

**First Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ**

**Of**

**Essex Junction, Vermont**

**2017 Annual Report**



**150th Annual Meeting**

**Sunday, January 28, 2018**

**11:30 a.m.**

*Draft #2 ~ 1/19/18*

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**WARNING FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING  
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ESSEX JUNCTION  
January 28, 2018  
11:15 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 on Sunday, January 28, 2018 at 11:15 a.m. to act upon the following business:

ARTICLE I: To vote on the proposed projects and budget of the *Our Home, Our Future, Our Time* Capital Campaign, with a goal of \$822,430 and a stretch goal of \$1,088,911, and to authorize the Capital Campaign Steering Committee in conjunction with our Assistant Treasurer to open a bridge loan if necessary to allow construction to begin and proceed on a timely basis.

ARTICLE I: To hear and act upon the reports of the Church Officers, Committees and Recognized Groups of the Church.

ARTICLE II: To act and vote upon the proposed budget for 2018.

ARTICLE III: To elect all church officers and committees required by the by-laws of the Church and others as may be necessary.

ARTICLE IV: To vote on the proposed minor by-law changes from the Deacons and the Nominating Committee.

ARTICLE V: To see if the Church will authorize the Finance Committee to borrow money and sign notes pledging the credit of the Church, if needed, to meet the current expenses of the Church.

ARTICLE VI: To transact any other business which may properly be brought before this Annual Meeting.

On behalf of the Church,  
Alison Wermer, Church Clerk

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHURCH CLERK

Active Membership as of January 1, 2017: 431

Received by Letter of Transfer	1	Removed by Death	6
Received by Rite of Confirmation	10	Removed by Letter	0
Received by Reaffirmation of Faith	11	Removed by Request	4
Reactivated by Deacons	<u>2</u>	Moved by Deacons to Inactive or Affiliate Member	<u>22</u>
Total Added:	24	Total Subtracted:	32

Active membership as of December 31, 2017: 423

Inactive membership as of December 31, 2017: 159

Non-member participants (adults & youth): 312

Total members/participants: 894

### SERVICES

Communion: Regular:	24	Weddings:	3
Other:	5	Funerals:	10
Off Site:	5	Baptisms:	7

### MEMBERS RECEIVED

Donald Gray	Addison Kasmarek	Arnold Thomas
Jonathan Aichinger	Eva Cunningham-Firkey	Samuel Dooley
Nicole Frank	Ethan Goedken	Nicholas Mendes
Clay Messier	Emma Parker	Munroe Shearer
Cameron Starkey	Jim Glatz	Janice Jordan
Marilyn Powell	Edward Steele	William Harris
Natalie Whitfield	Amani (Harvey) Whitfield	Brad Jackson
Michelle Jackson	Denise Keating	Carol Bishard

### COVENANT MEMBERS LOST BY DEATH

Ernest Wilfred Drost Jr.	Rachel Ellen Herbig Jarvis	William F. Meyer
Daniel Kevin McMaster	Hazel Ruth Billheimer	Doris Farnsworth

## **PRESIDENT & COUNCIL/HRC UPDATE**

Frankly, when I agreed to take on this journey as President, my goal was to simply maintain the status quo, no new initiatives. My predecessor, Kevin Dorn and before him, Beth Warren led the church through so many exciting changes, I anticipated...peace. A time to simply become grounded and thankful for our community.

But...what an amazing year it has been! This report is challenging to write because I don't want to "steal the thunder" from the Committee reports that follow. This church is so blessed to have so many individuals who share so much of their time, talents and resources. I can't begin to name names; there are so many. Thumb through your church directory and take note of the names and faces who seem to live in this building! They are here all the time!

Accomplishments/Events this past year include a revised Endowment Policy, completed Personnel Evaluations, moving from a contract for cleaning to hiring our own custodian, a "facelift" for the Thrift Shop, Mission trip to Jamaica, continuously thriving Food Shelf, onboarding our new Associate Pastor, the most incredible, year-long celebration of our church's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and hours of preparation for the launching of our Capital Campaign.

Meanwhile, our Trustees, Stewardship and Finance Committees continue to do what needs to be done keep the lights and heat on, the water running, bills paid and the bees...out! There is always a friendly face to greet our friends and family, and coffee seems to magically appear every Sunday. Our Clergy and Deacons continue to think of creative ways to challenge and to educate us – reflecting on our wonderful Lenten series. Christian Education, child care and our numerous musical groups are "staples", reliable and meaningful.

Finally, my heartfelt thank you to the incredible, supportive and dedicated staff. Should anyone consider taking on the role of Vice President and President.....no worries you're in good hands!

Sincerely,

Brenda Dawson Crocket

President

## **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE**

Over the past two years, our church leadership has identified a number of key renovations and improvements needed to maintain our aging facilities, make our home more welcoming and efficient, and further our efforts to expand ministry and outreach. In 2016, Church Council hired Full Harvest Fundraising LLC to assess our church's readiness to raise the necessary funds.

Last spring, Church Council decided to move forward with plans for a proposed Capital Campaign to be voted on by the congregation at the Annual Meeting in January 2018. Following the recommendations from the feasibility study report, Council asked the Trustees to develop more detailed project plans, timelines and cost estimates. Council also approved a new contract with Full Harvest to recommend key action steps and a timeline to get us ready for the congregational vote, and to help us be ready to launch a campaign that would run February-June 2018 if approved.

In October 2017, Council established a Capital Campaign Steering Committee, led by co-chairs Dave Johnson and Kaki McGeary. The Steering Committee is comprised of 21 church members and includes the following subcommittees: Building/Projects, Communications, Visiting (Fundraising), Administration, Finance and Events/Fun. This dedicated group of volunteers has met bi-monthly, and sometimes weekly, since the beginning of October. In just three short months, we have developed a proposed campaign budget, further refined project plans, created informational materials, researched and applied for grants, and laid the groundwork for the hoped-for campaign.

The theme of the proposed campaign is “Our Home, Our Future, Our Time.” The proposed goal is \$822,430, with a stretch goal of \$1.09 million. A series of informational meetings is planned for early January 2018 to provide the congregation with details about all of the proposed projects and budgets, and to gather feedback. The list of proposed projects reflects the priorities shared by a cross-section of the congregation during the feasibility study, and was further developed based upon input from church member John Alden and his architectural firm, Scott + Partners, Inc.

The goals of the main projects are:

- ❖ Restore and maintain our aging facilities in order to avoid more expensive, emergency repairs in the future (*Roofing, Window Repair/Preservation, Sanctuary Restoration*)
- ❖ Make our home more welcoming and inviting (*Sanctuary Restoration, Parking Lot & Entrance Improvements, Office Wing/Marvin Lounge Improvements, Kitchen Remodel*)
- ❖ Increase accessibility, efficiency and comfort (*Add two ADA Bathrooms to First Floor, Heating & Insulation in Office Wing, Remodel Current Lower Level Bathrooms*)
- ❖ Increase safety and reduce environmental liabilities (*Parking Lot Improvements & Removal of Oil Storage Tank*)
- ❖ Increase our capacity to expand ministry and outreach (*Kitchen Renovation, Parking Lot Improvements & ALL Projects - because we are taking care of Our Home*)
- ❖ *We have identified several “Stretch Goal” projects to complete if we raise additional funds. These projects also align with the goals listed above.*

2018 promises to be an exciting and transformational year for our church as we consider whether to move forward with a Capital Campaign, and as we begin to learn more about how this campaign might help us more fully realize our vision of being a welcoming church, accepting and serving all in the spirit of Christ.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kaki McGeary & Dave Johnson, Co-Chairs

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SENIOR PASTOR**

### **2017 Annual Report of Senior Pastor Rev. Mark Mendes**

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What a busy year 2017 has been! It was a year of transitions, special events and celebrations....all of which were accomplished in a successful way by our incredible staff and a cadre of volunteers that freely donate and dedicate their time, talent and treasure so that 1<sup>st</sup> Church's Ministry might continue to spread Christ's love to all people and make our community and the wider Essex Community stronger.

In 2017, our church celebrated our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with aplomb. With Ann Grey, Tom James and Beth Volker leading the way we experienced an Historical Worship Service with many wearing period costumes, won the Annual Memorial Day Parade Float contest, partnered with the Essex Historical Society to present a humorous and informative dramatic presentation of our history, enjoyed a great meal with letters from the Governor and both of our local civic governments honoring our work in the community along with great memories of those present and completed the celebration by hosting a week-end with the Minister and President of the United Church of Christ: Rev. John Dorhauer. Thank you all for participating for in our efforts, we honored those who went before and set the stage for looking forward to the next 150 years by ushering in *Our Home, Our Future, Our Time* Capital Campaign.

Despite the fact that our Campaign will not officially begin until the congregation votes at 2018's Annual Meeting, there was quite a bit of time and energy dedicated to the effort in 2017. From the preliminary committee who first explored the possibilities to the feasibility study to the list of projects with their specific costs to the official committee under the direction of Co-Chairs Kaki McGeary and Dave Johnson....we have spent hundreds of hours before the vote even comes into focus. Since my arrival here ten years ago, church leaders have always stressed the need to conduct a capital campaign to catch up on many deferred maintenance projects, but due to the poor state of the economy, we never got past the talking. I am thrilled that in 2017, we stopped just talking and have plans to enrich our facility and better enable our church to continue to reach out and accomplish an ever-increasing amount of ministry to the community in the name of Jesus. I simply cannot imagine where we will extend our energies and talents if we are no longer spending so much time on staff transitions and facility maintenance....new ministries, now initiatives, new ways to live out the gospel, new ways of connecting to the Essex community. I am so very excited and grateful to so many people who have stepped up and encourage all of you to seriously think and pray about what you might be able to gift to the campaign as we seek to secure our future.

Usually, I mention staff issues at the end of my report, but securing a new Associate Pastor in Rev. Josh Simon has been a significant step forward in our community. When many churches are cutting back on staff and coming up with new models of staff configuration to save money and stay more flexible to the whims of the economy, our church specifically voted to keep two full time ordained clergy on staff. This is a tremendous commitment, but one that I believe will pay off with increased staff presence in the community and congregation. Going out to attend Josh's ordination in Milwaukee Wisconsin was a great treat and an important commitment to our new associate pastor. It is also wonderful to be able to acknowledge hiring a new organist / choir director: Carol Spradling. Carol will start on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 due to previous professional and familial responsibilities. But she brings a wealth of energy and experience and will give us 110% once she arrives. The church also took a leap of faith and invested an additional amount of our budget to hire a 30 hour a week sexton: Kul Dahal. Kul and his family live in the Sawyer House's upstairs apartment and since Kul's arrival our church and grounds have never looked better. During the interim time, we have had three outstanding staff that have kept their respective ministries not only going but strong. Marie has gracefully led the choir with Bill Bickford's directing help and kept the

choir performing beautifully, enjoying each other's company and looking to the future with help. Devon Thomas and Erica Garvey have done the same for the youth group and we were blessed to have such dedicated interim employees. We also said good-bye this year to Catherine McMaster who led our music program for many years with style, talent and an informal professionalism that appealed to so many. It has been a personal joy to serve with her over the years and all of us in the church wish her and our other departing employees all the best. Lastly, the two pillars of Jen Dooley and Laurie Chipman have helped our church to be strong. Jen, with an expanded job description ensures that all things run smoothly and Laurie keeps our children and young families coming-----both key elements of a healthy church! The church should feel blessed to have such a dedicated staff.

