ANNUAL REPORT

 July 2019 – June 2020



SOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ

Founded in 1837; rebuilt on present location 1860

27 Pleasant Street, Concord, NH 03301

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2019-2020 South Church Staff

Rev. Jared Rardin, Co-Pastor

Rev. Carlos Jauhola-Straight, Co-Pastor

Lou-Ann Poirier, Administrator

Sue Berlenbach, Music Director

Peg Wenzel, Volunteer & Communications Director

Alison Nyhan, Director of Christian Education

Abigail Charbeneau, Organist

Carlene Ruesenberg, Handbell Program Director

Walt Irvine, Sexton

South Congregational Church

July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

Annual Report

Year in Review

Clergy Reports

Pastor

None of us will ever forget the year 2020. The corona virus outbreak became a pandemic. The killing of George Floyd galvanized protests around the world, and the Black Lives Matter movement inspired renewed calls for racial justice. Since the stay-at-home order in mid-March, we have -been worshiping and gathering virtually on Zoom. Members of Worship and Spiritual Life and of the Giving Ministry attempted to call everyone in the congregation to check in on them. We reached out to members of the caring professions to offer spiritual support. We gathered for morning prayer almost daily, Gyme Hardy initiated an evening prayer ministry. During Holy Week we continued observing Maundy Thursday, the Passion Play and Easter services online. Youth ministries and Confirmation Class continued online as well.

Everyone has stepped up to help us meet the challenges of the pandemic. Our music ministries felt the effects of the pandemic more than many of us because making music generally requires being physically together, but both the chancel choir and the bell choir have continued to meet online to stay connected, and with the help of the A Cappella app, Sue, Abby and Carlene have found ways every week to make sure that our worship remained filled with music. An extra word of thanks goes to Carlene, who voluntarily stepped into the role of “producer,” managing the Sunday services as they grew in complexity, and Alison Nyhan is now joining her on the roster.

In response to calls for Racial Justice, we have just begun an 8-week book study of Ibram X Kendi’s book, “How to be an Anti-racist,” and have created a new online Racial Justice Café where we can continue to hold conversations and share stories pertaining to racial justice.

This was also the year we said farewell to Carlos Jauhola-Straight, our Minister of Spiritual Growth for 13 years and our Co-Pastor for just over one year. Carlos accepted a call to pastor the first Congregational Church of Pelham, New Hampshire. Carlos’ many gifts will be sorely missed: his energy, his artistic and liturgical creativity, his humor, his compassion, his commitment to families and young people and his focus on helping us live into the fullness of online ministry. The pandemic necessitated a distanced farewell, but a festive “drive-by” parade to say farewell and thank you to Carlos, John and Bekah helped us feel some measure of closure. Our four current and recently-graduated Seminarians led worship throughout the month of August, and I want to thank Becky Josephson, Israel Cawley, Derek Waldron, and Gyme Hardy for their assistance.

The Council nominated Janet Zeller, Jay Haines, Will Delker and me to serve as the Interim Search Committee. We have been meeting every week, first to compile a congregational profile, then to interview candidates, and ultimately to recommend an interim associate pastor to help us through a time of transition and re-visioning our ministry in preparation for Carlos’ successor.

As of this moment, we have, with Council and WSL oversight, held a few small, carefully-managed in-person gatherings. We will continue to monitor the pandemic situation here in New Hampshire, and will be continuing to create unique opportunities to worship safely until the coast is clear. One thing that has become clear is that going forward, there will be a hybrid approach to sharing ministry and worship together that includes an online option for both worship and even meetings.

Our congregation mourned the deaths and celebrated the lives of five beloved members: Martha Harrison, Mary Gile, Manfred Drewski, Ferd Prevost and Dave Burnham. We bid farewell to three beloved, long-time members of South Church this year, and we continue to hold in prayer Chuck and Pat Gerhan and Ann Winterling as they get accustomed to their new homes that allow them to live closer to family members.

On a personal note, I’m glad to report that my neurology assessments continue to be good, indicating that my exercise regimen has been effective. I also look forward to taking my third month of sabbatical sometime this coming program year.

To all of you, for all you’ve done to support our life together through unprecedented times of worry and rancor: thank you! A special thanks is due to Mary Lynne Rahlson, who has guided us through the past four years of transition to a co-pastorate, the hiring of our new Bookkeeper Karen Joyal, Carlos’ departure and through the pandemic, and without whom we might not have so successfully secured a Payroll Protection Loan. Mary Lynne, on behalf of all of us, thank you for your leadership these last four years!

Finally, it seems fitting to end this report with appreciation to Pam Young and many of you who launched a new, daily ministry of ringing the steeple bell 21 times every day at 4 pm to ring good news out into our community during a time when many are feeling hopeless..

