

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC *of Grand Marais*

WINTER CONGREGATIONAL MEETING



You are Welcome Here

Annual Report for 2023
Sunday, January 28, 2024

grandmaraisucc.org ~ (218) 387-2113
300 West 2nd Street, Grand Marais, MN 55604

Table of Contents

Meeting Agenda.....	1
Minutes from June 2023 meeting.....	2-4
Pastor’s Report.....	4-5
Board of Directors Report.....	5-6
Finance Committee Report.....	7
Proposed 2024 Budget.....	8-11
Balance Sheet.....	12-13
Stewardship Committee Report.....	14
Time and Talent Workbook.....	14
Pastoral Relations Committee Report.....	14
Building and Grounds Committee Report.....	15-16
Memorial Committee Report.....	16
Rooted and Rising Climate Action Report.....	16-17
Worship Committee Report.....	17-18
Pizza and Social Justice Report.....	18-19
Food Committee Report.....	20
Thanksgiving Community Meal Report.....	20-21
Workers on Wheels (WOW) Report.....	21

First Congregational United Church of Christ

300 W. 2nd St., PO Box 95, Grand Marais, MN, 55604
GrandMaraisUCC.org (218) 387-2113

Office Hours: T, W, Th 9 AM - 1 PM
Other times by appointment.

Pastor: Rev. Enno Limvere
pastorgmucc@boreal.org

Office Manager: Neil Pederson
office@grandmaraisucc.org

Moderator: Tom Yuhasey Treasurer: Kevin LeVoir
 Board Members: Stephen Aldrich, Francie Beaster,
 Jenny Delfs, Bruce Tyler, Carol Winter



First Congregational United Church of Christ – Grand Marais
Winter Congregational Meeting Agenda -following the Worship Service
Sunday, January 28, 2024

AGENDA

1. Welcoming and review of procedures for the meeting
2. Call to order – Tom Yuhasey
3. Opening Prayer – Pastor Limvere
4. Mission Statement and Open and Affirming Statement
First Congregational United Church of Christ is an open, inclusive church that exists to worship God and practice the gospel of Jesus Christ. We welcome all people of goodwill who seek to share the love of God and honor the diversity of creation in a spirit of tolerance and flexibility. As a Just Peace Church, we invite all who seek the reign of God to join us in reaching out in healing ministry, working for justice, witnessing for peace and striving to overcome all forms of oppression. We recognize two sacraments: Baptism and Communion.
5. Approval of Agenda – **VOTE** (including Zoom participants)
6. Approval of 2023 Summer congregational meeting minutes – **VOTE** (including Zoom participants)
7. Financial Report for 2023 – Kevin LeVoir
8. Proposed 2024 Budget – Kevin LeVoir - **VOTE** (including Zoom participants)
9. Moderator Report / Summary of BOD activities - T. Yuhasey
- 9.1 Discussion on continuance of Mission Statement revision efforts - J. Delfs
10. Pastor Report - Pastor Limvere
11. Committee Reports Printed in the 2023 Annual Report: Any questions?
12. Architect Plan Situation Summary
13. Creation of Capital Campaign Committee or Capital Campaign Exploration Committee
*One would start to put together a campaign and the other would explore over the next 6 months how much money we think our church could raise and then report to the Summer Meeting to see what we want to do with the architects' information. - **VOTE** (including Zoom participants)*
14. Other Business -
15. Closing Prayer/Adjournment

First Congregational United Church of Christ – Grand Marais, MN Summer Congregational Meeting Minutes/ June 25, 2023