Sunday morning worship was particularly diverse and inviting this year. The Deacons supported following my lead to have a "Second Sunday Special," a program that brought themes, activities and speakers into our worship services. From Social Justice to an AA themed service, from celebrating our 5<sup>th</sup> Open and Affirming Anniversary to initiating a Scout Jamboree campout / worship, attendees experienced a varied and interesting array of services. Particularly memorable were our Lenten speakers: Rabbi Amy Small, Governor Jim Douglas and Imam Islam Hassan who helped serve communion, something the president of the UCC thought had never been done before in any of our churches throughout the country before! We ended the year with a focus on the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation and a visit from Paul Vasile who is a national leader in shifting congregations to a more community grounded choral experience.

The three organizational and or programmatic pillars of the church continue to draw people to the church and retain their interests for years: our Music Program, our Children and Youth Program and our Mission Outreach. As previously mentioned, Marie as well as our talented Musical Directors have kept our many choirs performing to the highest standards each week. Devon, Erica and now Josh have kept our youth group engaged with the young folks in our community. Laurie continues to do an outstanding job with our nursery through 6<sup>th</sup> graders and has brought in 11 new families and 17 new children to our program plus an additional 7 from families already here. In a day and age when most children's programs are drying up and dying, Laurie is growing ours and has a new increase when all is said and done!!! The third pillar of our church is our Mission Outreach, something so important in keeping us grounded in Christ's demands upon our time and in young family's attraction to our church as a religious home. Between the Food Pantry's distribution of 90,000 pounds of food this year and the Essex Eats Out Program I think it is fair to say that no other organization in Essex does more to relieve food insecurity than First Congo Essex Junction! In addition our newly refurbished Thrift Shop is thriving with new volunteers and a dramatic increase of income! And 2017 saw our international Mission Trip to Jamaica create a 30,000 square foot garden to help feed students and their families at the White Horse Primary and Infant School. I know the international Mission component of our Mission Outreach is an expensive program but it connects us in unimaginable ways to the global community and inspires our kids to envision changing the world.....which some of the participants have actually gone out and done! Last year we spent and gave away \$ 44,260.76 which equaled about 9.7% of our budget. What is amazing in that figure is that it does NOT include so much of the food we give away nor any of the non-monetary ways that we help people, which is quite extensive. I am so proud of all this church does to live out our faith in Christ in helping people with hands on mission work both locally and internationally.

All of our extensive programs, all of our mission outreach, all of our musical groups, all of our committee work, all of our work with our children and youth.....all of it is only possible because we have so many dedicated and hard-working volunteers. Our greatest asset and strength is the people who make this church run so smoothly. Our people are passionate about putting our faith into action AND THEY DO IT every day of the year. I am humbled and honored to be able to work side by side with so many faithful, good people who are actually changing the world for the better. Thank you all.



Lastly, I just wanted to mention that I continue to be active in the wider church. I am a part of a local ecumenical lectionary group. I support and attend UCC functions including Champlain Association meetings, LCDDC/MSSC meetings on behalf of Devon Thomas and Josh Sharp, the Vermont Conference's Investment Committee, the VTCUCC Annual Meeting and this last year I attended a required Boundary Awareness Training Workshop in New Hampshire. I also continue to reach out and have a relationship with local clergy and religious leaders of all types and do my best to represent our church in the community in my daily life.

May God continue to bless our church as we seek to live out the Good News of Christ's resurrection and the love he taught us to embody as we engage our planet and all the people who live on it.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Mark

### Senior Pastor's Discretionary Fund Report

<b>First Congregational Church</b> <b>Income and Expense Statement</b> <b>PASTORS FUND 02 - Checking Account</b> <b>January 2017 - December 2017</b>		
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		2017
<b>INCOME</b>	4000	
Transfer from Pastor Fund	4031	\$2,000.00
Misc Pastor Fund income	4032	400.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>2,400.00</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE</b>	5400	
Emergency Utility	5402	\$948.34
Emergency Food	5403	517.17
Miscellaneous	5406	750.00
Bank Charges	5420	39.00
<b>Subtotal Administrative Expense</b>	5400	<b>2,254.51</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>2,254.51</b>
<b>EXCESS INCOME\EXPENSES</b>		<b>\$145.49</b>

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR

2017 marks the beginning of my called ministry as an ordained minister within the United Church of Christ. I have been at First Congregational for a month now, and I can say that I am glad that God has led me here and that I said yes to this call. I know over the next several years I will continue to strengthen my skills and will participate in wonderful ministries.

I think most of you have read my bio, yet I know that an Annual Report serves as important record of testament. I come from Wisconsin, where I was born and raised. I was fortunate to live next door to my grandparents. I spent many summer's with them, especially my grandmother. I was not raised in the United Church Christ. I was raised in a fundamentalist version of Lutheranism; however, as I say, my parents did not attend worship service often but made sure my sister and I attended Sunday School. I was spared fire and brim stone sermons. I did though hear about God's love from my Sunday School teachers and how we should love God back. At the age of sixteen, I came out as gay. My relationship with my parents, rocky at first after coming out, grew after I came out. I went to college at University of Wisconsin: Milwaukee. It was while in college that I joined the United Church of Christ. During college, I discerned a call to seminary. I attended Chicago Theological Seminary, graduating in 2016. Through my time in college and in seminary, I a commitment to social and economic justice has been at the central of my theological understanding. I believe God loves all yet is also actively on the side of those who are living in poverty and/or who are oppressed. Jesus Christ teaches me to foster, grow, and to empower young people and adults to be disciples.

Before 2017, there were 5th and 6th grade known as the Junior Youth, 7-8th known as the Junior High Youth, and 9-12th known as Senior High Youth. This past January 2017, the Junior High and Senior High Youth groups were combined. Starting January 2018, 7-8<sup>th</sup> grade will be combined with 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade while the 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> will be in their own High School Youth Group. Students who are in 8<sup>th</sup> grade may choose to participate in either the 5-8<sup>th</sup> grade youth group or in the 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade youth group. These new arrangements allow for more age appropriate conversations. And since I will be involved with both sets of youth groups, it will help the 5-8<sup>th</sup> grades, once they are ready, to transition from the 5-8<sup>th</sup> grade youth group to the 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade youth group.

Over the last year, there have been a consistent number of youth attending the youth program. I hope that we will continue to have healthy attendance. My main priority for the first six months of the year is to build strong connections with the youth who are already involved with our ministry. I also want the youth to build strong connections with each other. During the other half of the year, I want to build upon those connections and reach out to youth in our community.

During the last year, Devon and members of the congregation participated in the Faith on Tap. I will continue to participate and encourage members from this congregation to participate in these important interdenominational, hot-topic conversations. Faith on Tap meets every third Friday of the month.

As your associate pastor, I will preach once a month. I preached for the first time as your associate pastor on Christmas Eve morning. I try to use my preaching time to shore up my skills and to try new styles of preaching.

Since I started here, I have had the opportunity to share a meal with some of you either at your home or at a restaurant. Once I have moved into the parsonage, I want to host some small group dinners, so I might get to know you more.

I look forward to 2018.

Thank you,  
Josh Simon

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE**

Search Committee Members: Joanne Irwin, Myrna Doney, Laura and Eva Cunningham-Firkey, Marlene and Nicole Frank, Josh Sharp, Lisa Clark, Carl Houghton, Laurie Chipman, and Mark Mendes.

Our Associate Pastor, Ryan Gackenheimer left in January 2016. After his departure the church engaged in a discussion and finally a congregational vote on whether to continue to have a two clergy model with a Senior Pastor and Associate Pastor or to shift to a programmatic model with various staff hired to cover various ministry tasks within the church. On May 22, 2016, the church voted to stay with the Senior and Associate Pastor model for our church's staff configuration. Over the summer, Council worked to create an A.P. Search Committee who then met with Pam Lucas in October 2016.

The AP Search Committee spent from October 2016 to June of 2017 creating a Church Profile that would then be used to attract candidates to our church. We received information from committees, church leaders and the entire congregation to help shape a Church Profile that would reflect who we are to any prospective candidates. Our Conference Minister, Pam Lucas, shared that she thought our profile was very strong and should attract 40 – 50 candidates. In late Spring, our profile began circulating and we received three profiles, two of which we followed up with skype interviews and finally personal interviews where each candidate came to town, interviewed, worked with youth and then preached in a neutral pulpit. It has been an arduous, but very good process.

After much discussion, prayer and back and forth conversations with these two candidates, the AP Search Committee decided unanimously to hire Josh Simons as our next duly called Associate Pastor. We proposed a November 19, 2017 Candidating Sunday. Church Council reviewed our process and the candidate and decided to issue a warning for a Special Meeting on Nov. 19, 2017 after the second worship service in the sanctuary to consider the Associate Pastor Search Committee's proposal to hire Joshua Simon as our next Full Time Associate Pastor.

The congregation had opportunities to meet and talk with Josh at our Friday morning Coffee Chatter at Martone's, a Saturday noontime barbeque and a congregational pot luck where he introduced himself and answered questions from the group. On Sunday November 19 he preached a candidating sermon and led various portions of the service. After the service at the Special Congregational Meeting, he answered questions and then was asked to leave the room while we deliberated. After a very brief discussion, the congregation voted unanimously to call Joshua Simon to be our next Associate Minister beginning on November 27, 2017.

At this point the Search Committee's task was completed, and the committee was dissolved.

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

According to the by-laws:

“ 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. “

The PRC met twice with Mark in 2017. The discussions focused on areas where Mark thought the committee's input and/or follow-up might be of help.

There are three PRC goals for 2018 based on experience in both 2016 and 2017.

1) We will include Josh in our meetings to make sure he has the support he needs. 2) We will remind the congregation that our mission also means that they can talk to the PRC if they are looking for help communicating with the pastor. 3) We will abide by the line in the by-laws stating that the PRC will meet at least four times a year, or propose a change in the document for the next annual meeting.

Lay members in 2017 were: Carl Wermer, Riley Elliott, Carolyn Antone, Tom James and Julie Leach.

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR**

Faith formation happens at its best when several ages all come together, live and breathe the love of God, forming relationships that hold us together and continuing to move our faith along on its journey. We witness every week here at FCCEJ. Faith is not taught... faith is caught! Our children and youth grow their faith in conversations with volunteers and by witnessing actions of those around them. With our many opportunities for children, youth and families to interact with each other and the wider church community...this has been another growing year in our faith formation programs.

A strong volunteer participation continues to keep our programs stay healthy and vibrant, attracting new families to us again this year. Many thanks to are great group of volunteers! It takes a village and you keep stepping up. Your dedication and willingness to participate, along with your time and energy that you give continues to help this church to have a strong faith presence in our community and is a huge support to me. Each year brings a few adjustments to our programs, allowing us to stay current in these ever-changing times of church life. Our quarterly Activity days for all ages transitioned this fall to being hands on Mission Project Sundays that is building some great energy once a month. Our first Sundays, this fall, have more of an intergenerational focus with children and youth participating in worship and our spiritual friends meet only with our preschool and kindergarteners. We are continuing to write our own curriculum for our preschool and kindergarten peer classes and use the lectionary based curriculum Feasting on the Word for our 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Some of our older peer classes were put together this fall and I recruited 2<sup>nd</sup> floor greeters to help children and families find their way transitioning from worship to our faith formation programs. Having these greeters freed me up to lead the 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> peer class, which was mostly a 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>, and spend more time with this age that feeds our youngest youth group.

