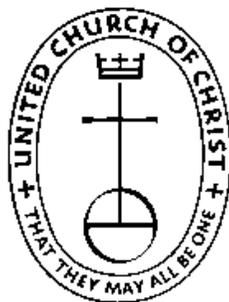


# 2021 Book of Reports

As Presented at the  
2022 Annual Meeting of the Monroe Congregational Church

Held Sunday, January 23, 2022



34 Church Street  
Monroe, Connecticut 06468

The Reverend Jennifer Gingras  
Senior Pastor

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**Monroe Congregational Church**  
*United Church of Christ*

**Annual Meeting Agenda**  
**Sunday, January 23, 2022**

Opening

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

Annual Addresses

- Moderator – Arlene Redmond
- Senior Pastor - Rev. Jennifer Gingras

Adoption of Minutes and Reports

- 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes
- Reports of the Boards, Committees & the Pastor
- 2022 Narrative Budget
- Election of Officers, Board Members & Delegates

New Business

Adjournment and Benediction

**2021 Annual Meeting Minutes**  
**Monroe Congregational Church**  
**Annual Meeting, January 24, 2021**

This year's annual meeting was a bit different because it was online, so as people logged onto Zoom we reviewed instructions for how the meeting would be conducted.

Once a **Quorum was established** the moderator, Dave Walker, **called the meeting to order** and the clerk, Kate Parker-Burgard, **read the call** to the annual meeting.

The meeting began with an invitation to **adopt the agenda**

Motion: Mark Barnhart

Second: Frank Wittenauer

Motion carried unanimously.

**Moderator's message:**

[See attached.](#) Words of appreciation for Dave's leadership who is chairing his last annual meeting, appeared in the Zoom chat.

**Pastor's message:**

[See attached.](#) Included a [creative video tribute](#) of the bathroom renovation that happened this year.

The moderator invited the **adoption of the minutes from 2019 Annual meeting.**

Motion: Mark Barnhart

Second: Frank Wittenauer

Arlene Redmond pointed to a correction--add Kyla Allen to the Bathroom committee on page 7.

With no objection, the clerk was asked to make that change to the report from 2019.

The motion to adopt the minutes from 2019 carried unanimously.

The moderator invited and **adoption of the Book of Reports**

Motion: Maria Barresi

Second: Mark Barnhart

Motion to adopt the Book of Reports was carried unanimously.

**Narrative Budget:**

Frank Wittenauer, chair of Trustees spoke about our budget as a faith statement.

At our last meeting there were three commitments made: to close the budget gap, draw down less from investments, and increase fundraisers and rentals. We met all three goals.

Thankfully, our investments grew, in spite of drawing money out of them. Our budget was started with the need to make up the gap of \$25,000 with rentals and fundraisers. Once the pandemic hit we focused on the impact of the revenue line.

But what helped was that the expense came in significantly less than what we budgeted--significantly fewer resources were needed since the building wasn't being used.

Congregation continued to meet pledge goals. We ended the year with pledge expectations. We also leveraged a PPP loan (fully forgiven) which also helped us meet our budget. Mustard Seed and Gingerbread met their commitments even though they were closed for much of the year.

2021 driving toward a sustainable financial outlook. This year the trustees worked to keep the budget as flat as possible.

Eliminated the Faith Formation role. We will have to continue to work with CE to help support their work.

Thanks everyone for your continued support, especially throughout a financially difficult and unpredictable year.

The moderator invited and adoption of the 2021 Budget

Motion: Julie McClenathan

Second: Mark Barnhart

Questions:

Arlene Redmond: We have budgeted income for Strawberry Festival and Mustard Seed. What's our degree of certainty that those will be realized?

Frank Wittenauer: Mustard Seed income is lowered. Strawberry Festival is hoping to move forward in some capacity. We do have the chance to draw down on investments if needed.

Ann Zeiner said that the Mustard Seed is committed to its church pledge.

Maria Baressi: what about rental income?

Most is from the Gingerbread School and we anticipate more coming in. Jenn Gingras reminded us of the summer camp income.

Our Moderator Dave Walker reminded us that the budget is always uncertain--it's a plan. What we're doing is authorizing our trustees to make expenditures on our behalf following this plan as closely as possible.

John Maiolo invited people with ideas about ways to manage the festival in lieu of our usual activity. Please send them along to him.

Trees Whitbeck asked if the loose offering projection of 25K is realistic. Frank replied that it's consistent with the last few years.

The motion to adopt the budget was unanimously accepted. Thanks to the trustees for seeing us through this extraordinary year and setting us up for another good year.

### **Nominating report**

Jane Allen: The work of the committee is to fill officer and board positions.

She thanked all of the people who are rolling off their positions and presented the slate of nominations for discussion. Special note about Melissa Coleman, who will be serving a bonus year on Christian Education. This was voted by the council.

There are a few vacant positions. The floor was open for nominations.

Leanne: self-nominate for Outreach. Second by Kate Parker-Burgard. It was determined that she's already on the slate.

Jane Allen nominated Kate Briggs for trustees who was present at the meeting and accepted the nomination. Frank Wittenauer seconded it.

The moderator invited a motion to close the nominations

Motion: Frank Barnhart

Second: Jenn Gingras

Passed unanimously

Motion to accept the slate of nominations

Motion: Diane Prall

Second: Mark Barnhart

Passed unanimously.

### **New Business**

People noted that they liked the brisk pace of this year's meeting.

The moderator invited a **motion to adjourn**

Motion: Julie McClenathan

Second: Diane Prall

Carried unanimously

Jenn Gingras: invitation for some Zoom social time afterward and expressed appreciation for everything people have done to run an efficient meeting.

