



THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SALISBURY

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Salisbury, Connecticut

**THE 271st ANNUAL MEETING
Part II**

REPORTS, BUSINESS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Sunday, April 24, 2016

271st ANNUAL MEETING, PART II OF
THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SALISBURY
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

SUNDAY, April 24, 2016

AGENDA

PRAYER

CALL TO ORDER

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING, PART I

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF REPORTS:

Council Report
Deacon's Report
Treasurer's Report
Christian Education Report
Christian Action Report
Music Committee Report

The Clerk's Report
Trustees Report
Hospitality Report
Religious Education Report
Ushers Committee Report

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE'S REPORT

ELECTION Officers and Committees

OTHER BUSINESS

THE PASTOR

PRAYER

ADJOURNMENT

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SALISBURY

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Salisbury, Connecticut

Call To The Annual Meeting

The 271th Annual Meeting, Part II, of the Congregational Church of Salisbury will be held following the worship service on Sunday, April 24, 2016 for the purpose of:

1. Presentation of Reports from Boards and Committees
2. The Nominating Committee's Report
3. The Election of Officers and Committees
4. Other Business

The Agenda

CALL of the Meeting

ACCEPTANCE of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting, Part I, of October 25, 2015

REPORTS as noted above

PASTOR'S REPORT

271st ANNUAL MEETING of the CONGREGATION, Part I
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF SALISBURY – U.C.C.
October 25, 2015

Moderator Sara Wardell called the meeting to order following the worship service, it having been determined that a quorum of forty-three members was present.

The Clerk read the call to the meeting, which was then opened with prayer by Pastor Diane.

A motion to cast a single ballot for the slate presented for the at-large nominating committee members was seconded and unanimously passed. The at-large members of the 2016 Nominating Committee will be: David Rich and Jeanette Weber.

Pastor Diane began the discussion of the 2015 budget with reflections on the nature of a thoughtful and carefully considered budget as a theological document revealing who we are and what we believe. After five years in Salisbury, she finds a healthy church ready to navigate cultural changes. After months of work, the Trustees drafted a written policy relating to expenditures from the endowment, which we are so fortunate to have received from those who came before the present congregation.

The policy is: In July of each year, the trustees will set a percentage to draw from the endowment. Any monies not expended at the end of the year will be channeled to benevolences in addition to line item benevolences. The percentage for this budget year is 4.5%.

Historically, we have taken what was needed, returning any unexpended funds to the endowment. The change will give us the power to make a substantial gift at the end of the year to make a major difference. A committee will be formed to determine how the funds will be expended. With a five million dollar endowment, our goal is not to grow the endowment but to imagine ways to use it to be responsive to our calling and affect the world's problems, both near and far.

A motion was made and duly seconded to adopt the budget as presented.

There followed a spirited discussion raising questions about who will decide how the money will be spent, the importance of maintaining our physical facilities, concern that spending could be subject to manipulation and concern about maintaining the "buying power" of the endowment.

Trustees assured the congregation that restricted funds will remain restricted and that the percentage draw for this year is the amount that the trustees determined could be safely drawn without impacting negatively the future "buying power" of the endowment. The investments and budget will be carefully monitored throughout the year so there are no surprises. The budget is transparent, designed to show everything on which the church spends money. In no way does it lessen the importance of the annual appeal.

This budget does reflect a change: we will contribute the "first fruits" not the leftovers.

The motion was approved by vote without opposition or abstention. Pastor Diane reminded the congregation that this is the beginning, not the end, of the conversation and thanked those who have worked hard and thoughtfully.

The meeting was adjourned.

Louise F. Brown, Clerk



COUNCIL REPORT

Friends:

Since last June your Council has been meeting monthly, except for December, to discuss both practical and philosophical matters. We have talked about issues brought to us from the other committees and have also focused on what sort of church we'd like to be in the future. Because we are the largest and most representative committee and because we work on behalf of the congregation, our meetings have been interesting and enlightening. As a committee we are working on a new understanding of our own role in a changing church world.