Families continue to have to choose and prioritize their weekend activities and where we used to see many of them 2 or 3 times a month, we now see several only once a month, or less. So, the ongoing questions continues...how do we feed and connect with them when they are not here with us...helping parents and kids to grow in their faith and keep God an ever presence in their family life. This in turn affects the amount of time that I end up putting into recruiting volunteers and planning for programs, continuing to look for new ways to bridge our connections to all who walk through our doors. Our pool of volunteer leaders in peer class groups...those who receive my weekly email, read through a lesson, and lead a class on Sunday morning...dropped by just one from last year. The full number for peer class volunteers dropped from 28 last year to 21 this year (leaders and helpers), but our overall volunteers across our full faith formation program rose from 41 last year to 43 this year (this ties us with our volunteer total back in 2013 when our leader numbers were higher). We welcomed 11 new families into our Faith Formation programs this year, who brought with them 17 children. Our members and regular attending families added 7 more children, bringing the total up to 24 children being added to the nursery through 6<sup>th</sup> grade programs. Our total number of children in the program moved rose by 1 to 88 this year, and our active children only dropped by 3 to 77. Our nine-month attendance average held to 34.

We have a very active Junior Youth Group of 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> graders that had 8 active youth in the spring and 9 in the fall. This means over the course of the year we had a total of 13 youth participating in the Junior Youth program. They continue to have a mission focus along with building a strong faith community where they said a grace before sharing a meal together, shared their highs and lows for the week, playing games together and chatted in depth on some great topics. They continued with their outreach mission projects for the church by helping with the Easter baskets for our Called to Care folks, made decorations for Vacation Bible Camp, restocked the first aid kits in the building, and put together goodie bags for the Giving Tree children. They also enjoyed participating in our Social Justice Sunday with the making of

sandwiches. All of them participated with speaking roles in the Christmas pageant this year, along with the senior high youth, which all make it a joy to direct each year. A big shout out to our junior youth parents who are encouraging their youth to attend, helping them deepen their faith even more than what one can grasp on a Sunday morning. In 2018, this group will be transitioning to be 5<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> grade and will meet twice a month, instead of just once a month, allowing them to do more/different activities, sharing their concerns and worries of the world while being supported by their peers as they move up through their teenage years...building their faith and deepening their connection with their God.

We had our 7<sup>th</sup> year of Vacation Bible Camp that runs for five weekday mornings and fills the church with an energy all its own. Even though our numbers were less this year than in the last couple years, the program energy was every bit as high as we welcomed 5 new children to the program and 6 new volunteers (4 of them in leadership roles). We had our biggest gathering so far for our volunteer pizza party on Friday, after everything was broken down and the building was put back in order. Many thanks to all those who volunteered their time before, during and after camp week...you all were great and were key to keeping this program running smooth and strong.

I continue to keep my connections with others in the VT Conference, NE and across the country as I stay current with faith formation in these changing times. The Community of Practice Group I organized did reform itself this year into the VT UCC Christian Educators, with its own Facebook closed group, meeting quarterly (moving around to different churches in the state) allowing me in November to pass off my organizational leadership hat. I attend two continuing education events this year: N.E.A.U.C.E. (New England Association of United Church Educators) that gathered for 3 days in early May at Pilgrim Pines in Swanzey, NH where I lead a workshop for new CE directors. In October I attended a Vibrant Faith Ministry Symposium in CT for two days...looking at faith formation for 21<sup>st</sup> century for children/youth/families in a 20<sup>th</sup> century program...how do we adjust and reach out. In July I spent a week counseling 5<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> graders at Horton Center UCC Camp outside of Gorham, NH and help out at our VT OM week at Rock Point Episcopal camp in Burlington on the shores of Lake Champlain for 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders. I served as chair of the VT Conference UCC Outdoor Ministries Team as we planned the OM week, keeping outdoor ministries alive in VT. In November the chair position duties were divided up amongst the team...lightening my load and helping the full team to be more engaged. This allowed me to say yes to serving as the VT UCC representative at the Burlington Diocese Episcopal Table for the future planning of the Rock Point Camp. In November, on behalf of VT OMT, I attended the National Outdoor Ministry gathering, OMA Consult, at Silver Lake UCC camp in Sharon, CT. I connected with camp site directors across the county, members of site boards and staff, many of who I met 4 years ago in NC when I traveled to this event with Pastor Ryan. Our UCC President, Rev. John Dorhauer shared the United Church of Christ new initiative of 3 Great Loves; Love of Neighbor, Love of Children, and Love of Creation. While there I received a call asking me to serve on the VT Conference Search Committee for the next Associate Conference Minister, which I have agreed to. My time spent on our AP Search committee will serve me well as this group begins its task of finding the next ACM, hopefully by summer.

Many thanks for keeping the Spirit in me moving, guiding, giving and growing!  
Blessed to be in ministry with you,

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 year. Devon Thomas and Erica Garvey kept our Junior and Senior High youth active and engaged throughout the year, while Laurie Chipman led and guided the Junior youth. Our youth have participated in many fun and mission related activities exploring faith and beliefs including working on contributions for the Easter baskets, providing Easter breakfast, hosting a Halloween party for the younger children, and baking pies for Thanksgiving.

Sunday Faith Formation continues to engage our children and youth in activities to support and develop their faith. They are actively engaged in activities, discussions, reading, projects, and music, with many of our Church members volunteering their time as leaders, as helpers, as Bible Partners, Spiritual Friends or as volunteers for Mission Project Sundays. The Cherubs and Joyful Noise groups are singing often, with practice now occurring as part of their Faith Formation time. The Faith Formation offering this year is going to the Humane Society for Chittenden County. Totals at the end of 2017 are over \$1,100.

The Adult programs continue to be a vibrant part of our church. Tuesday morning Sermon Talk Back continues 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. Devon was successful in joining with other clergy in the area to create an ecumenical after hours group, known as Faith on Tap, to encourage open friendships and conversations.

The CE Committee continued to support special events this year including Pretzel Sunday, an Ice Cream Social, Welcome Back Sunday (previously known as Rally Day), Vacation Bible Camp and the Christmas Pageant. This last summer's Vacation Bible Camp was attended by 38 happily engaged participants, with over 23 leaders and helpers.

Faithfully submitted by  
Jenny Bourn, Christian Education Committee Chair

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

Recently I visited the church website, and the music link had these words as the introduction:

*"At the dawn of creation the angels sang. When Jesus was born in the manger, the multitude of angelic choirs belted out a song of praise to our God. And when the roll is called up yonder you can be sure that there will be one snappy tune playing as we enter the eternal realm. Music has always been an integral part of the worship of God and we have a very strong music program at First Church."*

That sounds like our church! Cherubs, Joyful Noise, Currier Bell Choir, Heavenly Harmony, Men at First, Finally at First, Sanctuary Choir, soloists, duets and instrumentalists. Musical talent abounds. A very special thank you to the directors of all of our choirs and the singers and instrumentalists. What I remember is not some isolated (even if awesome) performance, but the great swaths of wonderful music performed by so many.

There are nearly 80 different men, women, boys and girls performing each year. Why do they do it? Many do so because they came to music out of a church music tradition. I bet most love music. Some would say that it is a great team of people and there is a sense of spiritual companionship among our groups. Our church has an incredibly supportive congregation. Thank you from all of us!

As the interim Organist/Choir Director, I am humbled to be working with so many talented musicians. With heartfelt sincerity, I appreciate the opportunity to be part of the incredible music program.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marie Johnson

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MUSIC COMMITTEE

Our church is such an active community and family. FCCEJ music program has so many participants; we have such vitality and so many people to thank.

There are many music groups within our church. Sanctuary Choir and Finally at First provide welcome and essential music for Sunday services, special services and events. Men at First, men's acapella group, provide music for occasional church services and special occasions throughout the year. Heavenly Harmony, women's voices united, is heard throughout the year. Currier Bells, Joyful Noise and Cherub Choir are often seen throughout the year during church services and at other occasions. We are blessed to have so much music within our church family. We celebrate the volunteer directors, singers and musicians that make this possible.

Catherine McMaster served as Organist, Choir Director, Music Leader, for our church for several years. Catherine retired from FCCEJ early in 2017. We thank her for her spirit, gift of music and laughter, and dedicated service to First Congregational Church of Essex Junction.

Marie Johnson has been serving as interim Organist and Choir Director since April, 2017. She is dedicated and provides energy and direction/coordination to the whole music program at FCCEJ. Marie has invited many young musicians to participate in our services. There are several talented individual church members who have come forward to sing and play. Marie is serving as Deacon while she is fulfilling this position. Thank you and God Bless You, Marie!

Bill Bickford filled in directing the choir this fall. Mindy Bickford picked up directing Heavenly Harmony. Thank you both for the interim leadership.

Denise Keating will be taking the responsibilities of interim choir director until May 1, 2018.

The search for a part time Organist/Choir Director has brought Carol Spradling to our church. Carol will begin her time with our church on May 1, 2018. We look forward to her energetic presence at the piano, organ and in the choir loft.

Big Joe's Band performed a wonderful concert this past year. Big Joe's Band continues to practice at FCCEJ, we welcome your presence and look forward to another concert this spring.

Praise-a-Palooza/Soup & Songs of Praise is an annual community event. This involves singers and bands from several churches and is a fun event. It will be held on Saturday, February 10, 2018 starting at 5:30pm with a warm fellowship meal of hot soup followed by praise music at 6:30pm.

The 1928 Estey Organ at First Congregational Church of Essex Junction is in need of some repair. During every church year the organ is tuned and has "regular" maintenance. This regular maintenance does not include major repairs. There are significant repairs needed to pipes and essential parts of the organ. The Music Committee has solicited an estimate on the repairs, in conjunction with the Capital Campaign Committee. The estimated cost of repair is \$30,000 (+-).

This church has a vital and energetic music program. The music brings joy to those who are playing and singing and to the congregation listening.

Music is a true gift from God.

Blessings to all,

Judy Larrabee Pomainville, Chair, Music Committee

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LOCAL CHURCH DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE**

Committee members: Michael Bottamini, Steve and Marilyn Mitchell, LindaLou Parker and Lori Giannuzzi, Chairperson. This Committee was originally formed by the Deacons when Devon Thomas our Bridge Associate Pastor requested to become a Member in Discernment, which is a requirement from the Vermont Conference in his journey to become Ordained. Devon shared his Spiritual Journey with us, and it was decided that we would get to know him better. In the months following, while Devon was acting as Bridge Associate pastor and preaching, going to Committee meetings, attending Searchers, Sermon Talk back and other duties that entailed. The Deacons voted to become his Local Discernment Committee. It was put before the Church Council and a letter was drafted to the MSSC at the Vermont Conference for Devon to officially become a Member in Discernment at his home church here at FCCEJ.

It was also decided that our Committee, should be smaller, five or six and thus be able to concentrate on giving Devon the support he needs going forward. Two Deacons remained on the Committee and three members of the Congregation were added that Devon chose. It should also be noted Devon still had the support of the other Deacons. The Committee's main purpose was to be Devon's support and advice when he needed it. We met about every six or eight weeks. Devon would tell us what he needed us to do, what the next step was in the process. Or we would just be a listening ear. He had to become licensed, so he could perform the Sacraments. Recently, he had his license renewed. There is a lot that happens during this Discernment process. It has been a very exciting time for our Church, the Committee, the Deacons, and the Congregation. We had the unique opportunity to help Devon on his way to become an Ordained Minister. And now that he has received his call to three Churches that he will be serving. We can look forward to his Ordination, which will be sooner than originally expected. Until that day, the LCDC Committee will continue to support Devon. He is also still a member of our church.