### **Benediction**

## **2021 Annual Report of the Senior Pastor, Rev. Jennifer Gingras**

Friends in Christ,

As I am writing this, we are nearing the 2 year mark of when COVID-19 began to disrupt worldwide sectors of education, business and non-profits (including houses of worship). It's been a bumpy ride, but we've stayed (for the most part) connected and continue to adapt with the changing health landscape.

In January, we began the year with in-person worship under many precautions, including most of our fellowship/CE/work groups either paused or virtual. Later in the month we held our first truly hybrid annual meeting, a practice we are continuing this year. With the onset of vaccinations, first in our elderly population than down the line, we became a little more confident about rolling back some of the practices that previously kept us safe from community spread.

In February, the Lenten season began with another successful "Ashes-to-Go", held outdoors on a chilly day to a steady stream totaling around 50 people. As Monroe was still in a red zone, we paused our typical Ash Wednesday church service and instead held a labyrinth prayer walk. Throughout the next six weeks, we held an online study of Amy-Jill Levine's Lenten study for about a dozen participants.

In March, more of us had been successfully vaccinated so the JAMmers began to work in earnest. Our Strawberry Festival Chairs John Maiolo and Clark Gingras began to plan what would be an adapted event for Father's Day weekend (the first post-covid festival in town). Over 220 volunteers clocked in to make the event an unprecedented success.

In April, Senior PF offered a massive Easter Egg hunt and the weather cooperated with beautiful sunny skies. We held a sunrise service at the fire pit, and two worship services on Easter Sunday (in order to better space our households out). Our choir remained on hiatus, which took its toll on both the church and the group itself, and our beloved Music Director Will Duchon gave notice that he would retire at the end

of the year, sparking the organization and work of a search committee which continued until the mid-fall when Will decided to stay (much to the relief of all involved).

May brought with it better outlooks and lessened community spread, so we planned enthusiastically for Strawberry Festival, a Senior PF mission trip to Hancock Maine, and held a Youth Sunday worship service. Junior PF began in-person outdoor activities again, with help from volunteer advisors Kate Goyette and Ann-Marie Campbell.

Over the summer, we had many reasons to celebrate. In June, a safe and successful 49<sup>th</sup> Strawberry Festival. In July, a successful mission trip to Maine (followed by a retirement of much beloved long term adult advisors Kelsey Kaminski and Kiersten Rooney). We hired Jeanette Cardentey-Morales as a ten-hour a week Coordinator of CE/Junior PF Lead Advisor, and she began planning for modified fall programs.

In September, we held a very successful Wine & Beer tasting to support the safe house for the Center for Family Justice outdoors at the fire pit. We started up in-person indoors coffee hour when the weather turned colder. We continued many of the worship restrictions we had put in place earlier as the Delta variant began to be prevalent. With the cooperation of so many church members around precautions, we were able to continue many in-person groups, although depending on the situation we had to be flexible and put in place some modifications.

Throughout the fall, flexibility continued to be key. We held an Outreach Tag Sale, much to the delight of those who have been holding onto their “really good stuff” for a while. Sunday School began, although at a smaller number than past years due to continuing issues with children or volunteers being quarantined. All three PF’s continued in person (with precautions). A masked choir began in the late fall, much to the delight of the congregation and this pastor. We held a 6 week online preaching course for about ten regular attendees, who received a certificate of completion in November on the same day in which we welcomed new members and celebrated our Stewardship campaign. Our Women’s Retreat was held at Silver Lake Conference Center, and the Senior PF went on retreat to Camp Hazen, just before the Omicron surge hit.

In December, we prepared to welcome the community both virtually and in-person with deeply touching worship experiences, including a traditional Sunday School pageant put on by our students and some adult helpers. PF went caroling to some members of the church community, and Junior PF went to a nursing home to sing and bring joy to residents. We enjoyed a special Christmas Coffee hour and Trees’ Viana chocolates (yum).

This year has been a challenging one, but there is also much to celebrate. We continued to learn how to record and post our worship services online and how to worship in front of a screen, finding a new sense of community. We kept in touch with each other through email and phone calls. And because we are a congregation that always looks beyond itself, we found ways to serve.

I encourage you to take some time to read the reports thoughtfully and prayerfully and with an openness to the wonders that they contain. This year’s annual report documents the many ways in which we have grown stronger as a congregation through the challenges of 2021. Together we have worshipped, cared for one another, studied, cared for our community and our world, and grown in generosity and gratitude.

I want to thank our staff for the many ways in which they have creatively responded to the challenges of this year. Scott Young and Larry Wissink rearranged schedules so that they could be at the church to record the worship service each week. Will's organ and piano music have sustained us through the year. Jeanette made sure that our children's programs adapted and continued so that the youngest in our congregation continue to grow in faith. Diane Prall worked overtime in the church office to keep our ministry and mission functioning smoothly and to respond to the needs and concerns of members. And our property manager, Dave Allen, has cared for our building and grounds so that they were ready when we needed them. Their selfless devotion to these tasks is an inspiration to me and they have the deep gratitude of the entire congregation.

I also give thanks for the work of our Moderator, Arlene Redmond, and the rest of the Church Council along with all the board and committee members whose energy, devotion, thought, and prayers have been central to the well-being of MCC-UCC this year. As individuals and as a congregation, we have changed in many ways this year. The challenge will be to take all those changes and become the church for the new days that we are entering.

In gratitude and hope, *Rev. Jennifer Gingras, Senior Pastor*

### **Christian Education Coordinator Annual Report 2021**

We kicked off the school year in September with 19 children enrolled in Sunday School. We have had somewhere between 6-8 children in attendance most weeks. We also have 9 Sunday School teachers rotating weekends and sharing responsibility for educating our youth about God's Love. 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. Finally, in partnership with St. Joseph's Center in Trumbull, our children made cards and drew pictures for residents with no living friends or family. We gave those cards to them right before the Thanksgiving holiday in hopes to spread love and joy to those who so desperately needed it.

