



Tony Ehrlich, 2011

*The First
Congregational Church
of Lee*

*An Open & Affirming
Congregation of the
United Church of Christ*

*2020 Annual Report
and materials for the
2021 Annual Meeting*

held on
Monday, January 25, 2021



~ 2020 ~

Virginia (Ginny) Markham

Arthur Martin

Edward P Schmidt

Ann A Snow

Ernest E Frink

Evelyn Chaffee

Robert J MacFarlane

Jeffrey P Harford

Patricia Ducharme MacDowell

Joseph Sorrentino, Sr

Marilyn Rossier

Ruth Naomi Phillips

Robert A Welcome

Gale I Rydel

Robert F Postens

Eleanor R Shiels

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Bill and Faith’s farewell service

ANNUAL MEETING - JANUARY 25, 2021

7:00 pm via ZOOM

Call to Order & Welcome – Dave Markham

Opening Devotions – Rev Jay Terbush

In Memoriam - Dave Markham

Minutes From 2020 Annual Meeting – Melissa Myers

Slate of Officers – Dave Markham

Budget Report 2020 and proposed 2021 Annual Budget – Jane Gleason

Minister's Report – Bill Neil

Other reports – Please note that reports will not be read at the meeting, so please read them in advance. Committee Chairs are open for questions regarding their reports.

New business

A Look Ahead to 2021

Motion to Adjourn

Stand for Lord's Prayer

Minutes: Annual Meeting, February 2, 2020

Call to Order and Welcome: Jane Gleason at 12:25 pm with 31 in attendance

Opening Devotion: Bill Neil

In Memoriam: Bill Neil read the list of members and friends that have died in 2019

Minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting: Motion to accept without reading by T. Roosa and second by M. Rossier. All in favor.

Minutes from a Special Congregational Meeting of March 3. Motion, C. VanAusdall and second by F. Neil. All in Favor.

Slate of Officers: Bill explained that with the new regulations and new conference alignment we now can have 3 delegates who can vote at meetings of the delegation. Our new conference is called the Southern New England Conference. Barbara Mahony also volunteered to serve. Faith Neil was the only person signed up. The addition of B. Mahony was moved by C. VanAusdall and seconded by M. Driscoll. The slate of officers as amended was moved by F. Neil and seconded by M. Eveland and voted all in favor.

Budget Report 2019: D. Markham reviewed the highlights of the 2019 budget which overall came in pretty much as planned with the notable exception of the insulation project. Please note the treasurer's report as attached for 2019 under the **Budget for 2020**. The change in numbers appear under Total Fund Raisers and Facilities Projects. Dave expressed appreciation for the significant donations that were given to get this project done. Our utility bills are, in fact, significantly lower. The insulation work cost \$70,000, with the church paying 10% of the cost or \$7,000. Our cost was a little lower than that however. It was also discovered that we in fact had "knob and tube" wiring throughout the sanctuary section of the building. That was replaced with up-to-code wiring by Henry's Electric. Thanks to all. He also recognized the work done by Marcia Eveland to help us recognize where our church dollars are going and what our response to that needs to be in our giving.

Annual Budget 2020: Thanks to our overall increased giving, the rental income and fundraisers, we can move forward for another year. Dave mentioned that for the first time in years we have been within the guidelines for non-profits of using less than 4-5% of their invested funds in the regular budget. In fact, with the donation from the Chris Niebuhr estate, we actually made it also for 2019. Garth spoke briefly about the invested funds with RBC. We are up significantly for 2019 and now have over \$400,000 in invested and endowed funds.

Minister's Report: Please check the attached report from Bill, **Report of the Pastor 2019**. Bill presented the whole church evaluation project which has been on the list of things to do for quite some time. He has read about evaluations, looked at evaluations, and modified a form for us to use in our evaluation. This will be the project of February. Everyone was encouraged to take a form and fill it out as best you can and try to attend one of the feedback sessions or if you cannot do that at least get any significant information in to Tari or Bill. Only you can help us identify what are we doing well and we need to improve or expand our ministry. Summary meetings will on Feb. 15 and Feb. 16, with a final meeting on Feb. 26. (Subject to revision).

Other Reports: Please see the other attached reports as part of the agenda and call to meeting. Ellen Krupka has prepared a report of the History and Archive Committee and their work over the past year. Garth suggested it be incorporated into the F and F report and as a reminder to be sure to include it regularly in the future.

A Look Ahead to 2020: Garth spoke primarily of the three major projects of 2020. We do have a good quote for paving the handicap parking area behind the church. This has been in the works for years and we need to get it done! Paving costs will be about \$6,000 and a portion of that is budgeted but we will need your donations to make up the difference. We also need to solve the wet back yard issue. A curtain drain and dry well should be installed. We don't have an estimate on that yet. The other item is a Labyrinth. We need to pin down the what, how, when, etc. for this one. Chris Niebuhr left us a portion of his estate. We have received the largest portion of it but do expect significant additional money. It may make some sense to use some of that both as a remembrance to him, but also to get some needed work completed. We'll keep you posted. Perhaps we can name this the year of the back yard!