It has been a great experience to be part of this Committee, to be part of Devon's faith Journey. From the moment he first started here at our Church to the moment he will be Ordained. We as a Church were a part of that. He grew from his time here. He learned from us, just as we learned things from him too. He was involved with the youth, he started a Bible study, and encouraged our church to join the ecumenical Faith on tap. I think between Rev. Mark's mentoring, congregational support, and the LCDC committee, this is a great place to be a Member in Discernment.

Respectfully Submitted, Lori Giannuzzi, LCDC chairperson



## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEACONS

During 2017, 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 80 years old and over on their birthday.

Several of our Deacons spearheaded a reformation of the Local Church Discernment Committee (LCDC) for Devon Thomas throughout the year, providing input, guidance, and feedback to him as he engaged with Rev. Mark in exploring ministry. In December, Devon was hired as the full time pastor for Jeffersonville, Waterville, and Bakersfield. The LCDC will continue to provide guidance and feedback to Devon until his ordination in Spring 2018. Devon's success in securing his first full-time pastor position reflects well on him, and also on the support he received from the clergy, staff, deacons and members at First Church.

A representative of the Deacons has served on the Associate Pastor Search Committee throughout the year. After a tremendous amount of time, hard work, and prayer, the Deacons were thrilled to welcome Associate Pastor Josh Simon to First Church after a unanimous church vote on November 19<sup>th</sup>! Pastor Josh comes with a lot of excitement and ideas of ways to reinvigorate our youth program, and we look forward to supporting him for years to come.

We continued to develop the differentiation between the worship styles of the first and second services throughout 2017. To that end, the Deacons have authorized funding to allow Finally@First to produce a contemporary songbook for use with Second Service, eliminating the need for paper song sheets on a weekly basis.

We continued to support Rev. Mark's proposal to have special services at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of every month, and helped him plan the services. The special services were very well received, and we look forward to continuing the series for the remainder of the program year. The special services for 2017 were Contemplative/Meditative, 1867 service (in honor of our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary), AA themed worship, Open and Affirming Celebration, Jazz Sunday, Scout Sunday, Peace Sunday, Social Justice Sunday, and Friend Sunday.

For the season of Lent, Rev. Mark was able to secure a number of guest speakers from various denominations, including Rabbi Amy Small, former Governor Jim Douglas, and Imam Hassan. 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). Following the Easter Season, on April 30<sup>th</sup> we celebrated our 5 year anniversary of being an Open and Affirming congregation with a special service.

This Advent, the Deacons again coordinated with the Christian Education committee for an Advent kick-off event. This included a potluck lunch, followed by the CE Advent Family Event in the Fellowship Hall while Deacons and volunteers decorated the Sanctuary for the season. This year was particularly joyous, as Pastor Josh had just been accepted as Associate Pastor that day! The event was well received. The Deacons invested in new maroon bows this year that we purchased from Maplehurst Florist, and they were

beautifully displayed throughout the Sanctuary and Narthex. We also purchased new candle holders for the candlelit services.

The Deacons supported the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee through various projects and celebrations throughout the year, culminating in a visit from the UCC President, John Dorhauer in the first weekend of November for our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service. Rev. Dorhauer was very impressed with the vitality and excitement within our Church, and gave an inspiring sermon, encouraging us to continue on our journey of faith, social justice and equality.

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 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 the entire Called to Care team, for all their work on behalf of the entire Church in this important ministry.

And finally, the Deacons celebrate this church's spiritual vitality and outreach so embraced by its members. Faith and fellowship are alive and well at First Church as we move into our 151st year.

Respectfully Submitted

Rick Dooley & Michael Bottamini, Co-chairs Deacons Committee

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE USHERING COMMITTEE**

The Ushering Committee has had a challenging year for 2017. We have worked with less than a full committee all year. Presently we have 4 out of 6 usual members which includes one member whose term finished a year ago. One member left the committee having found the frustration too high to continue. Responsibilities for the members of the committee are generally light – calling or emailing members asking for them to fill usher/greeter positions each Sunday. A major challenge is to have volunteers respond yes or no to emails and phone messages requesting ushers/greeters. One difficulty for committee members I think is the non-standard process for signing up participants for ushering / greeting. This has been mitigated to a small degree using the web-based 'Signup Genius.' However more should be done to organize a process that can be used to track not only who is scheduled for a slot but also when they last participated – perhaps with recognition of volunteers that are more available. Having the Sign up Genius right on the 1<sup>st</sup> page of our web page may help in this area. The non-codified practice of having each of the church's committees – Music, Deacons, etc. take on a 'one-Sunday-a-month' ushering/greeting responsibility has not been successful. If this practice is to be continued it should be codified – perhaps in the listed responsibilities of each of the committees. If members do not want to volunteer to greet or usher, we could consider having bulletins available for self-service in the Narthex. Thank you especially to the members of the committee itself in fulfilling the responsibilities of our group.

Respectfully Submitted, Ann Marie Sullivan, Chair

Committee Members: Mary Ann Warren [mawarren0526@aol.com](mailto:mawarren0526@aol.com)

Ann Marie Sullivan [ambs6155@comcast.net](mailto:ambs6155@comcast.net) Mike Sullivan [mike@scllc.us](mailto:mike@scllc.us)

## 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 second year being the Chair of this Committee and I want to thank everyone on the Committee for all their work, thoughtfulness and kindness that is shown to their fellow committee members. We continue to remain committed to donating to deserving entities and organizations and furthering the missions goals of First Congregational Church of Essex Junction. We started the year with \$6,500, with \$2,100 of it earmarked for the Jamaica Trip. We disbursed the remainder as follows:

- Called to Care Easter Baskets \$150.00
- House with a Heart (formerly called Ghar Sita Mutu) \$500.00
- Lucy's House (an organization that helps pets who are abandoned) \$250.00
- JUMP (Gas Card Project) \$500.00
- Essex Chips Snack Program \$350.00
- Meals On Wheels \$500.00
- UCC Emergency Fund \$500.00
- FCCEJ Pastor's Fund \$500.00
- RAINN (Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network) \$1,000.00
- Nepali Church Gas Cards 100.00
- Social Justice Sunday (JUMP Food Bags) 250.00

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

Mission Possible, which started as a branch of our Committee and the Christian Education Committee has scaled back, but events still continue under the leadership of interested participants. These events include working with the Vermont Food Bank, Dismas House and Vermont Respite House. If you are interested in being part of this active team of individuals, please let us know. We will be evaluating how this work can be revitalized as we build a more active social action/justice program.

We are still actively involved in forming a Social Justice Advocacy Group and in this regard, we have invited Debbie Ingram, Executive Director of the Vermont Interfaith Action Agency, to join us at our Committee meeting in January to share with us ideas on ways we can be involved in these types of issues on a statewide level. Let us know if you are interested in being a part of this group.

In the fall, discussions began on ways that our Committee could deepen our relationship with Pastor Dan and the Nepali Church. A class for English as a Second Language is in the works.

Our Committee helped out with the Hands On Experience in church for our youth. Once a month there will be a Hands On Mission Project Sunday. In October the theme was the Food Pantry, November was Hygiene Kits for World Church Service.

It is important to note the 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!

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Sandy Tallman, Mission Chair

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HEAVENLY FOOD PANTRY**

The Heavenly Food Pantry had another productive year in 2017, providing 90,000 pounds of food assistance to over 800 families in Essex, Essex Junction and Westford. The new year brought with it a major change, that being the addition of a Monday evening distribution, hoping to reach families unable to make the daytime hours on our Thursday distributions. This proved successful, as opening the pantry on the second Monday of the month enabled an average of 15 families to access the same foods available on the fourth Thursday of the month. 2018 will see a continuation of this Monday evening event, and thanks go to all who have helped make this a reality. Val Gabert, Judy Allen and Elaine Raymond from the Food Pantry Committee have worked hard to see that volunteers are scheduled and food is set up. We thank the many volunteers who also come to help. It does take a village!

Once again, the pantry has spread its wings to reach others in addition to the families visiting the pantry. Boxes of food are delivered to other local pantries, schools, senior housing and the Salvation Army. Volunteers continue to be an important ingredient in making the pantry operate as smoothly as it does. We are blessed to have many individuals who regularly come to shelve, stock and shop with our clients. We thank the local Rotary who provides a steady crew to come to the latter part of our Thursday pantry, enabling those who have been there all day to go home for much needed rest. The Rotary has also recently begun helping at our Monday pantry as well. We certainly do have a caring community.

The pantry has seen many contributions throughout the year from families, individuals, schools, organizations and businesses, both in the form of money as well as food. This year also saw a \$15000 bequest come to the pantry and a \$5000 donation from Hannaford, which may give us the ability to do some planning for the future. However, it appears that without these two generous donations, regular contributions of money seemed to be roughly the same amount as were the expenses, telling us that every contribution is vital to the continuation of the pantry. Food drives have been greatly appreciated from schools, churches and other organizations. Hannaford continues to be a generous donor of food to the pantry.

Mary-Ellen Grove and Judy Allen, members of the Food Pantry Committee, spent some time during 2017 educating the youth in our community regarding the issue of hunger. This included presentations to students at Essex Elementary School, Hiawatha Elementary School and Albert D. Lawton Middle School. The children seemed genuinely interested in knowing about the presence of hunger and how the pantry works to assist families. They asked questions that showed that they are really concerned about those who do not have enough to eat!

The Heavenly Food Pantry is available to any individual or family living in Essex, Essex Junction or Westford. While there is no verification of income for families to avail themselves of the pantry, the USDA does require individuals and families to confirm that their household income falls below federally mandated guidelines to partake in those government issued foods. This is a very small part of the foods available to families, and we urge anyone who needs assistance to visit. Even those who may not qualify for USDA will still leave with a large amount of food from our local supply!

Respectfully Submitted,

Food Pantry Committee-Mary Richer, Suzanne Reardon, Val Gabert, Anita Guild, Mary-Ellen Grove, Judy Allen, Elaine Raymond and Mark Mendes

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE JAMAICA BOUND COMMITTEE**

The second FCCEJ international, intergenerational mission trip to St. Thomas, Jamaica occurred in July of 2017. On the advance trip, our FCCEJ team leaders met with a group of Jamaicans representing the White Horses Primary and Infant School and the Morant Bay Rotary Club to discuss potential projects. Over a meal, we learned about a garden project at the school that could provide produce for the school's kitchen as well as additional income to support the school's budget. Of the 350 children who attend this primary school, 60% come to school hungry.

It was a very ambitious project for our team of nine – six adults and 3 teens. The first task was to enclose the 30,000 square feet of the garden with a chain link fence. Digging the post holes in clay soil was an arduous task, but with Jamaican ingenuity and lots of muscle, the task was accomplished. Once the chain link was installed and the irrigation system laid, we were able to plant the 750 tomato and scotch bonnet pepper seedlings.