Below is a brief summary of some of our discussions over the past 10 months.

WELCOME:

How to "widen our welcome," become more inclusive, provide an "extravagant" welcome.

We reviewed and discussed this proposed "statement of welcome:"

The Congregational Church of Salisbury comes together as faithful followers of the words and teachings of Jesus Christ. We strive to be a community of hope. We open our hearts and church doors to everyone, and welcome as part of our faith background, marital status, family structure, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, mental and physical ability, economic and social status, to share in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship sacraments, rites, responsibilities, blessings and joy of our church family. We are open and affirming to all God's children. To everyone and anyone who would walk in the ways of God with us, we say with many voices: No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

MUSIC

The transition to a new Minister of Music and the impact on a hard-working Music Committee; the role of new music programs on the church in general and music as part of our increasingly vigorous welcome.

MEMBERSHIP

What does it mean to be a Member; is the definition/role changing; should we discontinue having Members or requiring committee heads to be Members? We decided we would not.

BUDGET/FINANCE

Committee spending and the importance of a "budget narrative" were both discussed.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURES

This is an on-going conversation: how does committee work effectively support the mission of the church; what challenges do committees face?

PASTOR

Diane's sabbatical leave, how the church will function in her absence, and her Doctor of Ministry multi-event project, "Peace Through Understanding" have generated enthusiastic and supportive discussion. This project clearly connects to goals surrounding "widening our welcome."

I want to thank all the Council members who have both shown up and spoken up. Attendance has been remarkably good. Our disagreements have been agreeable, and our discussions interesting. In May we plan an evaluation of our progress by answering the question, "how are we doing ?"

Thank you all.
Sara Wardell



CLERK'S REPORT

Received into Membership – April 26, 2015 – April 24, 2016

By Reaffirmation of Faith and/or Transfer

Greg Arifian
Pam Arifian
Hatsie Baltus
Jack Bowman
Jane Deng
Shawn Deng
Dan Edmundson
Lorna Edmundson
Athena Fliakos
Ryan Gackenheimer
Kristine Graham
Beth Isler

Bill Kellett
Nancy Kellett
Sheryl Kennedy
Sarah Morrison
Tom Morrison
Charlie Norman
Helen Scoville
Kevin Wolgemuth
Lia Wolgemuth
Margaret Vail
Kathleen Voldstad
Michael Voldstad

Baptism

Parker Feen
Miles Cary Samuel Ullman
Avery Clark

In Memoriam

Albert Sly	December 24, 2015
Douglas Patton	January 12, 2016
Mary Wadsworth	March 18, 2016
Richard A. Dwelley	March 23, 2016

Total Membership: 307



BOARD OF DEACONS REPORT
ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

The Board of Deacons continued with many of its customary activities, including assisting Pastor Diane in the life of the church, participating in/supporting Sunday worship, and being in covenant with the members of the congregation.

1. The Deacons participated in serving communion, being lay readers, distributing flowers and assisting at special services. Two members of the Youth Group were lay readers for the Palm Sunday and Easter services.
2. We welcomed two new deacons to the Board: Bob Maxwell and Karin Noyes.
3. For a third year in a row, we developed and conducted the service for the first Sunday after Christmas. This year, Karin Noyes and Betsy Beck provided very moving commentary on an important aspect of their lives for them and their families.
4. The Deacons continued to write a monthly contribution to the Meeting House Times. A file has been created to archive each of these contributions as well as the opening prayer for our monthly Deacons' meetings.
5. The Deacons again hosted the Lenten Dinners that were held in the Parish Hall for the five Wednesdays in Lent. Over soup, bread, salad, and dessert, members of the congregation got to know each other better and to engage in lively conversation. (I think it's safe to say that if an activity occurs for three years in a row, it can now be designated as a "tradition.")
6. A Deacon accompanied Diane to lead the monthly communion service at Noble Horizons. The Deacons also planned and/or took part in the Christmas and Tenebrae services.
7. The Deacons arranged for Pastor Supply during Diane's absence from the church including having Rev. Eileen Epperson serve in January during Diane's sabbatical leave.
8. The Deacons once again supported the Quilt Exhibit as part of the Fall Festival. This year's quilts filled the church and the exhibit was a popular event that brought many people into the church building.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Zarbock
April 2016



BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT **ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016**

The Trustees addressed a number of building issues, financial issues and procedural issues during the past year. The building issues include renovation of the steeple cupola, (the structural integrity of the tower had been investigated the year before and found to be adequate), replacing the floor in the front bathroom and renovating the upstairs bathroom. In addition, lighting has been upgraded in the Sunday School room and shelves have been added for music storage. Plans are underway for repairing and painting the front facade of the church.

The Annual Appeal, directed by Sue Morrill, achieved a very satisfactory response from a large majority of our members who are committed to the continuing mission of the church. This response is reflected in the church budget for the year.

The Trustees and Pastor Diane developed and approved a procedure for managing the church endowment. This procedure presents guidelines for investments, reporting, and withdrawals from the endowment. In addition, the procedure provides an additional opportunity for the church to contribute to worthwhile needs whenever our finances allow.

Unfortunately, Mark Capecelatro, who has provided us with valuable legal service, and John Easterbrook, who has been our outstanding secretary, will be leaving the Trustees due to term limitations. Both have been of great assistance to the operation of the Board of Trustees and they will both be missed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tom Key, Chair, Board of Trustees
Jennifer Weigel, Treasurer



TREASURER'S REPORT

The Operating Budget vs. Actual Report is attached (please see appendix) and provides a good overview of how your support was put to use over the course of the year. A narrative summary of other funds is also provided below.

Operating Income

Donations received for 2015 were \$286,846, approximately \$49,000 more than budgeted. This was due to increased generosity on the part of members and the community, and particularly to a \$25,000 anonymous donation matching increased member pledges. The only other substantial income the church has is from the rental of the parsonage, which was rented for the entire year. Fall Festival income, as has been practice for many years, is donated to local non-profit organizations; unlike in previous years, that expense has been accrued on this income statement. You will see that the Fall Festival Income has a matching expense further down on the report.

Operating Expenses

Expenses were generally within budgeted amounts. Compensation and Other Personnel expenses combined came in slightly under-budget, as some staff, particularly the sexton, worked fewer hours than budgeted. The categories of Office costs, Utilities and Insurance were all under-budget. Program Expense was slightly over-budget as our new Music Minister invested new energy and funds in our music program. We did have \$6,000 in unbudgeted expenses at the parsonage (repairs and a rental commission) as well as additional repairs & maintenance at the Church of \$3800. This excess probably reflects under

budgeting initially as there are no single large items in this line. The net result is Income over expenses of \$30,770.57 for 2015. The Trustees are considering the most appropriate allocation for these funds

Other Funds

AL Sly Fund

Available Balance \$62,557

The music program has been rejuvenated by our new Music Minister, and funds from the Al Sly Fund have been used to support some of these initiatives. In 2015, the Fund received donations of \$3,186 and had expenses of \$16,302.

Capital

Available Balance \$143,250

The Church undertook 3 capital improvement projects that were paid from the Capital fund and are therefore not reflected in the Operating Budget vs. Actual. The first was the purchase of a new elevator to replace one that had reached the end of its useful life and could no longer be repaired. The total cost of that was \$20,300. We also had repair work done on the steeple for \$11,500. Finally \$8,100 was spent on new furniture and cabinetry upstairs to store and access music more easily.

Endowment

Value 12/31/15 \$5,069,797

The financial markets experienced below-average returns in 2015, and as a result our endowment did as well. We had investment income of \$154,481.33, investment expenses of \$43,627.88 and withdrew \$154,000 in 2015 to support our Operating Budget, a draw of approx. 3% of the beginning asset value. Our investment manager Wilkinson O'Grady reports that the net performance (performance after fees) of the Church's investment account was 2.1% in 2015. Fortunately we are able to take a longer-term view however, and annualized performance since 2005 has been 6.6% after fees. Both annual and historical returns are higher than the benchmarks. At our meeting with the investment manager, he suggested that this 6.6% annual return is within the range of what we can expect over the next 10 years; however, the Investment Committee will continue to monitor performance and our withdrawals from the account to ensure the long-term viability of the fund to support our church's mission.



HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

The Mission Statement of the Hospitality Committee is to promote a congenial and hospitable atmosphere for all individuals who attend or visit the Congregational Church of Salisbury.

We seek to answer God's call by creating an environment in which bonds of friendship can be formed and sustained in the church's love for one another.

The committee, responsible for coffee hour; arranging for flowers for the Meeting House each Sunday including the holidays of Christmas and Easter; hosting Collations following funerals and memorial services; as well as hosting receptions for special events.

Although there were no Collations in 2015, we did have many receptions that we either did in their entirety or assisted other committees with their events.

Our certified kitchen has been rented/or used for various functions this past year, with many thanks.

We are looking into starting to use an "on line" volunteer sign up for coffee hour and flowers, which will automatically send out a reminder.

Rosanne Lamson, Janet Kaufman, Sarah Rydingsword, Sue Bucceri, Cynthia LaPier, Clare Rashkoff, Christie Olson, Debbie Mark, Amy Rasner-Clulow, Sheryl Knapp



REPORT OF THE COORDINATOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

The Sunday School began its school year in September with *Moses: From Bulrushes to Burning Bush*, a rotation model unit that explored the birth, rescue and call of this major figure from the Hebrew Scriptures through music, art, story, drama, games and puzzles, and video. The familiar hymn, *For the Beauty of the Earth*, was the focus of our late autumn unit. On the Sunday before Thanksgiving we presented table grace cards with verses from the hymn to everyone in the congregation.

Angels, Shepherds and the Stable! was the theme of our Advent rotation as we approached the Christmas story from these different points of view. In January we began *Jesus Gifts*, based on Matthew 25:35-40 (“For I was hungry and you gave me food ...”). Throughout the unit the children explored the idea of “surely as you have done it to one of the least of these, you have done it for me” by bringing in cans of soup on Souper Bowl Sunday, making Valentines for the congregation and shut-ins, preparing flower centerpieces for the Bridgeport dinners, and helping at Fellowship Hour. The Lord’s Prayer was the model for our late winter unit, *Jesus, Teach Us to Pray*. Our spring unit, *The Tale of the Three Trees*, which includes our annual musical of the same name, is based on the life of Jesus.

Our fourth year of modified rotation model learning has been very successful. Children who miss some Sundays are still exposed to the core stories and tenets of our faith. The traditional commitment and preparation time for Sunday School teachers is no longer an issue. Many wonderful people, both parents and “civilians,” have come forward to serve for two or three weeks, teaching the same material each week to a new age group.

In May I attended NEAUCE, a three-day conference presented by the New England Association of United Church Educators, an extraordinary opportunity to learn, worship, reflect, and connect with faith formation leaders from throughout New England. In September I attended *Do What Matters! Faith Formation for A New Age*, a two day training experience for church leaders presented by Vibrant Faith Ministries. I continue as a regional representative to CAUCE (Connecticut Association of United Church Educators) and helped implement the November CAUCE retreat held at Silver Lake which was led by our own Pastor Diane with the help of Anne Hughes. In the process of monthly CAUCE board meetings, communications, and workshops, I am reminded again and again of what the Connecticut Conference of the UCC has to offer us. I am also grateful to have the opportunity to get to know and learn from the many fine people who are charged with the Christian faith formation and education of the children and youth in our Connecticut UCC churches and beyond.

REPORT OF THE COORDINATOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Barbara Collins, Coordinator



REPORT OF THE BOARD OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION **ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016**

The Board of Religious Education continued its focus on ministry to families with children during the past year, including a variety of activities and opportunities for people of all ages.