Attendees: 30 participants in person and 3 on Zoom

1. Welcome and review of procedures for the meeting.
 - a. Participants asked if voting by show of hands or by ballot for the items to vote on was preferred. It was agreed by show of hands that voting by “show of hands” was preferred. A 2/3 majority is necessary to pass the new Mission Statement. A simple majority is needed for approval of Board of Directors nominees.
2. Call to Order at 11:50 by Moderator Tom Yuhasey
3. Opening prayer: Pastor Limvere
4. Purpose and Mission statement was read.
5. Approval of Agenda
 - a. Agenda was amended to reflect that the vote for Board of Directors was for two new members and three returning members, not two.
 - b. Amended agenda approval: Carol Winter/ Ann Russ. All say “aye”.
6. Approval of 2023 Winter Congregational Meeting minutes: John Bottger/Nancy Strayer; “Aye”
7. Moderator Report by Tom Yuhasey: Thanks to all the Board Members for their service. Thanks to ALL those who serve on so many different committees.
8. Pastor Report: Pastor Limvere:
 - a. Note of appreciation for how special this church is; best of all the congregations he has served.
 - b. Noted that 71% of churches have 50 or fewer attendees at worship
 - c. We are not an “At Risk” church according to parameters set out in a UCC study
 - d. Pastor Limvere asked the congregation to consider volunteering to establish a Sunday School to serve the families with young children. He estimated 2 children but probably four. The school could be on a different day and time than Sunday.
9. Treasurer’s Report: Kevin LeVoir. Printed report is available in the church office. Kevin noted that the church is meeting its bills and obligations. No questions were asked.
10. Introduction of Prospective Board of Director Candidates: Tom Yuhasey
 - a. There are seven BOD members: Tom Yuhasey, John Bottger, Kevin LeVoir, Carol Winter, Carol Bennett, Bruce Tyler, and Jen Delfs. Pastor Limvere attends the meetings.
 - b. Two of the current members have completed their 2-year terms and are stepping down: John Bottger and Carol Bennet.
 - c. Three members are volunteering to stay on the board for another term: Jen Delfs, Carol Winter, and Kevin LeVoir.

d. The Nominating Committee – Carol Bennett and Tom Yuhasey approached several members of the community to seek their service as board members. The candidates who agreed to serve were vetted by the committee and by Ann Russ and Nancy Starr per the rules of the by-laws.

e. New members to be voted on: Francie Beaster and Steve Aldrich.

f. Moderator asked if there were any other nominations? No.

g. Question: Board make-up is usually members with a one-year term and some with a two-year terms for smoother transitions. There is no distinction at voting time regarding length of term of each nominee.

h. Proposal: Approve the board, members will determine length of individual terms at the first meeting of the new board. Nancy Starr noted she has created a chart of who is on the board and the length of their term and will provide this to the BOD.

i. Motion by John Bottger to approve 2 new board members and 3 continuing, all for a 2- year term, to be sorted out by the board. Second Nancy Giguere. Call for discussion: none. Call for vote: all in favor, none opposed.

11. Proposal to replace Constitutional (Sec 111) Purpose and Mission Statement with a new, more current and concise mission statement.

a. New Statement: The mission of the First Congregational United Church of Christ, Grand Marais is to:

Welcome all

Explore the mysteries of faith

Celebrate and honor creation

Work for justice and peace.

Create Community.

Motion to amend the statement and add “Minnesota” after Grand Marais made by Ann Russ/Nancy Strayer. All vote “yes”

Question regarding our status as a Just Peace Church”? Covered by “work for justice and peace”.

Discussion comments:

-In the Constitution there is a “Purpose and Mission statement”. The new version is just mission.

-A fuller, clearer statement like the current statement is preferred

-In the current statement there are two words which have become outdated and are divisive: “tolerance and flexibility” and should be removed.

-Shorter version is a helpful guide for decision making; easier to ask if a new idea or request meets the church mission.

- Add “purpose” to the new mission statement?

-Omit 2 offensive words and keep the original statement

a. Call for vote by show of hands: Proposal to replace current Purpose and Mission Statement with new concise statements

b. Results: 17 in favor; 6 opposed, 2 abstentions. A 2/3 majority (22 approving) needed of the 33 attendees. Vote does not pass.

c. Ann Russ thanked the committee members for the hard work to create the new statement; the failed vote reflects the need for more discussion.

12. Closing prayer: Pastor Limvere

13. Meeting adjourned at 12:45

Respectfully submitted by Carol Bennett

Annual Settled Pastor's Report for 2023

Please let me start with an expression of gratitude! I feel very blessed to be a part of this church and community. It is a joy for Kileen and I to be here and serve. God is good! All the time! I have experienced and know that people in our church and around the community have experienced the fruits of the Spirit: goodness, kindness, patience, faithfulness, self-control, love, joy, peace, and gentleness.

Let me lift up that this Fall we had 10 Sundays in a row with a new guest or guests showing up and continue to see a new face in our sanctuary on Sunday mornings. An evangelism newsletter I once subscribed to stated that the average church will keep 1 out of 10 guests who show up, and a good church will keep 2 out of 10 guests. It would be great if that was higher, but it keeps our feet on the ground. We do have some of those new people becoming a part of our church.