Working collaboratively with our Jamaican colleagues was one of the highlights of this trip. We learned about many of their customs and were treated to some of their local foods, such as breadfruit and cocoa. The 2017 team members were: Lauren Boerger, Christine Czarny, Sharon Dettenrieder, Dave Dewey, Nicole Frank, Rev. Mark Mendes, Carolyn Rushford, Cameron Starkey and Lori Weischedel.

This trip is funded by contributions from the church (Mission Committee and Endowment Fund), group fundraising and individual team member contributions, with our primary fundraising event being the annual Calcutta. The 2017 trip expenses were \$26,548 of which \$5643 defrayed the cost of the fencing and the irrigation system. Additionally, we donated \$400 to provide uniforms for four boys so that they could continue in school and \$200 to the book scholarship fund for needy students. We also purchased 100 pounds of rice and 25 pounds of "peas" (beans) to donate to a local medical clinic for distribution among those who are food insecure.

In the summer of 2019, we plan to take another intergenerational team to Jamaica and hope to continue this partnership with White Horses Primary School. We will be recruiting team members in the spring of 2018. Youth members need to be 16 at the time of the trip (July 2019). If you are interested, please speak with Rev. Mark, Rev. Josh, Carolyn Rushford or Sharon Dettenrieder.

We are most appreciative of the support of church members, the Mission Committee, Church Council and the Trustees for this international, intergenerational mission trip. Prior team members continue to attest to the value of this experience.

Jamaica Bound Committee members include: Dave Johnson, Bob McEwing, Colin Parker, Carolyn Rushford, Rev. Josh Simon, Lauren Starkey, Marion Wrightington, and Sharon Dettenrieder

Cool Runnings,  
Sharon D. Dettenrieder & Carolyn Rushford, Team Leaders

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HEAVENLY CENTS THRIFT SHOP

“Don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive and go do it. Because what the world needs are people who have come alive.” Thurman. Early in the year, over twenty women met to discuss how to make the Thrift Shop more vibrant, improving its’ mission. As a result, an organizational structure was established to enhance the participation and communication for upcoming projects, including writing a mission statement: “The purpose of the Heavenly Cents Thrift Shop is to serve the community, by offering gently used high quality merchandise at thrift shop prices for the purpose of financing philanthropic programs and providing a service to the community.” The curating of the shop included upgrading the checkout counter, building of shelving and hanging racks as well as repositioning displays to enable access to the merchandise and painting throughout. On the operations side, new sorting and pricing guidelines were developed and as a result, customer traffic has been steady. To restate one of our volunteers: “We have customers who need a deal and those who want a deal.” We also have expanded our marketing to include Facebook, the Essex Reporter and Front Porch Forum, reaching many new customers as well as the regulars. As the Heavenly Thrift Shop continues to meet its mission in 2018, we rely on both volunteers and donations. Please consider joining our altruistic team by either volunteering a few hours at the shop, donating clothes, shoes and accessories for men, women and children or by spreading the good word about how we simply “do good” in our community.

Submitted by Sue Wood

### HEAVENLY CENTS THRIFT SHOP 2017

CASH BALANCE, JANUARY 1	\$10,008.67
INCOME	
SALES	\$12,021.66
INTEREST	7.91
TOTAL INCOME	\$12,029.57
TOTAL CASH AVAILABLE	\$22,038.24
EXPENSES	
CONTRIBUTION	\$ 6,420.00
ELECTRICITY	\$ 422.75
TELEPHONE	\$ 347.02
SUPPLIES	\$ 169.89
WREATHS FOR CHURCH PROPERTIES	\$ 150.00
CHRISTMAS CONTRIBUTIONS	\$ 1,800.00
SHOP RENOVATIONS	\$ 1,887.13
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 315.81
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$11,512.60
CASH BALANCE DECEMBER 31	\$10,525.64
CHECKING	\$ 2,950.92
MONEY MARKET	\$ 7,574.72
TOTAL CASH BALANCE, DECEMBER 31	\$10,525.64
MISSIONS (CLOTHING)	195.00

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

We currently have 14 people joining committees for 2018 who were not serving in 2017. We had 18 members who left committees in 2017, either due to terms expiring or other commitments. We are still recruiting for several committees and for a new Vice President.

Committees with openings include:

- Ushering                    2 open slots out of 6
- Stewardship                4 open slots out of 6
- Nominating                2 open slots out of 6
- Communications            3 open slots out of 6

There are also three openings for VT Conference Delegates and one opening for a Champlain Association Delegate.

Proposed by-law changes for 2018 will state the number of members in Christian Education and Missions as being “from 8 to 12” instead of “12”. The committees expect to work effectively without a full slate of 12 members. In some cases, this simply reflects a greater reliance on volunteers who are not ready to join a committee, but who are ready to help with specific tasks.

Nominating continues work with, and update, an additional spreadsheet that tracks feedback from members we call.

Sincerely,

Carl Wermer

### General Church Officers

President	*2018	Carl Wermer
Vice President	*2018	
Clerk	2018	Alison Wermer
Assistant Clerk	*2018	Andrea Sharp
Treasurer	2018	Ann Gray
Assistant Treasurer	2018	Dan Petherbridge
Financial Secretary	2018	Pat Seaver
Assistant Financial Secretaries	2018	Fred Babinger
	2018	Linda Bogardus
Auditors	2018	Rob Sinkewicz
	2018	Faith Truax
Church Historian	2018	Ann Gray
Champlain Association Delegates	2018	Lyn Beliveau
	2018	_____
Vermont Conference Delegates	2018	Maureen McKenzie
	2018	_____
	2018	_____
	2018	_____

Committees

Christian Education

2018 Shannon McCullen  
2018 \_\_\_\_\_  
2018 \_\_\_\_\_  
2018 Tom Shearer  
2019 Jane Schneider  
2019 Lisa Clark  
2019 Donna Burnett  
2019 Sara Kellogg  
2020 Jenny Bourn  
2020 \_\_\_\_\_  
2020 Elaine Raymond  
2020 Allison VanSteensburg

Communications

\*2018 \_\_\_\_\_  
\*2018 \_\_\_\_\_  
2018 Kevin Dorn  
2018 Judy McCullen  
2018 Andrea Sharp  
2018 Tom Helmstutler

Deacons

2018 Lori Giannuzzi  
2018 Lauren Starkey  
\*2018 Trista Acebo  
2018 Betsy Weischedel  
2019 Myrna Doney  
2019 Erica Garvey  
2019 Josh Sharp  
2019 Peter Schmalz  
\*2020 Carolyn Rushford  
\*2020 Clint Russell  
\*2020 Jonah Moos  
\*2020 Amy Trimble

Hospitality

\*2018 Jen Dooley  
\*2018 Hannah Tracy  
\*2019 Jim Glatz  
\*2019 Rose Drost  
2020 Mary Jane Allen  
\*2020 Gorden Starkey

Missions

2018 Kelley Charland  
2018 Peter Firkey  
2018 Sandy Tallman  
2018 Judy Allen



\*2019 Tony Marthaler  
 2019 Linda Lou Parker  
 2019 Maryann Carlson  
 \*2019 \_\_\_\_\_  
 2020 Sharon Dettenrieder  
 2020 Joanne Irwin  
 \*2020 Ed Steele  
 2020 Sally Turner

Music

2018 Judy Larrabee  
 2018 Brian Chipman  
 2019 Laura Marthaler  
 2019 Laura Cunningham -  
 Firkey  
 2020 Mindy Bickford  
 2020 Denise Keating

Nominating

\*2018 Brenda Dawson  
 2018 Barb Smith  
 \*2019 Dick Harris  
 \*2019 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*2020 \_\_\_\_\_  
 2020 Marsha Duell

Pastoral Relations

2018 Carolyn Antone  
 2019 Julie Leach  
 2019 Riley Elliott  
 \*2020 New VP  
 2020 Tom James

Planned Giving

2018 Trustee Rep.  
 2018 Ann Gray – Treas.  
 2018 Stewardship Rep.  
 2018 Dave Johnson  
 2018 Matt McGeary  
 2018 Darryl Koch

Stewardship

2018 Kathy Finnie  
 \*2018 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \*2019 \_\_\_\_\_

\*2019 \_\_\_\_\_  
2020 Jessica Moos  
\*2020 Bill Adams

Trustees

2019 Kevin Meilleur  
2019 Megan Barnes  
2019 David Antone  
\*2020 Phil Bourn  
2020 Cathy Shearer  
\*2020 John Burnett

Ushering

2018 Mary Anne Warren  
\*2018 Terri Livak  
2019 Ann Marie Sullivan  
2019 Paul Hyde  
\*2020 \_\_\_\_\_  
\*2020 \_\_\_\_\_

(\* ) 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 HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE**

The Hospitality Committee has attempted to provide the coffee hour service between services and after the second service with both coffee and tea available. We have also been providing peanut free and gluten free finger snacks. There have been challenges in having enough hospitality helpers to ensure consistent coffee hours. The funeral sub-committee has been instrumental in hosting receptions after funerals in our church. Thank you to all who have assisted in assisting the grieving families.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacqueline Parks

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

The focus of the Communications Committee this past year has been to improve our social media presence. The Church website was no longer serving as a source of useful information as it was no longer being updated and was utilizing an older technology platform. With the leadership and hard work of Committee members Andre Sharp and Judy McCullen we upgraded our technology and began the process of redesigning and rebuilding the website and re-populating the information. Staff and the various Church Committees provided input to the website and Jen posts the Church Bulletins & Newsletters. Just this one feature allows Members of the Congregation and friends to be up to date on what is going on in the Church even if they are unable to attend.

The website is now much more functional, informative and up-to-date and should serve the Congregation well as a place to go to find out all the Church has to offer.

The second priority for the Committee this year was to support the work of the Capital Campaign Steering Committee. Church Council has established a Capital Campaign Steering Committee to prepare the Congregation to vote on whether or not the Church should conduct a Capital Campaign Fundraising Drive to raise money to address maintenance and structural issues with our properties. The vote of the Congregation will occur at the Annual Meeting on January 28th. The role of the Communications Committee has been, and continues to be, to provide all manner of communications support for the Campaign to include letters, signage, website presence, fact sheets and other materials that will help Members to be fully informed about the physical needs of the Church prior to the vote on January 28.

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE 150<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE**

Major events were held in each of the four quarters to celebrate our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

The first event, the historical re-enactment of a worship service was held in February. Several members dressed in period costumes and Rev. Mark preached an 1867 sermon.

The second quarter's event was designing and building a float for the Essex Memorial Day Parade – it was a replica of First Church mounted on a flatbed trailer pulled by a truck. Frank & Barb Smith graciously took the lead on this project. Members of the congregation rode inside the church and Rev. Mark preached a continuous sermon for the entire route of the parade. The float was flanked with marchers carrying signs showing all that First Church does in the community. A sign on the back of the float stated that “no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome in this place.” Our float won the trophy for the most original/creative float.

The third quarter event was a narrated 150-year history of First Church from 1867 to 2017. Several vignettes were interspersed with the narration with First Church members acting out special happenings in the Church's history. The Essex Community Historical Society incorporated this event into their annual Tales and Treasures of Essex lecture series.

The year ended with two fourth quarter events – the first was the celebratory dinner at the fairgrounds on October 20<sup>th</sup>, and the second, two church services on Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup> with the President of the UCC, the Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer leading both services.

