

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF GLEN ELLYN  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023**  
*Making a Difference*



**The Annual Meeting of the Members**  
**Sunday, June 4, 2023 at 11:00 a.m.**

The agenda for the meeting will include the following Congregational actions:

- Election of the Slate of Candidates for Church Council and Committees
- Discuss and vote on the proposed Church budget for 2023-24
- Discuss and vote on proposed updates to Church Bylaws & Constitution
- Objectives for 2023-24 Church Year

Submitted by Liz Cooper, Clerk

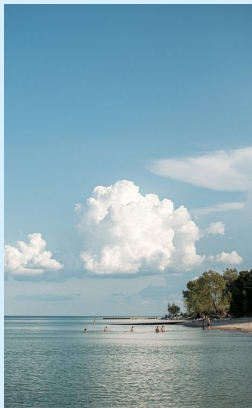
# FCCGE Staff and Church Council

## Staff

Senior Minister..... Rev. Seth Ethan Carey  
 Associate Minister (Interim)..... Rev. Kyle Roggenbuck  
 Administrative Assistant ..... Joyce Driver  
 Business Administrator ..... Laura Shellady  
 Director of Christian Education ..... Catherine Curtis  
     Youth Education Coordinator ..... Cathy Basso  
 Director of Communications ..... Sherry Flugel  
 Director of Music Ministry ..... Michele Hecht  
     Associate for Music Ministry ..... Jeff Haeger  
     Handbell Director ..... Matthew Prins  
     Organist .....Shu-Hui Janet Tsai  
 Director of Youth Ministry ..... Danny Harman  
 Facilities Manager ..... Wojciech Gracz  
     Sexton ..... Jose Beltran  
 Nursery Care Provider ..... Torrie Holst  
 Nursery Care Provider ..... Amy Zita  
 Nursery Care Provider ..... Maggie Zita

## Church Council 2022-23

Moderator ..... Andy Ginger  
 Moderator Designate ..... Jeannine Kannegiesser  
 Assistant Moderator ..... Rich Troyer  
 Treasurer ..... Matt Szafranski  
 Assistant Treasurer ..... Whit Brooks  
 Clerk ..... Liz Cooper  
 Connections Committee Chair ..... Nicole Baedke  
 Finance Committee Chair  
     (and Treasurer Emeritus) ..... Tim Rodine  
 Property & Grounds Committee Chair ..... Tim Waterloo  
 Service & Justice Committee Chair ..... Jill Hewitt



### Church Weekend Away | A Retreat for All Ages | July 21 -24, 2023

**Tower Hill Camp on the Shores of Lake Michigan** (adjacent to the Warren Dunes) in Sawyer, MI.

Come for a weekend of fellowship, fun and sun! This tradition is a great way to enjoy nature, relax and meet new people! This is an all ages event for the entire congregation. Enjoy swimming, playing in the sand, climbing the Dunes, trail walking, star gazing, storytelling, campfires and more! Register from your Thursday Noon eBlast, [fccge.org](http://fccge.org) or the FCC App.

**Accommodations include:** Tent camping or trailer camping and indoor lodging in Schrag Hall (with running water and electricity).

Questions? Contact Cathy Basso [cathy@fccge.org](mailto:cathy@fccge.org) | 630-469-3096 x19

### Brand-New! Faith + Pride Camp! July 23-28

This camp is designed specifically for LGBTQIA+ youth and allies who are currently in grades 7-12. Youth of any sexual orientation and gender/gender expression are welcome! If you are looking for a place where you can come as you are, where your full identity is affirmed and celebrated, and where you are surrounded by a community of support and love...then join us at Faith + Pride Camp this summer, July 23-28, 2023, at Pilgrim Park Camp and Conference Center near Starved Rock in Princeton, IL.



Register from the Thursday church eBlast, [fccge.org](http://fccge.org) or the FCC App. n*Watch for more Pride events in the church eBlast!*

# Table of Contents

**Staff & Church Council** ..... Inside front cover

**Annual Meeting Agenda** .....4

    Church Year Goals 2023-24 .....4

    Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting .....5

    Nominations of Officers and Committee Members..... 8

    Proposed changes to Church Bylaws ..... 9

    Treasurer’s Report .....10

    Proposed Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget and Comments .....12

**FCCGE Member Responsibilities** ..... 14

    Membership & Attendance 2022-23 ..... 15

**Reports of the Clergy and Church Officers**

    Senior Minister ..... 16

    Associate Minister ..... 17

    Associate Pastor Search Committee ..... 17

    Moderator..... 18

**Reports of Committees and Ministries**

**Connections Committee** ..... 19

        Connections Ministry Reports .....20

**Finance Committee** ..... 22

        Annual Fund Team Report .....22

        Endowment Fund Committee Report .....23

        New Business Feasibility Committee Report.....23

**Property and Grounds Committee**.....24

        Property and Grounds Ministry Reports .....25

            Major Initiative—New Church Roofing .....25

        Capital Building Plan and Budget Update .....26

**Service and Justice Committee** ..... 29

        Service and Justice Ministry & Mission Reports .....30

        Ukrainian Relief Support .....37

**Staff Directed Ministries**

**Education**

        Director of Christian Education .....38

        Director of Youth Ministry .....40

        Cub Scout Pack #51 .....42

        Boy Scout Troop #41 .....42

**Music and Worship**

        Director of Music Ministry .....43

        Worship Ministry Reports .....44

Open and Affirming Statement, Global Mission Statement,  
and Just Peace Covenant ..... Back cover

*Inside...*



*Rally Day 2022—pg. 20*



*New Eden Project – pg. 33*



*Ukraine support – pg. 37*



*2022 Christmas Pageant—pg. 39*

# Introduction to the 2023 Annual Meeting

## Annual Meeting Agenda

Sunday, June 4, 2023

11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Welcome & Invocation .....	Rev. Kyle Roggenbuck, Assoc. Minister
Call To Order—Declaration of Quorum .....	Andy Ginger, Moderator 2022-23
<i>FCCGE Bylaws, Section 5a—A quorum will be: Fifty members at any annual or special meeting of the members.</i>	
Approval of Minutes from June 2022 Annual Meeting.....	Elizabeth Cooper, Clerk
Moderator’s Report .....	Andy Ginger
Nomination and Election of Leadership Candidates .....	Rich Troyer, Assistant Moderator
Senior Minister’s Report .....	Rev. Seth Ethan Carey, Senior Minister
Including Staff-Led Ministries	
Treasurer’s Report & Approval of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Operating Budget .....	Matt Szafranski, Treasurer
Authorization To Renew Line of Credit	
Committee Reports	
Service & Justice Committee .....	Jill Hewitt, Chair
Property & Grounds Committee .....	Tim Waterloo, Chair
Connections Committee .....	Nicole Baedke, Chair
Finance Committee .....	Tim Rodine, Chair
Associate Minister Search Committee .....	Tom Pulver, Chair
Constitution and Bylaws Updates .....	Andy Ginger
Looking Forward .....	Jeannine Kannegiesser, Moderator 2023-24
Opportunity for Comments from Members .....	Moderators
Closing Prayer.....	Rev. Seth Ethan Carey

## Church-Year Goals 2023-2024

- **Faith Formation & Fellowship:** Meaningful worship, education and fellowship to engage and inspire our community.
- **Sustainability:** Focus on environmental and financial sustainability for our church.
- **Outreach and Welcome:** Invite and engage with our greater community with authenticity and curiosity; leading and following as appropriate.

# Approval of Minutes of the June 5, 2022 Annual Meeting

## FCCGE Annual Meeting Minutes — June 5, 2022

### I. Welcome and Devotional

- The Annual meeting of the First Congregational Church of Glen Ellyn, conducted in person in the sanctuary, was called to order at 11:04 a.m. by Moderator Jackie McCarthy. A Quorum was determined with 59 persons seated in the sanctuary, including the church council members.
- Reverend Seth Ethan Carey provided the invocation prayer to open the meeting.
- Jackie reviewed the protocol for meeting conduct. The annual report was printed with all the committee reports from the past year and the agenda for this annual meeting. She requested that any comments from the congregation be spoken into the microphone and the speaker should state their name before speaking.

### II. Church-Year Goals 2021-2022

- Revive and Reinvigorate: Enhance impact and use of church energy and resources to deliver missions and ministries.
- Increase Economic Stability: Explore a wider range of financial and membership growth opportunities.
- Cultivate Participation: Expand leadership, participation, and connection through multiple initiatives.

### III. In Attendance

- Staff: Reverend Seth Carey, Senior Minister
- Officers and Committee Chairs: Jackie McCarthy, *Moderator*; Andy Ginger, *Moderator Designate*; Tim Rodine, *Treasurer*, Theresa Holly, *Finance Committee Chair*; Jim Stuhlmacher, *Property and Grounds Committee Chair*; Sylvia Rodee, *Connections Committee Chair*, Colleen Spaeth, *clerk*
- Also present: members of the Congregation.

### IV. Approval of Minutes—Colleen Spaeth, Clerk

The June 6, 2021, minutes appear on page 5-7 of the annual report.

**MOTION:** Karen Pulver moved to approve the June 6, 2021, Annual Meeting Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Linda Davenport. No discussion or amendments followed. Minutes approved as presented with all ayes. The motion passes.

### V. Moderator Report—Jackie McCarthy

Jackie reminisced that her 3-year term started just before the COVID-19 Pandemic causing most of the activities of the church to be held remotely. She was grateful that the previous moderators amended the Bylaws to allow meetings like the annual meeting to be held virtually in 2020 and 2021. She was glad our clergy and church were able to maintain the welcoming community during online worship and events and noted there were 6,000 online views of our worship services this year compared to 5,000 congregants that attended in-person worship services. One highlight of her term includes the Viva Las Vegas fundraiser that raised \$19,000 for key missions we support. She remembered the efforts of Michele Hecht to keep our music going online and looks forward to future events like the choir trip to Carnegie Hall in June 2023. Catherine Curtis continued to have church school classes outside when the weather permitted, and when our doors were open to in-person worship, and 12 new families began attending our church school. She thanked all the church staff and the council members and Maggie Zita, our Youth Representative. She gives thanks to and has confidence in the skills of the next council Moderator, Andy Ginger. She is especially proud of our congregation's response to the war in Ukraine by raising funds to support Ukrainian refugees in Poland.

### VI. Nomination and Election of Officers and Committee Members – Sylvia Rodee

Sylvia Rodee presented the slate of new officers and committee members as printed on page 8 of the 2022 Annual Report. Moderator Designate: Jeannine Kannegiesser; Assistant Moderator: *Vacancy*; Assistant Treasurer: Whit Brooks; Clerk: Liz Cooper; Endowment Chair, Dave Mook; Endowment Team member: Dean Fischer; Connections Committee Chair: *Vacancy*; Property and Grounds Chair: *Vacancy*

Sylvia notes that for vacancies, the Council can fill vacancies between Annual meetings.

**MOTION:** Clara Hughes moved to accept the nominations and slate of officers and committee members as presented, and that any remaining open positions are to be filled by the Council as provided in the by-laws. David Hecht seconded the motion. No discussion followed. The motion passed with all ayes.

### VII. Senior Minister's Report

Reverend Seth Ethan Carey is excited that post-pandemic the church is coming back in full force. Worship attendance has been growing, and ministries are reviving. It's a blessing to see church school children back in the halls. He is grateful to work with such a hard-working and compassionate staff. He thanks the volunteers and leaders who have guided the church this past year.

## Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting—continued

He notes that the world outside the church is still in need but this need only highlights the importance of the church's work. The congregation is committed to peace by helping the refugee crisis from the war in Ukraine, and is helping people in financial need due to inflation by supporting the local food pantry with food and our time. Our congregation campaigns alongside DuPage United to bring affordable housing to our area and works with DuPage PADS and Bridge Communities to support the homeless population and families. Our church supports sustainability, as well as mental health services with the Glen Ellyn Youth and Family Counseling Services and our partnership with the Central DuPage Pastoral Counseling Center. He thanks the church members for all they do.

### **VIII. Treasurer's Report and Approval of the 2022-2023 Operating Budget**

Tim Rodine presented the Treasurer's report on pages 9-12. Where we've been, where we are, and where we're going depends on pledge offerings. The balance sheet of assets and liabilities has been the same year over year, but our cash position is above our planned amount.

Overall our year is consistent but some months, show higher income, like July when fiscal year pledges begin, and in December (Christmas) and April (Easter) when we have extra pledges coming in.

In 2012, the church obtained a loan from the Endowment Fund for \$190,000 to help offset church expenses. Tim reports that the Endowment Fund loan will be completely repaid and the debt retired as of June 2022. Our line of credit was renewed last year for two years, so it will be renewed again in 2023.

The church is in good financial standing with pledge offerings \$42,000 over planned income and our current operating cash is above expectations. The Council voted to use this extra cash to pay off some major expenses, such as elevator repairs, in order to put us in a better position next fiscal year. Last year we approved a deficit budget, but are managing it well. We will also present a deficit budget for next fiscal year, but the deficit is less than in previous years. The Council will continue to gauge, monitor, and track that budget to make adjustments as needed. We hope to decrease expenses even while providing staff with salary increases of 3%. Next year's budget includes income from the preschool planned to start in 2023. The congregation is welcome to examine the details of the budget that is on page 12 of the Annual Report.

**MOTION:** Ted Harman moved to adopt the budget for fiscal year 2022-2023 as proposed on page 12. John Mulherin seconded the motion. There is no further discussion. The motion passes with all ayes.

### **IX. Committee Chair Annual Reports**

#### **Finance Committee, Theresa Holly, Chair**

Theresa started her service on the council 3 years ago, just before the pandemic. There was a lot of work for the Finance committee with navigating the PPP loan process and the uncertain times for forecasting and budgeting. She is proud to say that the church came through better and stronger than could be expected. She thanked Laura, Joyce, as well as the past, present and future treasurers. She feels confident in our financial stability and our internal controls to manage our funds with integrity. She thanked the members of the finance committee. Two major achievements she highlighted were the analysis of the insurance policy, which increased coverage by 6 million dollars while reducing the payment by \$5000, and the completion of the FCCGE Finance Handbook, which will give future new Treasurers a quick overview of the church's finances. She thanked the congregation for allowing her to serve.

#### **Property Committee Report, Jim Stuhlmacher, Chair**

The Property and Grounds Committee makes our historic church a safe and welcoming place to support the church's missions.. He thanked the members of the Property and Grounds Committee as well as Jose, Wojciech, and Laura. Some highlighted projects of the past year include renovating the Youth Room renovations, improving the computer network, modernizing the elevator, and replacing the HVAC system for the All-Purpose room and chapel.

The Endowment tree has a new location in the lobby and the south office suites have been painted and carpeted. Ongoing projects include replacing a section of fence and replacing the telephone system. Jim thanked the Handyman ministry and the Garden ministry.

#### **Connections Committee Report, Sylvia Rodee, Chair**

Sylvia thanked the members of the Connections Committee for being an important part of welcoming people back into the church. Highlights include delivering gift bags and holding outdoor events like Oktoberfest, and then transitioning to being able to have indoor events. The Kitchen Chix have been an active part of this ministry, serving food at events during almost every month of the year. The Newcomers Ministry has continued strong during lockdown and The Open and Affirming Ministry is very key to this church especially this month, during Pride Month. She thanked the congregation for allowing her to serve in this

## Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting—continued

capacity and encouraged the congregation to volunteer their time and talents in leadership roles in the church.

**Service & Justice Report**, Jill Hewitt, Vice Chair on behalf of Julia Kling, Chair

Although Jill Hewitt was to present the report on behalf of Chair Julia Kling, Assistant Moderator Andy Ginger presented the Service and Justice Report in their absence. This ministry supports key initiatives in housing, mental health, homelessness, food insecurity, and enhanced mission support, O&A endeavors, and adult education. This committee has been able to be active in person and each mission has made tremendous progress this year.

### X. Upcoming Initiatives

Andy Ginger shared that in the next church year, the focus would be on three primary goals:

- Reinvigorate and revive
- Increase economic stability
- Cultivate participation

Focus groups were held on how the church should communicate and brand its identity. Detailed feedback has been gathered from the focus groups, and work will continue using this information.

Union Church Preschool enrollment has begun. This preschool program to be held in our facility will provide a service to our church families, bring in new member families, and drive energy into our education programs. The Property and Grounds Committee is working on updating small spaces to keep our building vibrant and alive, not just repairing historic areas. For long-term financial stability we need consistent participation in our annual fund and capital plan, supplemented with external revenue like the leasing income that is to come from the preschool. Andy emphasizes member participation and consistent volunteers are needed for continuity in programs from year to year. He encourages people to notice and take action in the church with their time and work.

### XI. Opportunity for Comments from the Members - Andy Ginger

Joe Fortunato asked why the income from the Union Church Preschool stated as “non-taxable? Is there a threshold where this income becomes taxable? Andy answered: There isn’t a threshold where this becomes taxable. We have consulted with lawyers and have seen Union’s historical records where the income falls under religious and education exemption.

Ted Harmon thanked Jackie for her three years of service on the Council with her organization and aplomb. Thanked the entire Council for working above and beyond. Andy noted that the Annual Report has evolved to include photos under Jackie’s leadership.