Let us continue sharing God’s Radical Hope and Extravagant Love in the time before us!

Grace, peace and courage!

 Jed Rardin

President’s Report

The President’s report from last year started out, “The current church year saw dramatic change with elevating Carlos to Co-Pastor with Jed.” Well, this year was no different! Carlos has moved on to the First Church in Pelham and we now hold virtual worship and meetings. Who would have ever thought a global pandemic and watching Carlos spread his wings to take a church of his own would bring us closer together?

The church remains closed for gatherings until it is safe to resume. We continue to do our work remotely and for the most part with success. There is limited access to the building by staff and no more than three people were in the building at any one time from March through September. We have developed a few Zoom Masters and have been able to with some delays, continue the regular work of the church. Attendance at virtual worship services has been at or exceeded normal numbers when we gathered at 27 Pleasant Street. South Church is a vibrant and resilient congregation, and we continue to worship in new and creative ways.

The church was approved and received a Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan from the SBA and expect to have the loan fully forgiven since it was used exclusively for payroll. We didn’t furlough or lay off any staff during the pandemic outbreak. This has allowed the church to continue operating and supporting our members while sharing and spreading the love of God through this challenging time.

 Mary Lynne Rahlson

Staff Reports

Director of Christian Education

This year in the Nyhan household Molly started her freshman year at Concord High School and Colby attended Rundlett Middle School in the seventh grade.  Molly loves high school!  She enjoyed her classes, a sense of freedom, and making new friends.  She participated in Confirmation Class, swimming at the YMCA, and running cross country.  The Concord High School girls’ cross country team placed first in New Hampshire and Molly placed second on her team, an overall successful year.  Colby continues to enjoy middle school.  He likes to be with his buddies and learn new things.  This year he participated in the Junior High Youth Group and on the Concord Capitals Peewee hockey team.  He plays with a great group of boys with great families.  Through all of the challenges of the past year, he has also found ways to be creative and keep busy at home; he has built and completed projects around our house that are creative and inspiring.

Like many households, we are always busy.  However, our lives came to a halt in March, as did everyone’s.  Initially, it was a welcome break from our busy lives.  I enjoyed having the kids around while they did their schoolwork.  We had time to make dinner together, play games, piece together puzzles and catch up on television shows.  It was a relaxing time.  But as the weeks and month continued, it became frustrating.  Hockey was put on hold; baseball and track were canceled; and school continued to be remote.  Thank goodness for the relative normalcy that came with summer: riding bikes, the beach, the lake, family barbeques, and family swimming.

At the church, it made for a program year that none will soon forget.  My goal is, and continues to be, to make church, and church school, a meaningful aspect to your faith journeys, as well as our collective Christian learning.  However, the Covid-19 pandemic has made it more challenging.  Here on Church staff we are asking a lot of questions:  How do we make meaningful experiences for our church school children and their families?  What is Zoom?  How can we meet remotely?  Who is finding it comfortable to connect remotely, and who might be struggling?  What do you need from South Church right now?  How can we faithfully, and connectedly, flatten the curve together?

We started the year, offering two Faith Formation classes on Sunday mornings: one for children ranging in age from preschool to fifth grade, and one for youth in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades.  The younger class was a multi-aged class that learned the stories of the bible using the Deep Blue curriculum.  The older class used a lectionary-based curriculum called “Season of the Spirit.”  This was the second year with this model, and it seems to work well.  Our attendance on Sunday mornings is expectedly lower, but each week we see different faces and collectively have many children, youth, and families involved in our programs.  My involvement with the Epiphany Tableau and the Passion Play continues to demonstrate to me that our children and their families are learning the stories of the bible in new and exciting ways.  These experiences are offering authentic ways to encounter the stories and make them our own.  Lent and Easter were the most affected by the pandemic; we weren’t able to offer our usual programs and services.  It was strange, sad, frustrating and relieving.

Not knowing what the future holds is scary.  However, as with most things, I do believe this is temporary.  And, like all challenges in life, there is something good we can take from this pandemic, and the time it has required us to be physically apart from one another.  I look forward to the time when we can share an in-person smile, embrace, sing together, and feel energized in the warmth of a full church.  Until that time, I offer you a socially-distanced blessing.

Some of the highlights this year include:

Vacation Bible School:  *The Green Team.*  In seven days, God created the earth.  God created the light, the sun, the moon, the plants, the animals, and the people.  The earth is so precious.  This year, nineteen children spent a week learning how to be good stewards of the earth.  Throughout the week, we heard the stories of creation; trusting God; the crossing of the river; and the great commission.  Each day, we nourished these stories to truly appreciate this amazing world.  In the mornings there were an array of stories, songs, crafts and games.  In the afternoons, we embraced the story in unique ways and determined our response to caring for the earth.  As stewards, we hiked the Marjory Swope trail to see God’s natural world; we visited the Squam Lake Science Center to see how the animals interact with the world; and we met with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, where employees of the Environmental Bureau taught us how water sheds work and human interaction effects our environment.