- The Board helped plan and supervise special activities to enhance “Oh, Jonah!” a musical play which was presented by the children of the Sunday School and their friends on May 17th.
- Members of the Board prepared children’s games for the August church picnic at the Catania’s house. Even though we couldn’t get the kids out of the pool to play games, we were ready!
- In the fall, the Board joined the Board of Deacons for the Sunday School Opening Breakfast. The Board appreciates the support of the Deacons in providing this inviting occasion for greeting old friends and welcoming newcomers to the church school year.
- In October Judith Frost and Barbara Collins traveled to Canton Center for an interesting day-long Godly Play workshop. Godly Play is a teaching method based on Montessori principles and uses a spiral curriculum of Bible story-based learning.
- The first annual Parents’ Night Out (free dinner, activities and babysitting for the kids) was held on Friday, December 4th with much success.
- The annual Christmas pageant featured Linden Godshall as the baby Jesus with his parents, Andrea and Deryl, playing the Holy Family. Members of the Board and other helpers costumed an impressive cast of shepherds, angels, wise men, animals and a star. Several families joined us as we went Christmas caroling at Noble Horizons and Geer.
- The Board sponsored an Unbirthday Party during Fellowship Hour on February 28th. This was an ideal way to cross generations and get to know each other better. Tasty cupcakes, too!

The opposite ends of our children and youth spectrum have been especially blessed this year. Holly Tierney has become a wonderfully warm and capable friend to our youngest ones in the Nursery each week. Thank you, Holly. And a fine group of folks have stepped forward to take turns leading the Youth Discussion Group each Sunday.

In conversation and action, the Board of Religious Education continues to address the reality that today, more than ever, families have to make difficult choices for their children’s time, with church activities often coming in second. We value Pastor Diane and her infectious enthusiasm as we explore how best to serve the spiritual needs of young families in a secular society.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
Barbara Collins for the Board



BOARD of CHRISTIAN ACTION
ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

The Board of Christian Action has two missions: to work on projects that reach out to those in our community and beyond and to make financial donations to worthwhile organizations and charities. Within our community we support the Corner Food Pantry through donations and a percentage of LaBonne receipts. Church members and friends provide special joy to children and parents through our Giving Tree project. Beautifully wrapped presents, gift cards, and paper products are delivered to the Astor Early Childhood Program and the Grace Smith House in Millerton just before Christmas. Money is also donated to organizations that aid children and families in our community: Housatonic Day Care, EXTRAS, Housatonic Youth Service Bureau, SOAR, Chore Service, Salisbury Visiting Nurse Association, and Grace Smith House.

Within our state, we are very committed to our partnership with United Congregational Church of Bridgeport. This year we hosted three community suppers called "Feel the Warmth." Plus we have collected and delivered warm clothing, boots, and gloves for members of their community. We offer scholarships to children from Grace Smith House to attend Silver Lake; scholarships for children from United Congregational Church in Bridgeport are also provided for in the church budget.

Reaching out farther, we have again made a donation to Simply Smiles for the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation and will provide two scholarships for members of our congregation to travel to South Dakota to work on the reservation. Our global projects include participation in the CROP walk, which helps to end hunger locally and abroad. Our Global Crafts sale of "fair traded" items during the annual Salisbury Fall Festival supports artisans in many developing countries. Our donation to Hispanola Health Partners has helped build a new clinic in Haiti.

Peggy Heck, Chair
Jeanette Weber, Co-Chair
Board of Christian Action



USHERS COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

When you arrive for Sunday worship at our church the first people you meet, in addition to Pastor Diane, are the ushers. It is our privilege to welcome everyone coming through the church doors, whether they attend every week, are returning from an absence or coming to our church for the first time. The Ushers Committee is made up of twelve people. We each serve for two months during the year in addition to special services during the holidays. We collect the offering and when the service is finished we make sure all the pews are clean and the Hymnals and Bibles are returned to their proper places. It is our responsibility to make sure that everyone feels welcome.