Clara Hughes expressed her appreciation for the servant leadership in the church. She is proud of how our congregation digs deep in its faith principles.

Dave Exner recounted how the Open and Affirming policy of our church encouraged he and his wife Theresa to become members. He is proud that our members are living love each day by being the hands and feet of the church.

Tim Waterloo asks how the church member can help the new church preschool membership grow. Andy answered that there have been many inquiries, but not as many people at the point of enrolling. He says that the purpose of summer classes is to encourage enrollment. Each church member with children at the target preschool age has been contacted. The school is continuing to reach out into the community with information and marketing materials. Andy and Seth both mentioned that building enrollment in the school may take more than one year and we are committed to making it work. Janet Anderson suggested that different social media groups like parent groups on Facebook are a way to get the word out about the preschool to boost enrollment.

### XII. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Jackie McCarthy moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Brian Hamilton.

### XIII. Closing Prayer, Rev. Seth Ethan Carey

Meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Colleen Spaeth, *Clerk*

### Approval of the Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting

*A motion will be made to approve the Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting as presented, followed by any discussion, and a vote of the members present.*

# Nominations for Church Council & Committee Members

The following are the church officer positions and committees that form the core of our church government structure. Members are listed with the year their term expires. The names listed in **Bold** designate nominees to serve terms beginning July 1, 2023.

**Officers:**

Jeannine Kannegiesser, Moderator	2024
Rich Troyer, Moderator Designate	2025
<b><i>Open position, Assistant Moderator</i></b>	<b>2026</b>
Whit Brooks, Treasurer	2025
<b>Jason Savitt, Assistant Treasurer</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>Liz Cooper, Clerk</b>	<b>2024</b>

**Property & Grounds Committee:**

Mike Sorenson, Chair	2025
Mike Artrip	2025
<b>Don Bartell</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>Tom Rausch</b>	<b>2026</b>
Erik Schuchardt	2024
Sharon Wussow	2024
Mike Zita	2025

**Connections Committee**

Nicole Baedke, Chair	2024
Tom Petrich	2026
<b>Jennifer Sellers</b>	<b>2026</b>
Fay Shong	2025
<b>Tanner Spears</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>Sara Waterloo</b>	<b>2026</b>

**Service & Justice Committee:**

Maria Metz, Chair	2025
Lisa Clay	2024
Richard Jones	2024
<b>Catherine LaChapelle</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>Andy Livingston</b>	<b>2026</b>

**Finance Committee:**

Matt Szafranski, Chair	2024
Whit Brooks, Treasurer	2025
<b>Jason Savitt, Assistant Treasurer</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>Dave Mook, Endowment Chair</b>	<b>2024</b>

**Endowment Team:**

<b>Dave Mook (Chair)</b>	<b>2024</b>
Dean Fischer	2025
<b>Kyle McClure</b>	<b>2024</b>

**Approval of the Slate of Nominations** — *A motion will be made to approve the Slate of Church Officers and Committee Members as presented, followed by any discussion, and a vote of the members present. Any open positions will be filled by Council as provided in the Bylaws.*

**Experts Serving the Church**

In addition to our dedicated officers and committees, several members with professional experience in needed disciplines have provided strong, volunteer support to FCCGE. For the coming year, these are some of the people who have committed to make a difference in specific areas. We are grateful for their support.

Legal: Ted Harman	Church Archives: Karen Pulver, Dolly Rada
Insurance: Martha DeForest	Audio-Visual: Dave Hecht
Human Resources: Clara Hughes	Architect/CAD Drawings: Ryan Dent
Communications: Deb Giampoli, Jackie McCarthy	



## FCCGE Bylaws and Constitution Update 2023

A number of governance policies and processes outlined in our Bylaws and Constitution have evolved over the past five years. The Bylaws and Constitution have not been kept current with those changes. That has led to this update.

Many of the proposed alterations simply align the Bylaws with current practices. In several areas, activities and operations have become more technical or complex and now require more expertise. Finally, there are areas where responsibilities have shifted from one area to another within the Council and Committee structure.

A copy of the proposed red-lined changes to the Bylaws and Constitution were distributed electronically to the Congregation on May 25, 2023, and hard copies were made available at the church for member review.

For time considerations and efficiency, we will not vote on each individual edit/update to our governance documents. Instead, where the same proposed update needs to be made in several places, those changes have been grouped together for a single vote.

The below chart outlines the five (5) categories of changes and rationale for making such changes. We will introduce a motion for each of the categories — one for each letter — for a total of five votes at the annual meeting.

### KEY TO CHANGES

Within the Bylaws document, KEY LETTERS appear to connect the explanations and rationale below to the changes.

<b>A</b>	<b>GENERAL UPDATES &amp; COMMITTEES:</b> Changes on pages 4, 5, 6, 9 and 13 to align the Bylaws with practices ongoing for multiple prior years. Changes on pages 6, 10, 11 and 12 to update the description of the four standing Committees to reflect current practices for the past several years.
<b>B</b>	<b>COUNCIL:</b> Changes on page 7. The moderators and minister have functioned as an executive committee for many years. The Church Council has been expected to establish goals and strategic direction for many years.
<b>C</b>	<b>EXPERTS:</b> Changes on page 8. As operations and administration have evolved, we have expanded the number of important roles that involve professional, expert assistance beyond attorneys and financial professionals. Currently, all of these are members who are volunteering their time.
<b>D</b>	<b>VOLUNTEER RECRUITING:</b> Changes on pages 8 and 10. The task of effectively recruiting, electing and training a full range of volunteers reaches well beyond the scope of the prior arrangement. Out of necessity, Council has developed this new process over two years and will continue to refine it.
<b>E</b>	<b>HUMAN RESOURCES:</b> Changes on pages 15 and 16 of the Bylaws and page 6 of the Constitution. The important process of human resources administration has not been addressed by the previously described task force for over 5 years. The Council and Clergy have deployed a new process and will continue to refine it. Among several key provisions, the new Bylaws will require an annual review / update of the Employee Handbook.

### **Approval of updates to the Bylaws and Constitution**

*Several motions will be made, one for each Letter category, to approve the proposed updates to the Bylaws and Constitution as presented. Each motion will be followed by any discussion, and a vote of the members present.*

# Treasurer's Report 2022-2023 — Matt Szafranski

The Treasurer's Report contains two sections. The first is a report on the financial activities of the current fiscal year to-date (July 2022- June 23) and the second being comments regarding the 2023-24 budget passed by Council.

The fiscal year of First Congregational Church of Glen Ellyn begins on July 1st of each year and ends on June 30th of the following year. This allows for our fiscal year to match our program year. But since our annual meeting is prior to our fiscal year-end, final financial statements are not available. This fiscal year end financial statements should be available by August 31, 2023.

## Financial Position

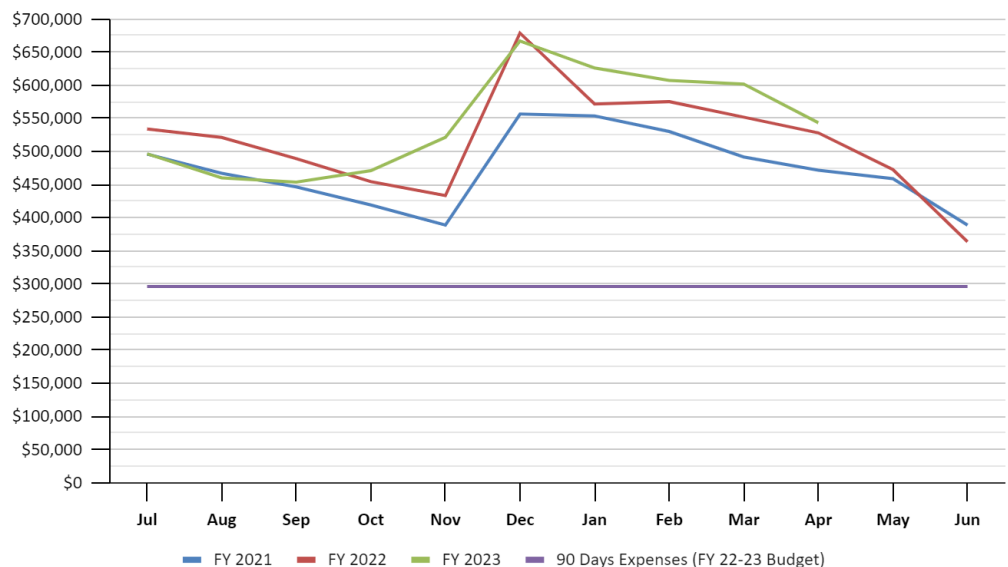
The financial position of the church is defined by our balance sheet. It shows where we are at a point in time identifying all cash on hand (operating fund, endowment fund, and restricted donations and council designated funds), historical investment in our building, debt, and equity. We use the cash basis of accounting so there are no payables listed such as payroll or other liabilities. We also don't record depreciation on our building and equipment. The following is our most recent balance sheet as of April 30, 2023.

ASSETS		LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Operating Fund Cash	\$1,271,844	Liabilities	
Restricted and Council Designated		Credit Cards	\$1,537
Bldg Reserve Council Desig	14,561	Total Liabilities	1,537
Music	7,916	Equity	9,193,021
PADS	46,561	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>\$9,194,558</b>
Youth Work Camp	5,569		
Sem Scholarship	4,311		
General Education	16,286		
Charitable Crisis Council Desig	1,661		
Ensuing Year Pledge	55,464		
Capital Campaign	56,883		
Other Limited Use	440		
Total Restricted and Council Designate	209,652		
Endowment			
Investments	962,994		
Total Endowment	962,994		
Fixed Assets	6,750,067		
<b>Total ASSETS</b>	<b>\$9,194,558</b>		

## Cash Position

Many activities of the church are very seasonal in nature. For example, the programs of the church are limited during the summer and in contrast, the donations to the church are very high at the end of the calendar year. However, our biggest expenditure, personnel, does not decrease during the summer. Therefore, our operating cash balance peaks in December and then decreases throughout the year. Our historic monthly cash balances with a horizontal line depicting the recommended 90 days' cash balance we should be maintaining are shown at right.

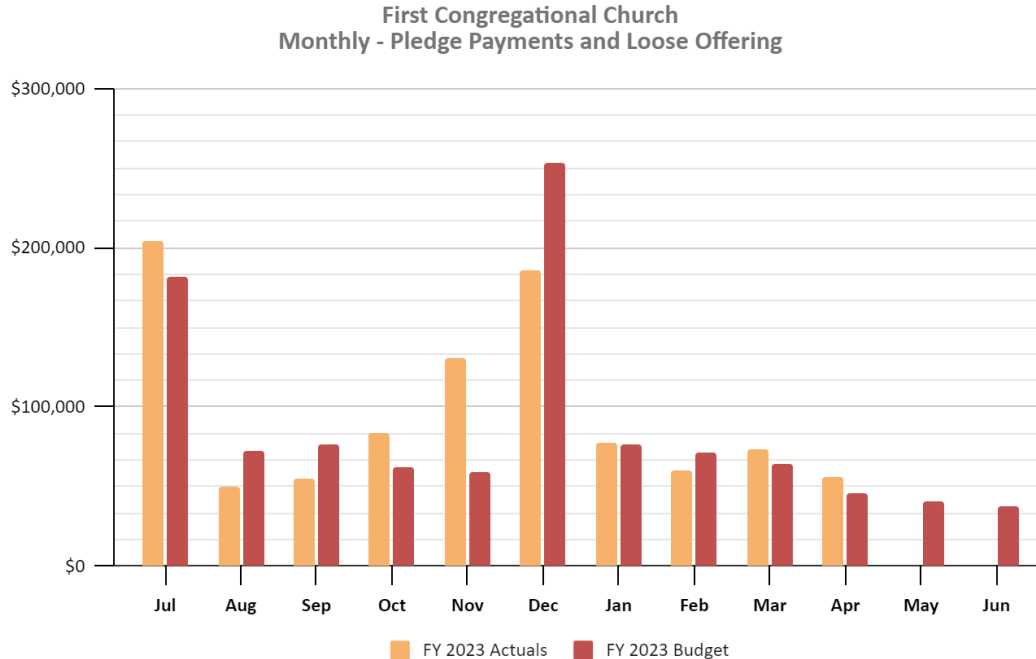
First Congregational Church  
Operating Cash Balance



## Treasurer's Report — continued

### Receipts vs. Budget

We estimate and budget our receipts based on the historical seasonality of collections. The chart below reflects our current fiscal year actual receipts vs. budget. The large spike in July is due to pledges given in advance for the entire fiscal year.



### Line of Credit

In February 2008, the Church Council began annually renewing a line of credit in the amount of \$200,000, secured by a mortgage on our building that would carry an interest rate of prime. This line of credit has been renewed annually. The line of credit has never been used and as such has no outstanding balance. Council last renewed the line of credit in 2022 and at that time was eligible to renew for a 2-year period, until March 2024. Therefore, the Congregation will need to authorize Council to renew the line of credit at its June 2023 Annual Meeting. Note: Only with Congregational approval would Council draw upon the line of credit.

### Summary of Fiscal Year 2022-2023

The approved budget for FY2022-23 anticipated a deficit of \$36,886. Our pledge revenue is forecasted to meet our budget of just over a million dollars, generally in-line with years past. Realized expenses for the current fiscal year have to date been lower than our budget. Given the results thus far, we have forecasted a modest surplus by the end of this fiscal year.

As of April 2023, FCCGE had \$543,246 in operating cash on hand. (The Church maintains a minimum cash threshold of \$296,011 representing 90 days of operating costs as a good financial practice.) Because the cash position well exceeds the minimum needed for financial operating stability, Council voted to approve presenting a deficit budget of \$24,528 for approval for the 2023-24 church year.

### Authorization to Renew Line of Credit

*A motion will be made to authorize Council to renew the \$200,000 Line of Credit with Wheaton Bank & Trust prior to its expiration in March 2024, followed by any discussion, and a vote of the members present. Note: Only with Congregational approval would Council draw upon the line of credit.*

## Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024—Comments

We are proposing a deficit budget of \$24,528 for FY23-24 as inflation has impacted our personnel wages and benefits, maintenance and operating expenses for our church, while pledges and offerings remain flat. To present a balanced budget would mean seriously exploring cuts in staff benefits, programs and missions, which we determined was not in the best interest of the church. To keep current staff, maintain our facility, and continue current levels of programs and mission support, we will need to increase annual giving pledge revenue, increase participation/event fees, and/or find alternative revenue sources in the coming year. Conservative spending will be needed to ensure a reduced deficit.

### Highlights of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Proposed Budget

#### Revenue

- Our pledge and offering revenue will increase marginally relative FY22-23 aided by noticeable uptick in loose offerings thanks to the successful launch of digital giving (QR Code).
- We are still awaiting important pledges to meet this forecast as the year closes
- Building usage—Lower than prior year as there is no rental income from usage by a preschool.
- Following the historical bi-annual pattern, a church fundraiser is included in next year's budget, adding a net contribution of \$15,000.

#### Mission Support

- We have budgeted the same level of generous mission support for FY23-24.

#### Staff Support

- The FY23-24 budget assumes all clergy and personnel positions are fully staffed for the entire year.
- An increase of 4.0% cost of living adjustment for personnel has been budgeted and increases in insurance costs.

#### Debt Service

- No outstanding debt, therefore are no debt service payments in the proposed budget.

#### Building Support

- The property and grounds budget is marginally higher than the prior fiscal year budget due to costs and inflation being experienced across the board while numerous cost saving initiatives are providing some relief.

#### Program Support

- Church school and Youth Groups are showing steady growth in participation rates thus associated expenses are budgeted to increase to meet those needs.
- Some budgets were adjusted down to align more closely with actual expenses.
- Other program budgets were increased to include offerings that have been on hiatus since pre-Pandemic.

As always, we strive to be good stewards of the generous gifts from the Congregation and other sources. Our goal is to ensure that the Church will continue to offer radical hospitality, justice and progressive Christianity in both the upcoming year and long into the future.