Fourth Grade Bibles:  We believe that our fourth graders are at a point in their spiritual development where they can understand and truly appreciate the Bible. We give them their own bible to use during class and to keep for their own. This year, we presented bibles to four youth on Sunday, September 29, 2019 during the 10 a.m. worship service.

Advent Workshops:  This Advent Season we offered two “workshops” which allowed us to embrace the Advent season in meaningful and practical ways.  We made Christmas Wreaths using traditional greens and ribbon.  We also gathered for a simple meal and listen to our professional Christmas storyteller, Chris Yellen.

Advent Literature:  We provided two Advent Calendars for the 2019 season.  These one-page calendars were visual reminders of the season and what’s to come.  The first calendar was titled *Count the Days*. This calendar was geared for families with small children. It was fun and spiritually enriching filled with Scripture verses, and activities for each day of Advent.  Each mini meditation helped children focus on the coming Savior.  The second calendar was titled *Lighten up for Advent.*This calendar was geared for families with teenagers. It provided brief, spiritual reflections for each day through Bible verses and simple calls to action. This informative (and often funny) calendar helped teens welcome God’s word in practical ways.

We also offered a Reverse Advent Calendar.  This Advent Calendar was designed to support the mission of the Blue Duke Care Closet at Rundlett Middle School. The Care Closet is designed to alleviate barriers and challenges associated with food insecurities and hunger so that all students can remain in school and continue to pursue academic excellence.

Epiphany Show:  The Tableau took place on Sunday, January 5, 2020 during a 9 a.m. worship service.  This year the children presented, *"Wow!  A New Nativity"*written by Gwynne Watkins.  This nativity was the same, but a little different and a little more fun. This play faithfully tells the story of Jesus’ birth in a contemporary style with our favorite hymns.

**Lenten Devotional Booklet:**  We provided the booklet titled “*Still Speaking Writers’ Group.”*Climate crises caused by global warming. Strident polarization in communities. Gaping income disparities between the richest of us and the rest of us. The rampage of racism and militarism. The existential and everyday threats we face are daunting. With faithful people across the ages, we cry out to God for deliverance ... not only pleading for God to act but seeking the courage to let God act through us. We can take such a risk ... or we can play it safe. The Lenten season is a time for each of us to explore the ways in which we promote (or prevent) the deliverance we so desperately seek.

 Alison Nyhan

**Director of Music Ministry**

This past fall and winter, the music ministry continued to bring music to the South Church community in our Sunday services.  Beginning in late March, after in-person worship was cancelled, the music staff was quick to adapt and continue providing music in a different way.  We began with a live performance and we found that the quality of the sound was not optimal online and decided to use recorded music.  We are using various technologies to do this.  The Acapella app for the iPhone has allowed us to make music in groups.

Abby, our organist and accompanist, is an outstanding musician and is an asset to our staff. She collaborates continually with Memorial Bells and Chancel Choir.  She has excellent relationships with musicians in the congregation and is always willing to collaborate in new and innovative ways. She has mastered new technology so that we can provide music during online worship services. Abby has also been providing accompaniments for Chancel Choir and Memorial Bells members to sing/play with in preparation for recording music for online worship.

Carlene continues to lead our Memorial Bells rehearsals once during the week on Wednesday evenings in the Fellowship Hall loft and on the Saturday before their participation in Sunday worship when we have in-person worship. Carlene has met the challenge of creating recorded music for our online services.

The Chancel Choir rehearses on Thursday evenings during the program year and sings at 10 o’clock Sunday service.  We’ve gained a few members and lost a few members through the year.  As Abby and Carlene have done, Sue has learned new technology to provide music for online worship. Several Chancel Choir members have joined in with more in the wings to try the app we have been using.

Cataloguing South Church’s music library has been an ongoing project and is nearly finished.  There are perusal binders of almost all of the titles in the South Church music library.  The library is catalogued on Google Sheets.

Nearly every Sunday, Sue has invited church school students to join her in singing before their lessons. While this is no longer happening, sing-along music videos will be available for use during the remainder of our time in online worship. As the youth of South Church become more accustomed to singing regularly as a part of worship and religious instruction, they will be introduced to the hymnal. They will be learning some of the more popular hymns so that they can sing along with the congregation and Chancel Choir during many of the hymns.

I was happy, during this April, to visit Chancel Choir members at home (physically distanced) for photos to create a video greeting.  Carlene joined in and visited Memorial Bells members to take photos as well. It was a lovely way to connect the choirs to our congregation.