Other activities during the year included:

- 1) Hanging of a sign over the narthex window stating “Celebrating 150 Years of Service to God and Community”
- 2) Writing monthly articles on the history of the Church’s involvement in the community for the Essex Reporter
- 3) Publishing four issues of a special 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary newsletter
- 4) Designing coffee mugs with pictures of the church in 1900 and today and our anniversary slogan – “Celebrating 150 years of service to God and community”
- 5) Collecting quilt squares made by members of the congregation showing what the Church means to them, to be sewn into a wall hanging

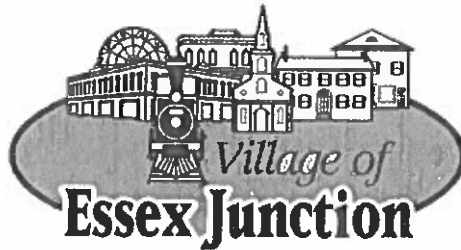
There are still two unfinished projects. There was just not enough time this year to complete the quilted wall hanging. Twenty-four squares have been submitted and they will be put together this winter. The other project is an anniversary year “memory book.”

The Committee would like to extend a huge thank you to:

- ❖ Frank and Barb Smith for their work on building the Memorial Day Float and to all who marched with or rode on that float.
- ❖ Lester Nutting for hanging the banner over our front door and for helping to build the float.
- ❖ Dave Johnson, photographer extraordinaire, for taking pictures at all of our events.
- ❖ The Essex Community Historical Society for allowing our historical skit to be part of their “Tales and Treasures of Essex,” and to all of the talented actors who participated in that event.
- ❖ Clint Russell and his daughter and son-in-law for videotaping this historical skit in August.
- ❖ The Essex Reporter for providing us with FREE space for our monthly articles.
- ❖ Judy McCullen for authoring the Reporter article on Scouting at First Church

And last but not least, to all of the members of First Church who helped to make our 150th year the awesome year it has been!

Ann Gray, Tom James,  
Mark Mendes, Beth Volker



## **Proclamation for the First Congregational Church**

Whereas, for 150 years the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction has provided comfort, solace, charity, and cheer to all who come to its doors; and

Whereas, the First Church's abiding defense of human dignity has down through the generations lit a flame of altruism, hope, and kindness in the hearts of its members and others within the community; and

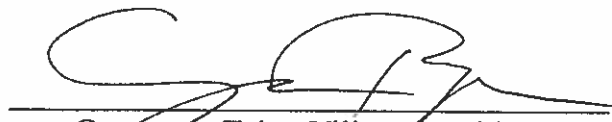
Whereas, for 150 years the First Church has opened its doors to nondenominational events, and civic groups, and helped the community weather the storms of change by being a nexus of thoughtful dialogue and political discourse; and

Whereas, the First Church has provided sustenance to the food insecure and others in need of a helping hand by organizing gracious and effective outreach efforts; and

Whereas, the First Church choirs have faithfully enriched local culture by donating their time and musical talents to community events outside the church; and

Whereas the First Church has a long tradition of greeting all comers, regardless of their faith, with the words: "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome in this place!"

Now, therefore, the Essex Junction Trustees hereby commend the First Church on its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary and celebrate the Governor's proclamation declaring October 20, 2017 as First Congregational Church of Essex Junction Day in Vermont.

  
George A. Tyler, Village President  
On behalf of the Village of Essex Junction  
Board of Trustees

## **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 2017 the Trustees and other volunteers worked on the following:

- Hired a full time Janitor.
- Replaced/upgraded the Marvin Lounge Kitchen Breaker Panel.
- Sawyer House – Helped with facelift in the Thrift Shop.
- Repaired leaking roof over the Narthex.
- Re-pointed (replaced missing mortar) in brickwork on the Narthex.
- Repaired sidewalk in front of Church street entrance that heaved and did not settle back into place after winter of 2016/2017 (safety hazard).
- Patched several large depressions in the parking lot.
- Worked with engineers and architects to develop refined plans for Capitol Campaign projects.
- Addressed numerous routine/ongoing maintenance needs.
- Continued work on the list of Buildings and Grounds items and associated/estimated costs as part of a Capitol Campaign.

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 required to keep these 100 plus year old buildings safe and sound for the various and numerous groups that use our facilities.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kevin Meilleur, Trustees Chair

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The Finance Committee is responsible for all of the churches accounts and for maintaining financial accountability with the assistance of the Church auditors. It meets once a month. In 2017 the Finance Committee has:

- 1) Monitored expenses against budget and assisted in decision making when budget line items are over-spent.
- 2) Reviewed requests for money from the Endowment before passing on to Council.
- 3) Moved the church to using credit cards with at least 1% rewards on spending
- 4) Input all 2017 income and expense data for review.
- 5) Created a draft Church budget for 2018. The inputs for building the budget include: proposed staff salaries, committee requests, pledges, adjustments to expected income/expense line items based on data from 2017 and adjustments for new information in 2018 (e.g. \$500 estimated credit card rewards, change in Parsonage occupancy,...)
- 6) Agreed that any income from Weddings and Funerals that was due to the event participants would be paid directly to them by the Church. Forms for any tracking and reporting required by the IRS would be provided.

Finance committee members: Carl Wermer (VP), Ann Gray (Treasurer), Dan Petherbridge (Asst Treasurer), Pat Seaver (Financial Secretary), Kevin Meilleur (Chair of Trustees), Kathy Finnie (Stewardship Chair) and Jeffrey Nowell

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

The Stewardship Committee takes part in raising 80% of the income to support the Church's programs through pledges by our Church family. Thank you to everyone for a wonderful pledge drive! We had 221 pledges for 2018, with 23 new people pledging. The average pledge for 2018 is \$1,456. If you haven't pledged for 2018 yet, you still can! Contact Financial Secretary, Pat Seaver, [vtri2@aol.com](mailto:vtri2@aol.com), 879-4445 or any of the members of the Stewardship Committee. We count on your pledges for our budget and we would greatly appreciate your support.

Our pledge drive is conducted in October and November, but activities by the Stewardship Committee are year-round, including educating the congregation about the joys and responsibilities of stewardship, and conducting the Hannaford and Claussen gift card sales which raised over \$2,000. We also conducted a Per Capita campaign in May to encourage members to contribute toward our dues to support the Vermont Conference/Champlain Association of the United Church of Christ. We are responsible for paying on a per member basis, regardless of whether we receive funds from all members or not, and the 2017 Per Capita campaign brought us closer than ever to covering our dues through member contributions.

Many people are paying their pledges through automatic bill pay with their bank. Ask at your bank if you can take part in that too, it is extremely convenient and it takes a load off of your mind!

Finally, I want to thank Stewardship Committee members Jessica Moos and Maureen McKenzie, and ex-officio members Pat Seaver and Ann Gray for all their work on the Stewardship Committee, and say a grateful goodbye to Maureen who is stepping down after six years on the Committee.

Faithfully yours,

Kathy Finnie, Chair, Stewardship Committee

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TREASURER

A complete accounting by line item, including the 2018 budget, can be found in the statements on the following pages. Total operating income for 2017 was \$461,348 with expenses of \$456,126, representing a surplus of \$5,223.

The \$27,981 positive variance in income came primarily from an increase in actual pledges received and a large increase in the loose offering. Expenses were also higher by \$22,805 due to a number of factors. The two largest contributors were “loaning” money for expenses to the potential capital campaign and an increase in facility maintenance. There were savings due to the timing of the hiring of the Associate Pastor which partially offset these increase. This position was budgeted to come onboard earlier than actually occurred. Additionally the loss of our Music Director contributed to the savings in employee expenses as the temporary organist expenses were lower than the director’s salary.

The overall 2018 budget for both income and expense is essentially the same as the 2017 budget. The income has two one-time entries for 2018. One is the reimbursement of the capital campaign expenses that were paid by the church in 2017. The other is the transfer of the income from the Hannaford’s fund raising effort. Since the inception of that program the income has been kept in a restricted account. This money is part of our fund raising efforts so we want to reflect that income properly. There will be additional income transferred each year as long as the Hannaford program exists, but amount will be limited to the actual income occurring each year. We have switched to a new credit card that will provide a rebate on purchase so have added a “CC Rebate” to reflect that income. We will have a loss of rental income with the Associate Pastor’s move into the Parsonage.

Overall expenses remain similar to 2017 but with shifts within the major accounts. Staff salaries were increased by 2% with an additional market adjustment to bring the Administrative Assistant closer to market value. However, the Associate Pastor is held at the salary that he was hired at in November 2017. Please keep in mind that the Custodian only worked about 10 months in 2017; his salary increase was equal to the 2% provided the other employees, but appears larger compared to 2017 due to this factor. The increase in employee expense is offset by various savings in several other areas.

The approved endowment expenditures this year were \$3,500 to support the Jamaica Mission and a deferred amount of up to \$8,585 to be used to spruce up the Parsonage. The market value of the endowment on 12/31/2017 was \$563,615.59 with a book value of \$401,342.44.

The Capital Campaign exploratory committee spent \$28,804 on the fundraising consultants and the architects and engineering work. This money will be reimbursed to the church in 2018 pending approval of the Capital Campaign. In anticipation of a Capital Campaign several church members donated \$51,247.37 to the campaign.

Ann Gray, Treasurer

Dan Petherbridge, Assistant Treasurer



2017 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITORS

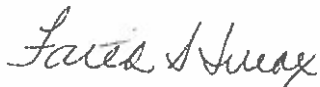
January 18, 2018

The operating statement for the year ended December 31, 2017 of the First Congregational Church of Essex Junction appears to accurately reflect the receipts and disbursements for the period, as does the operating statement of the Heavenly Cents 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



Faith Truax

**First Congregational Church  
Income and Expense Statement**

**GENERAL FUND 01, January 2017 - December 2017**

	Acct #	2017 Actual	Budget	Difference	Budget %	2018 Budget
<b>INCOME</b>	4000					
<b>CONTRIBUTION INCOME</b>	4010					
Pledges	4030	\$349,376.95	\$330,518.20	\$18,858.75	105.71%	\$316,086.00
Initial offering	4035	583.50	0.00	583.50	0.00%	500.00
Loose Offering	4040	27,148.31	18,000.00	9,148.31	150.82%	24,000.00
Fund Raisers	4050	7,095.04	9,000.00	-1,904.96	78.83%	9,000.00
Fund Rrs - Hannaford Tsfr	4051	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	5,000.00
CC Rebate	4055	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	500.00
Rent	4070	36,873.84	36,000.00	873.84	102.43%	36,000.00
Parsonage Rental	4072	24,000.00	24,000.00	0.00	100.00%	800.00
Per Capita Offering	4075	4,263.00	4,000.00	263.00	106.58%	4,000.00
Building Use - Regular	4080	6,246.25	8,000.00	-1,753.75	78.08%	7,000.00
Building use - Misc	4090	1,400.00	1,000.00	400.00	140.00%	1,000.00
Christmas Offering	4095	1,587.26	2,000.00	-412.74	79.36%	2,000.00
Wedding income	4100	600.00	500.00	100.00	120.00%	500.00
Funeral Income	4105	1,825.00	0.00	1,825.00	0.00%	1,500.00
Cap Campaign Reimburse	4110	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	25,000.00
Subtotal	4020	460,999.15	433,018.20	27,980.95	106.46%	432,886.00
<b>INTEREST INCOME</b>	4500					
Banking Interest	4510	86.33	40.00	46.33	215.83%	76.48
Investment Interest	4520	10.12	10.00	0.12	101.20%	10.00
Interest on notes	4530	252.81	252.80	0.01	100.00%	186.45
Subtotal Interest Income	4500	349.26	302.80	46.46	115.34%	272.93
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		461,348.41	433,321.00	28,027.41	106.47%	433,158.93
<b>EXPENSES</b>	5000					
Contract services	5015	\$433.12	\$0.00	\$433.12	0.00%	\$0.00
<b>PASTORAL STAFF</b>	5050					
<b>SENIOR PASTOR</b>	5060					
SP Salary	5061-001	55,996.98	55,997.00	-0.02	100.00%	57,117.00
SP Health Insurance	5064-004	21,269.25	21,960.00	-690.75	96.85%	23,307.00
SP SECA	5065-005	4,809.00	6,000.00	-1,191.00	80.15%	6,117.23
SP Professional	5066-006	1,375.36	1,250.00	125.36	110.03%	1,250.00
SP Programmatic Expenses	5067-007	305.20	250.00	55.20	122.08%	250.00
SP Annuity	5068-008	10,975.44	10,975.00	0.44	100.00%	11,195.00
SP Life & Disability Ins	5069-009	1,175.96	1,150.00	25.96	102.26%	1,199.00
SP Mileage	5070-010	1,250.00	1,250.00	0.00	100.00%	1,250.00
SP Other	5072-012	458.22	500.00	-41.78	91.64%	500.00
SP Housing Allowance	5073-002	23,898.58	22,399.00	1,499.58	106.69%	22,846.80
Subtotal Senior Pastor	5060	121,513.99	121,731.00	-217.01	99.82%	125,032.03
Search committee expenses	5075	4,172.81	2,000.00	2,172.81	208.64%	0.00