## Proposed Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget with Prior Year Comparisons

	Fiscal Year						
	<u>FY18-19</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY19-20</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY20-21</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY21-22</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY22-23</u> <u>Forecast</u>	<u>FY22-23</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>FY23-24</u> <u>Proposed</u>
Pledge revenue	1,033,181	1,002,801	985,122	1,029,992	1,012,514	1,020,000	1,048,100
Loose offerings	19,130	17,948	5,751	23,373	41,972	20,200	43,100
Endowment	22,233	21,988	22,072	20,066	18,222	22,000	22,000
Interest	736	1,399	879	311	375	900	900
Building Usage	8,691	2,410	895	1,550	4,325	19,400	4,200
Church Fundraiser	-	-	-	24,489	-	-	20,000
Donation Processing Income	-	-	1,386	2,304	2,098	1,540	1,580
PPP Revenue	-	118,500	-	-	-	-	-
Other	900	4,425	1,104	1,400	14,930	-	-
<b>Total Unrestricted Revenue</b>	<b>1,084,871</b>	<b>1,169,471</b>	<b>1,017,208</b>	<b>1,103,485</b>	<b>1,094,437</b>	<b>1,084,040</b>	<b>1,139,880</b>
Connections							
Program Revenue	4,218	2,915	528	4,024	8,365	9,900	9,500
Program Expense	7,218	5,671	1,402	5,892	7,031	12,450	9,725
Net Connections Costs	2,999	2,756	874	1,868	(1,334)	2,550	225
Council	25,842	6,502	1,398	25,634	927	2,250	10,250
Finance	49,600	54,576	56,476	51,319	51,373	53,047	51,880
Property & Grounds	157,860	147,036	137,662	189,241	121,902	154,316	156,747
Service & Justice							
Program Revenue	3,046	5,286	6,030	20,303	13,345	3,800	13,300
Program Expense	80,963	72,647	72,048	92,762	70,770	69,400	75,650
Net Service & Justice Costs	77,917	67,361	66,018	72,459	57,425	65,600	62,350
Education/Music/Worship							
Program Revenue	72,013	19,306	8,050	26,040	85,241	65,500	36,340
Program Expense	117,272	48,612	33,319	59,644	148,939	105,739	82,299
Net Edu/Music/Worship Costs	45,259	29,307	25,269	33,605	63,698	39,454	45,959
Personnel	690,003	742,885	722,912	764,481	791,338	802,926	836,998
<b>Total expenses less program revenue</b>	<b>1,049,479</b>	<b>1,050,423</b>	<b>1,010,609</b>	<b>1,138,606</b>	<b>1,085,328</b>	<b>1,120,926</b>	<b>1,164,408</b>
<b>Excess/(Deficit)</b>	<b>35,391</b>	<b>119,048</b>	<b>6,599</b>	<b>(35,121)</b>	<b>9,108</b>	<b>(36,886)</b>	<b>(24,528)</b>
<i>Without PPP Income</i>		548					

### Approval of the Proposed Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget

*A motion will be made to approve the Proposed Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget as presented, followed by any discussion, and a vote of the members present.*

## FCCGE Member Responsibilities

*Membership in this Congregation is open to any person who requests it, who confesses faith in Jesus Christ as Lord, who agrees to its purpose and covenant, and who agrees to abide by the responsibilities of a member. These responsibilities are determined by the Connections Committee and, according to our Constitution, are to be distributed to all members annually. As a faithful reminder of the promise we made to serve God together and to support each other in our respective journeys of faith; members of this faith community are expected to:*

**Attend Worship.** We come together to be centered on God in community with others. Regular attendance nourishes and renews our spirit. It reminds us that we are part of something greater than ourselves. We are strengthened to interact within our daily community with an attitude of Christian love and fellowship.

**Volunteer.** Contribute your time and talents to the Church on a ministry team or Church sponsored event(s). We are the hands and feet of Christ. Enjoy the fellowship of others as you engage in meaningful activities within this faith community.

**Give.** Our Church budget is funded entirely by the financial generosity of our members. You are encouraged to contribute a percentage of your resources. By doing so, as your resources change the dollar amount may vary; but your commitment to support the life and work of the Church remains constant.

**Pray.** We believe that God is still speaking and that also means that God is listening. During worship we pray in community centered on God, supported by each other. During the week, we pray privately, for each other and to grow and move forward in our own personal faith journey.

**Vote.** As a member of First Congregational Church of Glen Ellyn you have the right and the responsibility to vote for nominated lay leaders, to approve the annual Church budget, and other important matters of the Church that require Congregational approval. Your involvement making decisions in the life of the Church is essential to help our community of faith grow and change centered on God.



*New members joining April 16, 2023 (left to right):* From the podium Teresa Exner of the New Member Ministry introduces: Darren and Jen Stevenson with their children Ariana, Elias and Asher; Kate and Chris Connelly with their children Jack, Georgia and baby Benjamin; Darci and Greg Bertrand; and Jennifer Larabee. Officiating are Rev. Seth Ethan Carey and Interim Associate Pastor Kyle Roggenbuck.

# Membership & Attendance 2022-2023

All membership and attendance figures compiled from data beginning May 31, 2022- May 31, 2023.

<b>TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AS OF MAY 31, 2022:</b>	<b>1,642</b>
TOTAL MEMBERS ADDED (21 New/Transfer/ Reaffirmation of Faith & 11 confirmands):	+ 32
TOTAL MEMBERS REMOVED (Transfers and members removed by own request):	- 2
DEATHS:	<u>- 11</u>
<b>TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AS OF May 31, 2023:</b>	<b>1,661</b>
BAPTISMS (1 Confirmand, 4 Infants & Children):	5
MARRIAGES (1 OFFSITE, 1 ONSITE):	2



<b>WORSHIP ATTENDANCE</b> <b>Fiscal Year 2022-2023</b> FCCGE offers both in-person worship and live-stream worship services for online viewers. The attendance figures include in-person attendance taken by our Usher Ministry and online views as recorded on YouTube from June 1, 2022 — May 21, 2023.	Total In-person Attendance: <b>7,605</b> Avg. In-person Attendance per Sunday: <b>199</b>	Total Online Views: <b>4,745</b> Avg. Online Views: <b>95</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE</b> <b>SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICES</b>	<b>In-person Worship Attendance</b>	<b>Online Views of Worship Services</b>
<b>Christmas Eve</b> —Total: 1,018	596	422
<b>Ash Wednesday</b> —Total: 168	64	104
<b>Palm Sunday</b> —Total: 441	259	182
<b>Maundy Thursday</b> —Total: 190	87	103
<b>Good Friday</b> —Total: 163	90	73
<b>Easter Sunday</b> —Total: 811	544	267
<b>Cantata Sunday</b> —Total 1,302	290	1,012
<b>Confirmation Sunday</b> —Total: 216	166	50
<b>CHURCH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:</b>	<b>Church School Participants</b>	
<b>Pre-School thru 5th Grade Avg. Church School Attendance</b>	Avg. 30 children weekly	
<b>Church School Volunteers &amp; Staff</b>	4 youth / 6 Staff volunteers	
<b>Confirmation Class</b>	11 youth / 4 Adults weekly	
<b>2022-23 CHURCH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE</b>	<b>45 students / 10 adults weekly</b>	

## Senior Minister Report — Rev. Seth Ethan Carey



*So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ~ Acts 3:41-42*

After Jesus was crucified, darkness covered the whole world for about half an hour; and even as it lifted, the disciples remained paralyzed with fear, cowering behind locked doors in a rented apartment for three days. It wasn't until Jesus returned to restore their hope that they could breathe more easily again; and it wasn't until several weeks later that they actually began to carry on his work.

Emerging from trauma takes time; and our whole world was traumatized, in ways we still don't fully comprehend, by the Covid-19 Pandemic. In early 2022, we began to finally emerge from behind our own locked doors; and now, a year later, our church is truly beginning to thrive again.

Our worship feels vibrant and relevant, as we address the greatest hopes and anxieties of our time in light of our faith. Attendance continues to grow, averaging about 300 adults and children every Sunday, with a third of them online. Church school participation has increased by a stunning 300% since September; youth groups for junior and senior high school students are growing, and young families are engaging in meaningful ways. Our remarkable choir, which just performed our first Cantata in three years and will soon be performing in Carnegie Hall, is growing every week. We have made remarkable progress in our work for affordable, sustainable housing in Glen Ellyn, and we have continued to push for LGBTQ+ rights in our schools and our community. We also continue to strengthen our partnership with folks in Tenczyn, near the Ukrainian border, raising over \$25k to support their efforts to care for refugees from the war. Our reinvigorated Green Team is working towards food sustainability and energy efficiency in our building, which is now 100% powered by solar technology. Our church celebrated a remarkably powerful Holy Week this spring, with more folks at services - especially Easter - than we have seen in many years. And while we haven't baptized three thousand new members, as the disciples could boast on Pentecost, we continue to regularly welcome new folks that are excited to be here, growing our community.

Numbers aren't everything, of course, but they tell a story; the story of a church that is successfully rebuilding itself, by God's grace, after an unprecedented global disaster. It truly feels like we are building momentum towards a brighter future for our congregation, which celebrated its 160th anniversary this year.

To be sure, we are not without sorrow. We parted ways with Rev. Kendra Joyner Miller this year, our much beloved Associate Minister of 8 years, as she accepted a call to serve as University Chaplain of Catawba College in North Carolina. We have also bid numerous saints of this church farewell, as they departed this life. And of course, larger concerns such as war, political instability, rampant gun violence, and the climate crisis remain unresolved; but that only means that we have important work to do as people of faith.

I am grateful, as Jesus' disciples surely were, that I don't have to do it alone.



Left: Rev. Seth Ethan Carey singing "Amen" by Leonard Cohen in worship with background vocalists Sherry Flugel and Jackie McCarthy.

At right: Rev. Seth on Rally Day during the "Soak Your Pastor" fundraiser.



## Interim Associate Minister Report — Reverend Kyle Roggenbuck

*“I am about to do a new thing;  
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?  
“I will make a way in the wilderness  
and rivers in the desert.” ~ Isaiah 43:19*

As I write this, FCCGE is alive and well and beginning to thrive as our country and our world emerges from the deprivation of a global pandemic. It has been a blessing for me to be a part of the new things God is doing as we emerge from the wilderness, and we work together to flourish as a community in this place.



I joined you in December of 2022 after Pastor Kendra was called to her dream job in North Carolina and her footprints were indeed large ones to fill. What I found (among a ton of other things) was a robust Stephen Ministry program walking along side those in need, two women’s groups meeting twice monthly for learning and fellowship, an environmental justice committee (Green team) working diligently to build those rivers in the desert.

In the 5 short months I’ve been with you, I have marveled at passionate lay leaders who have shepherded new members into the church, who have devised the Eden Project which will provide fresh produce for the food insecure, who have helped to put together our Interfaith Transgender Day of Visibility, who have gathered for a joyous women’s retreat lifting up our solidarity and resiliency as women of faith. When I heard that the local school district was considering banning some LGBTQ+ book from the high school library, I asked if we might buy them to add to our own church library so people could judge for themselves.

Truly God is doing a new thing in our midst, do you not perceive it? I do. And find hope in all of you who are faithful to God’s call to make a way in this sometimes hard but mostly precious life we get to live together in community.

### Associate Pastor Search Committee Report

*Committee Members: Tom Pulver (Chair), Alan Bayert, Sandy Butt, Becky Gadowski, Brain Hamilton, Jeannine Kannegiesser, DJ LaChapelle, Jackie McCarthy, and Tanner Spears*

Since being commissioned in January 2023, the Associate Pastor Search Committee has completed several critical tasks. The committee has conducted four listening sessions, met with several members of the staff and clergy, and considered the skills that best meet the needs of the congregation as an Associate Pastor is called. We have completed the Congregational Profile document and updated the Associate Pastor position description and have had these documents reviewed by the moderator team and our clergy. These documents were forwarded to the Illinois UCC Conference and a posting was placed on the UCC Ministry Opportunities web page. As a result, we have had several ministerial profiles of candidates forwarded to us for consideration.

We expect to continue receiving candidate profiles, but the committee is in the process of reviewing the profiles that have been received. A subcommittee reviewed material candidates have made available on social media or other internet postings, including listening to sermons and media interviews. Following the initial review process, the committee commenced the interview process of selected candidates. While the entire committee is involved in selecting candidates and important interview questions, the initial interviews of all selected candidates were conducted via Zoom by a sub-set of the committee. The committee chose four candidates for initial interviews and completed the initial interview process via Zoom the week of May 21, 2023.

Once we determine the best two or three candidates, we will ask them to visit Glen Ellyn and our Church for more in-depth discussions with the committee and with Rev Seth Carey. At that point, we will identify the candidate that is the best fit for FCCGE and ask them to meet the congregation which will provide the final vote decision.

## Moderator's Report — Andy Ginger

*"Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth."  
~ 1 John 3:18*

I want to thank the clergy, staff, Council, committees and ministries for your many achievements described in this annual report. It has been a real privilege to support and serve you.

In addition to our spiritual and liturgical objectives, we worked on achieving three goals this year: 1) To revive and reinvigorate our missions and ministries; 2) to increase our economic stability; and 3) to cultivate participation. As you might expect, we made progress, but we also see future potential.

Each of our churchwide fellowship events was a big success with rising participation levels and a warm feeling of community and belonging. Thanks to the Connections teams that brought us together.

We sought to bolster our financial strength. While our preschool partnership hasn't yet come to fruition, we're exploring other external revenue sources. We have maintained our economic health during an uncertain economy. Our Finance team improved our budget process and timeliness, implemented an updated handbook, created new tools and put our limited use funds to work.

Strengthening our processes helps us operate well and allows us to focus our energy on important causes. We'll be voting to update our bylaws to reflect our actual policies and practices. We've enhanced our committee orientation process. Our emergency procedures have been re-written and tested. Our employee handbook and human resources / benefits policies were reviewed and significantly updated. We used your input to outline a new communications plan to improve how we reach each other and the community around us. The first phase is underway now. We are starting a process to finish organizing our neglected archives.

Our committee volunteer recruitment approach, which withered during the pandemic, has been reorganized. We successfully re-engaged existing members and are now reaching out to newer members. Our survey of which areas members are interested in helping with is also re-prioritizing our activities.

Christian education and youth ministries are all-important. The way back from the pandemic has been slow, but this year we have seen steady growth. Our many incredible music programs are now back at full strength. Thanks to our intrepid staff, volunteers, musicians and choir!

Our Service and Justice committee created a new strategic view of the ministries we support. It seeks to prioritize / organize our most important causes. They coupled this to a goal-setting workshop for ministries to outline action plans and rededicate themselves to their missions.

For example, we tried a new approach to serving the homeless through PADS. We realized that the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry isn't a twice-yearly effort....it's a daily imperative. DuPage United is leading the larger community toward important changes. GEYFC reached new levels of service. We stepped up to help Ukrainian refugees in Tenczyn, Poland with strong financial support. Our new Computer Recycling ministry adds a new environmental / service effort. The recently revived Green Team is finding new ways to attain sustainability through hands-on efforts. The list is quite long.

Our Property committee continued our capital improvement efforts, reaching back to 2015, to restore and rejuvenate our historic building while reducing our energy consumption. While their hands-on work helps us every day, their plan to replace our 100+ year-old clay tile roof will serve generations to come.

My messages to you haven't changed. Show up. Join in. Make a difference. Thanks.



*Left to right: Joann Ginger, Andy Ginger, Rev. Seth Ethan Carey volunteering at the Fall Festival for DuPage PADS.*

# Connections Committee Report — Nicole Baedke, Chair

**Committee Members 2022-23:** Nicole Baedke (Chair), Laura Berk, Scott Fischer, Fay Shong, Anne Weber

The Connections Committee enhances the spiritual life of church members by fostering a culture of engagement. It is responsible for creating an inclusive environment, fostering involvement, and coordinating membership integration. Connections organizes and executes important all-church fellowship and recreational events and encourages acquaintance and community.

**Rally Day** - We hosted a picnic-themed kickoff to the program year which featured live music, delicious food from the Kitchen Chix, volunteer sign-up sheets and a variety of kids' activities coordinated by the Christian Education team (including an indoor bounce house). *Pictured right: Mike and Elaine Metzger with Darryl and Jodi Baltimore at Rally Day 2022.*



**Oktoberfest** - We were blessed with beautiful fall weather for this outdoor event. The boy scout troop erected two large tents with twinkling lights and the Kitchen Chix provided a bountiful array of German fare. We sat together at long tables, listening to German music, soaking up the warmth of the fire pits and enjoying each other's company.

**Progressive Dinner** - We brought back this long-standing annual event where participants gather together at a member's home for appetizers, then progress to various individual homes for sit-down meals and reconvene at a final home for desserts.

**Christmas Cookie Delivery to Seniors** - We delivered boxes of homemade Christmas cookies to the homes of all church members age 80+.

**Advent Festival** - Mindy Post once again spearheaded this annual kickoff to the Advent Season with Christmas crafts to be completed either at the church or at home.

**Euchre Tournament** - The annual Euchre Tournament was hosted by Lowell and Jennifer Lindstrom in their home. The tradition is for the winner from each year to host the next year's event. The 2023 winner and therefore 2024 host is Steph Harman! *Pictured: 2023 Euchre host Lowell Lindstrom with 2024 Euchre winner and future host Steph Harmon.*



**Easter Egg Hunt** - We helped the Christian Education staff with this fun Easter Egg hunt, which took place indoors due to inclement weather. Children enjoyed hot chocolate and donuts while waiting for the Easter Bunny to complete his work and then raced throughout the church collecting eggs. *Pictured below are a few of the adorable Easter Egg Hunters.*

**2023 Retreat** - We will be supporting the All-Church Retreat this summer at Tower Hill in Michigan.

This was an exciting time to serve on the Connections Committee, as we saw more people feeling comfortable reengaging with in-person events and activities at the church. We look forward to finding even more ways to create fellowship opportunities in the coming year!



# Ministries of the Connections Committee

## AMERICAN POETRY DISCUSSION GROUP – Alan Bayert

This group met monthly from April to September 2022 (initially in person, then on Zoom) to discuss the works of three pivotal American poets: Walt Whitman (*Leaves of Grass* and other poems), Emily Dickinson (various poems), and T. S. Eliot (*The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*).