-Jeanette Cardentey Morales

### **Historian's Annual Report 2021**

Two new books about people of our congregation were received this year and placed into our Library. The first book, *The Notorious Mary Long*, by Richard P. Plumber, is a historical novel about the exploits of Mary Long in London, England and the newly settled Australia. She was the great-great-great-great grandmother of our 40<sup>th</sup> Minister, Rev. Joseph Vectis Harrison. It details some family history of the Rev. Harrison and was the subject of an Elisha's Corner article "A Tale of Two Pictures". The second book, *The Tanzanian Pressure Cooker*, by M. Virginia (LaPointe) Southworth, is a collection of letters from Mark Day to the author while he was a missionary in Tanzania and her commentaries. Mark Day was our "haystack" missionary to Tanzania, between 1980 and 1984, where he died from a fall off a water tower he was helping to build. He was the son of Sue Day, then our choir director, and Burt Day. Mark was a PF alumnus and his memorial weeping cherry tree stands between our Meeting House and Rexford Hall.

A thirteen part series of articles for Elisha's Corner in our monthly *Steeple* was started in May. They traced the genealogies of the eleven men selected to the first committees by the congregation of the Ecclesiastical Society of the New Stratford Parish at their first official meeting in June of 1763. The articles provided biographies of them and their ancestral families back to their locations in England from where they came to establish the original Stratford settlement (Cupheag Plantation) in 1639. The last three articles in the series will be published in the January, February, and March 2022 *Steeple*.

There were two new projects started in 2020 that were carried forward into 2021; a file on the Pandemic 2020 at MCC and computerization of membership records from 1810 to 1936. The computer file contains the list members and brief information about them. The list of baptisms has been started and will be carried forward into 2022. When finished, the file will also contain the lists of marriage, and death records.

In September we received a gift from the History Coordinator at the Derby Library; three original handwritten copies of sermons given by our 8<sup>th</sup> minister, Rev. Robert Gardner. The first was given on December 19, 1847 – six months after the congregation held its first worship service in our current Meeting House, 175 years ago. The other two were given on March 26<sup>th</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup> of 1848. They reside safely in our archives.

Submitted by Gary Thompson, Historian

### Usher Report 2021

|   | 2017 (4) | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---|----------|------|------|------|------|
| Sunday Attendance (worship services and church school)                | 6310     | 5953 | 5704 | (5)  | (6)  |
| Average Attendance Per Sunday (worship services & church school)      | 121      | 114  | 110  | (5)  | (6)  |
| Worship Service Attendance only (not incl church school)              | 105      | 99   | 95   | (5)  | (6)  |
| Summer Average Attendance Per Sunday (not incl church school)         | 83       | 66   | 61   | (5)  | (6)  |
| Ash Wednesday   | 53 (4)   | 101  | 130  | (5)  | (6)  |
| Palm Sunday   | 153 (4)  | 136  | 80   | (5)  | (6)  |
| Maundy Thursday   | 35 (4)   | 80   | 54   | (5)  | (6)  |
| Good Friday with Monroe Clergy Association                            | 0 (4)    | 0    | 0    | (5)  | (6)  |
| Sunrise Service   | 0 (4)    | 0    | 27   | (5)  | (6)  |
| Easter Sunday   | 234 (4)  | 287  | 216  | (5)  | (6)  |
| Advent Season Average Per Sunday (incl worship services and children) | 143      | 120  | 138  | (5)  | (6)  |
| Christmas Eve   | 374      | 403  | 307  | (5)  | (6)  |
| (4) Pastor Jenn on Sabbatical   |          |      |      |      |      |
| (5) First Year of Pandemic (2020 Book of Reports)                     |          |      |      |      |      |
| (6) Second Year of Pandemic (stats below)                             |          |      |      |      |      |
| 2021 Sunday, August 22 –Hurricane Henri                               |          |      |      |      |      |

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Pandemic Year Stats 2021

| Services Attended Via:  | Meeting House    | Face Book | YouTube | Total  |
|---|------------------|-----------|---------|--------|
| Sunday Attendance (worship services and church school)                | 3147             | 4530      | 2372    | 10,049 |
| Average Attendance Per Sunday (worship services & church school)      | 61               | 87        | 46      | 194    |
| Worship Service Attendance only (not incl church school)              | 2907             | 4530      | 2372    | 9809   |
| Summer Average Attendance Per Sunday (not incl church school)         | 51<br>*hurricane | 1833      | 511     | 2395   |
| Ash Wed/Labyrinth Prayer Walk   | 24               |           |         |        |
| Ashes To Go   | 51               |           |         | 75     |
| Palm Sunday   | 70               | 67        | 60      | 197    |
| Maundy Thursday   | n/a              | 81        | 47      | 128    |
| Good Friday with Monroe Clergy Association                            | n/a              |           |         |        |
| Sunrise Service   | 21               | n/a       | n/a     | 21     |
| Easter Sunday   | 96               | 370       | 103     | 25     |
| Advent Season Average Per Sunday (incl worship services and children) | 78               | 45        | 32      | 155    |
| Christmas Eve   | 177              | 96        | 317     | 511    |

In 2021 we continued to navigate the ever changing pandemic world with Pastor Jenn and her team working diligently to further enhance our “virtual” worship experiences bringing them to new heights for those who have chosen to join us safely from their home. 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 2021

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 was the pre-packaged wafer and juice. By mid-year we had one oz. cups with lids holding a grape and a piece of bread that was offered at the door. At the end of the year, a team offered the same cups in baskets to members through the aisles. Deacons also participate in special services such as Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve.

