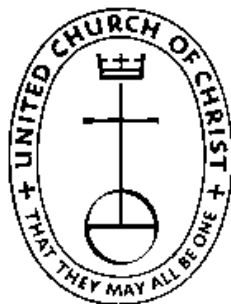
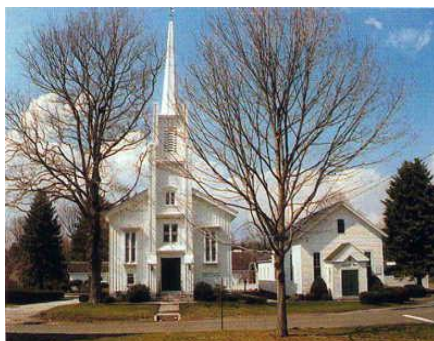


2022 Book of Reports

As Presented at the
2023 Annual Meeting of the Monroe Congregational Church

Held Sunday, January 29, 2023



34 Church Street
Monroe, Connecticut 06468

The Reverend Jennifer Gingras
Senior Pastor

Website: www.mcc-ucc.org
Church E-mail: secretary@mcc-ucc.org

Table of Contents

Agenda - Annual Meeting Agenda – January 29, 2023	3
Annual Meeting Minutes –January 23, 2022	4-5
Annual Report of Senior Pastor	5-6
Annual Report of Christian Education Coordinator	7
Historian’s Report	7
Usher’s Report	7-8
Deacon’s Report	9
Memorial Report	10
Clerk’s Report	11
Board of Christian Education Report	12
Senior Pilgrim Fellowship Report	12-13
Junior Pilgrim Fellowship Report	13
Board of Christian Outreach Report	13-14
Covenant to Care Report	14
Green Committee Treasurer Report	15
Board of Trustee’s Report	15-16
Board of Christian Fellowship Report	16
Morning Circle Report	17
Mustard Seed Report	18
Nominating Committee – Church Officers, Boards and Committees	19-21
Investment Account Report	22
Proposed 2023 Budget	23

Monroe Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

Annual Meeting Agenda
Sunday, January 29, 2023

Opening

- Orientation to the Zoom Meeting
- Call to Order
- Reading of the Call
- Establishment of a quorum
- Welcome & Opening Prayer
- Adoption of Agenda

Adoption of Proposed Constitution & Bylaws

Adoption of Minutes and Reports

- 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes
- Reports of the Boards, Committees & the Pastor
- 2023 Narrative Budget
- Election of Officers, Board Members & Delegates

New Business

Adjournment and Benediction

2022 Annual Meeting Minutes
Monroe Congregational Church
Annual Meeting, January 23, 2022

Welcome address was given by Arlene Redmond. Meeting was held both in the Meeting House and via Zoom.

Quorum was established with 45 members in person and 16 via zoom.

Call to order was read by Barbara Pellegrino.

Rev. Jennifer Gingras offered the opening prayer.

Orientation to Zoom meeting was reviewed. Arlene Redmond as moderator reviewed the format of the meeting re: Roberts Rules of Order.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA-INVITATION TO ACCEPT

Motion: Joyce Rousseau

Second: Don Parker-Burgard

Motion carried unanimously.

MODERATORS MESSAGE: Arlene Redmond

Spoke of resilience, over the past two years during the pandemic.

Reviewed membership numbers Constitution gap reviewed.

A group is being formed to review for changes that may need to be made.

Changes will be subject to vote.

PASTORS MESSAGE:

What windows are we creating.

How to remain close during Covid.

Make members and newcomers feel welcome.

Thanks to all who volunteer.

The moderator invited the adoption of minutes from 2020 Annual Meeting

A correction to page 5, Frank Barnhart should be Mark Barnhart

Motion: Mark Barnhart

Second: Anne Zeiner

Motion carried unanimously.

The moderator invited the adoption of Book of Reports:

Motion: Betty Heiney

Second: Joyce Rousseau

Motion carried unanimously.

2022 Budget Review-Mark Barnhart

MCC has ended 2021 with a modest surplus thanks to a PPP loan.

Pledge income for 2022 at \$196,000.

See attached notes.

Motion to accept Budget 2022:

Motion: Mark Barnhart

Second: Frank Wittenauer

Motion carried unanimously.

Nominating report: Frank Wittenauer

Volunteer participation is strong in all areas.

Terms of service that have been completed, reviewed and acknowledged All members.

New volunteers - Starting roles of service acknowledged.

Bonus years for members discussed - Continuing service recognized.

Needed: Two members for Fellowship

Jane Allen volunteers

June Wininger (friend to Fellowship)

Clark Gingras requests adding Frank Wittenauer as a fourth co-chair for the Strawberry Festival

The moderator invited adoption of Nominating Report

Motion: Mark Barnhart

Second: Diane Prall

Motion carried unanimously

The Moderator invited new business, none was offered.