Motion to Adjourn: So moved F. Neil and second L. O'Shaughnessy

Respectfully Submitted,

Garth Story, Secretary Pro Tem

Clerk's Report – 2020

The current count of our membership to date is as follows:

Active Members 114 on 2019/12/31

Additions <i>by Confirmation</i>	5
Phoebe Bailey	
Rydel Drenga	
Zebulun Drenga	
Wyatt Markham	
Daniel Snow	
Additions <i>by Reactivation</i>	4
Donald Moffatt	
Dorinda Moffatt	
Jennifer Moffatt	
Heather Moffatt	
Removals <i>by transfer</i>	4
Donald Moffatt	

Dorinda Moffatt	
Jennifer Moffatt	
Heather Moffatt	
Removals <i>by death</i>	1
Marilyn Rossier	
Evelyn Chaffee (inactive member)	
Removals <i>to inactive list</i>	2
Ruth Francis	
Christopher Nerrie	

Membership 2020/12/31 116

There were no baptisms or wedding in 2020.
Respectfully Submitted, Melissa Myers, Clerk

Active Members and Friends 12/31/2020

Archibald, Heather
Arnold, John & Gloria
Bailey, Brian
Bailey, Phoebe
Biron, Peg
Blakeslee, Carol
Bleston, Shirley
Brazee, Marie
Bugley, Bob
Burdick, Ken
Carrington, Marion
Clayson, Lindsay
Clayson, Susan
Clifford, Charlie & Holly
Colli, Maria
Congdon, Martha & Angelini, Kate
Constantinos, Patricia
Copper, Laura
Cosmus, Jack
Cosmus, Naomi
Cozzaglio, Sandra
D'Elia, Dorathea (Dottie)
Davis, Rev. Cara Barkett
Davis, Church
DelSignor, Sarah & James
DelSignor, Kate
Demers, Janice & Bob
Dolmanisth, Karen
Drenga, Craig & Jessica
Drenga, Rydel
Drenga, Zebulun
Driscoll, Monda
Dutton, Debbie & Ted
Eveland, Rev. Marcia
Faivre, Delores (Dee)
Fassell, Isabel
Fennelly, Catherine
Fennelly, Marilyn & Bill
Fix, Gary & Anne
Fontana, Marilyn
Franchere, Timothy
Fraser, Dorothy P (DeeDee)
Gangloff, Raymond & Carolyn
Giarolo, Jessica
Gleason, Jane & Ralph
Greene, Teresa
Gregg, Rick
Harwood, Denise & John
Haynes, Charles
Heck, Jennie
Height, Jo-Ellen & Gordon
Holian, Barbara
Holt, Henry & Mary
Hunt, Linda
Hunter, Don
Jorczak, Paul & Victoria
Kershner, Seth
Ketchen, Andrew & Grace
Ketchen, Sarah
Klahn, Wanda & Bill
Krupka, Ellen
Kruse, Karina
Kuhn, Hayden & Olivia
Lanoue, Lynn & Harlan
Leyden, Melinda
Lloyd, Lexie
Lockenwitz, Arlene
Loring, Russell
MacNayr, Emmilyn
MacNayr, Matthew
Mahony, Barbara
Markham, Cristina
Markham, David & Margaret
Markham, Wyatt
Maroni, Sheila
Martin, Timothy & Patricia (Niti)
Matarazzo, Julie
Matarazzo, Robert & Betsy
McDerment, Jeffrey & Jessica
McNutt, Judy
Melbourne, Ruth F.
Miller, Gerard & Elaine
Miller, Hannah
Miller, Jordan
Monachina, Paul & Joyce
Monteleone, Kellie
Moore, Michelle
Morehouse, Merrill & Karen
Morehouse, Pamela
Morehouse, Rainsford (Ray) & Judith
Morrison, James
Mougin, Debbie
Myers, Karl & Melissa
Neil, Rev. Bill & Faith
Ohman, Conrad & Margaret (Margy)
Olds, Judy
O'Shaughnessy, Rev. Laura
Palmer, Frances (Joan)
Perry, Barbara
Phillips, Dorothy
Rathbun, Mary
Renner, Chenoë
Renner, David
Renner, Zoe
Richard, David & Patricia
Rizzardini, Edward & Karen
Rock, Joseph
Roosa, Michael
Roosa, Peter & Tari
Smothers, Linda
Snow, Danna & P. Brian
Snow, Daniel
Snow, Katrina
Sorrentino, Zachary & Samantha
Spalinger, Richard & Jeanette
Sterlin, Ann
Stone, David
Stone, Robert Francis & Susan
Story, Garth & Karen
Sturgis, Franklin, V
Tillotson, Brian & Bonnie
Tillotson, Larry & Lucille
Topham, David & Jill
Tremblay, Madelyn
Tucker, Nancy
Tucker, Susan E.
VanAusdall, Rev. Charles
Wadsworth, James
Walker, Cheryl
Wheeler, Charles
Williams, Amy & Josh
Zelehoski, Raymond & Christine



Chief Konkapot Water Fountain

Report of the Pastor – 2020

Rev. Bill Neil (12/23/2020)

Weekly: Worship planning and participation; Choir; Tuesday Bible Study at the Story's until the time of COVID.