 Sue Berlenbach

 **Volunteer & Communications Coordinator**

I have published the announcements for over 75 bulletins for Sundays, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week and Easter.  These bulletins have weekly announcements that keep everyone up to date on what is happening at the Church. I also do the

 announcements of church services and special events for the Concord Monitor, the Insider, Bow Times and the

 South-end Town Crier papers.  This way the Greater Concord Community knows what is happening and gets an

 invitation to join us. This past year I have published 24 regular e-Lations! and seven special editions. With Covid-19

 pandemic and Carlos starting a new journey it has been imperative to keep the congregation updated on what is

 happening within the church. These publications have shared activities of the church family including special events, the

 birth of children and upcoming events in the wider UCC community and Greater Concord Area.

 I have also published 2 new monthly newsletters.  “News from the Pews”; which is for people visiting the church; to

 Let them know what is happening and how to contact the staff.  The second newsletter is “Senior News”; which is

 For seniors that do not have an email address; to let them know the highlights for SAGES and what is happening

 around the church.

 I worked with Carlos on the weekly altar flower deliveries.  On Sundays that we have altar flowers; members of the

 congregation have been delivering the flowers to members that are not feeling well or are unable to come to church.

 In March of this year, I started to put the bulletins and announcements online since we would be holding all of our

 service virtually.

 The On-Line Church Directory has been up and running for 6 years and I have started to update all the information. I have changed addresses, phone numbers and emails so that we have all of the correct information on each member.  I have emailed to the congregation and requested pictures for those members that I do not have pictures for.  I have also

 asked for some updated pictures. This directory allows parishioners to access the most current address, phone number and emails available with the click of a button!  This will be a very important tool for our new Interim Minister and our new full-time Minister.

 This position maintains a few areas of the new and improved South Church website including “the calendar”,

 “This week” and “the online directory.” This helps visitors as well as members of the Congregation know what is happening, when and where.  I will be working with Alison Nyhan to take on even more with the website over the next year.

 As the staff liaison to the Guild, I organize the schedule for preparing monthly communion as well as assist with any

 special recognition or funeral receptions.   There are four traditionally served communions and eight communions

 served by intention each year.  This past year we prepared for 8 funerals.

 Although most people would think that the summer months are a slower time for this position, it is not so.  Many hours are spent  coordinating all volunteer positions for the upcoming program year - acolytes, greeters,  ushers, readers and fellowship hours. This past year we had 2177 volunteer hours which is a value of $59,628. The increase to volunteer hours included the Passion Play, online service, office help, flower deliveries, shoe drive, tag Sale and other fundraisers.

 If Volunteers are always welcomed and much appreciated!  It takes a village of volunteers to make the church run as smoothly as it does.  This would give you the opportunity to share your talents with the rest of the church.  If you would like a Passions and Talent form, please feel free to email me and I will send you the link or send a hard copy to you by mail.  Then you can sign up to volunteer for what interests you. one of these opportunities is of interest to you or someone in your family, please contact me at communications@southchurchconcord.org.

 In addition to the above I have also assisted with many projects this year:

* Ordering and arranging the plants in the sanctuary for Christmas and Easter flowers

 to the homes of the people.

* Inspirational posters throughout the building
* New member information class preparation
* New Communion binder
* Coordinating for the TakeThemAmeal.com program; which simplifies meal coordination so parishioners can show they care about others that are in need of meals during hard times in their lives.
* Updates to the Clerk’s book.  We had eight funerals, four children were baptized, two weddings,

nine new members and one send off for Carlos and his family.  Peg Wenzel

MINISTRY REPORTS

Worship & Spiritual Life Ministry

We have supported 3 members in discernment this year and all have graduated! We have continued to support the clergy as they have both taken sabbatical months this past year. We sponsored a movie series in the winter. We supported the clergy thru the Advent and Lenten seasons... (remotely for the Lenten one). We purchased a chalice and plate for Carlos upon his departure from the Church and continue to support Jed in his ministry.

 Deb Imse

Faith in Action (FIA) Ministry

FIA is proud with how South Church continues to live their faith and generously shares with the wider community, locally, nationally and internationally. This year our giving, like much of the rest of our lives, is divided between pre and post-COVID eras.

Prior to COVID we have again committed to being a “five for five” congregation meaning we donate to all five of the UCC programs; Our Churches Wider Mission ($15,000); Neighbors in Need, Christmas Fund, Strengthen the Church and One Great Hour of Sharing. Total donations for these programs from both FIA budget and the congregation’s moment for mission donations are $17,396. We also have continued our annual giving to the UCC Global Ministries Disaster Relief fund for $500.