A true mountaintop experience was the trip to Washington, DC through our Minnesota Conference that had 48 youth and 25 adults who toured the Capitol and met with our Representatives and Senators and their staff. We were mightily supported by our community to fund this trip. The national UCC staff said this was the biggest lobbying group they have ever worked with. Our Pizza and Social Justice group continues to meet and we are focusing on taking care of ourselves and finding balance in our lives.

We have found a great Office Administrator in Neil Pederson after Nancy Backlund finished her time with us (Thank you for your time with us, Nancy!). He has really elevated our bulletins and newsletters and keeps our church office chugging along. Thank you, Nick Wharton, MJ Wharton, and Amber Pederson who took turns as our Building Custodian. Right now, the position isn't filled and am working on filling it. Many thanks to our Worship Committee who meets with me monthly and keeps our worship service moving forward. Our four outside worship services were wonderful and wondrous. I really would like to incorporate more visual art inside the sanctuary. If you have talent or just a desire to adorn our sanctuary, please talk to me. The

Board of Directors in our annual review have asked me to tighten up and elevate my sermons. I found a preaching coach and am beginning the process. We are now in the Narrative Lectionary which focuses on going through one Gospel at a time focused on the story, and not themes and seasons as is the Revised Common Lectionary.

I continue to enjoy working with Cook County Pride, Grand Marais Public Library, and the renewed Cook County Ministerial Association. I have pulled back from the Earth Day Fair this year, 2024, because I continue to serve on the Annual Meeting Worship Planning Group for the Minnesota Conference and planning 3 big events over 2 months is too much on my plate.

Our Care Center is now open (though closed for a short time) and worship services are going again, so every 2nd Sunday of the month, I lead a service and serve communion. I continue to try to be present in our community, especially with events related to social justice.

I am really looking forward to this coming year as we engage ATSR Architects to keep our building in good shape and dream what the next 50 years of ministry can look like. This church continues to be a beacon of light in this already progressive community and I hope we will continue to grow to be salt, light, and leaven for the furtherance of God's kindom in Cook County and around the world.

Peace,

Rev. Enno K. Limvere

Board of Directors (BOD) 2023 Annual Report

Submitted by Moderator Thomas Yuhasey

Speaking for the Board, I want to say that we have a lot to be thankful for. Challenges have been addressed and dealt with and the mission of the church continues. These meetings are an important part of that. In 2023 congregational meetings, we worked out a budget plan and held an election for our BOD positions, resolved our Maple Hill property issue, and granted a daycare provider the opportunity to begin a business in our former nursery. By this action we have shown our commitment to community-building and the income our church hopefully will show our action was fiscally responsible.

A month-by-month summary of BOD activities can be viewed in last year's monthly newsletter.

There were some changes in Board personnel this past year:

Current BOD members: Tom Yuhasey (Moderator), Jenny Delfs (Secretary), Kevin LeVoir (Treasurer), Carol Winter, Bruce R. Tyler, Steve Aldrich, and Francie Beaster.

Our newest board members, Steve and Francie, have been on the board for six months and have done a wonderful job. Thank you!

Previous members: John Bottger and Carol Bennett Many thanks for their service.

Our numerous committees have also continued to meet and remain active. A summary of their good works is also included in the bulletin. Speaking of bulletins, how about a special thanks to Neil Pederson for all the work he did getting this publication to us.

I am also thankful for congregants who have taken other paths to help guide our church forward: those who attend and participate in Sunday services, work on special projects, give generously of their abundance, and offer their skills and knowledge to ensure success. I want to praise our technical staff whose skills are second to none. They include: Steve Noble, Steve Aldrich, Nina McCune, and when things get desperate -me.

I have acted as your moderator for 18 months. I am thankful for our board members and pastor's guidance and assistance, and to all who welcomed and encouraged me.

During the past year we have been especially pleased with our pastor Enno Limvere. His service to our congregation has been steadfast and his commitment is unquestioned. As Pastor Enno enters his fourth year of ministry with us (which includes one year as "term" pastor), I hope we all continue to extend our church's utmost hospitality to him and Kileen.

I am Joyful that at this meeting we will be able to finalize our budget plans for the coming year. Certainly, challenges will arise but we are confident those who believe in our mission will see us through it.

At our meeting today, we will hear from our Building and Grounds Committee where we stand with the Architect's Plan to provide guidance on future improvements to our building.

We will also consider the formation of a Capital Campaign Committee and/or a Capital Campaign Exploration Committee to begin exploring where we will go with the endeavor.

As a constantly evolving congregation we are still in discussion with the possibility of developing a new mission statement, to better state who we are today. Future plans for this action will be discussed at this meeting also.