Monthly: Prayer Ministry; Pilgrim's Way gatherings; Lee Food Pantry (when possible); Meetings of Committees and Council – some in person, some via zoom. Our new COVID Reopening Team has met regularly.

Occasional: *Peer Group for Spiritual Direction; Community Meals (until they ceased), Grab 'n Go.*

Berkshire Association and SNEUCC: I attended one ordination and one funeral. I attended the Association's Annual Meeting and the Annual Meeting of the new Southern New England Conference – both via zoom.

Berkshire Interfaith Organizing: Martha Congdon has continued to serve as BIO's President and Rev. Laura O'Shaughnessy is our congregation's representative to the Executive Council. BIO experienced a huge transition of leadership as Wendy Krom left the position of Lead Organizer and was replaced by Dondei Dean.

Seasonal and Special: Most of our special and seasonal events were canceled or done using Zoom, YouTube or Facebook. Planning for a big *50th Anniversary Celebration of Earth Day* continued until we finally had to give it up with hope for an event in 2021. We celebrated Scout Sunday in February. We did offer a small gathering to discuss the book, *Caste*. Several were able to attend a fund-raising gathering on behalf of Brian Bailey, just before the lock down. The *Christmas Bell Concert* was able to go forward thanks to the folks who televise via CTSSB. Judy Olds led a group of 10 plus bell ringers and musicians plus 3 singers for two performances. *Christmas Eve* will be presented via Facebook as well as my *Farewell Service* on 12/27/20.

Pastoral Services: Visitations at homes, hospitals, and nursing facilities were mostly not allowed. I led Memorial Services for – Robert MacFarlane, Patricia Ducharme MacDowell, Marilyn Rossier, Robert F. Postens, Arthur Martin, Shaun M. Litchfield, and Jeffrey Harford. In addition, our church family lost Evelyn Chaffee and other family members or friends: Ginny Markham, Anna Snow, Joe Sorrentino, Ruth Naomi Phillips, Gale I. Rydel, and Eleanor Shiels. Marcia Eveland and I led a Confirmation training that resulted in the Confirmation and Membership of Phoebe Bailey, Rydel Drenga, Zebulun Drenga, Wyatt Markham, and Daniel Snow.

Major Church Projects: Early in the year we conducted a "*Whole Church Evaluation.*" The method was adapted from "*Completing the Circle*" by David R. McMahill. An extensive questionnaire was completed by several and results were tabulated and written up in a 5-page summary. Most of the takeaways have been put on hold due to the pandemic. They include: Inviting newcomers to coffee hour; adapting the prayers of the people; streamlining announcements; add gatherings for men; offer training for visitation by the laity; work on publicity and outreach to the community. Reviewing these responses could be a good starting place as the congregation begins work with a transitional leader.

The Labyrinth Project ended up on hold as the contractor for the drainage and preparation work was not able to schedule that job this year. The paving of the accessible parking area in the rear of the building was accomplished! We hosted a film crew during the first week of August which added an excitement and activity level otherwise missing during the COVID pandemic.

The major project for the year turned out to be the announcement of my retirement plans and the need to form a Transition Team and begin work toward finding an Intentional Interim or Transitional Pastor. Plans for a Farewell Sunday are well underway as I write this.

Personal Reflections: I had hoped that we could share a celebration of our ministry with a 10 Year Anniversary Party in late March. Due to COVID and my September announcement of my end-of-the-year retirement, we are combining the celebration of our work together with my departure. A big project of my own was the repair of two cataracts with the installation of corrective lenses in both eyes. I am now able to see without glasses. It is helpful when wearing a mask! Faith and I enjoyed a pleasant vacation and 25th wedding anniversary on Nantucket. Upon the announcement of my retirement, we busied ourselves with preparing our Lee home for sale and letting go of many of our acquired possessions. We are looking forward to relocating to Vermont and discovering a new tempo of life.

May every blessing of divine love flow upon and through this congregation.

Pastoral Emergency Fund Report for 2020

Beginning Balance	\$172.81
Donations	\$1,707.64
Given to Families and Individuals	\$1,265.00
Ending Balance (12/29/2020)	\$615.45

Rev. Bill Neil



Report of the Moderator – 2020

My thanks to all members, friends and covenant partners for your unlimited hours of volunteering and for your generous pledges, tithes, and other gifts throughout the year. This has certainly been a challenging, year but in spite of the challenges, the church and its ministries have remained strong and as relevant in the community as ever. The Mission and Ministry programs are richly vibrant and have continued to impact our church and the community. Finance and Facility recognized the need to tap into the federally funded payroll protection program funds. This not only allowed the church to maintain staff but allowed us to accomplish the necessary building and grounds maintenance and upgrades. Most importantly we were able to remain mostly open in a safe manner. Thanks to the COVID reopening team we established protocols that allowed in-person worship for most of the year. And with our newly established on-line presence for live or delayed viewing, we have more ways to offer our ministry than ever before. There is no question that we learned how to adapt and are a stronger church than we were a year ago.