## KITCHEN CHIX – Laura Carey, Maggie Fredricks, Mindy Post and Celia Rodee

Although many celebrations were postponed during the Pandemic, the Kitchen Chix have re-emerged as an important and vibrant ministry team of **over 50 church members** (including 4 new members joining our flock in the past few months).

**All-Church Events:** The Chix helped provide the extravagant welcomes and opportunities for fellowship and celebration throughout the year:

**September:** Baked cookies, made veggie wraps and iced tea and lemonade for over 200 attendees of **Rally Day**

**October:** Prepped, cooked and served a German Feast for **Oktoberfest**, including pretzel bites, potato salad, red cabbage and sausages

One of our bittersweet celebrations was the **Farewell Reception Party for Pastor Kendra -Joyner Miller** and her family after church on October 30, 2022, for over 200 people.

**December:** Baked and served Cookies and Cocoa to welcome Pastor Kyle to our church. Baked and delivered cookies to Seniors in the Congregation (becoming an annual tradition).

**April:** Made over 300 devilled eggs and over 150 rice crispy treat nests and served to Easter Sunday attendees.

**May:** Confirmation Celebration Dinner for approximately 50 people including confirmands, their families and sponsors

**Memorial Receptions:** Sadly, there was a backlog of overdue Memorial Services and celebrations due to the Pandemic and a continuation of members passing, ranging in age from 3 years old to over 90. But, the Kitchen Chix provided comfort and sustenance to the families and mourners by catering 9 receptions over this past year with over 100 attendees at each:

- Nancy Djangi 6/24/22
- Ward and Virginia Highstone 7/30/22
- Eunice Green 8/13/22
- Elliot Guido 10/7/22
- Robert Rittichier 10/8/22
- Betty Hodge 11/12/22
- Susie Temple 11/18/22 (*Our Kitchen Chix Leader for 20+ years*)
- Jerry Schurmeier 2/11/23
- Louise Kolar 3/25/23

We welcome all new volunteers to this Christ-inspired ministry that helps sustain and nourish our congregation in all seasons.



## NEWCOMERS MINISTRY - Clara Hughes, Teresa Exner and Hal Temple

The purpose of the Newcomers' Ministry Team is to welcome visitors to our church on Sundays, to host scheduled information sessions and introduce new members during the designated Sundays for joining our faith community.

For the liturgical year 2022-23, the newcomers' ministry held four in-person newcomer welcoming sessions with 19 visitors attending and three private sessions to accommodate five newcomers with special circumstances. 11 newcomers who attended sessions within the last 12-24 months chose to become members of our family of faith. This Fall Hal Temple and I welcomed Teresa Exner to the newcomer ministry team. A relatively new member herself, Teresa brings a fresh lens to the ministry. Teresa re-started the Welcome Desk. Each Sunday she and Dave Exner are on hand to welcome visitors.

Our ministry would not be as successful if it were not for the efforts of our staff who attended the meetings or watched the young children in our nursery during the newcomer sessions. Special thanks to Sherry Flugel who publishes our new members in our weekly eblast and for Joyce Driver who sets the stage so we can keep a smooth program running. Our goal for the upcoming year is to rebuild the Sunday Welcome Desk — *pictured Theresa and David Exner at the Welcome Desk.*

## Ministries of the Connections Committee

### **OASIS GROUP** – Deb Wenninger and Tricia Kerns

The Oasis group is for members of the LGBTQ+ community – at the intersection of faith and sexuality. As a gay woman, I know the challenge it is to find spaces which welcome all of me. In many churches I've attended, my gay self was not welcome. Many secular spaces which welcomed my gay self, preferred that I not express my faith.

Our mission is to create a safe space where LGBTQ+ people may gather and find space that accepts all of who they are including their sexuality and their faith. We continue to meet bimonthly on the first and third Sundays of the month.

Because church has often been a difficult or hurtful space for members of this community, we meet once at the church and once away from church property. The group size varies widely from 4 to 10 people. The majority are not members of FCCGE but rather benefit from the hospitality and support of Oasis and FCCGE.

We have a text group that is active and contains 14 people. Members text when the news reports are particularly upsetting and they reach out when personal events are upsetting. Events are shared as well as jokes and memes.

This year, transgender members have experienced significant personal challenges as well as an increase in anti-transgender rhetoric and legislation.

- The club Q shooting in Colorado Springs directly attacked an LGBTQ+ safe space
- Rhetoric around the recent shooting in Nashville included blame and language denying transgender people

We are grateful for the consistent messaging of FCCGE in support of the LGBTQ+ community. Seth met with us and fielded questions from the group. We feel his support and the FCCGE support through involvement in Transgender Day of Visibility and Transgender Day of Remembrance and the consistent acknowledgement of our presence and worth.

Our focus continues to be on the group meetings; however, we are considering involvement in the Aurora Pride Parade. We are also in search of digital ways to allow church members/ allies to post messages of support and encouragement when public acts against the community occur. I am personally grateful for the hospitality that FCCGE affords us. I am proud to call myself a member of FCCGE – which provides this safe space.

### **OPEN AND AFFIRMING (ONA) MINISTRY** – Hal Temple, Chuck Lukavsky, Co-Chairs

**Ministry members:** Caroline Andres, David and Teresa Exner, Mary Ellen and Chuck Lukavsky, Tanner Spears, Bob Tyler, and Hal Temple. Thanks to our clergy for serving as ministry advisors during the year.

Our purpose is to keep the tenets of the ONA Statement before the congregation (*see ONA Statement on back cover of this report*). To help educate members of the church on various issues brought forward in support of the ONA Statement, the following event was held: On March 29, 2023, FCCGE along with four other area churches (Congregation Etz Chaim, St. Mark's Episcopal, St. Matthew's UCC and Hope UCC) came together to celebrate the Transgender Day of Visibility. The service was held at Etz Chaim and was attended by over 100 people with more viewing it online. The four members of the LGBTQ community who spoke about their life journey provided us with moving testimony about the continuing struggles of the LGBTQ community.

### **SOUL SISTERS** –Becky Gadomski and Amy Stout

The idea for Soul Sisters was formed at a church retreat approximately 5 years ago. At the retreat, women spoke of the need for the companionship, encouragement and support that they were feeling to continue when the retreat ended. As a result, a biweekly group was formed to allow women to make and sustain meaningful relationships with other women.

We meet twice a month on the first and third Sundays after church services (usually in the parlor), however we take a break during the summer. The group continues to represent all ages (30s to 70s) in diverse stages of life: single, married, divorced, widowed, new parents, new grandparents, working outside the home and in, retired, etc...

Discussions take place in a non-threatening, safe environment, as you are encouraged to talk as little or as much as you'd like. Discussion topics are determined by the interests of the group; sometimes we talk about the sermon, sometimes we talk about an issue someone shares that she may be struggling with, or sometimes we generate discussions around questions such as: "What do you do to take care of yourself?" or "Is there a person you struggle to forgive, and why"? We have also gathered to create vision boards, share our favorite things, recommend books, make jewelry, and do yoga, among other things.

We welcome new members to join at any time and any level of commitment is welcome.



## Finance Committee—Tim Rodine, Chair and Treasurer Emeritus

**Committee members:** Tim Rodine (Chair and Treasurer Emeritus); Matt Szafranski (Treasurer); Whit Brooks (Assistant Treasurer); Laura Shellady (Business Administrator and Staff Liaison to Committee); Martha DeForest; and Dave Mook (Endowment Team Chair)

The Finance Committee provides financial oversight to build and preserve the financial resources necessary to support the mission of the Church, both for the short and the long term. We strive to be good stewards.

In addition to monitoring our performance against the current Annual Budget and helping the Treasurer develop the proposed Annual Budget for the upcoming fiscal year, the Committee took on several important tasks this year, including:

- Updated our Budget process to streamline the effort and make it easier for everyone to work with, which provided more time to consider the upcoming budget. A key aspect was creating a new file for capturing and projecting staffing-related expenses. A big thank you to Whit Brooks for his work with the new personnel file!
- A group reviewed our current Medical Insurance Plan compared to others in the marketplace. We found we could not do any better than our current plan.
- Reviewed the Limited Use Funds, which are contributions made to specific areas or parameters. Developed a process to provide visibility and tracking of these funds for the different areas of our church.
- Continued our adoption of Google Cloud which can only be accessed by the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Finance Chair and Treasurer Emeritus, Business Administrator and Senior Minister. This serves as a central repository for financial reports and documents. Worked to eliminate printing and physically storing as much as possible. This aligns with the church's overall sustainability effort.
- Incorporated more checks and balances with our processes, especially adding the use of Quickbooks Online and Google Cloud. This helps us make better decisions on the location of funds and allows us to highlight exceptions or trends with expenses.

I want to thank the Committee for all their hard work and commitment this year. We are also very grateful for the giving and support of this Congregation. Your generosity, along with careful expense monitoring, has allowed us to end this year in a strong financial position and remain confident that the Church and its mission will continue.

## Annual Fund Report—Rev. Seth Carey

### Results of the Annual Fund Campaign for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

This year, our Church's Annual Fund — the *Generations* campaign — asked members to celebrate our church's illustrious history and spirit-filled future, as a place that endures from one generation to the next.

We had hoped to raise \$1 million to fund the Church and its ministries in the coming fiscal year. We aren't there yet; we are still waiting to hear from approximately 60 households who pledged last year and have not pledged yet this year. Here is what we have received as of May 23, 2023:

- Our pledge total for this year's campaign, thus far, is **\$869,543**.
- **190** households have pledged to support the Church financially.
- Approximately **60** households that pledged a gift last year have not yet made a pledge this year. We are still hoping to hear from you! Altogether, these individuals pledged **\$179,735** last year.
- We are pleased to share that based on the 190 pledges we have received to date, **there are 134 new and increased pledges, 56% of pledging households, and 17% have pledged to maintain their current level of giving.**
- In total, we lost \$25,000 due to relocation, death, and financial hardship; but we gained \$67,680 in new and increased pledges.

We are very encouraged by the enthusiastic support we received from our Congregation, and we are hopeful to make up the difference in the weeks to come.

If you participated in this year's campaign – thank you! All of your gifts and contributions are appreciated, valued and yet another example of how we are a community like no other.



## Endowment Fund Committee Report — Dave Mook, Chair

**Endowment Committee members: 2022-23:** Dean Fischer, Megan Savitt, Matt Szafranski, and Dave Mook (Chair)

The value of the Endowment Fund as of 12/31/22 was as follows:

	<u>12/31/22</u>	<u>12/31/21</u>	<u>Change</u>
Investments*	\$ 895,219	\$1,020,985	\$ (125,766)
Outstanding Church Loan	<u>0</u>	<u>14,627</u>	<u>(14,627)</u>
Total	\$ 895,219	\$1,035,612	\$ (140,393)

\*Investments are in the iShares ESG Aware Growth Allocation ETF (EAOR). Funds were moved to an ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) strategy in April 2021 to better align with the values and mission of our church.

As of March 31, 2023, the total value of the Endowment was \$954,588.

Church Loan – Original balance was \$190,000. Loan was made in 2012 for church office and kitchen renovations. Amortization of the loan was completed in June 2022.

In November 2022, a payment of \$18,222 was made from the Endowment Fund to the Church Operating Fund. This represents dividends / income for 2021. It includes salary augmentation of \$1,828 for church staff as stipulated by a donor.

The fund received \$50,992 of contributions during 2022. Since April 2021, funds have been invested in an ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) strategy to better align with the values and mission of our church.

### Endowment Tree

The Endowment Tree (pictured right) is located on the east wall of the Atrium and acknowledges those who have made a contribution to the Endowment Fund or have informed us of a bequest they have made in their will (Covenant Club). If you'd like to have your name included on the Endowment Tree, see one of the Endowment Committee members or contact the church office.



### Columbarium Memorial Center

Located in the Church Narthex, the Columbarium provides a final resting place for loved ones and family. Since 2004, the center has provided individual niches or companion units for the interment of the remains of church members, immediate family, former members, and friends of the Church.

The Columbarium was funded by our Endowment Committee, so income from the sale of memorial units has been repaid to the Endowment Fund over the years. Approximately 30 niches are still available for purchase. Information regarding purchase of a niche can be obtained from the Church Office.

## New Business Feasibility Committee—Dean Fischer

Imagine our church being able to do more ministry work in our community and in the wider world. Imagine not having to worry as much every year about our annual pledge campaign and subsequent budget.

About 10 months ago, Pastor Seth assembled a team of members from the congregation, each of whom had entrepreneurial experience starting and growing a new business. The team members are Dean Fischer, Tim Waterloo, Jill Foucré, Thom and Sue Martin, and Hope and Tim Rodine. The team examined the possibility for the church to start a business aligned with our church's mission that could produce income to supplement our current funds.

The team has been hard at work brainstorming ideas for potential "for-profit" businesses that could benefit the church financially. We came up with several ideas. We have taken one of those business ideas and enlisted the support of Northern Illinois University students to help us on a pro bono basis to develop a business case for the feasibility of such a venture. The NIU team will deliver their final results to us by the end of May. After that we will begin to get input from our church members about the idea and whether we could bring the project to life.

## Property & Grounds Committee — Tim Waterloo, Chair

**Committee Members 2022-23:** Mike Artrip, Steve Jungling, Erik Schuchardt, Mike Sorensen, Tim Waterloo (Chair), Sharon Wussow, Mike Zita. Special thanks to Jim Stuhlmacher, previous Chair, who continued serving as Project Manager for several initiatives begun in the prior year.

The Property and Grounds Committee is responsible for maintaining our historic building and grounds. The committee works to ensure our facilities are safe and support the ministries of the congregation while striving to be good stewards of the congregation's financial support.

The committee works closely with the Church's excellent staff especially with Facilities Manager Wojciech Gracz, Business Administrator Laura Shellady and Sexton Jose Beltran.

### Completed projects in 2022-2023

- Moved to 100% solar-powered electricity via our participation in the Nexamp community solar farm.
- Installed a modern full-featured phone system which replaced our 20-year-old system.
- Installed a new door entry security system which improves building and employee safety.
- Designed and installed exterior signs for all the doors of the church which makes the experience more welcoming for our visitors.
- Replaced the kitchen exhaust fan with a larger capacity unit which improves air quality and safety.
- Refurbished the kitchen dishwasher with a new water heater booster pump and electronic circuit board.
- Replaced the old water heater with a new energy-efficient model.
- Repaired several roof leaks in the sanctuary and flat roof.
- Repaired fascia on the Temple of Light building.
- For Fall Workday, 20 church members assisted in removing vines from the parking lot fence, preparing gardens for the winter, refinishing a table top, cleaning our storage areas, and painting a hallway wall.
- For Spring Workday, 25 church members came out to assist with painting the Pre-School Classroom south wall, repair of the communion table, installation of sensor light switches in the downstairs bathrooms, dusting and cleaning of sconces and light fixtures, cleaning and resealing the parking lot fence, and improving storage areas.



*Top (L to R): On Spring Work Day Mike Sorenson (left) seals the parking lot fence while volunteers help clean up garden beds. Bottom: Committee member Sharon Wussow led the external signage project installed in 2022-23.*

### Ongoing projects in 2023-2024

- Roof replacements for the sanctuary, Temple of Light building and the five flat roofs atop the towers. During the year the committee researched several options for this significant capital fund project. The Church Council approved the selection of Conrad Roofing to perform all the work which will take place during 2023 and 2024.
- Manage our natural gas costs. The church's three year contract for natural gas expired in 2022. The committee is watching market prices to determine the optimal time to enter a new multi-year agreement.
- Furnish the All Purpose Room for flexible usage.



## Ministries of the Property & Grounds Committee

### Garden Ministry—Nancy Bell

**Ministry Members:** Nancy Bell, Leslie Foster, Katie Miley, Jenny and Dean Fisher

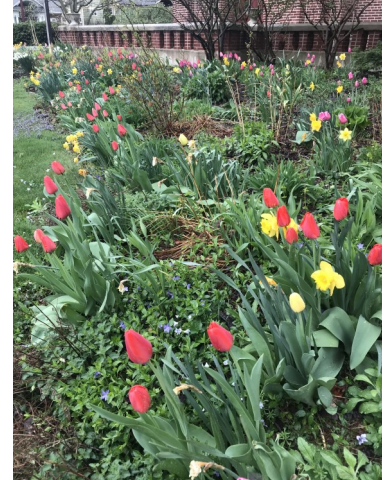
This team is responsible for planting, watering, weeding and generally maintaining all the places around the grounds where you see flowers, shrubs and trees blooming! Many other church members pitched in for the Spring and Fall clean-ups.

This was the fourth full year of the garden bed renovation for existing front and side garden beds. Shrubs and perennials finally came into full maturity, providing lots of color, continuous bloom and plenty of food for the pollinators! We did a great job controlling the invasive weeds, but there is always more weeding to be done!

The beautiful 2021 garden donated and installed by Jenny and Dean Fisher on Anthony Street started to fill in nicely this year, looking great throughout the whole growing season. Dean also rejuvenated the Terrace Garden.