Motion to Adjourn:

Motion: Betty Heiney

Second: Frank Wittenauer

Motion carried unanimously

Closing Prayer: Rev. Jennifer Gingras

2022 Annual Report of the Senior Pastor, Rev. Jennifer Gingras

A mentor once remarked to me that half of ordained ministry is just the work of showing up. As I enter my 16th year as a pastor at MCC, I can say with certainty that it's a little more complicated than that. Showing up also requires being attentive to another's needs, an ability to listen, to avoid giving advice (unless needed) and to ask the appropriate clarifying questions.

I've been thinking a lot at the turning of the year about the advantages and disadvantages when it comes to pastoral longevity. It was good that people knew me long enough to trust my recommendations about COVID protocol, especially as the pandemic shifted to an endemic. Did everyone agree with every decision I made? No. But they respected their connections with their faith community enough to do what church leadership and I deemed best. I'm not sure that respect would have been afforded me were it not for our long-term relationship. Other faith communities haven't weathered this storm as well as we have, and I hope that you will join me in praying for communities that struggle under the stress.

One obvious disadvantage to staying at a church too long is the potential for one's ministry to become stale. That's a main reason, churches who are able, give their clergy an extended period of sabbatical rest to do so, so that they might grow and learn. Thank you for supporting me through my third sabbatical. I appreciated all the catch-up conversations we've shared upon my return. I am indebted to my retired clergy colleague Rev. Peggy Allen for providing compassionate pastoral leadership in my absence, as well as our wonderful staff and lay leaders for all their help.

To keep things fresh, I offered a variety of adult education opportunities, by zoom and in person. Our Lenten series, *Witness at the Cross* (by Amy Jill Levine) was a popular series. Later in the spring, I focused on our church's history in preparation for traveling to places where our founders came from. I'm particularly grateful to church historian Gary Thompson for providing his wonderful book *Binding Covenant*, and also his energy in writing biographical sketches of the founders. In Advent, I offered a three-part series, *Christmas on the Screen*, with a small number of people on zoom and at Thursday morning Bible study. It may be that Advent is not a great time for an extra learning opportunity on zoom, or the topic just wasn't compelling enough for many people. On the positive side, Thursday morning participation was great!

I've come to learn that the longer I stay, the more potential there is to grieve the loss of people I care deeply about. The PF'ers I laughed (and cried) with on mission trips grow up, some may move away and start their young adult lives (as they should). Other folks relocate, and although many retain connection by watching the livestream on Sunday, I still miss seeing them regularly. Then there are the deaths. Just prior to Strawberry Festival, we hosted a memorial service for Jim and Gretchen Davison, members who were quite active at MCC when I first came, who had moved away in retirement. I also laid to rest the earthly remains of Lauren Rousseau, one of the teachers who was tragically killed ten years ago at Sandy Hook Elementary. At the end of the summer, our community lost two cherished active members; Sue Crea and Susan Walker. I was honored and humbled to be allowed the opportunity to comfort their families and celebrate their lives upon my return in October.

How fortunate we are to have so many new faces in worship and at programs this fall! I am working on connecting with all of them, but I also encourage you to get to know them and invite them to partake in all the activities we provide. We must all do our part to make everyone feel welcome and included. The constitutional review group, led by Moderator Arlene Redmond, have been diligently working on a constitutional update so that newcomers (and even those who have been around a while) will find our procedures more understandable in the future. I believe their work will be received well by the church and will help our newer folk integrate quickly with all the wonderful mission and ministry we have to offer.

I'd like you to know about the different opportunities I've taken to serve the town of Monroe this year. You may not know that I am on the Juvenile Justice Review Board, a small group that meets at the Police station to help minors who have had minor infractions make necessary restitutions and hopefully change the trajectory of their lives for the better. In the spring, I held a Vigil for Peace in Ukraine, inviting townspeople to come and reflect. In June, as the pastor of the only Open & Affirming church in town, I was asked to give the invocation at the raising of the pride flag at town hall. In October, I was asked to do the invocation for the Think Pink Vigil at town hall. It was especially meaningful to me, as I had recently learned of a dear friend diagnosed with breast cancer.

In the wider church world, I served a third year on our conference's Unified Fitness Review Board, which adjudicates the standing of clergy that are accused of boundary violations. I also served a deeply powerful week at Silver Lake Conference Center as Camp Chaplain – a role I had never done before. I sat on an advisory panel of pastors of churches that had gone through the ONA process for one of our neighboring churches. And, as one way of staying fresh with my advocacy work on achieving a just peace in the middle east, I participate in a monthly Palestine/Israel Solidarity Circle with UCC Clergy from around the country. We all need ways to increase our vision of what can be, in the midst of all that is.

The great Maya Angelou once said *"If you must look back, do so forgivingly. If you must look forward, do so prayerfully. However, the wisest thing you can do is be present in the present... gratefully."* In 2023, this will be my highest dream and goal – to continue to be present in the present, gratefully.

God bless you, *Pastor Jenn*

Christian Education Coordinator Annual Report 2022

We kicked off the school year in September with 10 children enrolled in Sunday School. We have had somewhere between 4-5 children in attendance most weeks. We also have 6 Sunday School teachers rotating weekends and sharing responsibility for educating our youth about God’s Love. We made love notes and put them in bibles scattered around the meeting house to bring a smile to the lucky congregant and celebrated Halloween in style with costumes and yummy sweet treats. We have a good representation of children who regularly attend Sunday School that will be participating in our Annual Christmas Pageant. We are thrilled to have been able to share this with the congregation once again.

