 115.28	\$ 200.00	\$ (84.72)	57.64%	\$ 450.00	
Subtotal Hospitality	6400	\$ 1,089.45	\$ 1,200.00	\$ (110.55)	90.79%	\$ 1,200.00	
CONFERENCE EXPENSE	6450						
Youth Visitors	6460	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00%	\$ -	
Delegates/Conference	6465	\$ 1,200.84	\$ 1,500.00	\$ (299.16)	80.06%	\$ 1,500.00	
Per Capita/Association	6470	\$ 350.00	\$ 350.00	\$ -	100.00%	\$ 350.00	
Per Capita/Conference	6480	\$ 5,600.00	\$ 5,600.00	\$ -	100.00%	\$ 5,600.00	
Basic Support	6490	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ -	100.00%	\$ 11,000.00	
Subtotal Conference Expense	6450	\$ 18,150.84	\$ 18,450.00	\$ (299.16)	98.38%	\$ 18,450.00	
STEWARDSHIP	6500						
Stewardship Supplies	6510	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ (100.00)	0.00%	\$ 100.00	
USHERING	6540						
Ushering miscellaneous	6541	\$ 164.75	\$ -	\$ 164.75	0.00%	\$ -	
Subtotal Departments/committees	6000	\$ 38,599.25	\$ 39,025.00	\$ (425.75)	98.91%	\$ 41,950.00	

Total Budgeted Expenses		\$ 405,347.12	\$ 393,418.66	\$ 11,928.46	103.03%	\$ 421,698.50
OTHER EXPENSES	6550					
Endowment Expenditures (note 3)	6705	\$ 20,000.00	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00	0.00%	\$ -
Total Non-Budgeted		\$ 20,000.00	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00	100.00%	
Subtotal Expenses	5000	\$ 425,347.12	\$ 393,418.66	\$ 31,928.46	108.12%	\$ -
EXCESS INC/EXP (Budgeted)		\$ (5,991.95)	\$ -			\$ -

Note 1 - Five quarterly payments were made for staff insurance and annuity

Note 2 - Negative balance due to member gift to this account

Note 3- Includes \$18,290 transferred from endowment principle plus \$1,710 from special offering

**First Congregational Church
2015 RESTRICTED (special) FUNDS**

TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED INCOME	4201	
Capital Fund	4209-103	\$ 13,627.28
Christmas Fund	4212-104	\$ 2,046.00
Sunday School	4215-105	\$ 1,221.97
Flower Fund	4221-107	\$ 2,460.55
Food Pantry	4224-108	\$ 17,230.79
Hand Bell Choir	4226-131	\$ 372.72
Memorial Fund	4233-111	\$ 495.00
Missions Reserve	4239-113	\$ 767.50
Missions - Coffee project	4242-114	\$ 358.46
One Great Hour of Sharing	4245-115	\$ 1,071.00
Music Committee	4248-116	\$ 599.00
Pastor's Fund	4254-118	\$ 1,174.21
Sabbatical	4255-133	\$ 375.00
Hannafords fund raisers	4256-132	\$ 35,547.50
Senior High Youth	4260-120	\$ 2,719.52
Family Camp	4280-128	\$ 160.00
Vacation Bible Camp	4281-128	\$ 400.00
Essex Eats Out	4282-129	\$ 2,042.51
2015 Jamaica Trip	4283-130	\$ 27,593.72
Subtotal Temporarily Restricted	4201	\$ 110,262.73
PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED	4300	
Endowment QE Div Income	4310	\$ 5,505.26
Endowment QE contribution	4330	\$ 1,710.00
Subtotal Donor Restricted	4200	\$ 117,477.99
RESTRICTED FUNDS EXPENSES	7000	
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	7050	
Alternative Giving Fair	7203-101	\$ 328.68
Capital Fund	7209-103	\$ 125,660.25
Christmas Fund	7212-104	\$ 2,041.00
Sunday School	7215-105	\$ 790.63
Flower Fund	7221-107	\$ 2,662.20
Food Pantry	7224-108	\$ 16,449.34
Hand Bell Choir	7226-131	\$ 128.00
Missions Reserve	7239-113	\$ 650.00
Missions - Coffee Project	7242-114	\$ 576.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	7245-115	\$ 1,071.00
Pastor's Fund	7254-118	\$ 3,000.00
Senior High Youth	7260-120	\$ 806.64
Woodside CD interest	7272-124	\$ 32.82
Teen CD Interest	7275-125	\$ 185.10
Camp Scholarships	7279-127	\$ 225.00
Family Camp	7280-128	\$ 80.00
Vacation Bible Camp	7281-128	\$ 467.66
Essex Eats Out	7282-129	\$ 1,339.47
2015 Jamaica Trip	7283-130	\$ 27,141.39
Hannaford fund raiser Exp	7284-132	\$ 34,940.00
Subtotal Restricted Funds Expenses	7000	\$ 218,575.18

First Congregational Church
Balance Sheet
General Fund 01, for the Year Ending December 2015