Our spring gardens were filled with colorful bulbs until mid-May. Five very large hostas were relocated from the west garden bed to a shady section of the front garden bed, making room for several new perennials to be planted along the west garden path. Many bags of topsoil and fresh mulch were installed to help with weed control and to reduce watering.

In the Fall, the group did a complete clean-out of the overgrown weedy bed along the north parking lot. Much needed weed barriers were installed in the west bed and many bags of mulch were installed. We took special care not to remove all the leaves and dying plant material at the end of the season to promote healthy soil and provide shelter for wildlife and beneficial insects over the winter. And just before the first severe winter cold snap, over 200 spring bulbs were planted around the front and west side gardens.



### Major Initiative: New Church Roofing – Tim Waterloo

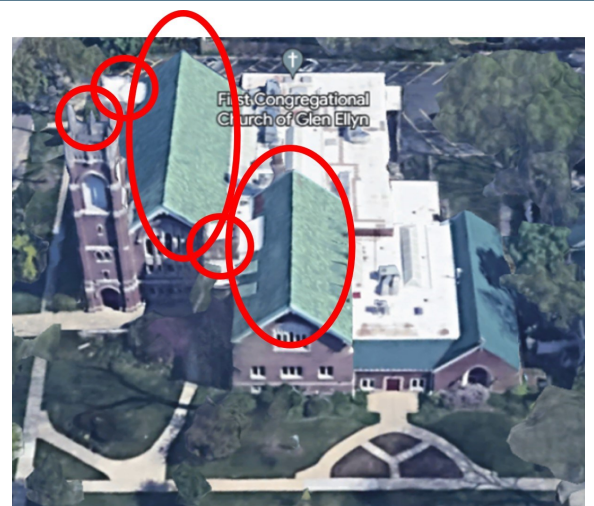
Our church building has multiple roofs. Several of these have been replaced in the past five years. The remainder are more than 100 years old and showing signs of failure. They include the Sanctuary roof, the Temple of Light roof, and five flat roofs on our towers. We have experienced rainstorm leaks with increased frequency that put our refurbished Sanctuary at risk. Repairing leaks is an expensive stop gap measure.

It is now time to replace these roofs. The plans for roof replacements were an important part of our 2014 Reserve Plan and our 2018 Capital Fund campaign. The estimated cost is approximately \$650,000 which will deplete most of the remaining funds in our Capital Fund. Council approved this project in April 2023. (See the updated Capital Plan on subsequent pages in this report.)

The tower roofs will be replaced during the summer of 2023. The clay tile roofs will be replaced in the spring/summer season of 2024. The Sanctuary and Temple of Light buildings will be roofed with new French clay tiles to replace the failing historical tile roof. This will preserve the beautiful architectural look of our church and protect our historic building. It is estimated the new clay tile roofs will last 100 years.

Conrad Roofing was selected to do this work through a thoughtful bidding process. Conrad has specialists who work on historic buildings like ours and understand the installation of clay tile roofs. Their artisans have worked on our church before, replacing copper gutters, fascia, and decorative woodwork for us over the past several years.

Once completed, our facility will be protected from above for the next century. Thank you for your generous contributions to the capital fund which enables FCCGE to be a safe, warm, and DRY refuge to our community.



# Building Capital Fund Update — Tim Waterloo

## Building Capital Fund - Updated Projection May 2023

In 2015, we embarked on a journey to maintain our historic building. In 2017, the Congregation generously responded to the Called Forward capital campaign, pledging contributions over a 3-year period to fund capital projections. With those funds we've accomplished many successes including renovations of the Sanctuary, Pilgrim Hall and much of our infrastructure. The next two years will bring significant and necessary investments in our roof. The roof replacement will draw down the capital fund close to zero. This means our Congregation will need to discuss our plan to fund the next several years of capital improvements. The updated plan is outlined below.

### KEY FOR EXPENSES

Original Reserve Est. = OR

Completed = COM

Needs Research = RES

New / Revised Item = REV

### Prior to 2018-19 Fiscal Year

	<u>Estimate/Actual</u>	<u>Key</u>
Air handling and condensing units, split systems	12,446	COM
Exterior door - west side	6,000	COM
Asphalt pavement, total replacement	52,377	COM
Light fixture refurbishment - sanctuary		COM
Light fixtures, bell tower	10,832	COM
Roofs, asphalt shingles, dormers at clay tile roofs	8,227	COM
<b>Total</b>	<b>89,882</b>	

### 2018-19 Fiscal Year

Window refurbishment: stained glass and double-hung	70,000	COM
Roof, asphalt shingles and downspouts, chapel	34,000	COM
Fire panel replacement	18,000	COM
South exterior doors	12,000	COM
Automatic electric door opener	8,300	COM
Rooftop ventilator for rest rooms / showers	3,850	COM
West Sanctuary gutters, downspouts, roof valley, woodwork	23,400	COM
Chimney cap	7,000	COM
Replace / relocate 5 rooftop HVAC units - Stage 1 and 2	90,000	COM
Computer / security equipment	2,325	COM
<b>Total</b>	<b>268,875</b>	

### Pilgrim Hall Renovation: 2019-2020

	<b>580,000</b>	COM
--	----------------	-----

### Sanctuary Restoration: 2019-2020

Restoration of Sanctuary, Narthex, Stairwells, Equipment	250,000	COM
Sanctuary: audio visual	225,000	COM
<b>Total</b>	<b>475,000</b>	

### 2019-2020 Fiscal Year

Payback endowment loan	25,000	COM
Furniture: public areas	5,300	COM
Convert Temple Of Light to 4 season room	15,000	COM
Digital HVAC control systems	1,500	COM
Exterior masonry and tuckpointing including chimney	18,000	COM
Acoustical ceiling tiles - first floor restrooms - professionally installed	750	COM
Asphalt pavement, crack repair, patch and seal coat	3,600	OR
Replace refrigerator	2,500	COM
Computer / security equipment	3,343	COM
<b>Total</b>	<b>74,993</b>	

# Building Capital Fund Update — continued

## Building Capital Fund - Updated Projection May 2023

### 2020-2021 Fiscal Year

Payback endowment loan	25,000	COM
Digital HVAC control systems	1,000	COM
Rooftop HVAC - Stage 3	58,666	COM
Roof Maintenance - Multiple Areas	35,000	COM
Roofs, thermoplastic, CPE, 2001 (Moved one year earlier)	98,837	COM
Interior painting (Balance Moved Later)	2,800	REV
Computer / security equipment	3,000	REV
<b>Total</b>	<b>224,303</b>	

### Youth Room Renovation: 2020-2021

	37,000	REV
--	--------	-----

### 2021-2022 Fiscal Year

Payback endowment loan	25,000	COM
Attic Air Handler and HVAC - Stage 4	42,181	COM
Floor coverings, carpet, common areas, phased	12,832	COM
Walls, masonry, inspections and repairs	1,500	REV
Exterior walls, wood trim, paint finishes	7,150	OR
Boiler circulating pumps	3,378	COM
Organ vault asbestos and fire sprinklers	8,108	COM
Elevator Control System	43,057	COM
Fence post replacements	1,614	COM
Computer equipment	-	COM
Interior Painting	-	COM
<b>Total</b>	<b>143,283</b>	

<b>Total Through 2021-2022</b>	<b>1,893,336</b>	
--------------------------------	------------------	--

### 2022-2023 Fiscal Year

Fence replacement	7,858	COM
Floor coverings, carpet in back offices	12,832	COM
Signage for exterior doors	800	
Exterior- Temple of Light fascia repair	10,550	COM
Security / phone system replacement	9,250	COM
Water heater	14,700	COM
Kitchen equipment- exhaust fan/hood, dishwasher booster heater	10,050	COM
Computer / security equipment	3,000	REV
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,040</b>	

<b>Remaining Capital Campaign Funds (as of 4/30/23)</b>	<b>710,131</b>	
---	----------------	--

### 2023-2024 Fiscal Year

Small & tower roofs	83,000	REV
Sanctuary roof-new clay tiles, underlayment	311,000	REV
Temple of Light roof- new clay tiles, underlayment	257,000	REV
Gutters and downspouts, copper	16,000	REV
Asphalt Pavement, crack repair, patch and seal coat	3,302	OR
Computer / security equipment	3,000	REV
<b>Total</b>	<b>673,302</b>	

<b>Total Through 2023-2024</b>	<b>2,635,678</b>	
--------------------------------	------------------	--

<b>Target (Reserve estimate plus Pilgrim Hall at \$580 K)</b>	<b>2,721,265</b>	
---	------------------	--

# Building Capital Fund Update — continued

## Building Capital Fund - Updated Projection May 2023

### 2024-2025 Fiscal Year

Replace second floor attic air handlers and HVAC	40,000	REV
South windows, wood frames	13,824	OR
Skylights	46,933	OR
Furniture: Tables	4,000	REV
Computer / security equipment	3,000	REV
<b>Total</b>	<b>107,757</b>	

### 2025-2026 Fiscal Year

Boilers, building heat	124,595	OR
Rooftop air intake unit for boilers	15,000	REV
Tuckpointing exterior walls, wood trim, paint finishes	38,129	OR
Walls, masonry, inspections and repairs-Bell tower	64,742	OR
Floor Coverings, tile, common areas	9,398	OR
Computer / security system	3,000	REV
Acoustical ceiling tiles - 2,525 sq. ft. - DIY installed	10,000	REV
Acoustical ceiling tiles - 3,367 sq. ft. - professionally installed	16,835	REV
Stained glass window maintenance	10,000	REV
<b>Total</b>	<b>291,699</b>	

### 2026-2027 Fiscal Year

Organ restoration, electrical and enhancement	71,791	OR
Life Safety System, Emergency Devices	30,000	REV
Kitchen equipment and appliances	30,000	REV
Kitchen equipment- cooktops	15,000	REV
Replace north parking lot fence	4,000	REV
Asphalt Pavement, crack repair, patch and seal coat	3,673	OR
Floor coverings, carpet, common areas, phased	60,000	REV
Computer / security equipment	3,000	REV
Furniture: Public Areas	4,000	REV
Rest Rooms, single stall	4,000	OR
<b>Total</b>	<b>225,464</b>	

### 2028-2029 Fiscal Year

Rest Rooms, multiple stalls, renovations	66,569	OR
Light Fixtures, sanctuary, refurbishment	12,710	OR
Light fixtures, can and pendant, atrium and chapel	6,424	OR
Light fixtures, sanctuary, narthex and stairs, dome	3,115	OR
Kitchen cabinets, counters, renovations	39,206	OR
Floor coverings, common areas	102,225	OR
Computer / security equipment	3,000	REV
<b>Total</b>	<b>233,249</b>	

### 2029-2030 Fiscal Year

Rest Rooms, single stall	4,000	OR
Acoustical ceiling tiles - 2,525 sq. ft. - DIY installed	10,000	REV
Acoustical ceiling tiles - 3,367 sq. ft. - professionally installed	16,835	REV
Computer / security equipment	3,000	REV
Floor coverings	104,905	OR
<b>Total</b>	<b>138,740</b>	

<b>Five Year Total 2024-2030</b>	<b>996,909</b>	
----------------------------------	----------------	--

## Service & Justice Committee — Jill Hewitt, Chair

**Committee Members:** Lisa Clay, Jill Hewitt (Chair), Richard Jones, and Maria Metz (Vice-Chair)

The Service & Justice Committee supports organizations that align with our church’s mission. This year, the committee developed an organizing structure to communicate our purpose and connect our congregation to service & justice opportunities. It starts with the overarching goal of sustaining our congregation, our community, and our world. Service & justice ministry and partner organizations align with the three pillars that support sustainability: equity, health, and security.

Through the generosity of our members’ financial contributions and volunteer hours, FCCGE has supported the organizations listed below. The Service & Justice Committee developed and documented a process for evaluating future funding requests that come to FCCGE. The process ensures that requests align with our three pillars (equity, health, and security), encourage connection with existing organizations, and allow us to maximize the impact of our church’s financial offerings.

<h3 style="text-align: center;">Sustainability</h3> <p style="text-align: center;">We strive to sustain our congregation, our community, and our world through the pillars of equity, health, and security</p>		
<h4>Equity</h4> <p>Promoting equality of status, rights, and opportunities</p>	<h4>Health</h4> <p>Promoting mental, physical, spiritual, and environmental health</p>	<h4>Security</h4> <p>Promoting safety and stability in housing, food, and other basic needs</p>
<p>Equity Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DuPage United</li> <li>• Glen Ellyn Children’s Resource Center</li> <li>• Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation</li> </ul>	<p>Health Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central DuPage Pastoral Counseling</li> <li>• Glen Ellyn Youth &amp; Family Counseling</li> <li>• Mental Health Ministry</li> <li>• Ministry of Meals</li> <li>• Stephen Ministry</li> <li>• Green Team (formerly the Environmental Ministry)</li> <li>• Creator’s Purpose Computer Ministry</li> </ul>	<p>Security Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bridge Communities</li> <li>• Garden Works Project</li> <li>• Glen Ellyn Food Pantry</li> <li>• Glen Ellyn Walk-in Ministry</li> <li>• Habitat for Humanity</li> <li>• Onward House</li> <li>• DuPage PADS</li> <li>• Rebuilding Together</li> <li>• World Relief</li> <li>• Ukraine Relief</li> </ul>

In October 2022, the committee held in-person workshops with representatives from our partner organizations (*pictured below*). Participants shared their goals for the year and identified opportunities for connection. Two themes emerged from the workshops: 1) the need to build awareness, and 2) the need to recruit people to take part in the great work of our partner organizations. As a result, the committee will invite partners to share testimonials during Sunday services, match the interest survey results to partner organization needs, and open FCCGE communication channels to share events, needs or requests. We encourage the congregation to review the great work of our service & justice partners have shared in their annual reports on the following pages and learn more about getting involved by contacting the organization lead.



### **Bridge Communities—Leslie Dodge**

Bridge Communities is a dynamic grassroots, non-profit organization committed to transforming the lives of homeless families by partnering with individuals and groups in the local community. The Bridge program houses, mentors, and empowers the families, focusing on moving them towards a goal of self sufficiency. Over the last 35 years, Bridge has provided free transitional housing and has grown to include more than 100 units of transitional housing. During the two years that each family spends in the program, they are able to save money, learn budgeting skills, and obtain better employment so they can live self-sufficiently. Members of the church often serve as mentors to the families.

As a Bridge Communities Program Partner, FCCGE financially supports a family and more broadly, continues to aid Bridge Communities' ability to provide services during the family's time in the program including case management, nutrition and employment services, and charitable services that support them. This year we transitioned one family out of the program into their own apartment and brought another family into the program with a newly formed team of Bridge mentors.

### **Central DuPage Pastoral Counseling Center (CDPCC)—Nancy E. Cochran, Executive Director**

The center's mission is providing high quality and affordable mental health care to all who seek their services. They offer a sliding scale to low-income clients. CDPCC helps everyone who comes to the center; however, the therapists are uniquely trained as well when those in need either find spirituality as a resource or if they find themselves in a spiritual crisis.

This year the Center's counselors worked hard providing counseling sessions and assessments for those with mental health needs through both telehealth services and in-person sessions when safe. They offered weekly sessions on mindfulness practice, which teaches acceptance and compassion to increase coping skills and reduce stress. The Board and staff are working together to launch a Mental Health Awareness in Churches campaign in which photographs depicting mental health challenges like depression can be on display at churches during May (Mental Health Awareness Month). A large focus this year has been to rebuild staff. The past two years has seen several seasoned therapists either retire or move away amidst the mental health crisis. At this time the center has hired new full-time staff who are enthusiastically planning group support to those in need who are suffering alone.

### **Creator's Purpose Computer Ministry—Mike DeFlorio**

2022 - 2023 was the year of inception of Creator's Purpose Computer Ministry at FCCGE. Our mission is to create a rebirth of old electronics for the advancement of God's kingdom. We have recruited a total of three volunteers to start working on the donated electronics. Donations included 10 monitors, 7 desktop computers, and 3 laptop computers. We have deployed one monitor, desktop computer to a client from Bridge Communities and have worked on all other donated computers to be ready for deployment. In addition, we are working on building relationships with various community partners to get the word out for both donations and deployment opportunities.

### **DuPage Habitat for Humanity—Debbie White**

Habitat for Humanity's mission is to bring people together to build homes, communities and hope. Their work encompasses neighborhood revitalization, home new construction and repairs. Funds from FCCGE continued to aid DuPage Habitat's efforts with the building of 8 new townhomes in Hanover Park, 2 rehabs in West Chicago, and 2 rehabs in Glen Ellyn this past fiscal year, resulting in providing affordable housing for 12 additional families. DuPage Habitat also continued to build upon their Aging in Place (AIP) home repair program which provides affordable repairs to seniors (everything from grab bars to new roofs). Without this critical program, some DuPage seniors would be forced from their homes. Through this work, needed housing stock is being preserved, adding another level of sustainability for the community overall.

Additionally, this past year DuPage Habitat for Humanity increased their efforts in advocacy. DuPage Habitat staff members and a DuPage Habitat partner family attended "Habitat on the Hill" in Washington DC from 2/6/23-2/9/23 to advocate for the Habitat mission through federal policy. They met with house representatives and senators to make specific asks including increasing Federal Funding for affordable homeownership, repair, and neighborhood revitalization.