-Jeanette Cardentey Morales

Historian’s Annual Report 2022

This was a year of multiple and significant anniversaries for the congregation. On April 10th, following worship, we celebrated Pastor Jenn’s fifteenth year with us as a settled pastor; the first five as Assoc. Pastor, the past ten years as Sr. Pastor. June 7th marked the 100th anniversary of the incorporation of MCC, thus dissolving the Ecclesiastical Society. In June we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the modern day Strawberry Festival and the 150th of the very first one. Interviews and historical presentation displayed in the Meeting House on that weekend were featured in the *Monroe Sun*, the local “on-line” newspaper. We acknowledged the 175 year anniversary of the last worship service in the old Meeting House, June 13th, and, the 175 year anniversary, on June 22/23rd, of the first worship services in the current Meeting House. We celebrated the 175th anniversary of its dedication on Dec. 15th. And October 22nd was the 150 year anniversary of the deed for the Centre Green conveyed to MCC and St. Peter’s.

A large number of documents were gratefully received for archiving from several member of the congregation.

Computerization of membership records from 1810 to 1936 was completed, along with baptisms, marriages, death records. The file will be added to as more records are found.

In light of the 175th anniversary of our Meeting House, pictures that have been filed over the years will be taken out mothballs and added to the gallery display that has been started in the rear entrance of the Meeting House.

Submitted by Gary Thompson, Historian

Usher Report 2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 (4)
Sunday Attendance (worship services and church school)	5953	5704	(5)	(6)	(7)
Average Attendance Per Sunday (worship services & church school)	114	110	(5)	(6)	(7)
Worship Service Attendance only (not incl church school)	99	95	(5)	(6)	(7)

Summer Average Attendance Per Sunday (not incl church school)	66	61	(5)	(6)	(7)
Ash Wednesday	101	130	(5)	(6)	(7)
Palm Sunday	136	80	(5)	(6)	(7)
Maundy Thursday	80	54	(5)	(6)	(7)
Sunrise Service	0	27	(5)	(6)	(7)
Easter Sunday	287	216	(5)	(6)	(7)
Advent Season Average Per Sunday (incl worship services and children)	120	138	(5)	(6)	(7)
Christmas Eve	403	307	(5)	(6)	(7)
(4) Pastor Jenn on Sabbatical					
(5) First Year of Pandemic (2020 Book of Reports)					
(6) Second Year of Pandemic (2021 Book of Reports)					
(7) Third Year of Pandemic (stats below)					
2022 had 2 large Sunday snow storms (1/30 & 2/13)					

3rd Pandemic Year Stats 2022

Services Attended Via:	Meeting House	Face Book	YouTube	Total
Sunday Attendance (worship services and church school)	3940	2912	1803	8655
Average Attendance Per Sunday (worship services & church school)	75	56	35	166
Worship Service Attendance only (not incl church school)	3587	2912	1803	8302
Summer Average Attendance Per Sunday (not incl church school)	52	53	22	127
Ash Wed/Labyrinth Prayer Walk	52	37	18	129
Ashes To Go	22			
Palm Sunday	105	71	52	228
Maundy Thursday	33	33	30	96
Easter Sunrise Service	18	42	n/a	156
Easter Sunday	127	55	70	252
Advent Season Average Per Sunday (incl worship services and children)	97	31	32	160
Christmas Eve	203	67	114	384

This summer (June, July & August) of 2022, Pastor Jenn was on a well-earned sabbatical. This should be taken into account when reviewing the year's stats. After pastor Jenn's return in October and the lessening of state restrictions, MCC started to feel a little more like "normal" pre-pandemic times. Pastor Jenn and Scott Young continued to bring quality "virtual" worship services into our homes. As in the previous 2 pandemic years, I have created 4 columns to report on the tracking of attendance this year.

**Due to the nature of sharing worship videos, YouTube and Facebook views are an evolving statistic and should only be used to understand general trends. Counts were tallied and recorded at the end of the year.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Prall

Board of Deacons Annual Report 2022

The Board of Deacons works with the Senior Pastor to assist with the worship service and as appropriate, to assist with the pastoral cares of the church community. Worship service assistance is provided through our welcoming of all individuals to worship and the role of the Deacon of the Day every Sunday in providing an opening prayer and read the scripture limiting the number of people coming to the podium. Communion returned to the traditional trays and plates with the exception of continued use of the plastic cups. Deacons also participate in special services such as Confirmation dinner and service, new member meeting, memorial services, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve. They also take a month to host coffee hour.