If the pandemic and all the challenges were not enough, we were notified by our pastor Bill Neil that he and Faith decided to retire at year end after 10 years of service. Bill will be missed. We will forever be appreciative of his leadership. He rolled up his sleeves and participated in all the church activities and was a terrific leader for us all. We celebrated Bill's retirement with his last service with us on Dec 27th.

In October we had a special council meeting and formed an Interim/Transitional pastor search team. The team (Garth, Margaret, Carol, Melissa) worked with the conference creating a church profile. They interviewed candidates and assessed alignment of church goals against each candidate's strengths. On December 30th we held an open church meeting where the committee briefed us on the process and provided a candidate recommendation. That candidate Rev. Dr. Jay Terbush will be joining us on January 24th under a one-year contract. We look forward to having Jay join us and lead us into a new year. Please join me in thanking the committee for taking on this challenge and bringing us an excellent choice as transitional pastor.

As we head into the new year, while the pandemic is still front and center, we are starting to see signs that we are getting back to normal. We are once again doing Wednesday night suppers. The Food Pantry, Pilgrim's Way, Berkshire BIO are all active church missions. Sunday church services continue to see increased attendance. Our church staff has never missed a beat. Tari, Jim, Glenn and Bill were there every day for us. We owe them our thanks for figuring out a way to operate while the world around was shutting down. And they did it safely.

As we enter 2021, we can clearly see light at the end of this pandemic. And I believe that we are going to emerge even stronger as a congregation. Losing the ability to attend Sunday services has shown us how socially and spiritually important they are for us all. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to serve as your moderator.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dave Markham

Mission & Ministry – 2020 Report

In February and March 2020, M & M was beginning its Lenten planning. The Covid-19 Pandemic stopped us for a few months, but then we were back, if not actually up-to-speed!

MISSION IN ACTION was able to continue its programs, although not completely at top speed.

We collected offerings for *Heifer Project*, *One Great Hour of Sharing* and *Blanket Sunday*, but the offerings were taken in April and May, when we were unable to make personal requests in church. As a result, we saw a substantial reduction in amounts given.

In August, we put out a call for school supplies, and did very well. Judy Morehouse completely filled her car with the donations. Our thanksgiving Food Drive did very well. In December, when we requested donations for a Christmas Family, we not only received enough donations to truly bless one family, as planned, but enough to assist a second family as well.

As soon as M & M was able to meet in person, we began trying to figure out how to bring back *Community Meals*. With Margy Ohman leading, we began a *Grab-n-Go* program, giving out meals twice each month. Although we have only two community sponsors, church members have stepped up to provide meals for between 30 and 40 people in our community.

We continue to be the biggest supporter of *The Food Bank* in Lee. In this, we are doing very well indeed!

Thank you to everyone who has, in the teeth of a pandemic, continued to open your hearts to help our neighbors in the community and farther afield.

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT 24/7 grieved this year over the passing of Marilyn Rossier, who was at the forefront of our Lenten and Advent programs. In addition, we have now “lost” Faith Neil. A major goal in 2021 will be to find additional members for this group.

In addition, we cancelled our Women’s Retreat. Our church women, however, joined to read *The Bluest Eye*, Toni Morrison’s first book. We gathered at Margaret Markham’s home, and again in our church hall, to discuss the novel. We offered a group reading of *Caste*, by Isabel Wilkerson and an Oprah Winfrey pick. That was less successful as only four people actually read the book in time for the discussion, so we decided to cancel, for now, any future book readings.

THE LEARNING TREE also stopped abruptly when church worship stopped. We had no choice but to cancel our *Good Friday Pilgrimage*. Later in the year, the Pentecost Sunday red balloon celebration was drastically downsized, and the Advent Workshop was also cancelled.

Of course, KEDS ended, but slowly, we regrouped. In September we began a monthly KEDS meeting for an hour on the third Thursday of the month, telling a bible story about a bible child, and then having a related craft and game. We followed that up, on the same day, with a one-hour Confirmation class, in which there were five students. The students were confirmed in December but plan to continue to meet until June 2021.

CONNECTING CONVERSATIONS has been unable to present any member gatherings. As soon as we opened the church to members, this group was up-to-speed, organizing and training ushers and greeters, who have made sure that worshipers had made prior reservations, answered several medical questions, wore masks, and used hand sanitizer prior to picking up a bulletin. During the pandemic, these front-line church volunteers have been a blessing to us.