### **DuPage United (DU)---Clara and Roger Hughes**

DuPage United works collectively with other faith-based and non-profit institutions within DuPage County who share an interest in building relationships and power with a vision to create lasting change that address social injustices. FCCGE has been a member of DU for six years.

Affordable, Accessible, Supportive Housing (AASH) Initiative: This year we continued our focus on growing our "people power" to support our efforts for an AASH development in Glen Ellyn. In addition to bolstering support within DU Glen Ellyn member institutions, we developed a strong ally group of over 10 community institutions. We rallied our members through educational

## Service & Justice Ministries & Mission Partners — continued

forums and one-to-one conversations. We canvassed our community, prepared educational flyers, grew our leadership base and participated in listening sessions. On May 22, 2022 DuPage United hosted an assembly with over 200 attendees and 50 via zoom. In the Fall we garnered 500 signatures on a petition to support the AASH development. On January 9, 2023, 160 residents, including many of you, attended the Village Trustee Board meeting to visibly demonstrate your support to our Village leaders. There, we presented the petition and ally letters of support of the AASH development. We anticipate a final Trustee decision in early May, 2023.

Decriminalization of Mental Illness Initiative - DuPage United has fought to decriminalize mental illness in DuPage County and state-wide beginning in 2015. Our current work has focused on creating a County-wide crisis stabilization center for residents experiencing a mental health crisis. Following research on best practices across the country, we met with State and County officials, unwavering in our criteria and commitment for such a center here in DuPage County. The May 22, 2022 Assembly highlighted our successes and continued need to expand mental health crisis services. On March 28, 2023, The DuPage County Health Department announced the expansion of its mental health services to build a comprehensive Crisis Stabilization Center, which is in line with DuPage United objectives. This new center, targeted to open in early 2025, will go far in assuring that our county residents have an alternative to jail or crowded emergency rooms when they experience a mental health crisis.

Racial Justice Initiative: All of the work that DuPage United does is through a lens of righting the wrongs of systemic discrimination. We have developed relationships with the local NAACP, Together Is Better, Pizza and Social Justice, and Unity Partnership and are

Gun Safety Initiatives: DuPage United participates in a regional and national coalition to increase the development and use of smart gun technology among law enforcement agencies and general public. On July 16 2022, DU participated in a regional assembly of over 1600 attendees and several state legislators, highlighting our work on gun safety.

### **Gilead Church Chicago—Vince Amlin and Rebecca Anderson, Co-Pastors**

Gilead is a church started in 2017 to be church for, with, and by people who've been told or made to feel church isn't for them. It's also a church for people who live on different kind of margins — because of their sexual orientation, gender identity, mental illness, or socioeconomic status. Our core practices are to make beautiful, creative worship, throw great parties and make real friends, and tell true stories that save lives.

Our first ever congregational business party, with snacks and drinks, was opened and closed by ringing the cowbell we use on Ash Wednesday when we sing, “Don’t Fear the Reaper.” The incoming leadership team each shared one dream they have for Gilead. Everyone in attendance was invited to write one line of our new Open and Affirming statement; we read those aloud, and people cheered at each affirmation. Between business items, we have dance breaks — during which there was actual dancing.

Our July worship series, “Hammered and Nailed: stories of sex, drugs, and carpentry,” started as a joke (as so much does). But the real purpose behind a theme like that is to invite people to find God in all of their stories, not just the ones they may think are appropriate for church. This goofy theme became the occasion for one of Gilead’s most powerful services ever, in which multiple Gileadites shared stories of sexual violence, including an incredibly moving and spirit-filled dialogue sermon between Pastor Rebecca and a congregant.

Over the year, we welcomed 3 clergy on sabbatical who wanted to learn from Gilead. We said goodbye to 2 wonderful student pastors and began working with 3 others. We hired a wonderful AV tech. And: we finally moved back into a bar! It’s the most expensive location we’ve ever rented, at a time when our attendance and giving numbers are down. These are the lean times we’ve been planning for, and when your support is so appreciated!

### **Glen Ellyn Children’s Resource Center—Celia Rodee**

GECRC offers after-school and summer programming that empowers under-resourced K-12 students in School Districts 41 and 89 to meet state and local standards for academic and social-emotional learning; involves students in activities that enrich learning; and connects families to schools and other resources necessary to support student success and well-being. GECRC programs allow students, their parents, teachers, volunteer tutors, and GECRC staff to develop mutually enriching relationships that support and inspire learning and growth.

GECRC is continuing to grow and thrive in our community! This year GECRC completed a three year strategic plan that will guide GECRC as it continues to serve more of the most vulnerable students in our community with cost-free tutoring and mentoring. The four after-school programs (Churchill Elementary, Lincoln Elementary, Hadley Junior High School and Glen Crest Junior High school) implemented a social emotional learning curriculum, in addition to the academically rich tutoring that has always been a staple of GECRC. One fun annual activity is celebrating math literacy on PI day (3.14) and this year, board president Celia Rodee delivered individual homemade pies to students at our Lincoln elementary site, 11 of whom had never tasted pie before!

This summer, GECRC will serve more students than ever in their annual six week Summer Program.

**Service & Justice Ministries & Mission Partners — continued**

**Glen Ellyn Food Pantry—Jennifer Darnall**

For more than 40 years, the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry has been dedicated to helping those experiencing food insecurity. An endeavor of 14 Glen Ellyn churches, First Congregational Church is proud to be a founding member of the Pantry and remains committed to the mission. The Glen Ellyn Food Pantry Ministry fills one spot on the Pantry Board. Meetings are held on the third Monday ten times a year. The Board is made up of representatives from 18 area churches and a few members at large. Volunteers are always needed to pick up recovered food from stores. Cash donations are always welcome to purchase other needed items. Visit the website for the list of needed items, which is updated weekly: [www.glenellynfoodpantry.org](http://www.glenellynfoodpantry.org).

2022 was an interesting year for the Glen Ellyn Food Pantry. Construction began on a new home, located next to Faith Lutheran Church, 55 N. Park Blvd. While it was hoped the move would occur by the end of 2022, there is still a little work that needs to be completed. The Pantry, located in Grace Lutheran Church, continues to serve the community within the building as well as assisting other organizations. In 2022, nearly 6,000 people were served which amounted to approximately 866,000 pounds of food (320,000 is fresh produce). Partnerships were established with PADS, a veterans' organization, a senior facility, and an expansion of the backpack program. Clients continue to make appointments to come into the pantry to shop. There is also an option to have the food ready for pick up. The Pantry has also been focusing on making people aware that clients come from all over DuPage County. Not just Glen Ellyn. First Congregational holds collection drives twice a year - in May and in September. Food is also collected throughout the year with a collection bin inside the parking lot door.

**Glen Ellyn Walk-In Ministry—Lora Ilhardt**

The Glen Ellyn Walk-in Ministry (WIM) was created in 1994 to provide a source of compassionate assistance to Glen Ellyn residents and members of Glen Ellyn churches who are in need of emergency aid. It is an all-volunteer mission coordinated and funded by fifteen Glen Ellyn churches, including FCCGE.

After having to serve out clients via phone requests for nearly two years, we have once again returned to full opening at the First United Methodist Church of Glen Ellyn. We are excited to be able to serve our clients in person once again, and we continue to assist by giving our clients food gift cards, bus and train passes, and gas vouchers. We also assist with utility bills, car repairs, and prescriptions by sending checks directly to the service providers. We plan to continue providing assistance by phone as well, so that all can benefit from our ministry. Office hours are Monday through Thursday from 10:00 a.m. until 12 noon.

**Glen Ellyn Youth and Family Counseling Service—Clarque Johnson, LPC, Executive Director**

Glen Ellyn Youth & Family Counseling Service (GEYFCS) is a 501c3 non-profit community mental health center housed in the First Congregational Church of Glen Ellyn which provides reduced-fee counseling services for low-income individuals and families and those who may lack insurance resources. GEYFCS is partnered with local schools and police to provide mental health treatment, group supports, community referral and linkage and substance abuse assessment services. GEYFCS offers services on a sliding-scale fee, which is based off a client's income level. GEYFCS' mission states that no individual or family is ever denied services based on their inability to pay. For more information, visit our website: [www.geyfcs.org](http://www.geyfcs.org)

We are so grateful to FCCGE staff and members for allowing our office to be integrated in the church property. The funding support from FCCGE helps us to not only supplement reduced-fees for clients but to maintain counseling staff and meet operational needs.

**GEYFCS FISCAL YEAR May 1, 2021-April 30, 2022**

Total Counseling Hours: 987  
Cases: 122  
Clients (Seen at least once): 223  
GE Residents or GE Schools: 100%  
Total Referrals: 115  
% under 200% FPL: 84.5%  
Youth under age 18/families: 102 cases or 84%  
Minority Clients/Cases : 63%  
**Client Fees: \$12,773.73**  
Total Clients Seen: 1,084

Referrals from GE Schools: 63 or 55%  
GWHS: 19  
GSHS: 18  
Lincoln Elem: 4  
Hadley Jr. HS: 16  
GlenCrest MS: 2  
Ben Franklin Elem: 1  
Forest Glen Elem: 1  
College of DuPage: 2  
GEPD referrals: 5  
GE Library referrals: 4



## Service & Justice Ministries & Mission Partners — continued

### Green Team (formerly Environmental Ministry Team)—Nancy Bell, Tom Rausch



Above: Installing the Eden Garden beds (L to R): Katie Miley, Rosemarie Pinkos, Melissa Guido, Nancy Bell, Theresa Exner, and Eva Schuchardt. Below: Green Team volunteers plant the Ambassador Garden located outside the Chapel entrance on Anthony.



**Members:** Karen and Tom Pulver, Deirdre Winkelhake, Jim and Alice Stuhlmacher, Nancy Bell, Eva Schuchardt, Joan Looi, Tom and Debbie Rausch, Clara and Roger Hughes, Mary Ellen and Chuck Lukavsky, David Crane, Teresa and David Exner, Bob Burrows, Jennifer Sellers, Melissa Guido, Rosmarie Pinkos

**2022-23 Accomplishments:** In light of growing concern for the Earth's biosphere, this ministry has rebranded itself in an effort to raise awareness, and has taken on some exciting new endeavors. In April of 2023, we launched *the Eden Project*, an effort to teach people to grow their own produce and to nurture 30+ new gardens in DuPage County, donating a significant percentage of the yields to local food pantries. We have installed 5 raised garden beds outside of our Chapel entrance (pictured). These will remain as "Ambassador Gardens" for our *Eden Project*. This garden is intended to inspire and teach as well as share food with members in our community.

We have also begun work to electrify our building, where 100% of our electricity is produced by a local solar farm, courtesy of Direct Energy and our Property & Grounds Committee. We have continued to support other organizational efforts, including the non-partisan Citizens' Climate Lobby and their efforts in support of climate legislation. FCCGE member Teresa Exner described her participation in a well written Op-Ed published in the Daily Herald. We also hosted several walks in local forest preserves this year, including tours of St. James Farm and Lincoln Marsh. The team also made a donation to *Faith in Place*, whose mission is to empower people of diverse faiths to be leaders in caring for the Earth and advancing environmental and racial justice, and who granted us the *Environmental Justice Award* for our efforts.

**Mission:** This ministry was formed in 2007 and reconstituted in 2023 to support love and respect for Creation and take action on climate-related concerns. We work to reduce the church's environmental impact and support sustainability initiatives within our church. We raise the congregation's awareness of environmental concerns and actively partner with organizations that seek environmental justice and care.

### Mental Health Ministry Team—Christine McMinn

In response to FCCGE listening sessions that listed mental health as a primary concern, this ministry team was formed in 2020 to help address the mental health needs of our members and the community beyond our walls. Following the UCC WISE model, we intend to promote a church that is Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaging.

In November, our team met with DuPage United to build a relationship for possible future collaboration and partnership. In January, our team formally transitioned its leadership from Roger Hughes to Christine McMinn. In March, we

helped coordinate the Rock Your Socks Drive to raise awareness surrounding the experience of living with a disability and to support a local community agency (People's Resource Center). We have also continued to post weekly mental health-related educational articles on the FCCGE e-blast and have maintained and updated the Mental Health Resources link on the FCCGE website.

### Ministry of Meals—Jenny Fischer

The Ministry of Meals is a thriving ministry that involves delivering meals to church members during times of illness or crisis. The volunteer roster includes 76 cooks and 5 "shepherds" who coordinate and schedule meal deliveries. During the past year approximately 30 phone contacts were made and 81 meals were prepared and delivered to our church families. We use foodtidings.com to organize the meals online.

### Onward House Christmas Gift Appeal—Marge Kovatch

This is a longstanding ministry which connects our church to a low income area in Chicago. The sole purpose is to provide Christmas gifts for children registered in the daycare, preschool, head start, and after school programs at Onward House, an outreach facility in the Belmont Cragin district in Chicago. It brings joy not only to the recipients, but also to the members who provide the gifts. This ministry also includes gifts for our Bridge family here in DuPage County.

For Christmas of 2022, we received a list of 205 children enrolled in Onward House programs. Gift tags were provided with the child's name and gift suggestions. Members of the congregation were able to choose a name and provide gifts for one or more children. Gifts were driven to Onward House on the Sunday before Christmas in a rental truck driven by Tom Pulver. We also provided 11 Christmas gifts for our Bridge family here in DuPage County. We do not use any funds from FCCGE, only what congregants choose to donate to the program.



### Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR)—Chuck Lukavsky

Our purpose is to develop ways in which FCCGE can support and enhance the work of PBMR, including building a strong relationship between the two organizations. PBMR serves youth, families, and community members who reside in the Back of the Yards neighborhood in Chicago and have been impacted by violence and the criminal justice system. PBMR also works with men and women who are currently incarcerated. They strive to restore human dignity through hospitality, hope, and healing and to create safe spaces for people.

During the summer of 2022 Ted and Danny Harmon planted flowers around the Sankofa house at PBMR. In the fall of 2022, the team actively supported the Visual Arts Ministry's display of art from PBMR. The team is currently working on a program to collect needed supplies for PBMR.

### Public Action to Deliver Shelter (PADS)—Tricia Kerns

Our mission is to provide a "lasting connection" to our homeless by engaging in activities that otherwise would be challenging or impossible. We aim to normalize homelessness by creating a "connection" that reaches the residents, builds relationships amongst residents and with our church members.



In touring the Interim Housing Facility that has replaced the PADS sites, the stress of a mother trying to entertain her kids in a small space and needing respite was observed. As a starting point of connection with these families in transition, we planned a Fall Festival. We provided food, cotton candy, a bounce house, games, face painting, & popcorn. The event provided fun and respite for families in a geographic location with no easy access to parks or recreation. The event was well received by the PADS staff volunteers, the clientele, and was well attended by FCCGE volunteers. Toward the end of the event, one father was all choked up with tears in his eyes as he expressed his thanks: "Ma'am do you see how happy my kids are?"

The new PADS Transitional Living Center has limited space or opportunity for ongoing volunteer activities in the way that FCCGE hosted weekly overnight guests in the past. As such, we are looking to find ways to interact and build relationships with individuals who are homeless and in transition. Our goal is to have

3-4 events per year that help parents bring joy to their children at a time when, for a multitude of reasons, they as parents are struggling. We will broaden these events to be family events and to reach singles as well.

### Rebuilding Together—Randy Briasco and David Hecht

**2022-23 Accomplishments:** For the 25<sup>th</sup> straight year, FCCGE was proud participate in Rebuilding Together, Metro Chicago, where we partner with local tradespeople and volunteers to help a person stay in their home by helping to keep it warm, safe and dry. This year's event took place on April 29, 2023 and our efforts were focused on a home in Blue Island. We made critical repairs and improvements including the repair of his primary bathroom shower with a new tub surround and faucet, retiling the kitchen floor, replacing multiple failed exterior windows, upgrades to smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, a new ceiling fan, exterior and landscaping improvements and painting multiple rooms. Volunteers from last year and this year include: Dave Hecht, Dale Todd, Steve Kruchko, Zada Clarke, Jodi Baltimore, Ted Harman, Jason and Erin Miller,

## Service & Justice Ministries & Mission Partners — continued

Rick Hoekenson, Krys Kling, House Captain Randy Briasco, and tradespeople from IBEW local 134 (Electricians), Painters from Local 14, Plumbers from Local 130, friends from Willow Springs, a window replacement company, and carpenters

**As an addendum to 2021-22 annual report:** In April 2022, our efforts were focused on a home in Chicago Heights. Improvements included: Assembling a new lawnmower. Cutting the front and back yard lawn, Disposal of one full dumpster of trash, trimming grass and refreshing old paver sidewalks, recycling 2 lawnmower engines, replacing stair railings, replacing tile in lower level bath, fixing bathroom plumbing, replacing a toilet, providing and installing a new washing machine, replacing a broken utility sink faucet, installing three new electrical outlets in the garage, repairing the garage door. repairing asphalt at the garage door entrance, replacing tile in the upstairs bathroom, repainting the living room, insulating the exterior garage wall, repairing an exposed wall in garage, re-wiring pipe heating coils, repairing the exterior light over garage, disposed of old barbeque smokers, installation of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and repairing and cleaning her vacuum cleaner.