Highlights for this year:

- We celebrated Pastor Jenn's 10 year anniversary as Senior Pastor in April.
- Spit guard was taken down in April and mask wearing became optional in October.
- Music Committee meetings were held frequently and as needed to ensure a rich musical experience for our members.
 - Chancel choir returned but will continue to remain masked.
 - Chimes were started with Will leading the group.
- Flock letters were sent out during the Lenten and Advent seasons.
- Pastor Jenn went on sabbatical from July-Sept. During that time Rev. Peggy Allen filled in while Vaughan Askue and Sheldon Smith covered for her on a couple of Sundays when she was not available.
- A scripture reading schedule was created with volunteers towards the end of the year.
- Flowers will be picked up by the Deacon of the Day from Big Y.
- Our Advent Study is Christmas on the Screen: Reviewing the Evolution of American Spirituality.

Respectfully submitted, Susie Cuseo, Chair of Board of Deacons

Annual Memorial Fund Report 2022

In 2022, \$1,755.38 was donated in memory of loved ones. Activity in the Memorial Fund account was as follows:

Beginning Balance on January 1, 2022		\$6,683.05
Deposits to Memorial Fund		
In Memory Gretchen Davison	\$75.00	
In Memory of James & Gretchen Davison	\$350.00	
In Memory of Susan Walker	\$935.38	
In Memory of Sue Crea	\$395.00	
Total Deposits in Memorial Fund 2022	+\$1,755.38	
Total Withdrawals from Memorial Funds in 2022	- \$0.00	
Balance as of December 31, 2022 in Memorial Fund		\$8,438.43

2022 CLERK REPORT

Birth (0)

Baptism (2)

Amar Winter Perez 6/26/2022
Lydia Rose Perez 6/26/2022

Confirmation (2)

Stephen Sentementes 5/22/2022
Joselyn Allen 5/22/2022

Death of Loved Ones (2)

Susan Lee Walker 8/20/2022
Sue Crea 8/26/2022

*Death of Loved Ones,
Non-members*

Rev. Robert Keeling 2/2/2022
Gretchen Davison 2/5/2022
Kyle Granello 12/23/2022

New Member (3)

Rebecca Cicarelli 3/20/2022
William Brett 3/20/2022
Mary Jo Brett 3/20/2022

Marriage (0)

Respectfully Submitted By
Diane Prall

Reinstated Membership (0)

Transferred (1)

Debi Mastroni-Kenyon 4/5/2021

Removed from Membership After Inactive (20)

Martha Black
James Fraser
Diane Fraser
Susan Grundt
Anne LaQuesse
Michelle & Michael Mount
Pat & Donna O'Hara
Todd Heffelfinger
Paul & Janet Haringa
John & Geraldine Esposito
John & Susan Quinlavin
Angela & John Cross
Alison & Olivia Cross

Summary

Active Members as of January 2022		454
New Members	3	
Confirmands	2	
Reactivation, Confirmands & New Members		5
Transferred	1	
Removed after Inactive	20	
Transferred, removed after inactive		21
Active Members as of January 2023		438

Board of Christian Education Report 2022

This year was another year of adjustment as the world attempted to “return to normal.” For our Board that meant continuing to have our meetings on zoom or google meet (there were some good things that came out of the pandemic) but a return to being back in person in every other way possible.

Sunday School:

In most churches, a “return to normal” has been a challenge in terms of numbers and this has affected our Sunday School attendance. With smaller class sizes we have condensed our classes to a younger group and an older group. We are back to our normal full schedule of Sunday school being run by a group of volunteers. We have continued to utilize the outdoors and outdoor activities in Sunday school as much as possible, another thing learned from the pandemic. We had many of our children from Sunday school age through Senior PF at Strawberry Festival helping out this year and we continued with the children hosting Halloween coffee hour, a big hit! A highlight of the Christmas Season was the Pageant, which featured some wonderful pieces by our youngest musicians.

Junior PF:

Junior PF continues to be very active with a variety of service activities mixed in with fun interactive social activities that meet weekly. The Junior PFER’s are always interested in volunteering and being part of the community. In November, they helped outreach at the Spaghetti and BINGO night, which was a great success for the church.

Senior PF:

2022 was a big year for Senior PF! They are an active group that meets weekly. They hosted their Chili cook-off to raise money for their mission trip. They participated in a variety of community, volunteering and faith-based activities. They went on retreat to Camp Hazen, and led us in a Youth Sunday in the spring. In July, the group and their fearless college and adult advisors went to the Henderson Settlement in Kentucky to volunteer their time and muscles on basic home repair! It was a successful and rewarding trip for all. They hosted a Trunk or Treat in October and finished off the calendar year with some Christmas activities in December.

Meg Sullivan, Chair Board of Christian Education

Senior Pilgrim Fellowship Report 2022

MCC is blessed to have such a vibrant group of young people in Senior PF! We meet most Sunday nights with 6 adult advisors and 30 high school youth, 2/3rds of which are from families that are not (yet?) MCC members. At our meetings we share highs & lows, discuss relevant issues, explore our faith, sing, and pray. We live by our covenant: learning to love, keeping an open mind, and welcoming every single person who comes our way. We are grateful to call MCC our home.

Our adult advisors give much time and energy to the program, they currently include Rev. Jenn Gingras (lead), Joe Gilberti, Joshua Post, Paul Cardentey, Audra Logan and newcomer Catherine Gingras. Hannah Halloran began the year serving as the lead while Jenn was away on sabbatical. Although she had to move on to other commitments in the fall, we are grateful for her time with us.