This Board is dependent on support and input from the congregation. We strive to keep the Board of Director's activities transparent. Meetings are open to all who might want to add their voice. Minutes are available in the Shining Light newsletter, on the website, and in the church office. Email or call a Board member with your concerns.

Finance Committee Report for The Annual Meeting of the 1st Congregational UCC Grand Marais MN January 2024

The Finance Committee met throughout 2023 to review the Financial System used by the Church. The Committee spent considerable time developing an accurate and complete 2024 Budget for the church. A listening session for the congregation will be held in Jan 2024 to discuss the proposed 2024 budget. The Finance Committee members are Kevin R Le Voir, Jeff Kern, Chris Silence, and Pastor Enno as Ex Officio.

A Listening Session on the Church's proposed Budget has been scheduled. The session provides a time to go over the proposed budget and ask questions. The Proposed Budget will be presented for adoption at the Winter Church Meeting on 28 Jan 2024. The session will be held on Zoom beginning at 1:00 P.M. Friday 26 Jan 2024. The Zoom address follows:

Kevin LeVoir is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Kevin LeVoir's Zoom Meeting

Time: Jan 26, 2024, 01:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89685181137?>

[pwd=TGZRTW1jRWt3eGxwUWhGcm9mYkRsUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89685181137?pwd=TGZRTW1jRWt3eGxwUWhGcm9mYkRsUT09)

Meeting ID: 896 8518 1137

Passcode: 358040

Kevin R LeVoir

Treasurer



First Congregational United Church of Christ Proposed 2024 Budget

Proposed 2024 Budget

	2021 Budget	2022 Budget
Income		
Pledges (Pledged Donations)	\$ 95,000	\$ 105,000
Offerings (Non Pledged Donations)		\$ 15,000
Loose Plate Offerings	\$ 6,000	\$ 2,500
Building Use	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500
Other Cash Assets (Example Endowment)	\$ 51,583	\$ 23,756
Interest Income	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Pass Through Donations	\$ -	\$ -
Memorial Donations	\$ -	\$ -
General Fund Income	\$ 158,083	\$ 151,756
Income Applied to Budget Expenses		
Hospitality Donations		\$ 50
Sunday School Offerings		\$ -
Expenses		
Mission & Per Capita		
OCWM	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
Per Capita	\$ 975	\$ 500
Total	\$ 4,975	\$ 4,500
Pastor		
Pastor Salary	\$ 42,840	\$ 42,840
Health and Dental	\$ 24,900	\$ 24,900
Life and Disability	\$ 835	\$ 835
Social Security Offset	\$ 4,260	\$ 4,260
Pension Fund Contribution	\$ 7,797	\$ 7,797
Mileage (@\$0.655/Mile)	\$ 650	\$ 650
Continuing Education	\$ 500	\$ 500
Professional Fees	\$ 500	\$ 500
Total	\$ 82,283	\$ 82,282
Staff		
Office Manger Wages and Taxes	\$ 8,640	\$ 4,250
Custodian Wages and Taxes	\$ 3,906	\$ 3,906
Taxes	\$ 705	\$ 705
Total	\$ 13,251	\$ 8,861
Business		
Advertising, Promotion, Website	\$ 685	\$ 685
Banking Charges and Checks	\$ 80	\$ 80
General Liability Insurance	\$ 3,850	\$ 4,200
Workers Compensation	\$ 950	\$ 950
Equipment Lease (Ricoh Copier)	\$ 3,625	\$ 4,000
Postage and Delivery	\$ 1,400	\$ 1,400
Accounting Expense	\$ 2,250	\$ 3,000
Telephone and Internet	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200
Office Supplies	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
Conferences and Meetings	\$ 500	\$ 500
Teacher and Board Expense	\$ 335	\$ 335
Technology Expenses	\$ 500	\$ 500
Total	\$ 16,875	\$ 18,350
Worship		
Musicians	\$ 7,800	\$ 7,800
Visiting Pastor	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Piano & Organ Maintenance	\$ 250	\$ 250
Music, Candles and Other	\$ 150	\$ 150
Total	\$ 9,200	\$ 9,200