THE APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT was another victim of the pandemic, but we hope that the trip will happen at a future date.

PUBLIC RELATIONS continued to maintain the website and the Facebook page, and created online and print advertising for the August Craft Fair. During this time of Covid, there was a substantial website review and redesign. Web designer is now Katie Story, who is contracted to consult and assist us with website issues as needed at the cost of a small retainer.

THE COVID REOPENING TEAM was created in early summer by the Church Council. The five members spent many hours reading everything available on UCC and Massachusetts laws and recommendations, before deciding when and how to reopen the church. All hymnals and other worship materials were removed from the sanctuary. Many pews were taped off. Signage was placed in all restrooms and the community hall.

The Team made decisions about KEDS and Confirmation, about the Christmas Fair, the Christmas Concert, and the Christmas Bells Concert. The team members continue to follow the numbers, and all new rules put forth by the Governor, while keeping in mind the suggestions of the UCC.

Grateful ‘thanks’ is given to all the volunteers in M & M who have spent so much of their time imagining how we can be the Church of Christ, the hands and feet of Christ, in this difficult time. On many levels we have been able to continue to serve our church members and our wider community, through the power, strength and creativity of the Holy Spirit. To God be the glory!

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia C. Eveland, Facilitator

Daniel Snow: - This past fall, Daniel Snow helped clean out the flower beds in the Church Courtyard and now helps with recording the Sunday morning services on Facebook. In addition, he assists Glenn with snow removal around the church. He also organized some of the items in our Sunday School Classroom and made his confirmation. With his help within the Church Community, he was able to reach his Eagle Scout goal. Congratulations to Daniel!!!



Publicity Annual Report

With so few events, 2020 was a quiet year:

- Online and print advertising for August craft fair and community suppers
- Substantial website review and redesign; our website designer Katie Story is now contracted to consult and assist us with website issues as needed with a quarterly \$50 retainer
- Maintenance of website and Facebook page

Provisional budget:

Photocopying/brochure production	\$100.00
Website maintenance contract	\$200.00
Print advertising	\$200.00
Gift bags and related supplies	\$ <u>50.00</u>
	\$550.00

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy Phillips

Music Committee Report

The year 2020 started very calmly and all choir members attended Sunday morning services and microphones were shared. The 2019 “Sounds of the Season” concert was successful and the thoughts turned to our Easter and summer themes. Then, in the middle of March it became the Sunday morning Chapel “studio”. We were able to switch to a smaller sound system that would work in the chapel.

I have to commend our leaders of the church, Rev. Bill Neil and Music Director Jim Morrison. The goal was to provide a Sunday morning church service as close as possible to what people were used to. New technical challenges were had. Zoom had to be learned and set up. The small sound board and speakers were moved in with mic stands and cables. There were initially 5 people taking part in the “studio” service, Bill, Jim, Monda Driscoll, Tari Roosa and myself. We all had a role to serve. It was the voices of the few that spoke and still continue to speak for the voices of many. Each person still is using a mic of their own. A few weeks before Easter we contacted Sam Sorrentino who came and helped us connect the sound board directly into the computer. While other churches just had their worship leader doing the service, we had expanded and tried to keep things as “normal” as possible. When it warmed up, we went into the sanctuary and were elated when parishioners were able to come to the services. We now have Josh Topham, Daniel Snow and Glenn Tamir in the back with cameras and the sound board and they are now going through Facebook. “Thank You So Much” to all that have worked so hard.

As the year progressed, we felt it was an honor to be the voices of the choir and the congregation. Jim picked selections of music knowing that we had limited voices and rehearsal time. I look forward to the day when all our choir members can be back, mics can be shared, hugs can be had, hands can be held, and the congregation can sing along.

Now, the update on the bell choir. It was determined at the end of 2019 that the bells would be sent out to be refurbished to the Schulmerich factory in Pennsylvania. The bells are between 35-40 years old. Our church owns 2 octaves and we are using the 3rd octave from The Lady of the Valley Church in Sheffield. It was set up to deliver the bells on March 30th. A week before that date, non-essential businesses were closed. Finally, towards the end of May it reopened, and Tari & Peter took them down. After they were inspected and recommendations were made, we had them refurbished. Total cost was approximately \$3200. This was taken from the money that the Housatonic Church had donated to the Lee church for the music program. The bells were shipped back, since we could no longer go into PA. They replaced 2 bells, which were under warranty, since they could not be tuned to their specifications. The bells arrived back beautiful and sounding wonderful. It is the goal of the bell choir to have a fund raiser in 2021 to replenish at least some of that money.

The bells started rehearsing again in the late summer, staying 6 feet apart and masked. They did a concert outside in the park in October. This was a wonderful opportunity since none of them had played outside before. A big “Thank You” to Jim Morrison & Ralph Olds for moving out the sound equipment, tables and bells for this.

Now, it was onto the Christmas concert. The church Covid Response Team met with Jim and me and made the decision that the “big” concert with all the singers and instruments was too dangerous at this time, but the bell choir could have one and have up to 4 singers.