During the PF year, we worked toward reaching our community service goal of completing one service project each month. This year's service trip was a return to Harlan, Kentucky working on basic home repair and learning more about the challenges of living in rural Appalachia. Although it was sad to say goodbye to our graduating seniors at the end of the trip, we were excited about welcoming our new members and the new program year with open arms and hearts.

Our 2022-2023 PF high school leadership team is President Evelyn Goyette, Vice President Mia Briggs, Treasurer Drew Williams, Secretary Paige Andrade, and Minister of Outreach Owen Correll. They are doing a fantastic job leading the group.

We are always grateful that MCC supports Senior PF and we love that this group brings so many youth together in a loving and safe environment. We can't thank you enough for the love, support and care! We are looking forward to a great year in 2023 with more exciting opportunities to grow and love with Christ.

- Rev. Jennifer Gingras, Lead Adult Advisor

Junior Pilgrim Fellowship Annual Report 2022

Our JR PF group has 9 youth enrolled with an overall avg of 7-9 students per gathering. Over the past four months our PFers donated over 150lbs of food to the Monroe Food Pantry through their fall food drive and raised \$100 towards the Monroe Food Pantry through the sale of their Strawberry Jam Gift Bags. They supported Fellowship and Outreach at the Spaghetti Dinner and Bingo night by serving food and selling raffle tickets. We also enjoyed apple picking in the fall, the Haunted Hayride & Trail at Fairview Tree Farm, a Friendsgiving in November, as well as ended the year with an Epiphany Party which included a gift exchange and pizza making, to name a few! We are looking forward to the coming year and all the ways we will continue to give back to our community and have fun while we do it! -

Jeanette Cardentey Morales

Outreach Board Annual Report 2022

St. Georges Supper: In 2022, the Outreach Board sponsored six suppers for homeless people in Bridgeport. Because COVID rules still apply, these consisted of "bag lunches" consisting of sandwiches (ham and cheese or turkey and cheese), an apple, a bottle of water, condiments and a snack consisting of chips or an energy bar. Hopefully we can resume providing full hot meals some time in 2023.

Ukraine: On March 20, MCC held a service of concern over the Russian invasion of Ukraine. A total of \$1,750.75 was donation to Ukrainian relief efforts. The flowers used during the service were given to Christine Wittenauer who has relatives in Ukraine.

Wine tasting: Still concerned about COVID, the wine tasting happened on the Pierce Lawn on October 1. Many thanks to Roy Nealon for being the MC and wine expert. \$600.00 was provided to the Center for

Family Justice for the Empower House; a safe residence for people who are forced from their homes by domestic violence.

Spaghetti and Bingo night: On Saturday, November 19, Outreach and the Fellowship boards teamed up to provide a spaghetti dinner and bingo night. The meal was excellent with meatballs, salad and both gluten and gluten-free pasta. Pastor Jenn served as our caller and there were all sorts of prizes and a silent auction. Over 100 people attended and about \$1,744.88 was collected. After expenses, \$1,375 was provided to Project Warmth; serving people in Monroe who are having trouble heating their homes in the winter. Many thanks to Leanne McEvoy for taking the lead on this and all the others who dove in to provide resources and help. So many people had so much fun that we might have created a recurring annual event.

Crop Walk: Julie McClenathan again led crop walk team MCC which accounted for \$3,404 in contributions.

Tag Sale: The board decided that the tag sale should resume in spring 2023.

Covenant to Care: See report below.

Under some pressure by the board, Vaughan agreed to apply for an additional (fourth) year on the board, serving as chair.

Vaughan Askue, Outreach Board Chair

Covenant to Care Annual Report 2022

AND WE'RE BACK! MCC members provided 14 bright and colorful Easter Baskets to children in the care of DCF this spring. In November, being one of this region's most generous churches to the Covenant to Care program, MCC was asked to start a new partnership with Covenant to Care and CAFAF (Connecticut Alliance of Foster & Adoptive Families). We started off with a bang, donating a record breaking 27 food baskets to families facing difficult times this Thanksgiving. With our new partnership came a new program for giving children Christmas gifts. We donated unwrapped gifts, which were picked up by Samantha Heltke, our CAFAF Advocacy and Support Services Regional Liaison, and brought to her office where several social workers could "shop" for the perfect gifts for the children on their client list. The gifts were then given to the foster or adoptive parents, along with packages of donated wrapping paper, bows, and candy canes, so the parents could join in the joy of giving by wrapping their child's gift. MCC members supplied 65 unwrapped Christmas presents to the program!