Highlights for this year: many restrictions due to COVID were lifted. We were able to return the bibles and hymnals into the pews, seating was opened up in all pews, and Communion was prepared in individually contained grape and piece of bread in baskets that were handed by Deacons. In April we received a letter from Will Duchon indicating that he was resigning after 15 years of service and his last day of employment will be at the end of December. A Music Director Search Committee was formed. In September Will sent us another letter stating that he'd like to continue working as Music Director. All members agreed to accept his letter but with stipulations that a one-year contract be drawn up where he would meet at least quarterly with a newly formed Music Committee, make decisions alongside Pastor Jenn regarding the music program, and at the end of the year the contract will be revised to reflected new goals. Upon returning from vacation Will reviewed the contract with Jenn and Mike Pfalzgraf and agreed with all terms.

In the Fall, Pastor Jenn offered a Lay Preacher Seminar that had an attendance of eight members. She sent out the recording of each Zoom meeting so that anyone who missed it could have the information. The hope is that the seminar will produce coverage for Pastor Jenn while she is away on sabbatical in 2022. Our Advent theme was The Inn: Housing the Holy.

Respectfully submitted by Susie Cuseo

### Annual Memorial Fund Report 2021

In 2021, \$735.00 was donated in memory of loved ones. Activity in the Memorial Fund account was as follows:

|  |           |            |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Beginning Balance on January 1, 2021                                 |           | \$6,004.05 |
| Deposits to Memorial Fund  |           |            |
| In Memory of Robert Olson  | \$235.00  |            |
| In Memory of Norman B. Stickney, Jr                                  | \$500.00  |            |
| Total Deposits in Memorial Fund 2021                                 | +\$735.00 |            |
| Total Withdrawals from Memorial Funds in 2020<br>(1 pouring Chalice) | - \$56.00 |            |
| Balance as of December 31st, 2021 in Memorial Fund                   |           | \$6,683.05 |

**2021 CLERK REPORT****Birth (0)****Baptism (2)**

|                       |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Aiden Clausen         | 5/23/2021  |
| Cameron Peter Panicca | 10/17/2021 |

**Confirmation (6)**

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Hanna Andrejczyk     | 5/23/2021 |
| Emma Campbell        | 5/23/2021 |
| Aiden Clausen        | 5/23/2021 |
| Owen Michael Correll | 5/23/2021 |
| Julia Telep          | 5/23/2021 |
| Isabells Pinto       | 5/23/2021 |

**Death of Loved Ones (2)**

|                       |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Robert Olson          | 11/1/2020 |
| J. Alvin "Al" Shaffer | 4/1/2021  |

*Death of Loved Ones,  
Non-members*

|                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| James Atkins              | 2016       |
| Richard "Dick" Ruot       | 12/23/2021 |
| The Rev. Luther C. Pierce | 12/15/2021 |

**New Member (6)**

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| Kate Goyette     | 5/23/2021 |
| Juliana Lavitola | 5/23/2021 |
| Amy Matejek      | 5/23/2021 |
| Cheri Irwin      | 11/7/2021 |
| Julio Morales    | 11/7/2021 |
| Carol Viellette  | 11/7/2021 |

**Marriage (1)**

|                                   |           |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| Kristen Prall & Nicholas Boronski | 8/29/2021 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|

Respectfully Submitted By  
Diane Prall

**Reinstated Membership (0)****Transferred (6)**

John Tusch  
Paul Coward  
Judy Coward  
Dianne Griffiths  
Alysha Griffiths  
Warren Griffiths

**Removed from Membership After Inactive (19)**

Lani Siciliano  
Joseph Siciliano, Sr  
Samuel Siciliano  
Matthew Siciliano  
Kyra Siciliano  
Maya Siciliano  
Joseph Siciliano  
Thomas Siciliano  
David Swift  
Kerri Swift

Marissa Swift  
Carson Swift

Pam Kelly  
Ken Kelly  
Nick Obertz  
Cody Forte

Lily Forte  
Cody Forte, Jr.  
Vincent Forte

**Summary**

|  |    |            |
|--|----|------------|
| <b>Active Members as of January 2021</b> |    | <b>469</b> |
| New Members                              | 6  |            |
| Confirmands                              | 6  |            |
| Reactivation, Confirmands & New Members  |    | <b>12</b>  |
| Transferred                              | 6  |            |
| Removed after Inactive                   | 19 |            |
| Deaths of Loved Ones                     | 2  |            |
| <b>Active Members as of January 2021</b> |    | <b>454</b> |

## **Board of Christian Faith Formation Annual Report 2021**

This year was a year of constant adjustment and fluidity for the Faith Formation Committee as we started the year for the first time without a Director of Faith Formation.

At the beginning of 2021, things were still ‘on hold’ or virtual, but we worked to find ways to bring the people together as much as possible. Throughout all events, the health and safety of our parishioners and volunteers was at the forefront of every decision made.

### **Sunday School:**

In early 2021, we were not yet ready to go back to full-time Sunday School, but we decided to hold some outdoor events for the children, starting with an outdoor, snowy scavenger hunt in February where we looked for examples of God in nature. We had three other outdoor events during the spring.

In September, we kicked off a full-year schedule of Sunday School, at Homecoming (Sept. 19) with nine volunteers who have signed up to teach classes for two age-groups: Pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. We decided to have classes outdoors when possible, and when we needed to return to inside, we are wearing masks and spreading out as much as possible. On October 31<sup>st</sup>, the children loved hosting the Halloween Coffee Hour and the Christmas Pageant on Dec 19<sup>th</sup>. There are about 19 children registered across 5-6 families.