Kathy Mera



MUSIC COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

Members: Christiane Olson, Tim Hughes, Peggy Hayes (resigned in August), Terre Lefferts (resigned in August) replaced by Ward Belcher and Nancy Kellett., Karin Noyes and Jo Loi.

The Music Committee met: 5/20, 5/27, 6/24, 7/6, 9/9, 10/14, 11/11, 12/9/2015, 1/13, 2/17, 3/15/2016

Events:

May 29-30, 2015 - Collaborative Choir Weekend (with Bridgeport)

November 8, 2015 - Vincent DuBois Organ Concert

December 13, 2015 - Christmas Oratorio

January 31, 2016 - Al Sly Memorial

February 28, 2016 - Student Recital

April 10, 2016 - Messiah Concert

Overview:

The Music Committee worked in early summer in making the transition from our traditional music program to the new approach of Jack Bowman. We worked with the input from the Church Council to trim and budget for a simpler concert schedule than Jack had originally proposed. Care was taken to work out the roles of each the Music Committee, the Minister of Music and the Church Council.

A new hymnal search was begun in December with input from the Congregation gathered in January. The effort is ongoing.

The following mission statement was adopted by the committee:

Music Ministry Mission

To inspire people to come together in communal worship to glorify God by offering quality choral and instrumental music in a wide range of styles, including opportunities to congregants and members of the community to participate in the creation of music.

Jo Loi, Karin Noyes
Co-Chairs



REPORT FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE
OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES OF THE CHURCH
 2016-2017

Moderator: Sara Wardell

Treasurer: Jennifer Weigel

Clerk: Louise Brown

Board of Deacons

Larry Blades	'17	Chico Aller	'18	Linda Estabrook	'19
Mike Clulow	'17	Theresa Carroll	'18	Sheryl Kennedy*	'19
Carol Magowan	'17	Bob Maxwell	'18	Cynthia LaPier*	'19
Sarah Zarbock	'17	Karin Noyes	'18	Mary O'Neill*	'19

Board of Trustees

Lee Collins	'17	Scott Frost	'18	Susan Hassler	'19
Tony Good	'17	David Heck	'18	Jim LaPier *	'19
Sue Morrill	'17	Tom Key	'18	John Merwin*	'19

Church Council Members-at-Large

Judith Frost	'17	David Rich	'18	Betsy Beck*	'19
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Board of Religious Education

Jennifer Kronholm Clark	'17	Judith Frost	'18	Debby Mark*	'19
		Jenn Good	'18	Carrie Smith	'19
				Stephanie Tierney*	'19

Board of Christian Action

Anne Hughes	'17	Jano Fairservis	'18	Susie Belcher*	'19
Peggy Sands	'17	Jeanette Weber	'18	Rich Reifsnyder*	'19
Margie Vail	'17			Kevin Wolgemuth*	'19

Music Committee

Jo Loi	'17	Tim Hughes	'18	Martin Baltus*	'19
		Ward Belcher	'18	Malcolm Brown*	'19
		Nancy Kellett	'18	Lynn Reifsnyder*	'19

Ushers Committee

Sal Accardo	'17	Kathy Mera	'18	John Arnold*	'19
Vincent Hanlon	'17	Ellie Owens	'18	Joe Catania*	'19
Erik Rydingsword	'17	Orrin Rydingsword	'18	Pat Palmer*	'19
Bob Weber	'17	Sharon Tingley	'18	Stephanie Tierney	'19

Hospitality Committee

Janet Kaufman	'17	Sheryl Knapp	'18	Sue Bucceri	'19
Rosanne Lamson	'17	Cynthia LaPier	'18	Linda Estabrook*	'19
Sarah Rydingsword	'17	Debby Mark	'18	Clare Roshkoff	'19
		Christie Olson	'18	Nancy Rossi*	'19

Delegates to State Conference and Litchfield North

To Be Filled

Nominating Committee 2016

Judith Frost	Tony Good	Peggy Heck
Carol Magowan	David Rich	Jeanette Weber

BLUE = Nominated for Election 2016

* = First Term