Estimate Values

Easter Baskets: \$490.00

Thanksgiving Baskets and Gift Cards: \$1,219.43

Christmas Gifts: \$1,530.00

Total 2022 Giving: \$3,239.43

I am so proud of this church and all its members do for children and families in our surrounding community –thank you for your loyal and outstanding support of Covenant to Care,

Diane Prall, Monroe Congregational Church Liaison Covenant to Care for Children

Monroe Green Committee
Treasurer's Report
Covering December 31, 2021, to December 31, 2022

<u>Balance on December 31, 2021</u>	\$113.86
<u>Receipts</u>	
Monroe Congregational Church	\$250.00
St. Peter's Episcopal Church	\$250.00
<u>Total Receipts</u>	\$500.00
<u>Subtotal</u>	\$613.86
<u>Disbursements</u>	
Eversource (electric utility bills)	\$589.53
<u>Total Disbursements</u>	\$589.53
Balance on December 31, 2022	\$24.33

Respectfully Submitted by, Joshua Friend, Treasurer

Trustees Annual Report 2022

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining the MCC campus and managing the finances of the church. MCC is truly a community of caring individuals who support the church with their time, talents and gifts. Thank you to all members and friends of the church.

During 2022, the Board replaced sheet rock in the two upstairs rooms and painted the interior of the parsonage. We installed Phase One of the electronic keypad entry for the front door of Rexford House. The push bars on the front and rear doors of Rexford House and on the side door of the Meeting House were also replaced. Since these capital improvements were not budgeted for 2022, we funded these projects through a \$6000 withdrawal from the Wilton investment fund. Thank you to John O'Rourke for his continuous attention to the MCC investment accounts.

In December, three required fire alarm pulls were installed in the Meeting House. Many thanks to Dave Allen for overseeing the projects and for his 19+ years as Property Manager of MCC.

In March of 2022, we welcomed a new family as tenants of the parsonage, which is now generating \$2200 per month in rental income. Things seem to be getting back to normal as organizations and others inquire about rental space in Rexford House. This includes the Monroe Summer Day Camp, the Lenihan School of Irish Dance, Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts and others. It's wonderful to see our campus being used by various groups. A special thank you to our office administrator, Diane Prall, who coordinates the rentals with the Board and diligently keeps records of all transactions.

We continue to video stream our worship services in order to reach those who are not able to attend church in person. We give thanks to Scott Young for his consistent monitoring of our remote services and meeting our technical needs.

MCC received a PPP loan in 2021 in the amount of \$42,700. In May of 2022, MCC completed the application to Newtown Savings Bank for the forgiveness of this loan. Thank you to Frank Wittenauer and Bill Stadler for their diligence in this matter.

This fall, we learned from the IRS that seven years ago, there were clerical errors in filing three quarterly required employer- tax forms. The Board voted to pay the outstanding payroll taxes due in three increments of \$4600 each in November and December of 2022 and January of 2023. The IRS agent assisted Bill Stadler in applying for forgiveness of the interest and penalties that will be assessed. Since this expenditure was not budgeted for 2022, we are funding these payments from the interest on our investment accounts.

The Trustees coordinated work days in the spring and fall of this past year. We are overwhelmed by the number of volunteers who trimmed bushes, carted away the debris, cleaned gutters, changed light bulbs, organized closets in Dineson parlor, cleaned the pews and floor, and painted the feet of the pews in the Meeting House. The Board thanks everyone who helped spruce up our buildings and grounds.

The Trustees thank all who have pledged to this year's stewardship campaign. The majority of our revenue comes from pledges which support our church's ministry. MCC has responded to the various challenges of the past two years with consideration and care for each other. Under God's direction and with your support, MCC will continue to welcome everyone, wherever they are on their faith journey.

Maria Barresi, Chair

Board of Christian Fellowship Annual Report 2022

2022 saw fellowship in full swing again. It was good to see everyone out and participating.

Easter Sunday was another hit this year, with brunch foods being served, it was a great time had by all. We followed up in May for 1st communion with a cake for all the communicants. Mother's Day was May 8th and was well attended. We had a great variety of food, which is always appreciated by the congregation.

On September 11th, we brought the Homecoming picnic back to Wolfe Park. We combined the Ice cream social with this event, and everyone really enjoyed some time to relax and eat together. Hopefully, next year will see even more families in attendance.

On November 19th, Fellowship partnered with Outreach to put together the Spaghetti Dinner and Bingo in support of project warmth. This partnership worked well, and I see it as an ongoing relationship in the future. This event was the most people we have seen in attendance since before Covid 19 – it was a good cause and a lot of fun.

December 18th was our Christmas Coffee Hour. As usual, this is one of the congregation's favorite events. We do love our food, and everyone brings such delicious goodies to celebrate together.

Michelle Cardentey, Chair

Morning Circle Annual Report 2022

Officers: Chair – Jackie Bleakney, Secretary – Susie Cuseo, Treasurer – Ann Zeiner

Activities for 2022:

Morning Circle members meet the second Wednesday of each month at 11:00AM in Wilton Hall with the exceptions of January, February, July and August.

March – No meeting due to weather.

April – Ten members put together 29 hygiene kits for Church World Service.

May – Thirteen members put together 31 birthday bags for the Food Pantry. Kathy Maiolo came to speak about Empower House on behalf of The Center for Family Justice. A donation of \$300 was given to the cause.

June – Annual June picnic with 13 members at June’s house with food from Sal’s. Ladies collected \$130 for the Center for Family Justice’s new safe house.

September – Nine members collected pet supplies for the Food Pantry.