### **Jr PF:**

This group became active in-person again, with some outdoor meetings and events including a hike at Webb Mountain, painting Kindness Rocks, a Trail Clean Up Day for Earth Day, and a hot dog cookout. They also had a time capsule, which they will open next year. In the fall, they did a food drive, attended the haunted hayride, created a Prayer Jar, and had a Friendsgiving. There was a change in advisors in the fall. There are about 13-15 kids signed up.

### **Sr PF:**

2021 was a very active year for Sr PF. The group hosted an Easter Egg hunt for the younger children, they had a Mother’s Day gift sale as a fundraiser, planned and hosted Youth Sunday in May, hosted a Trunk or Treat in October and of course had a very successful Mission trip to Maine in July and a retreat to Camp Hazen in December. There was a change in advisors during the summer. There is a consistent list of about 40 participants.

### **Other:**

Please note that all volunteers for Sunday School, Jr and Sr PF went through the Safe Church training. We also opened the “nursery” as a “family room”, with a tv, offering streaming of each service, if needed. Finally, we welcomed Jeannette as the Christian Education Coordinator in Aug/Sept.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Pfalzgraf – Co-Chair

Melissa Coleman – Co-Chair

Korene Dahl

Kelsey Maiolo

Meg Sullivan

Jeanette Cardentey Morales– Christian Education Coordinator

## **Senior Pilgrim Fellowship Report 2021**

Senior PF started off our 2020-2021 year strong (despite a global pandemic) with the following student leadership in place: Josh Correll - President, Jake Minch - VP, Grace Callanan - Treasurer, Josie Kelman - Secretary, and Vee Sampson - Minister of Outreach. In June, this team was replaced by our current team including Gavin Mills – President, Vee Sampson – Vice President, Evelyn Goyette – Treasurer, Lauren Unger – Secretary and Caleb Nealon – Minister of Outreach,

We planned out a great year of discussions for our regular Sunday night meetings where we share our highs & lows of each week, discuss relevant issues, current events, explore more about faith and our lives, sing, and pray. We live by our covenant: learning to love, keeping an open mind, and welcoming every single person who comes our way with open arms, all while becoming important young members of our greater community.

Our adult advisors continued to be a cohesive team helping to make PF a group that continues to grow. We experienced transition with the “retirement” of lead advisor Kelsey Kaminski (16 years) and Kiersten Rooney, RN (16 years) after the summer mission trip to Hancock, Maine. The new(er) adult team includes the addition this fall of PF Alums Audra Logan and Hannah Halloran along with seasoned veterans Rev. Jennifer Gingras (11 years), Joe Gilberti (24 years), Joshua Post (12 years) and Pauley Cardentey (3 years).

Our meetings continued throughout the year in-person with precautions and about 40 regulars. In the spring, we held a Mother’s Day fundraiser that allowed some of our more creative and entrepreneurial PF’ers to shine as they sold handmade gifts. We were also able to hold a successful Easter egg hunt in the spring, a Trunk or Treat fundraiser in October, and service projects collecting items for Bridgeport Rescue Mission, raking for an elderly member, and Christmas caroling in the community. In addition to an amazing mission trip in Maine, we held a lock-in at the church in the late summer, and a retreat in early December at Camp Hazen.

We are so proud that this leadership group has been able to adapt to protocols and continue to be doing the best they can to make sure that PF traditions continue, even through these challenging times. We are always grateful that MCC supports Senior PF and we love that this group brings so many youth members from our church and outside of our community together in a loving and safe environment, especially during this past year. We are extra thankful we were able to meet as often as we could in person, and still feel supported and heard by those who love and care for us. We can’t thank you enough for the love, support and care! We are hopeful that the year 2022 will be better and brighter and hopefully filled with more exciting opportunities to grow and love with each other, our community and with Christ.

*- Rev. Jennifer Gingras, Lead Advisor of Senior Pilgrim Fellowship*

## **Junior Pilgrim Fellowship Annual Report 2021**

Our JR PF group has 14 youth enrolled with an overall avg of 6-8 students per gathering. Over the past four months our PFers have helped clean the nurse in Wilton Hall, raise money for the Crop Walk, gathered almost 400lbs of food for the Monroe Food Pantry, and made cards for and sang carols to the residents at St. Joseph’s Center in Trumbull. We also enjoyed the Haunted Hayride at Fairview Tree Farm, Trick or Trunk with Sr. PF, a Friendsgiving in November, as well as ended the year with an Epiphany Party which included a gift exchange and ugly sweater competition, 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 2021

During 2021 the outreach board slowly began resuming normal operations by easing away from 2020 COVID restrictions.

**Saint Georges Supper:** In 2021, Saint Georges Supper was still using COVID protocols. Six times during the year, volunteers made 45-50 bag lunches consisting of sandwiches, bottles water, fruit, chips or other snacks and condiments to be delivered to St. Georges for distribution to homeless people. A special thanks to Stacy Andrecyk and Rob McClenathan for coordinating this important effort and for transportation.

**Tag Sale:** After two and a half years the tag sale returned on October 2. Thank to generous donations and a lot of help (at one point I counted 20 church members working and a big shout out to Senior PF for helping with clean up) we netted slightly over \$2,600. The board agreed to allocate this money as follows: \$500 each to Merton House, Bridgeport Rescue Mission, Project Warmth and Prospect House and \$600 to Spooner House. The board agreed that the next tag sale would occur in the spring of 2023.

**Crop Walk:** At the kickoff meeting in September, MCC was recognized as the largest contributor to CROP Hunger Walk. On 17 October, MCC contributed 6 walkers and gathered \$200 in donations. The total raised by MCC and friends was \$3175.00 and all of it went to Church World Service which sponsors CROP Walk. 25% of the money raised is returned to the host community (Bridgeport) to fight local hunger initiatives. The remainder goes to Hunger initiatives around the world. Many thanks to Julie McClenathan for leading this effort.