			2015	2014
ASSETS		1000		
CHECKING ACCOUNTS		1100		
	Main checking	1110	\$ 18,625.87	\$ 55,921.14
SAVINGS ACCOUNTS		1200		
	Main Savings	1210	\$ 140,369.44	\$ 230,275.82
Subtotal Bank Accounts		1050	\$ 158,995.31	\$ 286,196.96
INVESTMENTS		1300		
	Endowment - QE	1310	\$ 388,269.93	\$ 398,591.75
	QE unrealized (gain/loss)	1320	\$ 53,570.05	\$ 74,035.16
	CD-Missions (note 1)	1370	\$ 10,087.79	\$ 10,075.29
Subtotal Investments		1300	\$ 451,927.77	\$ 482,702.20
FIXED ASSETS		1500		
BUILDINGS		1600		
	Church property	1610	\$ 1,217,000.00	\$ 1,217,000.00
	Parsonage	1620	\$ 308,200.00	\$ 308,200.00
	Sawyer House	1630	\$ 257,600.00	\$ 257,600.00
Subtotal Buildings		1600	\$ 1,782,800.00	\$ 1,782,800.00
Subtotal Fixed Assets		1500	\$ 1,782,800.00	\$ 1,782,800.00
OTHER ASSETS		1900		
	Note Receivable - MM	1910	\$ 17,363.55	\$ -
TOTAL ASSETS			\$ 2,411,086.63	\$ 2,551,699.16
LIABILITIES		2000		
PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS		2201		
	TAXES PAYABLE	2205		
	Federal Withholding	2215	\$ 1,068.97	\$ 329.59
	Social Security	2217	\$ 445.92	\$ 291.96
	State Taxes Payable	2220	\$ 1,291.87	\$ 902.17
	Subtotal Taxes Payable	2205	\$ 2,806.76	\$ 1,523.72
	OTHER DEDUCTIONS	2250		
	FSA Payable	2265	\$ 33.30	\$ -
	Associate Pastor 403b Lia	2280	\$ 25.55	\$ (0.45)
	Subtotal Other Deductions	2250	\$ 58.85	\$ (0.45)
Subtotal Payroll Deductions		2201	\$ 2,865.61	\$ 1,523.27
PASS THRU CONTRIBUTIONS		2300		
	Seminary Sunday	2306	\$ 824.00	\$ 182.00
	Misc pass through	2308	\$ 2,954.24	\$ 1,924.28
Subtotal Pass Thru Contributions		2300	\$ 3,778.24	\$ 2,106.28
			2015	2016
OTHER CURRENT LIABILITIES		2400		
	Building Use Deposits	2410	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
	Security Deposits	2415	\$ 2,950.00	\$ 1,500.00
Subtotal Other Current Liabilities		2400	\$ 3,050.00	\$ 1,600.00
Subtotal Current Liabilities		2010	\$ 9,693.85	\$ 5,229.55

TOTAL LIABILITIES			\$ 9,693.85	\$ 5,229.55
NET ASSETS		3000		
UNRESTRICTED		3100		
	Unrestricted Net Assets	3110	\$ 1,833,686.10	\$ 1,841,386.05
DONOR RESTRICTED		3200		
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED		3201		
	Alternative Giving Fair	3203-101	\$ -	\$ 328.68
	Aquirre Garden	3206-102	\$ 178.56	\$ 178.56
	Capital Fund	3209-103	\$ 46,721.89	\$ 158,754.86
	Christmas Fund	3212-104	\$ 50.00	\$ 45.00
	Sunday School	3215-105	\$ 1,538.75	\$ 1,107.41
	Flower Fund	3221-107	\$ 1,021.18	\$ 1,222.83
	Food Pantry	3224-108	\$ 27,280.91	\$ 26,499.46
	Hand Bell Choir	3226-131	\$ 1,184.27	\$ 939.55
	Junior High Youth	3227-109	\$ 648.83	\$ 648.83
	Kitchen Equipment	3230-110	\$ 403.95	\$ 403.95
	Memorial Fund	3233-111	\$ 10,670.48	\$ 10,175.48
	Men at First	3236-112	\$ 1,449.63	\$ 1,449.63
	Missions Reserve	3239-113	\$ 2,787.30	\$ 2,669.80
	Missions - Coffee project	3242-114	\$ 442.62	\$ 660.16
	Music Committee	3248-116	\$ 1,887.66	\$ 1,288.66
	Organ Fund	3251-117	\$ 2,405.50	\$ 2,405.50
	Pastor's Fund	3254-118	\$ 5,865.81	\$ 7,691.60
	Sabbatical	3255-133	\$ 750.00	\$ 375.00
	Senior Choir Robe Fund	3257-119	\$ 363.12	\$ 363.12
	Senior High Youth	3260-120	\$ 2,596.88	\$ 684.00
	Trustees Fund	3266-122	\$ 396.86	\$ 396.86
	Woodside CD interest	3272-124	\$ -	\$ 32.82
	Teen CD interest	3275-125	\$ -	\$ 185.10
	Camp Scholarships	3279-127	\$ 723.00	\$ 948.00
	Family Camp	3280-127	\$ 232.12	\$ 152.12
	Vacation Bible Camp	3281-128	\$ 43.89	\$ 111.55
	Essex Eats Out	3282-129	\$ 1,251.03	\$ 547.99
	2015 Jamaica Trip	3283-130	\$ 12,077.33	\$ 11,625.00
	Hannaford fund raiser	3284-132	\$ 607.50	\$ -
Subtotal Temporarily Restricted		3201	\$ 123,579.07	\$ 231,891.52
PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED		3300		
	Endowment - QE	3310	\$ 379,768.33	\$ 390,843.07
	QE unrealized (gain/loss)	3315	\$ 58,743.72	\$ 76,745.91
	Endowment	3320	\$ 5,418.00	\$ 5,418.00
	Endow - unrealized (g/l)	3325	\$ 109.77	\$ 109.77
	CD-Missions	3330	\$ 87.79	\$ 75.29
Subtotal Permanently Restricted		3300	\$ 444,127.61	\$ 473,192.04
Subtotal Donor Restricted		3200	\$ 567,706.68	\$ 705,083.56
TOTAL EQUITY			\$ 2,401,392.78	\$ 2,546,469.61
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY			\$ 2,411,086.63	\$ 2,551,699.16

Note 1 - Does not include missions CD interest for quarter 4