October – Nine members put together 51 Halloween bags for the Food Pantry. Kathy Maiolo came to give an update on Empower House and ladies agreed to provide a \$150 donation to the cause.

November – Fifteen gift tags for the Giving Tree were given out. Thirteen members put together 25 bean soup jars for the Food Pantry.

December – Members will attend the annual Christmas luncheon at My Place in Newtown.

Treasurer’s Report: \$609.76

Dec 2021

Sunshine Fund Collection: +\$152 Empower House Donation: -\$450

Dues: +\$125 Church World Service Postage: -\$58

Interest: + .30

Heifer International +\$18

Total (as of 11/22) \$427.22

The Morning Circle directory contains 15 members. We have an average of 11 members attending each meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Susie Cuseo, Morning Circle Secretary

Mustard Seed Shoppe Report 2022

It was a relatively quiet year at the Mustard Seed. A group of dedicated workers came in each Tuesday afternoon to fill the shop with donations from our church members and the community. Clothes that were not used were given to Goodwill. Some clothes were also given to special needy people.

Our store clerks welcomed shoppers on Friday and Saturday. Their purchases enabled us to fulfill our \$5,000 pledge to the church. We gave \$500 to Sr.Pf. for their trip and another \$268 for the wreaths for the church.

Our thanks go to Rob McClenathan and Bob Hammond for various much needed repairs to the outside of our building. Dave Allen has been a wonderful support.

This was also a year of sadness for the shop. We said good-bye to a hard worker and very good friend. Sue Crea was a valuable member of our group. Not only did she work very hard at recreating and maintaining the shop, but she brought much laughter, smiles and friendship to the group. We will definitely miss her. In honor of Sue, the Mustard Seed gave \$100 to the church's Memorial Fund.

Thank you to everyone who helped the Mustard Seed this year. Remember we always welcome new workers and clothing donations.

The Mustard Seed Committee

**Monroe Congregational Church
2023 Officers, Boards and Committees - DRAFT**

Officers		Term	Ends
Moderator	Arlene Redmond	Second	January 2025
Treasurer	Bill Stadler	Third	January 2024
Asst. Treasurer	Open	First	January 2025
Receiver	John O'Rourke	Third	January 2024
Clerk	Barbara Pellegrino	Second	January 2025
Historian	Gary Thompson	Indefinite	

Diaconate (12)		Term	Ends
1. Owen Correll (Youth)		First	January 2024
2. Kristina Logan		Second	January 2024
3. Jessica Pfalzgraf (Chair)		First	January 2024
4. Michelle Correll (Secretary)		First	January 2024
5. Larry Wissink		First	January 2025
6. Jennifer Wissink		First	January 2025
7. Linda Resnick		First	January 2025
8. Open			
9. Open			
10. Open			
11. Open			
12. Open			

Friends of the Board: Trees Whitbeck (Communion, DOD alternate), Gay Muizulis (Pastoral Care)

Music Committee (appointed by Deacons)

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Will Duchon | 5. Michael Pellegrino |
| 2. Michael Pfalzgraf (chair) | 6. Emma Campbell |
| 3. Rev. Jennifer Gingras | 7. David Walker |
| 4. Julie McClenathan | 8. Betty Heiney |

Trustees (7-12)	Term	Ends
1. Scott Young	Second	January 2024
2. James Brown	Second	January 2024
3. Kate Briggs	Second	January 2024
4. David Allen (Property Manager)	Indefinite	
5. Zachary Gingras	First	January 2025
6. Caleb Nealon	First	January 2025
7. Open		

Friends of the Board: Tom Briggs, Bob Hammond (property), Frank Wittenauer, Mark Barnhart, Maria Barresi (leases)

Christian Education (6-9)	Term	Ends
1. Meg Sullivan (chair)	Second	January 2024
2. Jenna Rice	First	January 2024
3. Paul Cardentey	First	January 2024
4. Jeanette Cardentey-Morales	(ex officio, CE Coordinator/Jr PF Lead Advisor)	
5. Ann Marie Campbell	First	January 2025
6. Open		

Friends of the Board: Betsy Gilberti

Christian Education Ex-Officio positions:

Junior P.F. Advisors	Jeanette Cardentey-Morales (lead) Kate Goyette Julio Morales
Senior P.F. Advisors	Rev. Jennifer Gingras (lead) Joe Gilberti Josh Post Cady Gingras Paul Cardentey Audra Logan

Senior Pilgrim Fellowship Officers (elected by Senior PF)

President:	Evelyn Goyette
Vice President:	Mia Briggs
Secretary:	Paige Andrade
Treasurer:	Drew Williams
Minister of Outreach:	Owen Correll

Christian Fellowship: (6-9)	Term	ends
1. Juliana Lavitola	First	January 2024
2. Jane Allen	First	January 2024
3. Melissa Coleman	First	January 2024
4. Kelsey Kaminski	First	January 2025
5. Open		
6. Open		

Friends of the Board: Carol Kelly, Michelle Cardentey

Christian Outreach (6-9) *No term, self-appointing*

1. Vaughan Askue (Chair)
2. Julie McClenathan
3. Kathy Allen
4. Karen Matysczak-Brown
5. Michelle Cardentey

Additional Friends of the Board:

Leanne McEvoy
Covenant to Care Liaison: Diane Prall
St George's Supper: Stacy Andrejczyk
Giving Garden: Rob McClenathan, Lois Spence, Donna Konkol

Nominating Committee (one 2-year term)

	Ends
1. Frank Wittenauer	January 2024
2. Leanne McEvoy	January 2025
3. Open	

SNEUCC Delegates

	Term	Ends
1. Nancy Smith	First	January 2025
2. Rev. Sheldon Smith	First	January 2025
3. David Bailey (alternate)	First	January 2025

Fairfield East Association Delegates

	Term	Ends
1. Nancy Smith	First	January 2025
2. Rev. Sheldon Smith	First	January 2025
3. David Bailey (alternate)	First	January 2025

Mustard Seed Committee (self-appointed, no term)

1. Peggy Villani (chair)	4. Jackie Bleakney
2. Ann Zeiner (treasurer)	5. Jan Pearson
3. Lois Spence	

Morning Circle (self-appointed, no term)

1. Jackie Bleakney (chair)
2. Ann Zeiner (treasurer)
3. Susie Cuseo (secretary)
4. Shari Carrano (asst chair)

Safe Conduct (2 + 2 appointed by Council)

	Term	Ends
1. Bill Brett		January 2025 – 1st
2. Hannah Halloran		January 2025 – 1 st
3. Open		

Monroe Green Committee (appointed by Council)

1. Christine Wittenauer
2. Frank Wittenauer

Senior Pastor PRC (appointed by Council)

1. Kim Riffard (convener)
2. Mark Malia
3. Wendy Colegrove
4. Open

Strawberry Festival Co-Chairs

1. John Maiolo
2. Clark Gingras
3. Frank Wittenauer
4. Josh Post
5. Susie Cuseo

**Monroe Congregational Church
Investment Account Activity
January 1 – November 30, 2022**

Beginning Balance 1/1/22	\$743,956.95
Withdrawals	(\$50,000.00)
Dividends Reinvested	\$14,972.95
Unrealized Gain/Loss	(<u>\$98,961.70</u>)
Ending Balance 11/30/22	\$609,968.20

Investment Fund Detail

Helen Sherman Trust*	\$282,322.28
Clara Johnson Trust**	\$118,712.05
Wilton Estate Fund***	\$203,477.37
General Investment Fund	<u>\$5,456.50</u>
Total	\$609,968.20

*Helen G. Sherman Trust – this was initially established in 1995, in the amount of \$154,798 and was restricted as follows: principal is restricted, but income may be used consistent with MCC’s tax-exempt purposes as governing body shall designate. In 2002, 500 units of the Helen G. Sherman trust were sold and \$31,475.77 was distributed to the church.

**Clara Johnson Trust – this was initially established in 1998, in the amount of \$67,621.40 and was restricted as follows: principal is restricted, but income used for care, maintenance and upkeep of church building and pastor’s salary.

***Wilton Estate Fund – this was received in March of 2014 in the amount of \$403,000. There are no restrictions or specified use attached to these funds. \$200,000 of this fund was added to the investment account in June of 2014, with the remainder going into MCC’s Money Market account, with the expectation that some of these funds would be used to support the renovation of Rexford House, as well as replacement of the organ in the Meeting House.

General Investment Fund – represents income accrued from the other investment funds and is what we pull from to fund MCC operations each year.

John O’Rourke –Board of Trustees Receiver



MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST PROPOSED 2023 BUDGET

The Proposed 2023 Operating Budget as recommended by the Board of Trustees is presented on the reverse side. MCC is projected to conclude 2022 with a modest operating surplus. While this looks like positive news, it should be noted that this was made possible by withdrawing extra funds from our investment account to support some unexpected costs and shortfalls on income.

Below is a summary of the significant changes and key assumptions underlying the Proposed 2023 Budget to be presented at Annual Meeting.

Revenues:

- Pledge income is projected at \$200K, which includes prior year collections, which is the same as the previous year.
- Rental income is projected at \$58,500, which includes income from renting the parsonage at \$2200/month, net of property taxes of \$7000. It also includes rental income from Gingerbread, Rexford House and continuation of hosting the Monroe Summer Day Camp on campus during the summer months at an increased rate.
- Income from investments is projected at \$25K which is the recommended withdrawal amount to maintain the inflation-adjusted principal in our investment accounts.
- Strawberry Festival net income is budgeted @ \$30K which is based on our ability to conduct a "normal" festival event this year.
- The Mustard Seed contribution is \$5K, which was confirmed by the Mustard Seed Board. Again, this number is based on a return to more normal operations and volunteer support.

Expenses:

- Compensation & Benefits is expected to rise to \$230K, which includes a modest (2%) cost-of-living adjustment for staff the pastor's housing allowance of \$1650/month for 12 months.
- Facility costs are budgeted at \$80K, which reflects expected increases in electricity, oil and other costs to run our facilities.
- Program costs are budgeted at \$15K, and office expenses are budgeted at \$4500, reflecting significant savings over prior years on postage, printing and other costs.