First Congregational United Church of Christ Proposed 2024 Budget

Proposed 2024 Budget

2023 Budget	2024 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2023
\$ 100,000	\$ 101,000	\$ 107,953.55	\$ 92,886.64	Pledges (Pledged Donations)
\$ 5,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 4,021.33	\$ 9,151.00	Offerings (Non Pledged Donations)
\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,596.00	\$ 2,627.55	Loose Plate Offerings
\$ 2,500	\$ 12,850	\$ 2,917.00	\$ 3,968.25	Building Use
\$ 53,960	\$ 51,384	\$ 15,728.20	\$ 22,343.44	Other Cash Assets
\$ 150	\$ 100	\$ 14.39	\$ 182.29	Interest Income
\$ -	\$ -	\$ 279.00	\$ 1,265.00	PassThrough Donations
\$ -	\$ -	\$ 170.00	\$ 5,785.00	Memorial Donations
\$ 164,110	\$ 175,834	\$ 132,679.47	\$ 15,108.62	Misc Income
			\$ 153,317.79	
		\$ -		
		\$ 50.00		
		\$ 132,729.47		
\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	
\$ 350	\$ 350	\$ 375.00	\$ 350.00	
\$ 4,350	\$ 4,350	\$ 3,375.00	\$ 4,350.00	
\$ 42,840	\$ 44,554	\$ 42,840.00	\$ 42,840.00	
\$ 26,892	\$ 27,969	\$ 25,073.25	\$ 26,874.25	
\$ 835	\$ 850		\$ -	
\$ 4,260	\$ 5,548	\$ 4,260.48	\$ 4,260.48	
\$ 7,800	\$ 8,200	\$ 7,796.88	\$ 9,746.10	
\$ 1,025	\$ 1,025	\$ 1,195.59	\$ 518.04	
\$ 500	\$ 1,000	\$ 200.00	\$ 545.00	
\$ 500	\$ 1,000	\$ 261.98	\$ 411.98	
\$ 84,652	\$ 90,146	\$ 81,628.18	\$ 85,195.85	
\$ 8,750	\$ 14,000	\$ 5,580.30	\$ 11,713.00	
\$ 4,000	\$ 4,100	\$ 3,546.38	\$ 2,524.50	
\$ 825	\$ 1,055	\$ 698.80	\$ 1,089.18	
\$ 13,575	\$ 19,155	\$ 9,833.48	\$ 15,326.68	
\$ 685	\$ 685	\$ 522.55	\$ 1,506.46	
\$ 900	\$ 900	\$ 879.78	\$ 501.79	
\$ 4,600	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,199.00	\$ 4,363.34	
\$ 950	\$ 950	\$ 815.00	\$ 723.00	
\$ 5,500	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,143.23	\$ 4,940.10	
\$ 1,400	\$ 1,400	\$ 303.21	\$ 450.78	
\$ 2,000	\$ 2,250	\$ 2,040.89	\$ 1,035.24	
\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,504.18	\$ 1,369.21	
\$ 1,250	\$ 1,250	\$ 674.77	\$ 619.15	
\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 289.50	\$ 220.00	
\$ 385	\$ 385	\$ -	\$ 554.49	
\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 886.71	\$ 1,530.64	
\$ 21,670	\$ 22,320	\$ 17,258.82	\$ 17,814.20	
\$ 7,800	\$ 7,800	\$ 5,100.00	\$ 5,250.00	
\$ 1,200	\$ 1,200	\$ 406.00	\$ 800.00	
\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 125.00	\$ -	
\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 480.21	\$ 205.60	
\$ 9,550	\$ 9,550	\$ 6,105.21	\$ 6,255.60	

First Congregational United Church of Christ Proposed 2024 Budget

Proposed 2024 Budget

	2021 Budget	2022 Budget
Fellowship		
Hospitality Expenses (Net)	\$ 250	\$ 250
Total	\$ 250	\$ 250
Education		
Adult Education	\$ 250	\$ 250
Youth Ministry	\$ 100	\$ 100
Books and Teaching Material	\$ 250	\$ 250
Local Out Reach	\$ 500	\$ 500
Total	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,100
Buildings & Grounds		
Utilities (Electricity+ Sewer and Water)	\$ 750	\$ 3,750
Utilities (Heating)	\$ 10,806	\$ 6,000
	\$ -	\$ -
Roof Loan Interest and Principal	\$ 5,252	\$ 7,503
SBA Loan Repayment	\$ 250	\$ 250
Maintenance and Repairs	\$ 575	\$ 1,500
Grounds, Plowing	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Garbage	\$ 1,150	\$ 500
Misc. Expense	\$ 680	\$ 680
Total	\$ 21,463	\$ 22,183
Parsonage		
Parsonage Utilities	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,800
Parsonage Heating Fuel	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
Parsonage Utility Assessment	\$ 1,230	\$ 1,230
Real Estate Tax	\$ 3,356	\$ -
Maintenance and Repairs	\$ 800	\$ 500
Total	\$ 8,686	\$ 5,030
Total Expenses	\$ 158,083	\$ 151,756
Income - Expenses	\$ 0	\$ (0)