**Covenant to care:** Assembled 19 Easter baskets and supplied 12 Christmas gifts in 2021.

**Wine tasting:** The wine tasting on September 18 netted \$862 for the Center for Family Justice's new safe house. Roy Nealon did an excellent job presenting several excellent wines. Scott Redfern described the work of the Center of Family justice and the need for a new safe house.

**Giving Garden:** The giving garden had a good year and provided tomatoes, peppers, garlic, beans and onions to our neighbors. Many thanks Rob.

Vaughan Askue, Chair

## Covenant to Care Annual Report 2021

Unfortunately, other than 19 beautiful Easter Baskets and 12 Christmas gifts, there has still been little activity for Covenant to Care this year.

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

**Monroe Green Committee Treasurer's Report  
Covering December 31, 2020, to December 31, 2021**

|                                     |          |                 |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----------------|
| <u>Balance on December 31, 2020</u> |          | \$164.25        |
| <u>Receipts</u>                     |          |                 |
| Monroe Congregational Church        | \$250.00 |                 |
| St. Peter's Episcopal Church        | \$250.00 |                 |
| <u>Total Receipts</u>               |          | \$500.00        |
| <u>Subtotal</u>                     |          | <u>\$664.25</u> |
| <u>Disbursements</u>                |          |                 |
| Eversource (electric utility bills) |          | \$550.39        |
| <u>Total Disbursements</u>          |          | \$550.39        |
| <u>Balance on December 31, 2021</u> |          | <b>\$113.86</b> |

Respectfully Submitted by, Joshua Friend, Treasurer

**Trustees Annual Report 2021**

The Trustees are responsible for overseeing the upkeep of the MCC campus as well as the finances of the church. We thank all who have contributed with their time and gifts to help us achieve our mission and make MCC such a vibrant place.

This past year, the Board launched a capital campaign to raise funds to paint Rexford House. Thanks to the generous support of many, the campaign raised \$11,710 toward the cost of this work. MCC contracted with Bill Schiebe, and the project was completed this fall at a cost of \$13,020. Many thanks to Dave Allen for overseeing this and other improvement projects in and around our campus, and for John O'Rourke's work in leading yet another successful capital campaign.

The Board also focused this past year on improving our video streaming capabilities to continue to support remote worship as well as our technology and telecommunications equipment in general. I would like to express the Board's gratitude to Scott Young for his tireless efforts in this regard. His knowledge, expertise and overall willingness to pitch in are seemingly boundless. A big note of thanks to our Office Manager, Diane Prall, for her work in upgrading our phone system and in identifying opportunities and cost savings elsewhere.

Like this past year, MCC applied for and received \$39,511 under the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) to help offset the loss of other income. Receipt of these funds was a tremendous help to stabilizing our finances and maintaining adequate cash flow to make payroll and pay other obligations. Relatedly, MCC received confirmation that it had fully satisfied all conditions for forgiveness of its original 2020 PPP loan of \$42,700 from Newtown Savings Bank. Many thanks to Fred Dubois, Bill Stadler and Frank Wittenauer for their work in seeing this through.

The Trustees organized and conducted work days in both the spring and fall. Volunteers trimmed bushes, weeded and mulched planting beds, raked leaves, cleaned windows, cleaned and changed light fixtures, patched holes, replaced trim and made countless other minor repairs and improvements to the buildings and grounds. We thank all those who helped beautify our church facilities and grounds.

We also wish to thank all who have contributed thus far to this year's stewardship campaign. Pledge income continues to make up the majority of our revenues which support our ministry. While we are still not where we need to be, our financial situation appears to be stable thanks in part to external grants in aid. We are hopeful that 2022 will shine a little brighter, and with God's blessing and your help, MCC will fulfill our purpose to transform the lives of people who will in turn transform the world.

Mark Barnhart, Chair

### **Board of Christian Fellowship Annual Report 2021**

Fellowship was excited to return our Easter Coffee Hour this year. It was done with care for our congregation ensuring food was handled using gloves and tongs and masks of course to limit contact and possible exposure. The event was a success, and it was wonderful to see so many congregating together again in Wilton Hall. In partnership with Sunday School, we had a new event during October where our youth came dressed in costume, decorated treats for the congregation and then served them to everyone during coffee hour. That was the largest turnout we have seen since before COVID! We ended the year with our annual Christmas Coffee Hour and our Pajama & Hot Cocoa coffee hour the Sunday after Christmas. Stay tuned for our upcoming Murder Mystery Dinner in the Spring!

-Jeanette Cardentey Morales

## Morning Circle Annual Report 2021

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

### Activities for 2021:

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** – Seven members put together 32 birthday bags for the Food Pantry.

**April** – Seven members put together 29 Church World Service hygiene kits. \$58 was sent out for shipping.

**May** – Seven members made a collection of women’s products for Food Pantry. Linda Resnick showed us exercises to stay fit.

**June** – Fifteen members attended the June picnic at June’s house with a catered luncheon. Ladies collected over \$250 for the Center for Family Justice’s new safe house.

**September** – Fourteen members collected a trunk full of pet supplies for the Food Pantry.

**October** – Twelve members put together 79 Halloween bags for the Food Pantry. Ray Giovanni from Union Savings Bank spoke about local scams.

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

**December** – Seventeen members attended the Christmas luncheon at My Place in Newtown. \$100 donation to Heifer International was made.