The members of the bell choir were asked and most felt fine doing it. We did have two ringers that were not comfortable at that time, so two new ringers were found and in mid-October the choir started rehearsing 16 songs, five of them to be done with singers. Jim worked on those songs, adding harmonies, and then spending time with the singers. In the meantime, I ran into my friend Matt Fillio at Lee High School and

was talking to him about it and wanting him to record it as usual. Matt suggested that we air it live over CTSB TV and he would have his students make it a school project. I was elated when Matt said he would be the contact person between us and CTSB. He also had to contact the Town of Lee. It was through the town hall “feed” that CTSB was connected. Amazing!! People all over the world could tune in for some Christmas Spirit!! It was a huge undertaking for the bell choir to learn that many songs in such a short time. I am blessed with a group of amazing people. The ringers and the singers all did an amazing performance, and it was shown live both nights. CTSB was also able to show “reruns” of the concert after that.

The bells will start rehearsing again in February and hoping that in the end of August or beginning of September we can do a dinner and a concert for a fund raiser.

Most of the planned 2020 “Sounds of the Season” Christmas Concert will be used for 2021.

Again, a HUGE “THANK YOU” to Jim Morrison for his time and talent. Through his dedication, the music program continued throughout a “challenging” year.

On behalf of all involved in the music, “thank you” and “stay safe & healthy”.

Sincerely,

Judy Olds, Music Committee member
and Head Ding-A-Ling



Women’s Reading Group

Facility & Finance– 2020 Report

Garth Story, Chair Ralph Gleason, Ellen Krupka, Dave Markham, John Arnold and Tim Martin

The year of the pandemic. We didn’t get far into 2020 before the whole familiar world around us changed. By March meetings were being affected and worship had to look different. Our service change started in the chapel on Zoom and it quickly became evident that we needed to figure out how to live stream our church service. I called local churches that had moved successfully in that direction and found out what we would need. Of course, like everything else, if you need something it is already sold out! After more research it seemed that the best stable platform would be to go to Sling Studio. Thanks to Judy Olds and Glenn Tamir for their contacts, as their conclusions were the same as mine, and we ordered Sling Studio and the pieces needed to make it work. Jim Morrison helped us out, as we had to get audio directly from our sound board. Judy Olds also helped with all the mics that had to be set up for each service. Daniel Snow, Glenn Tamir and Josh Topham are all able to run the equipment and I was happy to be able to leave them in charge. We generally have two cameras, one donated to the church and the other is Glenn’s. It gives us good capability for production.

The other big item was to figure out how to tape off seating so that we could have people come to the service. That overall has worked out fine thanks to Marcia Eveland and others who have assisted in trying to keep us all safe!

Finances in a pandemic. We are so thankful to all of you who have continued supporting our ministry in the Berkshires. Support through regular giving has pretty much kept pace. We don’t take offerings anymore! Our office rentals have kept pace with some appropriate adjustments. Building usage and, therefore, some income has fallen by the wayside. Included in this is the annual holiday craft fair. We have

saved some on expenses and there is some good news. Jane Gleason and Dave Markham applied for and got PPP funds (payroll protection) to help us keep all employed! Our invested funds have performed wonderfully through Terry Webb and RBC, the Royal Bank of Canada. We right now have over \$600,000 in our invested and endowed fund account. That gives us availability of more operating capital while still being able to use only 4% or 5% of the funds annually. Only a few years ago we had about \$150,000 in that account. Thanks to everyone who has helped turn us around financially. If giving keeps up to our regular levels and we can get our programs back in gear, we will continue to be able to serve Lee and the Berkshires where God has placed us.

Facility and projects. Each year we try to commit \$5,000 to \$10,000 of our budget to building projects. With \$5,000 in the budget this year we had hoped to get the parking area, for people with accessibility issues, paved. We had a bid of \$5,860 to get the paving done and as usual we hoped we could raise funds through donations above and beyond our regular giving. Thanks to your faithfulness we got donations totaling \$2,912 toward the project and we got it done!! A great asset to the back yard. Tim Martin and his friend Ryc Ward have continued to scrape, prime and paint! Much of the church, sort of 10 feet high and down, has been completely painted. Looks like we'll not face all of our paint peeling off as we did only 10 years ago. If anyone likes to paint way up high, let me know.

A couple of projects lie in our future. We must work on drainage issues! The back yard cannot be used effectively until it has drainage. We have some numbers, but it wasn't possible to do any major fund raising with a pandemic going on. There is also the cellar project. We must stabilize the sanctuary floor. One beam and lots of support posts need replacing. Not visible, but a necessary improvement.

Thank you all for your continued support of our church community.