	Acct #	2017 Actual	Budget	Difference	Budget %	2018 Budget
<b>ASSOCIATE PASTOR</b>	5080					
AP Salary	5081-001	2,692.30	8,000.00	-5,307.70	33.65%	35,000.00
AP Housing Equity Allow	5082-002	188.46	3,200.00	-3,011.54	5.89%	2,450.00
AP Health Insurance	5084-004	2,024.75	5,000.00	-2,975.25	40.50%	6,262.00
AP SECA	5085-005	288.34	857.00	-568.66	33.65%	3,748.50
AP Professional	5086-006	0.00	100.00	-100.00	0.00%	500.00
AP Programmatic Expenses	5087-007	0.00	100.00	-100.00	0.00%	250.00
AP Annuity	5088-008	0.00	1,568.00	-1,568.00	0.00%	6,860.00
AP Life & Disability Ins	5089-009	0.00	250.00	-250.00	0.00%	525.00
AP Mileage	5090-010	0.00	500.00	-500.00	0.00%	500.00
AP Sabbatical	5091-011	375.00	375.00	0.00	100.00%	375.00
AP Other	5092-012	0.00	100.00	-100.00	0.00%	100.00
Subtotal Associate Pastor	5080	5,568.85	20,050.00	-14,481.15	27.77%	56,570.50
<b>PART-TIME PASTOR</b>	5100					
PTP Salary	5101-001	19,200.00	15,600.00	3,600.00	123.08%	0.00
PTP Mileage	5102-002	254.87	500.00	-245.13	50.97%	0.00
Subtotal Part-time Pastor	5100	19,454.87	16,100.00	3,354.87	120.84%	0.00
Subtotal Pastoral Staff	5050	150,710.52	159,881.00	-9,170.48	94.26%	181,602.53
<b>SUPPORT STAFF</b>	5150					
<b>STAFF SALARIES</b>	5151					
Administrative Assistant	5165	23,412.75	23,413.00	-0.25	100.00%	26,363.00
Education Director	5175	37,096.56	37,440.00	-343.44	99.08%	38,189.00
Part-time youth director	5176	14,360.00	15,600.00	-1,240.00	92.05%	0.00
Nursery Staff	5180	1,205.00	2,600.00	-1,395.00	46.35%	1,500.00
Custodian	5185	14,250.00	15,000.00	-750.00	95.00%	19,890.00
Music Director	5195	9,081.06	22,664.00	-13,582.94	40.07%	20,625.00
Subtotal Staff Salaries	5151	99,405.37	116,717.00	-17,311.63	85.17%	106,567.00
<b>BENEFITS</b>	5250					
Staff Annuity	5260-008	5,489.06	5,241.00	228.06	104.35%	5,346.00
<b>EMPLOYER EXPENSES</b>	5300					
Payroll Taxes	5305	10,138.03	10,122.00	16.03	100.16%	8,153.00
Workers Comp Insurance	5310	669.00	3,000.00	-2,331.00	22.30%	3,000.00
Payroll Charges	5315	1,065.00	1,020.00	45.00	104.41%	1,200.00
Wedding wages	5330	459.00	0.00	459.00	0.00%	0.00
Subtotal Employer Expenses	5300	12,331.03	14,142.00	-1,810.97	87.19%	12,353.00
Subtotal Support Staff	5150	117,205.46	136,100.00	-18,894.54	86.12%	124,266.00

	Acct #	2017 Actual	Budget	Difference	Budget %	2018 Budget
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE</b>	5400					
<b>OFFICE EXPENSES</b>	5410					
Bank Charges	5420	44.50	100.00	-55.50	44.50%	100.00
Offering Envelopes	5421	305.57	320.00	-14.43	95.49%	320.00
Donated Stock Fees	5422	300.00	350.00	-50.00	85.71%	350.00
Office Supplies	5430	4,424.55	4,500.00	-75.45	98.32%	4,000.00
Postage - First Class	5440	765.85	1,500.00	-734.15	51.06%	1,000.00
Postage - Bulk	5441	312.46	400.00	-87.54	78.12%	400.00
Candles	5451	200.00	200.00	0.00	100.00%	200.00
Devotionals	5452	71.80	90.00	-18.20	79.78%	90.00
Counseling Booklets	5453	50.00	50.00	0.00	100.00%	50.00
Palms	5454	74.00	80.00	-6.00	92.50%	80.00
Mileage Reimbursements	5470	1,035.59	1,000.00	35.59	103.56%	1,000.00
ED-Professional developme	5491	675.00	675.00	0.00	100.00%	675.00
ED - Programmctic expense	5492	169.30	200.00	-30.70	84.65%	200.00
Admin. Miscellaneous	5496	334.44	200.00	134.44	167.22%	400.00
Church leadership expense	5500	349.00	250.00	99.00	139.60%	250.00
Special event (150 annv)	5501	1,838.80	2,000.00	-161.20	91.94%	500.00
Funeral Expense	5505	1,165.14	0.00	1,165.14	0.00%	0.00
Subtotal Office Expenses	5410	12,116.00	11,915.00	201.00	101.69%	9,615.00
<b>PHONES</b>	5515					
Church Phones	5517	916.06	750.00	166.06	122.14%	900.00
Cell Phones	5525	475.11	1,000.00	-524.89	47.51%	1,000.00
Subtotal Phones	5515	1,391.17	1,750.00	-358.83	79.50%	1,900.00
<b>INTERNET</b>	5550					
Website	5555	118.32	200.00	-81.68	59.16%	200.00
Internet Access	5560	607.58	600.00	7.58	101.26%	600.00
Subtotal Internet	5550	725.90	800.00	-74.10	90.74%	800.00
<b>COMPUTER EXPENSES</b>	5570					
Computer Hardware	5572	500.00	500.00	0.00	100.00%	500.00
Computer Software	5574	472.60	250.00	222.60	189.04%	500.00
Subtotal Computer Expenses	5570	972.60	750.00	222.60	129.68%	1,000.00
<b>LEASED EQUIPMENT</b>	5580					
Copier Lease	5583	5,771.35	5,200.00	571.35	110.99%	5,327.40
Color copies - BW overage	5584	624.49	500.00	124.49	124.90%	700.00
Parking lot use	5590	500.00	500.00	0.00	100.00%	500.00
Subtotal Leased Equipment	5580	6,895.84	6,200.00	695.84	111.22%	6,527.40
Subtotal Administrative Expense	5400	22,101.51	21,415.00	686.51	103.21%	19,842.40

	Acct #	2017 Actual	Budget	Difference	Budget %	2018 Budget
<b>BUILDING MAINT CHURCH</b>	5600					
Building Insurance	5610	9,637.00	11,500.00	-1,863.00	83.80%	10,500.00
Trustees Contingency	5620	2,009.00	2,000.00	9.00	100.45%	2,000.00
Capital Campaign expenses	5625	28,804.38	0.00	28,804.38	0.00%	0.00
<b>UTILITIES</b>	5630					
Electricity - Church	5635	5,511.70	6,000.00	-488.30	91.86%	6,000.00
Water & Sewer - Church	5645	1,363.33	2,250.00	-886.67	60.59%	1,500.00
Fuel/Gas - Church	5655	5,901.33	8,000.00	-2,098.67	73.77%	6,000.00
Waste	5665	1,057.44	1,600.00	-542.56	66.09%	1,400.00
Subtotal Utilities	5630	13,833.80	17,850.00	-4,016.20	77.50%	14,900.00
<b>BUILDING MAINTENANCE</b>	5700					
Cleaning Supplies	5710	1,501.60	1,200.00	301.60	125.13%	1,500.00
Cleaning Service	5720	2,800.00	2,500.00	300.00	112.00%	0.00
Snow Plowing - sand/salt	5730	7,243.39	5,000.00	2,243.39	144.87%	6,500.00
Mowing/Snow blowing	5731	110.76	200.00	-89.24	55.38%	200.00
Elevator Maint/Inspection	5732	1,637.41	2,500.00	-862.59	65.50%	2,000.00
Repairs/Maintenance	5740	16,976.01	2,000.00	14,976.01	848.80%	2,000.00
Routine Maintenance	5745	11,275.70	6,000.00	5,275.70	187.93%	6,000.00
Subtotal Building Maintenance	5700	41,544.87	19,400.00	22,144.87	214.15%	18,200.00
<b>BUILDING MAINT SAWYER</b>	5800					
Water/Sewer - Sawyer	5810	370.35	1,250.00	-879.65	29.63%	500.00
Electricity - Sawyer	5820	57.08	1,450.00	-1,392.92	3.94%	100.00
Fuel/Gas - Sawyer	5830	1,900.99	3,500.00	-1,599.01	54.31%	2,000.00
Routine Maint. - Sawyer	5840	2,332.54	1,500.00	832.54	155.50%	1,500.00
Sawyer House Property Tax	5850	0.00	1,375.00	-1,375.00	0.00%	1,375.00
Subtotal Building Maint Sawyer	5800	4,660.96	9,075.00	-4,414.04	51.36%	5,475.00
<b>BUILDING MAINT PARSONAGE</b>	5900					
Water/Sewer - Parsonage	5910	518.82	400.00	118.82	129.71%	500.00
Electricity - Parsonage	5920	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	2,000.00
Fuel/Gas - Parsonage	5930	382.20	0.00	382.20	0.00%	2,500.00
Parsonage Property tax	5935	7,288.15	7,200.00	88.15	101.22%	3,673.00
Routine Maint. Parsonage	5940	1,507.79	1,500.00	7.79	100.52%	1,000.00
Subtotal Building Maint Parsonage	5900	9,696.96	9,100.00	596.96	106.56%	9,673.00
Subtotal Building Maint Church	5600	110,186.97	68,925.00	41,261.97	159.87%	60,748.00
<b>CAPITAL RESERVE</b>	5960					
Capital Reserve	5961	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	100.00%	0.00
Subtotal Fixed Expenses	5010	402,637.58	388,321.00	14,316.58	103.69%	386,458.93