### Treasurer’s Report: \$588.61 Oct 2020

|                           |        |                               |         |
|---------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|---------|
| Sunshine Fund Collection: | +\$153 | Bean Soup Expenses:           | \$69.19 |
| Dues:                     | +\$105 | Heifer International Match:   | \$50.00 |
| Interest:                 | + .34  | Church World Service Postage: | \$58.00 |
|                           |        | Misc.                         | \$60.00 |

**Total (as of 12/21) \$609.76**

The Morning Circle directory contains 15 members. We have an average of 12 members attending each meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Susie Cuseo Morning Circle Secretary

## **Mustard Seed Shoppe Report 2021**

This was a very different year for the Mustard Seed. As with much of the country, COVID affected us greatly. Even though we have many safety precautions in place, we did not open until late April and then closed again for a few weeks in July and August for our usual summer break. The end of August we once again opened and remained open for the rest of the year.

Our goal is to help others. In addition to selling quality clothing at very reduced prices we have continued our donations. After paying our church pledge of \$3,000 we gave Pastor Jen \$550 for the Pastor's Purse so that she may privately help others. The Center for Family Justice received \$1,000 and we gave Monroe's Project Warmth \$1,000 and Social Services \$500. And of course, we bought wreaths from Sr. P. F. (\$350) to decorate the church.

All these donations are possible because of the work of a very small group. Listing names might unfortunately miss someone but special thanks goes to Susie Cuseo for scheduling the shop workers, Ann Zeiner for keeping the funds and Joyce Rousseau and Lois Spence for heading up the sorters and hangers. Jan Pearson and Sue Crea deserve our heartfelt thanks for the many hours they spend keeping the shop running smoothly. We have a very small crew of workers but many, many thanks go to each person who gives time in the shop and behind the scenes. Without you we couldn't do it.

We welcome anyone who would like to join us.

The Mustard Seed Committee

## **Music/Choir Report 2021**

Thanks to our Music Director, Will Duchon, who throughout 2021, despite the Covid Rules and Regulations and different venues, made sure that there was "Music in the Air". With the help of MCC vocalists and musicians, music was always a part of the Services.

The Chancel Choir assembled in time for Advent and Christmas music. Christmas Eve was the debut of the Chime Ensemble.

"All is Well"

Respectively submitted, Betty Heiney, Chancel Choir's Librarian and Scribe Pro Tem

Nominating Committee  
**Monroe Congregational Church**  
**2022 Officers, Boards and Committees**

| <b>Officers</b> |                    | <b>Term</b> | <b>Ends</b>  |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Moderator       | Arlene Redmond     | First       | January 2023 |
| Treasurer       | Bill Stadler       | First       | January 2023 |
| Asst. Treasurer | Fred Dubois        | First       | January 2023 |
| Receiver        | John O'Rourke      | Fourth      | January 2024 |
| Clerk           | Barbara Pellegrino | First       | January 2023 |
| Historian       | Gary Thompson      | Second      | January 2023 |

| <b>Diaconate (12)</b>   |  | <b>Term</b> | <b>Ends</b>  |
|-------------------------|--|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Susie Cuseo (Chair)  |  | Third**     | January 2023 |
| 2. Caleb Nealon (Youth) |  | First       | June 2022    |
| 3. Catherine Gingras    |  | Second      | January 2023 |
| 4. Linda Fracassini     |  | Second      | January 2023 |
| 5. Joanne Malia         |  | Second      | January 2023 |
| 6. Don Parker-Burgard   |  | Second      | January 2023 |
| 7. Nancy Smith          |  | Second      | January 2023 |
| 8. Kristina Logan       |  | First       | January 2023 |
| 9. Bethany Dupuis       |  | First       | January 2023 |
| 10. Jessica Pfalzgraf   |  | First       | January 2024 |
| 11. Michelle Correll    |  | First       | January 2024 |
| 12. Open                |  | First       | January 2024 |

*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       |

| <b>Trustees (7-12)</b>            | <b>Term</b> | <b>Ends</b>  |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Andy Nivison                   | Second      | January 2023 |
| 2. Maria Barresi                  | First       | January 2023 |
| 3. Scott Young                    | First       | January 2023 |
| 4. James Brown                    | First       | January 2023 |
| 5. Kate Briggs                    | First       | January 2023 |
| 6. David Allen (Property Manager) | *           |              |
| 7. Kim Riffard                    | First       | January 2024 |

*Friends of the Board:* Tom Briggs, Bob Hammond (property), Frank Wittenauer

\*Property Manager is an unlimited term.

| <b>Christian Education (6-9)</b> | <b>Term</b>                                     | <b>Ends</b>         |
|----------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 1. Korene Dahl                   | Second  | January 2023        |
| 2. Kelsey Kaminski               | Second  | January 2023        |
| 3. Meg Sullivan                  | First   | January 2023        |
| 4. <b>Kate Parker-Burgard</b>    | <b>First</b>                                    | <b>January 2024</b> |
| 5. <b>Jenna Rice</b>             | <b>First</b>                                    | <b>January 2024</b> |
| 6. <b>Open</b>                   | <b>First</b>                                    | <b>January 2024</b> |
| 7. Jeanette Cardentey-Morales    | (ex officio, CE Coordinator/Jr PF Lead Advisor) |                     |

*Friends of the Board:* Betsy Gilberti

**Christian Education Ex-Officio positions:**

|                      |                                   |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Junior P.F. Advisors | Jeanette Cardentey-Morales (lead) |                 |
|                      | Ann Marie Campbell                | Kate Goyette    |
|                      | Marc Cardentey                    | Julio Morales   |
| Senior P.F. Advisors | Rev. Jennifer Gingras (lead)      | Joe Gilberti    |
|                      | Josh Post                         | Hannah Halloran |
|                      | Paul Cardentey                    | Audra Logan     |