*Above: Rebuilding Together volunteers at the April 29, 2023 event.  
Below: Volunteers at the Rebuilding Together event in April 2022.*



### **Root + Branch Church**—Tim Kim

Root + Branch is a community that seeks to remake believe. Sharing food. Asking questions. Listening deeply. Singing loudly. Reading curiously. LGBTQIA+ loving. Anti-racism preaching. Planet honoring. All-gender welcoming. Remembering ourselves. Having fun. Noticing one another. Trying to reflect divine things.

This year Root + Branch has continued its work providing jail support for those being released from Cook County Jail. Jail support is a mutual aid network that stands in solidarity with people who being detained at Cook County Jail by being there to offer free food, phone calls, coats, drinks, information on rides, and a listening to ear as they are released from jail. This makes a real difference as people are often left without a way to get home or stay warm upon release. It's great way to put compassion into action and work toward abolition.

### **Stephen Ministry**—Maggie Fredricks

**Stephen Leaders:** Maggie Fredricks, Michael Muren

**Stephen Ministers:** Cathy Christoff, Maggie Fredericks, Becky Gadowski, Brian Hamilton, Steve Jungling, Tracy Kline, Leland Livingston, Kristin Malone, and Sara Waterloo.

The Stephen Ministry is a program which trains laity to walk beside fellow congregants who are experiencing life difficulties, including grief, loss, divorce, illness, health issues, transitions such as job loss, children leaving home for college or work – or any other problem which calls for the ongoing help of a lay minister. The Stephen Ministry is not meant as a substitute for professional counseling or for the specialized help that clergy can provide. Stephen Ministers work one-on-one with a fellow congregant, meeting for an hour weekly for as long as the problem persists.

Subsequent to the departure of Rev. Kendra Joyner-Miller, Rev. Kyle Roggenbuck provides clergy support to the Stephen Ministers and Leaders. All conversations and contacts with any of the above people, even an inquiry about the program, are kept strictly confidential. The current Stephen Ministry has been in place for 17 years at FCCGE and this past year served more than 20 members of the Church in individual as well as a grief support group.

**Tower Hill / Pilgrim Park Outdoor Ministries**—Catherine Curtis, Cathy Basso

The Outdoor Ministries is the umbrella organization which oversees and manages the two camps of the UCC IL Conference: Tower Hill and Pilgrim Park. Tower Hill Camp is located on the shores of Lake Michigan in Sawyer, Michigan. It is the location for our congregation's annual camping weekend as well as for Jr High and Sr High retreats. Pilgrim Park is located in the hills near Starved Rock State Park in Princeton, Illinois. It has also been host to Jr and Sr High retreats. Members of our congregation have ties to both these beloved camps as campers, counselors, staff, and visitors. Their mission is to provide a space to step out of the ordinary and into the sacred.

The 2022 summer season saw our camps re-open to IL Conference congregations once again! Three new campers from our congregation attended Tower Hill's Godstock Camp. Church member and seminarian, Paula Rada, served on the camp staff for the summer, and church member Gabriel Koenig served on the camp staff for a month as he has done for the past several years. Our congregation reimagined its annual camping weekend in July at Tower Hill (formerly known as "Gurney Weekend" or "Tower Hill Camping Weekend" with a new more inclusive and descriptive name "All Church Weekend Away" and it included 30 attendees of all ages.



**World Relief Chicagoland**—Julia Kling

Around the globe, disaster, conflict, poverty, and violence have displaced 100 million people from their homes. As an organization that has resettled refugees and served immigrants in the Chicago area for more than 40 years, World Relief is uniquely positioned to work alongside local churches as we welcome newcomers and connect them with the vital services and community support they need to rebuild their lives and thrive in the United States.

World Relief Chicagoland's response to Afghans, Ukrainians, asylum seekers, and other immigrants involves holistic services, which work together to help low-income immigrant and refugee families build meaningful relationships, access needed resources, and overcome cultural, economic, language, legal, and social barriers so that every family can thrive.

The primary program areas of education, immigrant family services, immigration legal services, and church and volunteer engagement work together to create a lasting impact. Here are some key successes the organization achieved this year.

- We welcomed 352 Afghan evacuees.
- We resettled 313 refugees from all over the world.
- We served 700 Ukrainians fleeing conflict, and we welcome many more each day.
- We launched a new asylum legal clinic to serve the legal needs of asylum seekers in the Chicago area.
- We served 781 children through dedicated activities, school enrollments, parent support, and more.
- We partnered with 400+ churches.
- We equipped and mobilized 1,029 volunteers to build relationships and serve.
- We partnered with 231 Chicagoland employers who help provide jobs to immigrants and refugees.

**United Church of Christ (UCC) Illinois Conference**—Rev. Molly Carlson, Conference Minister

The Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ consists of all of the members of all of the churches, all of the clergy and all of the covenant partners affiliated with the United Church of Christ and located in the northern 2/3 of Illinois. Our shared work is to support local churches in ways they are stronger together. The United Church of Christ is built upon the balance between autonomy and covenant. The local church is the primary unit in our midst. The Association and Conference settings are designed to do things that support congregations but that congregations cannot do alone. This work is supported by the gifts (time, talent and treasure) of the local congregations and sometimes seems invisible. However, being a part of a wider organization provides support and sustenance through the struggles and the celebrations of the local church.

The Illinois Conference of the UCC appreciates the support of FCCGE through your support of OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission). These funds allow us to support the work of the 220 congregations of the Conference through pastoral transitions, oversight and accountability of authorized ministers, outdoor ministry programs, continuing education opportunities for both clergy and lay persons, conflict resolution support, serving as a liaison with the national setting of the UCC, supporting clergy communities of practice, casting a vision of hope and possibility and so much more.

## Ukrainian Relief Efforts Through the Town of Tenczyn, Poland

FCCGE's facilities manager, Wojciech Gracz, was born and raised in Tenczyn, a small village in southern Poland, that has been hosting refugees from Ukraine since the start of the war.

Tenczyn has only 1,800 residents, but they have absorbed over 200 refugees. This is a herculean effort for a tiny town. A quick history lesson: There is a long history of conflict between Poland and Ukraine. In Wojciech's words, "The past is toxic." The fact that the people of Tenczyn, in spite of this past, have opened their doors and their hearts to hundreds of refugees is, in Wojciech's words, "pure scripture: it's not perfect, and it's not always the way it is supposed to be, but those who need help, get the help."

As anyone from a small town knows, if the town wants to achieve something, everyone has to pitch in. That is exactly what Tenczyn has done. Countless households have taken in refugee families of 3 to 4 (usually a mother and her children), and provided housing, food and clothing. The village has created language classes, daycare and school programming for refugee children, and attempted to provide job training and opportunities for the women.

Through generous donations at our Casino Night, plus the holiday ornament sale (which graced hundreds of FCC member Christmas trees with beautiful handmade ornaments), and general donations, FCCGE has provided more than \$28,000 in support. These funds, channeled through a Tenczyn church and a local charity, have assisted families who are hosting Ukrainian refugees in providing food, medicines, hygiene products, clothes and shoes, cleaning products and other necessities. Funds from FCCGE may also be directed to specific needs: a child who needs something to attend school; a request for towels, bedding or other necessities. Donations have also been targeted to help host families provide special Christmas meals and gifts, candy at Easter and more. The hosts and families gratefully thanked us during our Zoom call at Christmas.



*Pictured (Left to Right): Tenczyn volunteers making Christmas ornaments and FCCGE's facilities manager, Wojciech Gracz, at the ornament sale in our church.*

### **Many thanks to all of the FCCGE members who supported these critical efforts this past year!**

We are blessed to have Wojciech as our liaison and contact. He continues to serve the important role of "point person" for ongoing connection efforts that include the following:

***Tenczyn Tales:*** Monthly online meetings with children (aged 6-15) who wish to learn English. Wojciech wants to expand this so that students and teachers record chapters of books to exchange and discuss. He hopes this will help teachers and children/refugees learn English and develop cross-cultural relationships.

***Music:*** Wojciech is working with groups in Tenczyn to assist musicians in recording and publishing a CD. Music and creative endeavors help people to find purpose and build self-esteem, Wojciech hopes that our church and other organizations will assist in these endeavors.

***Viking:*** Tenczyn volunteers deliver direct help across the border. Six times they have driven small convoys to impacted civilians in Ukraine, delivering food, generators, phones, clothing, medicine and more. The group of volunteers is called Viking. Their 4 vehicles were recently hit by the Russian military. They only have one van, damaged with bullet holes, but still in use.

**HOW YOU CAN HELP NOW:** FCCGE wants to help these brave volunteers in buying another van and with other programs described here. Send your donation to the FCCGE and direct it to "Ukrainian Relief" in the subject line.

# Christian Education Report — Catherine Curtis, Director of Christian Education



**Staff Members:** Cathy Basso, Youth Education Coordinator; Torrie Holst, Nursery Care Coordinator; and Amy Zita and Maggie Zita, Nursery Care Providers.

**Summer Church School (June 2022):** Preschool - 5th graders - in person combined classes in Starlight Cinema in May and outdoors in June.

**Vacation Bible School (VBS) - June 20 - 24, 2022:** We broadened our “community” by hosting VBS with Grace Lutheran and Faith Lutheran churches of GE as we’ve done in the past but also adding First United Methodist Church of GE and St. Paul Lutheran of Wheaton as hosting congregations.

We returned to our traditional five-day, 9:00 am to Noon VBS schedule and VBS was once again at Faith Lutheran. The theme of Compassion Camp for a second year was “Changing the World with Loving Kindness.” Fifty-nine families participated from 12 different congregations as well as families who did not claim a congregational affiliation.

## Program Year (Mid-August 2022 - April 2023)

**Online Registration** - 42 families registered for 74 children/youth

**Participation** - Our participation was double that of last year despite fewer families formally registering their children and youth. We are seeing a growth in families with young children and consistent attendance. We saw an increase through much of 2023 with several new families joining. By January 2023 we had returned to our pre-pandemic attendance figures.

**Nursery** - We hired two additional Nursery Care Providers onto the staff and provide nursery care for both worship services and during special weekday services such as Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. The number of children in the nursery at 10:30 am necessitated us to have three childcare providers for that service.

**Classes** - We moved from a combined “one room school room” of Preschool - 5th graders in 2021-2022 to a two-classroom model of Preschool - 2nd grade and 3rd - 5th grade. Then, the Sunday before Ash Wednesday we were able to open our Sunday morning Preschool class and have consistent and enthusiastic attendance there and continued steady attendance in the two older classes.

**Volunteers** - We are slowly re-building our volunteer base. Especially important have been our high school youth! We also have a four-person teaching team for the Sunday morning Preschool.

**Zoom Church School** - provided once or twice a month in January - April to a student and church family who lives out of state.



*Pictured are just some of the church school and other Christian Ed activities in 2022-23:*

*Top: Lesson in the Windows to God classroom.*

*Middle: S’mores & Game Night in Summer*

*Bottom: Church School Kick-off Sunday in Temple of Light*

## Christian Education Report — continued

### Special Events

**Presentation of Bibles** will be on Education Sunday May 7, 2023, with the Director of CE both presenting the bibles to students and preaching the sermon that morning. There will be a children’s choir singing a song from our upcoming Vacation Bible School during both services. Worship will be followed by a cookie reception.

**Heifer Market - September 25, 2022**—We returned to our traditional market following worship and along with World Communion Sunday was the “capstone” of our Communion Unit which began the church school year. The congregation supported this beloved ministry and we raised \$1,184.52.

**Christmas Pageant - December 24, 2022**—The pageant was part of the Family Worship Service held in the morning of Christmas Eve. The Pageant had a new script based upon the song “Jesus our Brother, Kind and Good” and was called “The Friendly Beasts.” With the assistance of staff and volunteers, church member Jessica Zolmierski directed the pageant of twelve children.

**Our Whole Lives retreats**—Due to the topic and intensely relational, in-person nature of this ministry, it was placed on hold during the pandemic with plans to resume for late winter 2024.

**Second Annual Easter Egg Hunt**—Christian Education co-hosted this event the Connections Committee again and we had a large turnout for our inclement weather indoor egg hunt. (See photos page 20).

**Library/Resources**—Volunteer Dolly Rada continued integrating new books into circulation, and finessed the newly relocated books into a neater and easier to use shelving system while re-labeling the spines of the books. Interim Associate Pastor Kyle Roggenbuck and Dolly purchased and created a display of the books that were under consideration for removal from School District 87 so that church members and guests might have the opportunity to check them out.

**Coordinating with Union Church Early Childhood Programs**—Christian Education staff continued to work closely with clergy, staff, and lay leaders of Union Church Hinsdale and FCCGE for much of the program year before Union Church needed to step away from the partnership and plan to run a preschool at FCCGE. Union graciously donated several large pieces of preschool furniture/activities to our Preschool classroom.



*Playing is learning in the Son-Shine Theatre—where church school activities invite children to act out bible stories and teachings through performing skits and creating puppet shows.*



## Youth Ministry Report — Danny Harman, Director of Youth Ministry



**Jr. High Youth Fellowship/Confirmation**—This year Jr. High Fellowship and Confirmation were combined into an hour-long session that took place every Sunday during the second service and every 1st Sunday of the month at 6:30pm. After a year on Zoom we started meeting in person again, leading to a lower attendance but much needed increase in energy to the program. Each morning we would start outside with donuts, move inside for some get-to-know you activities and games, break up into 6th/7th grade and 8th grade groups for lessons, and end with highs and lows and prayer. This group is led by Nicole Baedke, Dan Hitzmann, and Kate Brooks who teach the 6th and 7th grade class, as well as Chris Henkel and myself who teach the 8th grade class.

This year we also had high school upperclassmen, Henry Bayert and Gretchen Bayert helping as high school leaders. Average attendance each week was 14 youth.

The 6th and 7th grade youth began their year with engaging the principles of other major world religions and comparing and contrasting their beliefs and principles with Christianity. Later, they transitioned into reading different stories from the bible and began examining the mythological components of them to better understand their deeper themes.

This year we had 12 8th grade confirmands welcomed as official members of FCCGE. Over the past year they have engaged with a multitude of subjects such as the context for biblical literature, the roles of faith and science, Christian ethics, sin and evil, faith and justice, and more. Over the year each confirmand met with Pastor Kendra, Pastor Seth, and I on three different occasions to talk about: who God is to them, what values they hold, and finally what they wrote in their Faith Papers.

**Sr. High Youth Group**—Senior High Youth Group happens every Sunday night from 6:30-8:30. Each night we meet, hangout, play games, get to know each other, and pray. Our last meeting before summer programming was last Sunday on May 22nd but we will resume again in September. Youth leaders this year included Polly Cooper, Tanner Spears, Paige Gawrys, Catherine and DJ LaChapelle, Damon Holst, and Danny Harman,

This year we were able to start meeting in person again. Each youth group this year met at the church where we did a wide of activities including but not limited to: video scavenger hunts, cook outs, escape rooms, pumpkin carvings, sleepouts, Christmas parties, live-action-among-us, work camp fundraisers, work camp meetings, trivia nights, Jesus Christ Superstar watch parties, cardboard box fight nights, glow in the dark floor hockey, and more!

Last Summer in lieu of a work camp mission trip, Sr. Highers, myself, and youth leader Zoe Larson went on a week-long canoe trip down northern Wisconsin's Flambeau river. This trip to the wilderness was done to inhibit interaction from outside groups while COVID was an ever present threat. Minus some broken van windows, tipped canoes, and torrential downpours, the trip was a major success all learned the importance of communal support and leadership.



Above left: Workcamp group posing with West Virginia legend, Mothman; Above right: Youth Group volunteers: Paige Gawrys (The Grinch), Lizz Mook, and Polly Cooper at the Christmas lock in.



# Youth Ministry Report — continued

This Summer, 16 of our youth and 6 leaders are heading to West Virginia for Work Camp! We are partnering with ASP to provide home repairs to families in need. Youth leaders this year include: Damon Holst, Chris Henkel, Tanner Spears, Jeff Basso, Sydney Melms and Danny Harman.

More volunteers are always welcome! We are currently looking for high school junior to college age folks for our summer young adult seminary internship program. If you want to become involved or are interested in the seminary internship program, email [danny@fccge.org](mailto:danny@fccge.org) for more details!

*Below clockwise from top left: Cardboard Box Fight Night 2023; Sleep Out Saturday volunteer crew; Glow in the Dark Floor Hockey; Roasting hot dogs at the Fall Retreat; Feed My Starving Children volunteer crew; and a big yeehaw at the Work Camp Chili Cookoff Fundraiser.*



## Church-sponsored Cub Scout Pack 51—Aaron Stott, Committee Chair 2022-23

Pack 51, chartered through the First Congregational Church of Glen Elyn, is a local Cub Scout Pack primarily drawing members from Forest Glen Elementary School. Adult volunteers support Pack 51 and it is self-funded. For the 2022/23 school year, there are 40 enrolled scouts ranging from Kindergarten through 5th grade and 7 registered Adult volunteers. Each grade is led by a "Den Leader"/parent who conducts monthly meetings both at FCCGE and throughout the surrounding community.