A significant part of our focus this year was youth, supporting families and education. We were especially proud to donate to the Mary Stewart Giles Scholarship fund at the Children’s Place in memory of our beloved member ($1,600). We also used some residual bequest money from another beloved member Cindy Biese for the Carolyn L. Jenkins Scholarship to help art students at the Kimball Jenkins School of Art. Our Alternative Christmas giving program had options for the congregation to donate to help defray student debt in the Concord School lunch program ($800), providing bicycles to students and health care workers in third world countries through the World Bicycle Relief ($400) and international education programs through UCC Global Ministries ($300). We donated to the Crotched Mountain program for autistic youth, Ready, Set, Connect ($1,670). We also provided supplies for the Women’s prison program to help female inmates connect and mother their children while incarcerated ($157).

We continued our support for the homeless and housing insecure community. The Souperfest fundraiser for the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness received $750. We donated approximately $2000 of clothing, household goods and new hygiene supplies to Families in Transition. In addition, we made donations totaling $1,238 to Families in Transition and Family Promise.

Our ongoing support for New American’s in our community continued with a donation to Overcomer’s Support Services which provides outreach and help to New Americans with jobs, applications and otherwise adjusting to life in the US ($500).

After the COVID-19 pandemic started affecting our community we focused our donations to organizations providing immediate support to families affected by the crisis. We donated $1,000 to the NH Food Bank. To help a Concord charity struggling to provide a safe place for youth during the crisis we donated $500 to the Boys & Girls Club of Concord. We made an additional donation to the UCC Disaster Fund ($500). One of the most fun donations was a collection for Beaver Meadow School to send home outdoor toys and educational activities with free food boxes children on free and reduced lunch collect every 2 weeks. We collected approximately $300 in toys and donated $311 for the Beaver Meadow teachers to buy toys and activities at Gibson’s bookstore.

 Betsy Clardy

Giving Ministry & Stewardship Report

The giving ministry is currently comprised of John Buttrick, Liz Garlo, Marty Jenkins, Jock Irvine, Lorens Jorgensen, and Thom Bloomquist and Mitch Pelletier. We bid farewell to Jock and thank him for their incredible service to our ministry. This year we added John Buttrick. Next year we add Ann Marie Timmons to the ministry. The giving ministry or the asking Ministry as Marty Jenkins likes to say is in charge of getting member pledges for the upcoming year. For the past year, as of the end of April we are at 95% of where we should be for pledges that we have received. This year we start an annual pledge campaign from our once every two year pledge campaign. This will enable us to keep the idea of giving front and center. Overall this has been a challenging pledge campaign with the pandemic uncertainty hanging over us. Yet we forge ahead to reach our goal helping the church with foundational income that it can build its budget around. Thank you very much for your kind support of the giving ministry over the years.

 Lorens Jorgensen

Faith Formation Ministry

During the 2019-2020 year, the Faith Formation Ministry embraced its mission and provided meaningful and thoughtful ways for our members to connect with one another and enhance their faith journeys. Here are some highlights of our year.

* Our third Pie Fest was on Sunday, October 20, 2019. We served and raffled off pies during coffee hour. It was a unique way to spend coffee hour. We had ten pies to enjoy during coffee hour and we raffled off about twelve pies for people to bring home. A special thanks to all those who made and donated pies to our event, especially to the Kearsarge Regional High School culinary students.
* Our "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" event was on Saturday, November 16, 2019.  This evening continues to be a great way for members, new and old, to connect with other congregants in a social setting. This year we had four household hosting with twenty-five participants.
* During the months of January and February, we spent time connecting with members of our church community. Our focus this year was to connect with long time members and shut-ins. Threw phone calls or notes we connected with about thirty-five members. We didn’t necessarily hear back, but we wanted to let them know we were thinking of them.
* Our “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner Reinvented” event was on Saturday, May 2, 2020 via Zoom. This was a great way to connect and check-in with one another during this Covid-19 pandemic. We were able to break out into smaller “rooms” and truly connect with one another. We had sixteen individuals participate in the event.

* We continue to strengthen our Membership Exploration classes.  This year we offered a series of classes to incoming members in which to participate.  This year we have brought in ten new members.

 Alison Nyhan

**Lay Ministry Visitors**

The Lay Ministry Visitors have carried on a consistent ministry in 2019-20. We currently have nine active visitors: Jean Bragg, Herb Carpenter, Kathy Daniels, Nancy Haigh, Bill Jacob, Bonnie Ota, Oge Young and myself: Toni Callahan. In June, Pat Gerhan retired from LMV; we miss her, and we wish her well, grateful for her faithful ministry of many years. In the meantime we have trained and welcomed Jay Haines as a new Lay Minister.