	Acct #	2017 Actual	Budget	Difference	Budget %	2018 Budget
<b>DEPARTMENTS/COMMITTEES</b>	6000					
<b>MISSIONS DEPARTMENT</b>	6010					
Mission A	6015	6,492.73	6,500.00	-7.27	99.89%	8,500.00
<b>CHRISTIAN EDUCATION</b>	6200					
Curriculum	6201	1,275.03	1,700.00	-424.97	75.00%	1,300.00
CE Supplies	6204	1,401.09	1,000.00	401.09	140.11%	1,400.00
7th/8th Grade Youth Group	6205	684.01	700.00	-15.99	97.72%	700.00
Senior High Youth Group	6206	1,773.25	2,000.00	-226.75	88.66%	2,000.00
5th/6th Youth Group	6207	326.46	300.00	26.46	108.82%	300.00
Confirmation	6208	596.19	700.00	-103.81	85.17%	700.00
Adult Education	6209	315.39	500.00	-184.61	63.08%	500.00
CE Resources	6210	433.33	450.00	-16.67	96.30%	450.00
Vacation Bible Camp	6211	303.07	300.00	3.07	101.02%	300.00
CE Program Enrichment	6213	486.62	500.00	-13.38	97.32%	500.00
CE - Other	6214	0.00	100.00	-100.00	0.00%	100.00
Young adult group	6216	0.00	100.00	-100.00	0.00%	100.00
Subtotal Christian Education	6200	7,594.44	8,350.00	-755.56	90.95%	8,350.00
<b>MUSIC</b>	6275					
Prof Expense - Music	6277	232.72	250.00	-17.28	93.09%	250.00
Organ Supply	6280	12,150.00	3,000.00	9,150.00	405.00%	3,500.00
Piano Maintenance	6281	195.00	400.00	-205.00	48.75%	400.00
Organ Maintenance	6282	480.00	700.00	-220.00	68.57%	700.00
Robe Maintenance	6289	329.60	300.00	29.60	109.87%	300.00
Music All Ensembles	6292	803.77	1,000.00	-196.23	80.38%	1,000.00
Music Dir search expenses	6293	1,177.31	0.00	1,177.31	0.00%	0.00
Licensing	6295	750.00	750.00	0.00	100.00%	750.00
Subtotal Music	6275	16,118.40	6,400.00	9,718.40	251.85%	6,900.00
<b>DEACONS</b>	6300					
Communion/Worship Sup	6310	738.63	600.00	138.63	123.11%	600.00
Advertising - Deacons	6315	495.00	550.00	-55.00	90.00%	400.00
Evangelism	6330	1,245.78	1,200.00	45.78	103.82%	1,200.00
Deacons - other	6340	1,781.69	1,900.00	-118.31	93.77%	1,250.00
Pulpit Supply	6350	0.00	300.00	-300.00	0.00%	300.00
Subtotal Deacons	6300	4,261.10	4,550.00	-288.90	93.65%	3,750.00
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	6400					
Hospitality Supplies	6410	654.35	750.00	-95.65	87.25%	750.00
Fellowship Meals- Funeral	6420	47.97	450.00	-402.03	10.66%	50.00
Subtotal Hospitality	6400	702.32	1,200.00	-497.68	58.53%	800.00

	Acct #	2017 Actual	Budget	Difference	Budget %	2018 Budget
<b>CONFERENCE EXPENSE</b>	6450					
Delegates/Conference	6465	1,775.64	1,500.00	275.64	118.38%	1,500.00
Per Capita/Association	6470	400.00	400.00	0.00	100.00%	400.00
Per Capita/Conference	6480	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	100.00%	5,000.00
Basic Support	6490	11,000.00	11,000.00	0.00	100.00%	11,000.00
Subtotal Conference Expense	6450	18,175.64	17,900.00	275.64	101.54%	17,900.00
<b>STEWARDSHIP</b>	6500					
Stewardship Supplies	6510	143.60	100.00	43.60	143.60%	500.00
Subtotal Departments/committees	6000	53,488.23	45,000.00	8,488.23	118.86%	46,700.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		456,125.81	433,321.00	22,804.81	105.26%	433,158.93
<b>EXCESS INCOME\EXPENSES</b>		5,222.60	0.00	5,222.60	0.00%	0.00

**First Congregational Church  
2017 RESTRICTED FUNDS**

<b>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED INCOME</b>		
	4201	
Capital Fund	4209-103	2,050.00
Christmas Fund	4212-104	867.52
Faith Formation	4215-105	1,184.35
Flower Fund	4221-107	2,186.50
Food Pantry	4224-108	33,624.11
Hand Bell Choir	4226-131	385.00
Junior High Youth	4227-109	165.00
Memorial Fund	4233-111	9,338.97
One Great Hour of Sharing	4245-115	1,030.00
Music Committee	4248-116	343.00
Pastor's Fund	4254-118	3,115.00
Sabbatical	4255-133	375.00
Hannafords fund raisers	4256-132	37,468.25
Senior High Youth	4260-120	1,092.00
Other	4269-123	581.43
Vacation Bible Camp	4281-128	630.00
Essex Eats Out	4282-129	2,257.25
Jamaica Mission	4283-130	30,090.50
Outdoor Ministries	4285-134	837.00
<b>Subtotal Temporarily Restricted</b>	4201	127,620.88

<b>RESTRICTED FUNDS EXPENSES</b>		
	7000	
Christmas Fund	7212-104	987.52
Faith Formation	7215-105	1,853.18
Flower Fund	7221-107	2,518.99
Food Pantry	7224-108	12,975.53
Hand Bell Choir	7226-131	359.50
Memorial Fund	7233-111	1,000.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	7245-115	1,030.00
Pastor's Fund	7254-118	<del>3,000.00</del>
Senior High Youth	7260-120	128.94
Camp Scholarships	7279-127	150.00
Vacation Bible Camp	7281-128	420.10
Essex Eats Out	7282-129	1,628.52
Jamaica Mission	7283-130	32,749.48
Hannaford fund raiser Exp	7284-132	37,755.25
Outdoor Ministries	7285-134	827.00
<b>Subtotal Restricted Funds Expenses</b>	7000	97,384.01

2000



		Current Year	Previous Year
<b>ASSETS</b>	1000		
<b>BANK ACCOUNTS</b>	1050		
<b>CHECKING ACCOUNTS</b>	1100		
Main checking	1110	\$31,296.21	\$42,384.65
<b>SAVINGS ACCOUNTS</b>	1200		
Main Savings	1210	180,524.20	130,437.87
Subtotal Bank Accounts	1050	<u>211,820.41</u>	<u>172,822.52</u>
<b>INVESTMENTS</b>	1300		
Endowment - QE	1310	401,342.44	395,544.34
QE unrealized (gain/loss)	1320	162,273.15	79,744.22
CD-Missions	1370	7,531.87	7,513.08
Subtotal Investments	1300	<u>571,147.46</u>	<u>482,801.64</u>
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>	1500		
<b>BUILDINGS</b>	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	<u>1,782,800.00</u>	<u>1,782,800.00</u>
Subtotal Fixed Assets	1500	<u>1,782,800.00</u>	<u>1,782,800.00</u>
<b>OTHER ASSETS</b>	1900		
Note Receivable - MM	1910	10,853.88	14,141.19
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<u><u>\$2,576,621.75</u></u>	<u><u>\$2,452,565.35</u></u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	2000		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	2010		
<b>PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS</b>	2201		
<b>TAXES PAYABLE</b>	2205		
Federal Withholding	2215	\$1,081.13	\$1,061.92
Social Security	2217	758.10	702.02
State Taxes Payable	2220	163.24	160.17
Subtotal Taxes Payable	2205	<u>2,002.47</u>	<u>1,924.11</u>
Subtotal Payroll Deductions	2201	<u>2,002.47</u>	<u>1,924.11</u>
<b>PASS THRU CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	2300		
Seminary Sunday	2306	0.00	235.00
Misc pass through	2308	1,523.49	1,115.74

		Current Year	Previous Year
Subtotal Pass Thru Contributions	2300	1,523.49	1,350.74
<b>OTHER CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>2400</b>		
Building Use Deposits	2410	100.00	100.00
Security Deposits	2415	4,150.00	4,150.00
Subtotal Other Current Liabilities	2400	4,250.00	4,250.00
Subtotal Current Liabilities	2010	7,775.96	7,524.85
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>7,775.96</b>	<b>7,524.85</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>3000</b>		
<b>UNRESTRICTED</b>	<b>3100</b>		
Unrestricted Net Assets	3110	\$1,849,675.17	\$1,844,452.57
<b>DONOR RESTRICTED</b>	<b>3200</b>		
<b>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED</b>	<b>3201</b>		
Aquirre Garden	3206-102	178.56	178.56
Capital Fund	3209-103	3,707.50	1,657.50
Christmas Fund	3212-104	0.00	120.00
Faith Formation	3215-105	1,764.56	2,433.39
Endowment donation	3218-106	20.00	20.00
Flower Fund	3221-107	242.56	575.05
Food Pantry	3224-108	63,696.74	43,048.16
Hand Bell Choir	3226-131	1,425.38	1,399.88
Junior High Youth	3227-109	813.83	648.83
Kitchen Equipment	3230-110	1,678.95	1,678.95
Memorial Fund	3233-111	26,991.66	18,652.69
Men at First	3236-112	1,449.63	1,449.63
Missions Reserve	3239-113	3,250.63	3,250.63
Missions - Coffee project	3242-114	604.67	604.67
Music Committee	3248-116	2,230.66	1,887.66
Organ Fund	3251-117	2,405.50	2,405.50
Pastor's Fund	3254-118	785.02	6,670.02
Sabbatical	3255-133	1,500.00	1,125.00
Senior Choir Robe Fund	3257-119	363.12	363.12
Senior High Youth	3260-120	3,555.95	2,592.89
Trustees Fund	3266-122	396.86	396.86
Other	3269-123	581.43	0.00
Camp Scholarships	3279-127	573.00	723.00
Family Camp	3280-127	232.12	232.12
Vacation Bible Camp	3281-128	209.90	0.00
Essex Eats Out	3282-129	2,758.60	2,129.87
Jamaica Mission	3283-130	22,252.74	24,911.72
Hannaford fund raiser	3284-132	5,466.75	5,753.75

First Congregational Church  
Balance Sheet (UNAUDITED)  
GENERAL FUND 01, For The Year Ending December 2017

		Current Year	Previous Year
Outdoor Ministries	3285-134	10.00	0.00
Subtotal Temporarily Restricted	3201	155,146.32	124,909.45
PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED	3300		
Endowment - QE	3310	395,837.84	387,719.74
QE unrealized (gain/loss)	3315	167,446.82	84,917.89
Endowment	3320	3,098.00	5,418.00
Endow - unrealized (g/l)	3325	109.77	109.77
CD-Missions	3330	-2,468.13	-2,486.92
Subtotal Permanently Restricted	3300	564,024.30	475,678.48
Subtotal Donor Restricted	3200	719,170.62	600,587.93
TOTAL EQUITY		2,568,845.79	2,445,040.50
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY		\$2,576,621.75	\$2,452,565.35