**Overview:** Pack 51 operates with a single bank account, doing business as Pack 51 through US Bank.

The current balance, as of April 20, 2023, is \$2,627.00

The sole source of revenue for the Pack is a yearly collection of dues at the start of each year, which funds both BSA enrollment and operational expenses for the year.

After national and local BSA fees are deducted, the Pack is left to operate on a budget of \$50 per scout. The major activities and events for the year include the Pinewood Derby (Hosted in FCCGE's Pilgrim Hall and pictured at right), Model Rocket Shoots, Blue and Gold Banquet hosted at Pilgrim Hall, and our GEFP Canned Food Drive.

Pack 51 is always looking for Volunteer Opportunities with FCCGE.



## Church-sponsored Boy Scout Troop 41—DJ LaChapelle

**Highlights 2022-23:** Boy Scout Troop 41 has had another great year! Lots of service, fun, and adventure. During the 2022-2023 school year, two more Scouts achieved the Eagle rank. Eagle projects included adding permanent signage at Churchill Park and renovating the courtyard at Ben Franklin School to make a Sensory Garden for students and faculty to enjoy. Community service is a huge part of Scouting; projects big and small make a difference. At our lock-in at FCCGE in February 2023 (the first in three years!) Scouts did a bunch of furniture moving and other tasks, including removing broken crayons from the pencil holders on the backs of the pews!

In April of 2023 we held our annual Pancake Breakfast fundraiser in Pilgrim Hall. Great to see old friends and Scout alumni come support the current troop. The newly renovated kitchen hood fan kept things much cooler in the kitchen!

### Camping Highlights

Troop 41 had a great 2022 camping season, from the Illinois Palisades to Kettle Moraine in Wisconsin to Lowden State Park in Oregon, Illinois. In June of 2022 Troop 41 sent a High Adventure crew to the BSA Northern Tier Base outside of Ely, MN for a week of canoeing in the Boundary Waters. The Scouts canoed close to 60 miles in that week and had lots of awesome adventures.

Summer camp is a highlight of our year, and 2022 was another great camp at Owasippe Scout Reservation in Michigan. The annual trek was made even more fun and special because 15 Boy Scouts from Troop 2 in Hanoi, Viet Nam joined us. At the beginning of the week the Scouts took their photo in two groups - but just 7 days later, it was one awesome collection of new friends. We are looking forward to camp again in 2023!

In the fall of 2022, FCCGE was very generous in allowing Troop 41 to park the Boy Scout trailer in the church parking lot! Costs for storing the trailer went from \$80 to \$250/month during the pandemic, so the storage we had been using was no longer sustainable. We are so extremely grateful that the church has allowed us to park the trailer at church - easy access during meetings has been really great!

## Church-sponsored Boy Scout Troop 41—continued

**Overview:** Boy Scout Troop 41 operates with a single bank account at Chase Bank. The current balance as of April 24, 2023 was \$18,848. A large portion of that will be paid out for the 2023 Sea Base High Adventure trip. The bank account is comprised of three distinct “buckets” as follows: 1) Troop Money; 2) Markham Fund; and 4) Trailer Fund.

**Troop Money** — There are two primary sources of revenue for the Troop each year—a Pancake Breakfast in the Spring and Popcorn/Wreath Sales in the Fall. This year, the Pancake Breakfast brought in approximately \$1700 after all expenses and a 10% donation to FCCGE. 2022 Holiday Greens Sales brought in approximately \$5000 to the troop.

Offsetting this revenue each year are the following major expenses which the Troop pays for or subsidizes:

- Annual Troop registration and insurance ~\$3,700
- Campouts (varying subsidy for each campout)
- Scout Store purchases (merit badges, neckerchiefs, patches, etc.) ~ \$1,000/year

**Markham Fund** — This fund was established many years ago in honor of a former Scoutmaster. It is used to assist boys who need financial help in paying for campouts and/or to help support boys going High Adventure campouts (\$50/scout). The Fund has a current balance of approximately \$2500.

**Trailer Fund** — Money comes into the Trailer Fund in one of two ways, either as a donation (usually from a former troop member) or upon a boy’s exit from the troop. The current balance in the Trailer Fund is currently at \$880.

Troop 41 is available to help other ministries and groups at church. Do you need stuff moved? Tables set up? We have Scouts that can help! If you have any question about the troop or Scouting, please contact me, DJ LaChapelle at [dj@hifrontier.com](mailto:dj@hifrontier.com)



*Boy Scout Troop 41, sponsored by FCCGE, volunteers to help with church projects throughout the year. In 2022, camping season took them from the Illinois Palisades to Kettle Moraine in Wisconsin to Lowden State Park in Oregon, Illinois.*

## Music Ministry Report — Michele Hecht, Director of Music Ministry



The music ministry is experiencing a boom! The choir has seen a steady influx of new members, with a new singer joining the choir almost every other week since September. Part of the excitement is undoubtedly due to the return of Cantata Sunday and performing on stage at Carnegie Hall!

**Worship** - Worship has been filled to the brim with outstanding music from our choir, handbells and amazing soloists. We have continued our unique tradition of offering incredible variety in musical styles, especially with popular secular songs to enhance our many sermon series. Our Taizé Ensemble instrumentalists have also returned to a regular monthly schedule providing music for Communion in addition to Vespers, Ash Wednesday, and Good Friday. In March, several FCCGE folks participated in a Trans Day of Visibility service in March at Congregation Etz Chaim.

**Choir** - Our adult choir has an active roster of 50+ singers, averaging around 30 singers for regular Sundays and 40+ for special services. We have 32 singers plus 5 non-performing guests who will travel to New York for a special massed choir performance of Dan Forrest's "Requiem for the Living" at Carnegie Hall in June. Thanks to generous donations to the music ministry in recent years, we were able to provide scholarships to three individuals for the trip. The choir presented this beautiful contemporary masterwork in worship at FCCGE on April 30 with soloists and orchestra as a Cantata. Nearly 300 members and guests attended the Cantata in-person and over 1,000 views have accessed our Cantata online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuB-9Vla7Ng>



**Musical Conversations with Tenczyn, Poland** - During the ongoing war in Ukraine, FCCGE continued to support the small town of Tenczyn, Poland, which has taken in a large amount of Ukrainian refugees. Tenczyn is the hometown of our Facilities Manager, Wojciech Gracz. After receiving a lovely musical video greeting from the Youth Brass Orchestra of Tenczyn, we responded with our own music video, which included a greeting from Wojciech and Pastor Seth. The choir said Hello in Polish, Ukrainian and English, then shared a couple songs, offering up prayers for peace. The first song we shared was "Bring Us Peace", written by Michele in 2020, as a response to the pandemic, presented as a virtual choir video. The choir recorded the second song, "How Can I Keep From Singing?", 'live' in the sanctuary. We received a warm response to our video, with the invitation to keep the 'musical conversations' going.



*Above: Cantata Sunday featured the FCCGE choir, soloists and orchestra presenting the masterwork "Requiem for the Living" by contemporary composer Dan Forrest. Members of FCCGE's choir will join a master chorale in New York City in June 2023 to perform the same masterwork at Carnegie Hall.*

**Handbells** - The handbell choir offered music in worship on a monthly basis. They welcomed a new member, Tanner Spears, into the group. Many of the arrangements they played were by our own Matthew Prins, our resident published composer and handbell director, who has been directing the group for over 14 years.

**Organ** - FCCGE has a pipe organ that other churches only dream about. Since 1989, we have been fortunate to house a beautiful Casavant pipe organ with three manuals (keyboards) and 46 ranks of pipes. This summer, we are delighted to act as one of the hosts for a Pipe Organ Encounter, a program offered by the Fox Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists (AGO) that tutors young musicians and fosters a love for the pipe organ.



*Middle: Director of Music Ministry Michele Hecht and Associate Director of Music Jeff Haeger direct the choir and orchestra on Cantata Sunday.*

*Bottom: During the Cantata, FCCGE organist Shu-Hui Janet Tsai plays the Casavant pipe organ which features three manuals (keyboards) and 46 ranks of pipes.*

## Music Ministry Report — continued



**Youth** - On Christmas Eve, the Christian Education staff and volunteers led a group of 20 kids in a new Christmas pageant, based on "The Friendly Beasts" carol. On Education Sunday, May 7, volunteer music leaders Sherry Flugel and Lora Ilhardt led a group of grade school kids in our second Kids Spring Sing (*pictured at left*). This summer, Michele plans to mentor a youth intern on a special 'music track', learning about music ministry and supporting our many programs.

**Music Makers Ministry** - Special thanks to the members of this team for providing care for our choir members, assisting with special worship services, and helping to plan socials and other big events. Members: Norm Adams, Martha DeForest, Lora Ilhardt, Karen Koenig, Jackie McCarthy, Beth Rosch, Colleen Spaeth. Jackie McCarthy and Theresa Holly helped to organize and manage the Carnegie Hall trip; Sharon Wussow helped with choir shirts, and Leslie Foster provided weekly assistance to Michele as the FCCGE Music Librarian, as she has done for 20+ years.

**UCC Musicians Association** - After eight years, Michele is wrapping up her service on the board of directors, but will continue to be involved in several ongoing projects for the national volunteer organization. She presented a webinar in April that demonstrated ways to incorporate popular music styles into traditional worship services.

The Worship Ministries of our church are under the guidance of the Director of Music Ministry, Michele Hecht.

*Pictured below: Easter Sunday 2023 with choir and orchestra. (photo courtesy of FCCGE member Sandy Butt)*



## Worship Ministry Reports

### Worship Ministry—Communion, Paraments, Sacristy Robes—*Karen Koenig*



**Communion** is served on the first Sunday of the month and Maundy Thursday. This schedule is subject to change. The communion table is set at 8:00 a.m. and reset at 10:00 a.m. The setup includes: 2 silver platters of cut bread, 1 small platter of individually packaged grape juice/gluten free elements, 1 flask of grape juice, 1 chalice of grape juice, one empty chalice of grape juice and 2 pre-split homemade bread bowls (one per service). A black binder containing the communion liturgy read by clergy is set on a stand on the communion table. From a pool of 15 communion servers, 4 are needed for each service. Invitation and confirmation to serve are handled by email one week prior to communion.

**Paraments**—The color of the paraments for the altar, pulpit, lectern and robe stoles are determined by the liturgical calendar (posted in Sacristy). Special services such as Jazz Vespers, Longest Night, Holy Week, Weddings, and Funerals may require a specific color.

**Sacristy**—The tasks of the Sacristy include: weekly clean-up, upkeep, organization and inventory of worship materials.

**Robes**—Clergy Robes and Stoles follow an annual cleaning schedule in July.

If you are interested in assisting the Worship Ministry, including serving communion, you may contact Karen Koenig at [karkoenig@yahoo.com](mailto:karkoenig@yahoo.com).

### **Ushers and Greeters**—*Jennifer Lindstrom*

This program year, 2022-23, has been back to “normal” with ushers serving at both 9 & 10:30 services each week. We assisted at each Sunday worship service as well as other special services such as Holy Week, Christmas Eve and remembrance services.

The Usher Ministry is made up of approximately 25 dedicated members. There are too many to list here but they are recognized in the bulletin each Sunday. We experienced some changing of the guard and we have welcomed 6 new ushers to the team this year.

The joy of sharing a smile and greeting worshipers as they arrive is the reward of ushering. We do whatever we can to help worshipers, members, and visitors feel comfortable.

The primary purpose of the members of the usher ministry is to greet worshipers as they enter the sanctuary, provide them with bulletins and other information and help everyone feel comfortable and safe as they find the place where they will worship. The ushers’ duties include lighting the candles, being sure flowers are in place, bulletins are handed out, attendance counted, lighting is attended to during the service, and offerings placed in the safe. There is always a need for more ushers and greeters, so we invite others, including our youth, to join—the work is easy, fun and appreciated.

### **Flower Ministry**—*Jennifer Darnall*

The Flower Ministry provides flowers to decorate the altar for Sunday services. The ministry conducts a sign-up on designated date (previously on Rally Day) (and until all spaces are filled) for families/individuals to select dates to sponsor flowers. A reminder is sent the month prior to the date – individuals are able to specify types and colors of flowers, and to indicate what is to be printed in the bulletin. This information is then e-mailed to Joyce and the florist (The Green Branch in Glen Ellyn). Special orders are done at Christmas and Easter. To sponsor flowers on the altar, email Jennifer Darnall at [darfamily@aol.com](mailto:darfamily@aol.com).

### **Tech Team Ministry**—*Lisa Crank*

**2022-2023 Team members:** Lisa Crank, Norm Adams Mike DiFlorio, Paul Flugel, Danny Harman, Andy Livingston, Dan Olson, Tom Melms, Paula Rada, Robb Sackett, Matt Stout and Elliott Wright. Our technical director is Dave Hecht.

The Tech Team Ministry records weekly worship services and special events for the Church in audio and video format, and live streaming the service.



## Worship Ministry Reports—continued

### Visual Arts Ministry—*Deb Giampoli*

Visual Arts Ministry's mission is to "enhance the worship experience through visual art". In 2022-2023, we hosted two traveling exhibits for the main gallery and supported the staff in decorating the Sanctuary for Advent, Christmas and Holy Week.

The first traveling exhibit consisted of artwork by members of PBMR (Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation), a nonprofit restorative justice hub, located in the "Back of the Yards" neighborhood in Chicago. Sharing in Christ's mission of reconciliation, they work as agents of reconciliation and healing with those in the community and the Church who have been impacted by violence. At PBMR, art is valued as a way of enabling a person impacted by trauma to tell their story. On the day the exhibit opened, members of PBMR came to FCCGE to share their stories and meet informally with members of our own community.

We also rented a traveling exhibit of art by printmaker Sadao Watanabe (1913-1996)—*Pictured at right*. Watanabe, a native of Japan, converted from Buddhism to Christianity at the age of 17. He is known throughout the world for his depiction of Bible stories in which biblical characters are clothed in kimonos, and prints showing tables of food consist of fish, sushi, and sake.

Many thanks to team members Sharon Wussow and Steve Rochelle, and "ad hoc" members Andy and Jo Ann Ginger, Matt Stout, DJ Lachapelle, and Roy Giampoli, without whom this work would not have been possible.

We've committed to a traveling Christian art exhibit for Rally Day titled "Fill the Earth with Music", a collection of 25 pieces from six centuries and many countries, brought together to help the observer appreciate how artists find inspiration in music, and in turn, be further inspired to celebrate and fill the earth with their own music.

Budget permitting, we'll find another traveling rental exhibit for after the first of the calendar year. We're also hoping to fund a professional photographer to take photos of our members in worship and at some of our special events, so that we can share the good news about what goes on inside FCCGE with the broader community.

### Worship Leaders—*Missy Carlson*

**2022-2023 Members include:** Norm Adams, Kathy Bayert, Nancy Bell, Eli Berry, Todd Buckton, Beth Carlson, Missy Carlson, Cathy Christoff, Sarah Clarin, Liz Cooper, Linda Davenport, Joe Fortunato, Didi Foth, Phil Gliori, Shane Hibbard, Lora Ilhardt, Karen Koenig, Kristen Malone, Laura Peccarelli, Tom Petrich, Karen Pulver, Celia Rodee, Sylvia Rodee, Jennifer Sellers, and Myra Walden.

- Our group said a bittersweet farewell to a few volunteers, but fortunately a few new participants joined our ranks. Tasked with reading scripture at most services, our members were happy to join the congregation in worship every Sunday.
- Our entire budget is the willingness and time of our volunteer members, with the same monetary requirements expected next year. One hope is that more volunteers join us in the worship leader rotation! Youth readers, one-time readers, and regular readers would be welcome! If interested, please contact Missy Carlson at [k-mcarlson@sbcglobal.net](mailto:k-mcarlson@sbcglobal.net).



## Open & Affirming Statement

At First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, we rejoice in our community of faith, strengthened by diversity, including: culture, economic status, age, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, and physical or mental abilities. We affirm that God is glorified when we welcome all people to our spiritual community, as Jesus did. Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

## Global Mission Statement

A Global Mission Church: prays regularly for partners, missionaries and the world; educates its members about global issues from preschool age to adult; seeks justice for the "least of these" in the international community; receives the gifts of the global church; gives to the work of global mission; sends its members into the world to share the Good News; and grows in sharing the story of God's mission with others.



## Just Peace Covenant

Just Peace invites all of us to testify with our actions and lives. As a Just Peace Church, it is our commitment to act in love, faith and spirit as we live and work toward:

- Just Peace in the community—so that all may live free from fear
- Just Peace with the environment—so that life is sustained
- Just Peace in society—so that all may live with dignity
- Just Peace among the nations— so that human lives are protected

Therefore, we resolve to grow in love of God and neighbor as a Just Peace congregation and faithfully live out our vision to be grounded in tradition, centered in worship, called to serve, fortified by justice, sustained by peace, and free to dream.



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
OF GLEN ELLYN

535 Forest Avenue | Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137

[www.fccge.org](http://www.fccge.org)