We have continued one or two calls per month on members of the congregation.  We have offered approximately 120 visits over the course of the year. We continue to find that it has become harder to reach people by phone, so sometimes email has come in handy; we have also found that many people are happy to have the conversations we offer to them by phone rather than in person.

Of course, since March, we have only been able to offer phone contact, and, given the sense of disorientation which many of us have had in recent months; these phone conversations have been welcomed and appreciated. Perhaps some of us will make offers of Skype or Face time visits in the future.

 In the month of December, the LMV team once again worked with Jed to sponsor a Service of Remembrance during Advent.  Almost 40 people attended and remembered loved ones; this service has come to be for many an indispensable part of the Advent season.

 For all of us it continues to be an honor and a privilege to represent and to serve South Church as Lay Ministry Visitors.

 Toni Callahan

**STAFFING MINISTRY**

Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (PPRC)

The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee met with the pastors of South Church individually and together, as specified by our by-laws. After the church completed the re-envisioning of Carlos’ covenant, there was a Celebration of New Covenants in June for both Carlos and Jed. We then worked with both pastors on a schedule for sabbatical time that was due to each of them.

After Carlos announced his new call to First Church of Pelham we met with him once to process the leave taking for him and the church.

 David Fries, Emily Geoghegan, Bill Jacob and Laura Knoy

Personnel Committee

We are blessed with an amazing team who works together well and has had to react to major changes in how we do church. They have adapted well, with a willingness to change their hours to include some work from home, so that they could maintain social distance from each other in the office. They have taught us what we need to do with all the zoom meetings, in order to continue to do the business of the church. We are thankful that we are all staying safe, but still able to be the church that we are. The music staff has adapted to not being able to sing together with solos and now the acapella app. They provide a lot of the community part of worship, but we can still worship together and we do. The flexibility of staff members to change, learn new technology, and be willing to help other staff when they are needed is wonderful. Thank you to all the staff for keeping our church going strong through this pandemic.

 Betty Jacob

MISSION

Relief Society

The Relief Society began with the gift of $200 by Franklin Evans, Esquire, of Concord, NH, in memory of his wife, the late Mrs. Sarah E. Evans, who died April 2, 1882. This bequest, worded as follows, was given as the nucleus of a permanent fund, the income of which was to be applied as set forth in the Constitution for the benevolent objects of this Society:

*It is hoped that this humble beginning may increase and be multiplied until its income shall be sufficient to supply the wants of the destitute and unfortunate in this parish and cause the hearts of the poor and needy to rejoice.*

The Executive Council of the Relief Society provides one-time assistance to those in our church and community with a variety of needs, such as rental payments or utility bills. As funds allow, we also contribute to community programs such as the Christmas Food Basket Program, The Friends of Forgotten Children Program and we have provided each school nurse in Concord with $150 to assist children in need of items such as boots, coats, hats and mittens.

This year we rescheduled our Annual Meeting for the third Tuesday in February. We meet three times a year (unless a special meeting is called) and we do the rest of our work by committee e-mail. We will host a Sunday Ice Cream Social on May 6 (Youth Sunday) to introduce ourselves to the congregation and we will have pamphlets available that describe the work of the Relief Society.

If members of South Church find themselves in emergency need, they may contact any member of the Executive Council of the Relief Society or one of our pastors. We will make every effort to help you.

The Executive Council members are:

Kathy Daniels, Sarah Sadowski, Bob Bragg, Mae Murdoch, Nonnie Hall, Adria Cilley and Pam Young

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Guild

The primary responsibilities of the Guild are to prepare Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month and to host any required funeral reception or celebration as needed.  Once again the Guild has had fewer members than normal, but the 12 women prepared the communion services efficiently.

On Sundays when communion is served by intinction, two Guild members will prepare the sacraments – one at the

8 a.m. service and one at the 10 a.m. service.  Four times per year – once each Liturgical season - Holy Communion is served the traditional method using the silver chalices, plates and communion cups. Traditional communion preparation requires much more time and at least 4 guild members (2 for each service) with clean up assistance from the Worship and Spiritual Life Ministry.

This year there were ten funeral receptions. The Guild was assisted by other congregants preparing baked goods and helping to serve and clean up after the funeral receptions. New reception servers and/or anyone willing to bake or purchase items for receptions are always welcome.  Peg Wenzel

**Collections & Deposit Committee**

The Collections and Deposits Committee consist of 4 teams with 3 counters each. This is done on Sunday after church and there is one team that counts on Monday morning. Each team counts for 3 weeks in a row. Christmas collections were done on Wednesday, Dec. 26th with three volunteers and Easter collection was  done on Monday, April 22nd with three volunteers.  We have some changes in the teams as 2 members have gone off and two new members have come on. Jean Bragg

Genesis Circle

Genesis Circle fosters Christian Fellowship through activities and services to the church community. For an example, as a fundraiser Genesis Circle hosted an India Night Dinner in November while member Cy Sherman talked about her family’s connection to India and a recent trip to India with her children. Genesis Circle also hosted bake sales at Thanksgiving and Valentine’s Day.  At Christmas time, we collected warm hats, mittens and scarves from our members and donated them to the Center to End Homelessness in Concord.  We sent correspondence and cookies to young people who are away at college or serving in the military.