Respectfully submitted, Garth Story

2020 HISTORY AND ARCHIVES COMMITTEE REPORT

Members of this committee are: Sandy Cozzaglio (Chair), Susan Stone, Ellen Krupka and Marcia Eveland. We have not met since the start of the pandemic in February/March 2020 to review, organize and file pertinent historical information, pictures and reports. We do, however, receive requests from people looking for ancestral information of prior church members and their activities. When possible, we try to respond to those requests.

This past year we have been unable to present historical displays of various church activities due to the Corona Virus.

When the virus /vaccinations are completed, we look forward to setting up a new schedule for future displays for Calendar Year 2021.

SANCTUARY CHAIR DONATIONS

In the late summer of 2020, the Rev. Donald Gray and Members of the former First Baptist Church of Adams sold their church in the center of Adams to a private entity for use as a place for presenting musical performances. Their membership was dwindling and the Baptist Church was in need of significant repairs which were too costly for their congregation to have repaired.

As a result of a personal connection that Ellen Krupka has with one of the Church's members, Rev. Gray and its' members offered to donate their three (3) beautiful oak Sanctuary Chairs and a marble-topped Communion Table to the Lee Congregational Church. We gladly accepted these items as a couple of our Sanctuary chairs are not easily repairable.

These donated items are a wonderful addition to our Sanctuary and it will be an honor to use them during our worship service. The Chairs and the Communion Table will be a continued reminder of their generosity and the Spirit of God that we all share in each of us.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen F. Krupka

2020 Financial Report:

This has been a challenging year for everyone as we all struggle with the pandemic and the changes in our lives required to keep us all safe and healthy. This includes the financial health of our church as well. In June, we applied for and received a Payroll Protection Plan forgivable loan of \$26,000.00. These funds allowed us to retain our staff who continued to work throughout this pandemic and to offset the loss of income from fundraising activities.

Offerings: Our total offerings for 2020 were \$122,940. This is \$5,560 less than our projected budget, but remarkable given the financial impact that the pandemic has had on many. Thank you to everyone for your continued generosity and faithfulness in keeping your pledges up to date.

Fundraisers: Due to the COVID-19 restrictions we were unable to hold the majority of our fundraisers. Despite many folks working very hard to find alternate ways to manage these restrictions, in the end safety concerns prevented the Holiday Fair, Christmas Concert and Old-Fashioned Church Suppers from taking place. The Craft Fair and contributions from the Farmers Market provided income of \$2,644.00.

Building Usage: Total rental income for the year was \$12,415. We did lose some rental income due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Salaries and Compensation: All salaries and benefits for the 4 church employees were on budget and in line with expectations.

Facility and Finance: Facility and Finance costs totaled \$21,595, (\$12,505 less than anticipated). Utility costs were about 50% less than anticipated due to reduced use of the building as well as savings from the insulation project completed last year. The paving of the back parking lot was completed at a cost of \$5,860.00 which was offset by donations of \$2,912.00.

Endowment Fund Transfers: The 2020 budget allowed for a withdrawal of \$16,000 from our invested funds. Our total withdrawals were \$8,000.00.

Mission and Ministry: The ASP program was postponed until 2021 but other mission and outreach programs were fully supported.

Bequests: We received a bequest from the Chris Niebuhr estate of \$23,456.00. Use of these funds has not yet been determined.

2021 Proposed Budget:

The proposed budget for 2021 includes an estimate of anticipated pledges. If you have not sent in your pledge card yet, you can do so at any time. The proposed 2021 budget includes a contract for our transitional pastor as well as a 2% increase for the music director, administrative assistant and custodian. Some of our remaining expenses have been level funded as it is unclear at this point in time when we will return to full use of our building and participation in our various programs. This budget proposal includes use of a surplus from our 2020 budget and a maximum transfer of 4% of our endowment funds to offset the deficit.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane E. Gleason

Budget for 2021

Comparative Budget 2021 vs. 2020

Income	Budget 2020	Actuals 2020	Proposed Budget 2021
Offerings			
*Pledge Contributions	\$ 115,500.00	\$ 107,616.00	\$ 110,000.00
Non Pledge Contributions	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 15,324.00	\$ 13,000.00
Total Offerings	\$ 128,500.00	\$ 122,940.00	\$ 123,000.00
Total Fund Raisers	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 2,644.00	\$ 10,000.00
Building Usage	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 12,415.00	\$ 13,000.00
Donations & Bequests	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 23,896.00	\$ 1,000.00
Misc. Income	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
Paycheck Protection Program	\$ -	\$ 26,000.00	\$ -
Total Income	\$ 160,500.00	\$ 187,895.00	\$ 148,000.00
Expenses			
Pastor Salary			
Pastor Salary		\$ 47,322.00	\$ 52,708.00
Housing Allowance		\$ 26,884.00	\$ 28,750.00
Church Portion FICA Med		\$ 5,696.00	\$ 6,200.00
Pastor Retirement Contribution	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,900.00
Pastor Salary Total	\$ 78,391.00	\$ 79,902.00	\$ 94,558.00
Benefits and Reimbursements			
Medical Insurance	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 5,648.00	\$ 5,959.00
Pastor Life Ins	\$ 361.00	\$ -	\$ -
Cont. Ed	\$ 800.00	\$ 259.00	\$ 800.00
Business Travel	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 638.00	\$ 2,000.00
Professional Expenses	\$ 800.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 800.00
Total Benefits & Reimbursements	\$ 9,461.00	\$ 7,145.00	\$ 9,559.00
Music Director	\$ 9,720.00	\$ 9,728.00	\$ 9,923.00
Custodian	\$ 13,837.00	\$ 9,829.00	\$ 10,275.00