***Senior Pilgrim Fellowship Officers (elected by Senior PF)***

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| President:            | Gavin Mills           |
| Vice President:       | Vinathi (Vee) Sampson |
| Secretary:            | Lauren Unger          |
| Treasurer:            | Evelyn Goyette        |
| Minister of Outreach: | Caleb Nealon          |

| <b>Christian Fellowship: (6-9)</b> | <b>Term</b>  | <b>ends</b>         |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| 1. Michelle Cardentey** (Chair)    | Third        | January 2023        |
| 2. Lisa (Ed) Burke                 | First        | January 2023        |
| 3. Juliana Lavitola                | First        | January 2024        |
| 4. Melissa Coleman                 | First        | January 2024        |
| 5. <b>Open</b>                     | <b>First</b> | <b>January 2024</b> |
| 6. <b>Open</b>                     | <b>First</b> | <b>January 2024</b> |

*Friends of the Board:* Carol Kelly

| <b>Christian Outreach (6-9)</b> | <b>Term</b>  | <b>Ends</b>         |
|---------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| 1. Vaughan Askue (Chair)        | Second       | January 2023        |
| 2. Donna Konkol                 | Second       | January 2023        |
| 3. Leanne McEvoy                | Second       | January 2023        |
| 4. Julie McClenathan            | Second       | January 2023        |
| 5. Kathy Allen                  | First        | January 2023        |
| 6. <b>Karen Matcyk</b>          | <b>First</b> | <b>January 2024</b> |

*Friends of the Board:* Covenant to Care Coordinator: Diane Prall, St George's Supper: Stacy Andrecyk & Kathy Maiolo, Kate Parker-Burgard, Rob McClenathan, Dave Allen, Lois Spence,

***Giving Garden Friends of Outreach (no term)***

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. Donna Konkol    | 3. Lois Spence |
| 2. Rob McClenathan |                |

**Nominating Committee (one 2-year term)**

|                     | <b><u>Ends</u></b> |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Kyla Allen **    | January 2023       |
| 2. Frank Wittenauer | January 2023       |
| 3. Open             | January 2024       |

**UCC CT Conference Delegates**

|                             | <b><u>Term</u></b> | <b><u>Ends</u></b> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Nancy Smith              | Second             | January 2023       |
| 2. Rev. Sheldon Smith       | Second             | January 2023       |
| 3. David Bailey (alternate) | Second             | January 2023       |

**Fairfield East Assoc. Delegates**

|                             | <b><u>Term</u></b> | <b><u>Ends</u></b> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Nancy Smith              | Second             | January 2023       |
| 2. Rev. Sheldon Smith       | Second             | January 2023       |
| 3. David Bailey (alternate) | Second             | January 2023       |

**Mustard Seed Committee (self-appointed, no term)**

- |                           |                    |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Peggy Villani (chair)  | 4. Lois Spence     |
| 2. Ann Zeiner (treasurer) | 5. Jackie Bleakney |
| 3. Kate Parker-Burgard    | 6. Jan Pearson     |

**Safe Conduct (2 + 2 appointed by Council)**

|                       | <b><u>Term</u></b> | <b><u>Ends</u></b> |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Don Parker-Burgard |                    | January 2023 – 1st |
| 2. Jeanette Cardentey |                    | January 2023 – 1st |

**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. Ann Zeiner
4. Wendy Colegrove

**Strawberry Festival Co-Chairs**

1. John Maiolo
2. Clark Gingras
3. Josh Post

*\*\* Vote extended 1 year by special request of Annual meeting*

**Monroe Congregational Church**  
**Investment Account Activity**  
**January 1 – November 30, 2021**

|                                 |                    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Beginning Balance 1/1/21</b> | \$686,991.40       |
| Withdrawals                     | -\$25,415.00       |
| Dividends Reinvested            | \$9,695.28         |
| Unrealized Gain/Loss            | <u>\$48,503.06</u> |
| <b>Ending Balance 11/30/21</b>  | \$719,774.74       |

**Investment Fund Detail**

|                         |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Helen Sherman Trust*    | \$318,169.97       |
| Clara Johnson Trust**   | \$133,785.67       |
| Wilton Estate Fund***   | \$220,911.68       |
| General Investment Fund | <u>\$46,907.42</u> |
| Total                   | \$719,774.74       |

\*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.

Submitted by John O’Rourke, Receiver



## **MONROE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST PROPOSED 2022 BUDGET**

The Proposed 2022 Operating Budget as recommended by the Board of Trustees is presented on the reverse side. MCC is projected to conclude the current year with a modest operating surplus. While this is positive news, it should be noted that this was made possible by temporary financial assistance through the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan.

Below is a summary of the significant changes and key assumptions underlying the Proposed 2022 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 current year.
- Rental income is projected at \$57,000, which includes income from renting the parsonage at \$2300/month, commencing February 1, 2022. It also includes continuation of hosting the Monroe Summer Day Camp on campus during the summer months.
- Income from investments is projected at \$25K which is the recommended withdrawal amount to maintain 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 estimated at \$5K, which is awaiting confirmation from the Mustard Seed Board. Again, this number is based on a return to more normal operations.

### **Expenses:**

- Compensation & Benefits is expected to rise to \$225K, which reflects the addition of the new CE Coordinator and includes an allowance for a modest (2%) cost-of-living adjustment for staff plus funds for the pastor's housing allowance based on \$1650/month for 11 months.
- Facility costs are budgeted at \$83K, which includes an allowance to pay property taxes on the parsonage estimated at \$8K/year.
- Program costs are budgeted at \$20K which includes an allowance for pastoral coverage during the Pastor's scheduled sabbatical (\$8K)