We participated in the church cleanup day by cleaning and organizing the church kitchen and closets.

The proceeds from our various fundraisers are used to pay our annual church pledge, our annual donation to the South Church Youth Group, and small donations and or fees for any guest speakers that we might have.

 Edie Dimick

 Minutes of the 182nd Annual Meeting

June 13, 2019

Moderator David Fries called the meeting called at 6 p.m.

Rev. Jed Rardin offered the invocation.

Meeting attendees watched a collage of photos from the year.

A motion to accept last year’s minutes passed.

Alison Nyhan, Director of Christian Education, gave the nominating report. All boards, committees and ministries are full.

Rev. Carlos Jauhola-Straight offered the necrology and remembered members who passed away in the last year: Daniel Levitt, Paul Eastman, Betty Huntington, Judy Dodge, Cynthia Bourn, Charles Sheridan, Kerry Bird, Ann Andrus, Paul Holden, Lois Sundeen, Nancy Drewski, and Grace Holden.

Alison Nyhan gave the membership report. The church currently has 509 members.

Jed and Carlos recognized the work of the church’s committees.

Jed reflected on his year with highlights that included “Ashes To Go” on Ash Wednesday, the addition of 13 new members, an increase in loose offerings, men’s breakfast gatherings and two dozen church members joining him to retrace the steps of the Civil Rights March.

Carlos said he is eager to try new things in the year ahead.

Jed and Carlos will be taking sabbatical leave in 2019 and 2020. Carlos will be away all of July and October in 2019 and away January, May and part of April in 2020. Jed will be away August and September in 2019 and February and part of June in 2020.

Emily Geoghegan of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee presented a new covenant for the pastors. The covenant lays out pastor duties and compensation. The Pastor Parish Relations Committee meets with each pastor individually twice a year and with them together twice a year.

Budget

Lorens Jorgensen, treasurer, presented the proposed budget.

Successes in the past year:

The congregation raised Carlos’s salary to be equitable to Jed’s and more reflective of his work in the church. The church paid down more of its loans, and loose offerings increased.

Expenses:

The budget includes increases for:

--health insurance to provide health care to Lou-Ann Poirier, church administrator.

--heating expense

--property taxes

--a new furnace for the community building. (This $14,000 expense will be paid with funds in the maintenance fund.)

Budget reductions:

The Property Stewardship Committee will not get $5,000 for the reserve fund for the church

Income:

The budget includes a $35,000 withdrawal from the church’s investment fund to cover a budget shortfall. This is a 7 percent withdrawal, which is the maximum withdrawal and over the 4 percent recommended. Spending it outpacing income.

Pledges continue to fall.

The 2018-2019 budget anticipated $336,000 for pledges; only $310,000 came in

The 2017-2018 budget included $310,00 in pledges; only $283,000 came in

The 2016-2017 budgets anticipated $334,000; only $315,000 came in

The church currently has 155 pledge units. Four years ago, it had 197 pledge units.

Loose offerings have increased.

In 2018-2019, the church received $51,000 in loose offerings.

In 2017-2018, it collected $50,000 in loose offerings.

In 2016-2017, it collected $30,000 in loose offerings.

The 2018-2019 budgets anticipated $15,000 in fundraising income. The church raised only $1,815 through fundraisers.

Questions/comments:

Linda Kenison asked how the church is going to raise more money.

A new Finance Committee and a new Fundraising Committee have been formed to tackle this. And, the church will begin the pledge campaign earlier this coming year and end it on April 1 so the Church Council will know the status of pledges when it starts working on the budget.

Several people said they find the church’s pledge system confusing and cumbersome, especially when they make two-year pledges and can’t recall what they pledged in Year Two.