Administrative Assistant	\$ 18,092.00	\$ 17,764.00	\$ 18,454.00
Church Portion FICA Med	\$ 3,289.00	\$ 3,151.00	\$ 3,000.00
Total Staff Compensation	\$ 44,938.00	\$ 40,472.00	\$ 41,652.00
Mission and Ministry			Page 2
Learning Tree (Christen Ed)	\$ 600.00	\$ 59.00	\$ 600.00
Music	\$ 600.00	\$ 1,348.00	\$ 600.00
Conn Conver(Vit, Hosp, Dia)	\$ 300.00	\$ -	\$ 300.00
Guest Ministers	\$ 600.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 600.00
Feeding Lee (Suppers + Pantry)	\$ 500.00	\$ 486.00	\$ 500.00
SNEUCC/MA/BIO Dues	\$ 5,689.00	\$ 6,189.00	\$ 6,690.00
Other Missions	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 90.00	\$ 1,000.00
Publicity	\$ 300.00	\$ 850.00	\$ 300.00
*Spiritual Life	\$ 500.00	\$ 3,318.00	\$ 500.00
Subtotal Mission and Ministry	\$ 10,089.00	\$ 12,790.00	\$ 11,090.00
Facilities and Finance			
Gas	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 3,256.00	\$ 4,000.00
Electric	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 1,326.00	\$ 2,500.00
Broadband	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,421.00	\$ 1,404.00
Water/Sewer	\$ 600.00	\$ 673.00	\$ 600.00
Custodial Supplies	\$ 750.00	\$ 772.00	\$ 750.00
Snow Removal	\$ 400.00	\$ 340.00	\$ 400.00
Garbage	\$ 450.00	\$ 490.00	\$ 588.00
Property /WC Insurance	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 6,891.00	\$ 8,500.00
Office Supplies	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 1,704.00	\$ 2,500.00
Maintenance	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,382.00	\$ 4,000.00
*Facilities Projects	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 2,339.00	\$ 6,000.00
Subtotal Operating Expenses	\$ 33,900.00	\$ 21,594.00	\$ 31,242.00
Total Expenses	\$ 176,779.00	\$ 161,903.00	\$ 188,101.00
Less Surplus from 2020			\$ (18,000.00)
Endowment Transfers	\$ 16,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ (24,000.00)
*Estimate of anticipated pledges			

Nominations, Church Leadership for 2021

Note: Persons may be nominated from the floor to fill vacancies provided they are present and agree to serve.

Church Officers:

Moderator – Dave Markham	Assistant Moderator – Laura O’Shaughnessy
Treasurer – Jane Gleason	Assistant Treasurer – Carol Blakeslee
Collectors – Dave Topham	Betsy Matarazzo
Clerk - Melissa Myers	

Additional Volunteers for major workings of the church

Delegates - Barbara Mahony (two openings)

Mission and Ministry: Chair Marcia Eveland

Barbara Mahony	Dorothy Phillips	Margaret Markham
Tari Roosa	Judy Morehouse	Laura O’Shaughnessy
Jo-Ellen Height	Dave Markham	Jim Morrison

Facility and Finance: Chair Garth Story

Tim Martin	Ellen Krupka	Ralph Gleason
Dave Markham	John Arnold	Jane Gleason, Treasurer

The Personnel Committee by definition is the Assistant Moderator, Assistant Treasurer, and the chair or representative from Pastoral Relations, Mission & Ministry and Facility & Finance.

The Pastoral Relations Committee

Wanda Klahn	Charles VanAusdall
Tim Martin	Ellen Krupka

The **Church Council**: Moderator, Asst. Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk, Pastor, and Chairs of Facilities & Finance and Mission & Ministry with one additional person from each of the two committees.

Diaconate: Chair (open)

Jane Gleason	Ellen Krupka
Tim Martin	Dorothy Phillips
Susan Stone	(two openings)



There is always room for additional helpers on any of these and other committees.

Church Staff

Transitional Pastor _____ The Rev. Dr. Jay Terbush
Director of Music _____ Jim Morrison
Office Administrator _____ Tari Wheeler Roosa
Sexton _____ Glenn Withers



The First Congregational Church of Lee

An Open & Affirming Congregation of the
United Church of Christ



25 Park Place, PO Box 395
Lee, MA 01238-0395

413.243.1033 uccleechurch@gmail.com
www.ucc-lee.org