 The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

 Submitted by Annmarie Timmins

Membership Report to the NH Conference, March 2019:      515

Received into membership through Confession of Faith:      0

Received into membership through Reaffirmation of Faith: 0

Received into membership through Transfer:   9

Received into membership through Confirmation:       0

Total Increase in Membership: 9

Removed from Membership through Death:   -5

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| Martha Harrison 07/15/2019 |
| Mary Giles 11/03/2019 |
| Manfred Drewski 11/13/2019 |
| Ferd Prevost 12/09/2019 |
| David Burnham 06/24/2020 |

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Removed from Membership through Inactive: 0

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Adjustment to Membership total                                                    -5

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| Ethan  Parker White | 10/21/2019 |
| Garrison Carter White | 10/21/2019 |
| Gary White | 10/21/2019 |
| Ingrid White | 10/21/2019 |
| Carlos Jauhola-Straight | 05/17/2020 |
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Total Decrease in Membership:                      -10

Total Membership as of 6/10/19:       505

Nominating Report

Officer, Ministry and Committee Rosters 2020-2021

Officers

President: Janet Zeller 1st Term 2022

Vice President: Pending 1st Term 2022

Moderator: David Fries 12th Term 2021

Clerk: Peg Wenzel 1st Term 2021

Past President: Mary Lynne Rahlson 1st Term 2022

Bookkeeper: Karen Joyal 2nd Term 2021

Ministries

Faith Formation: *(up to 9 Members)*

Bruce Bairstow 2nd Term 2023

Judy Forest 1st Term 2021

Cynthia Hogan 2nd Term 2023

Joanne Miles-Holmes 1st Term 2021

Ryan Sahr 2nd Term 2022

Faith In Action: *(up to 9 Members)*

Leigh Cheney 2nd Term 2022

Susan Hatem 1st Term 2023

Peggy Scott 1st Term 2021

Pauline Simonton 1st Term 2022

Chris Yellen 1st Term 2023

Worship and Spiritual Life: *(up to 12 Members)*

Gail DiMaggio 2nd Term 2022

Jay Haines 2nd Term 2023

Deb Imse 2nd Term 2022

Ron Montmagny 1st Term 2022

Cindy Rogers 1st Term 2022

Giving Ministry: *(up to 12 Members)*

Thom Bloomquist 2nd Term 2021

John Buttrick 1st Term 2022

Liz Garlo 2nd Term 2023

Lorens Jorgensen 2nd Term 2023

Mitch Pelletier 1st Term 2022

Annmarie Timmins 1st Term 2023

Staffing Ministries

Personnel: *(up to 5 Members)*

Ashley Babladelis 1st Term 2023

Becky Field 1st Term 2022

Betty Jacob 2nd Term 2021

PPRC\*: *(up to 5 Members)* *\*PPRC members chosen by Worship & Spiritual Life Members and Pastors*

David Fries

Emily Geoghegan

Bill Jacob

Laura Knoy

Spiritual Care and Visitation Ministries

Pastor’s Aid:

Israel Cawley N/T

Deb Conley N/T

Eileen Gfroerer N/T

Bill Jacob N/T

Eileen Jones N/T

Cheryl Nickerson N/T

Ray Phelan N/T

Cy Sherman N/T

Pam Young N/T

Lay Ministry Visitors:

Jean Bragg N/T

Toni Callahan N/T

Herb Carpenter N/T

Kathy Daniels N/T

Nancy Haigh N/T

Jay Haines N/T

Bill Jacob N/T

Bonnie Ota N/T

Oge Young N/T

Committees

Collection & Deposit Committee:

Kim Arndt 9 years N/T

Jean Bragg 25 years N/T

Chip Cilley 3 years N/T

Tracy Coen 8 years N/T

Christine Frost 8 years N/T

Nancy Gesen 13 years N/T

Eileen Gfroerer 8 years N/T

Pat Knight 25 years N/T

Mary Rosenthall 9 years N/T

Kevin Nyhan 3 years N/T

Seth Pingree 7 years N/T

Sarah Waldron 2 years N/T

Chris Yellen 2 years N/T

Church Guild:

Mary Jo Alibrio N/T

Maureen Arsenault N/T

Kathy Gullage N/T

Deb Imse N/T

Eileen Jones N/T

Deb Lincoln N/T

Pandora Martel N/T

Sue Noel N/T

Tracey Osborne N/T

Andrea McGahan N/T

Nancy Roberts N/T

Mary Rosenthall N/T

Cy Sherman N/T

Delegates:

Becky Josephson 1st Term 2021

Joanne Varga 1st Term 2021

Derek Waldron 1st Term 2022

Cy Sherman 1st Term 2022

Flowers:

Mary Ewert 11th Year N/T

Librarian:

Betty Jacob 28th Year N/T

Relief Society\*:

Kathleen Daniels

Pat Gerhan

Nonnie Hall

Sarah Sadowski

Pam Wagner

Pam Young

Planned Giving\*:

Tina Annis

Debbie Carley

Peter Imse

Oge Young

Property Stewardship: *(up to 9 Members)*

Will Delker

Mike Gfroerer

Lorens Jorgensen

Peter Imse

Jason Teaster

*\*committee self-appoints members*