First Congregational United Church of Christ Proposed 2024 Budget

Proposed 2024 Budget

2023 Budget	2024 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2023
\$ 125	\$ 125	\$ -		
\$ 125	\$ 125	\$ -		
\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 311.60	\$ 69.90	
\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ -	\$ 3,352.95	
\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 89.50	\$ 92.95	
\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ 57.06	
\$ 1,250	\$ 1,250	\$ 401.10	\$ 3,572.86	
\$ 3,750	\$ 3,750	\$ 2,699.74	\$ 1,938.20	
\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 4,352.37	\$ 4,889.88	
\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
\$ 7,503	\$ 7,503	\$ 6,252.50	\$ 7,503.00	
\$ 450	\$ 450	\$ -	\$ 172.00	
\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 1,097.43	\$ 1,251.43	
\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,335.00	\$ 1,230.00	
\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 35.00	\$ 229.76	
\$ 680	\$ 680	\$ -	\$ 650.26	
\$ 23,533	\$ 23,533	\$ 15,772.04	\$ 17,864.53	
\$ 1,800	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,581.74	\$ 1,786.88	
\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 772.26	\$ 1,340.42	
\$ 1,230	\$ 1,230	\$ 1,229.02	\$ 1,229.02	
\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,242.97	\$ 301.75	
\$ 5,530	\$ 5,530	\$ 4,825.99	\$ 4,658.07	
\$ 164,110	\$ 175,834	\$ 135,824.82	\$ 155,037.79	
0	0	\$ (3,145.35)	\$ (4,661.29)	

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2023

	Dec 31, 23
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Checking - GMSB 0660	2,557.99
Total Checking/Savings	2,557.99
Other Current Assets	
Investment Assests	
E. Jones Stock	1,108.88
UCF Investments Balanced Funds	89,995.00
Total Investment Assests	91,103.88
Total Other Current Assets	91,103.88
Total Current Assets	93,661.87
Fixed Assets	
Church	567,500.00
Building Renovations	
Bldg Rnvtn - Roof/Rocks/Doors	119,297.98
Total Building Renovations	119,297.98
Parking Lot	41,900.00
South Cemetery Property	52,400.00
North Cemetery Property	25,600.00
Parsonage	236,812.74
Furniture and Equipment	347.74
Total Fixed Assets	1,043,858.46
Other Assets	
PrePaid Donations	-800.00
Total Other Assets	-800.00
TOTAL ASSETS	1,136,720.33
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Unknow SBA Loan	-172.00
SBA Loan	10,000.00
Payroll Liabilities	
FICA Tax Withheld	365.28
Medicare Tax Withheld	85.42
Total Payroll Liabilities	450.70
Total Other Current Liabilities	10,278.70
Total Current Liabilities	10,278.70
Long Term Liabilities	
LOC - GMSB - Renovation	93,155.54
Parsonage 2008 Util Assessment	8,717.02
Total Long Term Liabilities	101,872.56
Total Liabilities	112,151.26
Equity	
Unrestricted Net Assets	-56,009.96
Opening Balance Equity	9,027.28
Unrestricted Equity Balance	1,052,602.06
Church Impr Accum Prior Yr Int	-5,499.86

First Congregational United Church of Christ
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2023

	Dec 31, 23
Restricted Equity Accounts	
REA Syrian Relief Funds	-450.00
REA - Thanksgiving	1,060.55
REA - Church Repairs	1,399.57
REA - Memorial	2,119.92
REA - Piano & Sanctuary	2,512.96
REA - Pass Through Accts	
REA Ukraine Relief	-260.00
REA Rooted & Rising	-289.20
REA Christmas Fund	-45.00
REA Neighbors in Need	-35.00
REA One Great Hour of Sharing	45.00
REA Strengthen the Church	-20.00
Total REA - Pass Through Accts	-604.20
Workers on Wheels	
WOW Balance Carried Forward	889.22
WOW - Current Deposits	8,146.35
WOW - Current Disbursements	-7,360.00
Total Workers on Wheels	1,675.57
Unresolved Restricted Equity	21,334.39
Restricted Equity Accounts - Other	-100.00
Total Restricted Equity Accounts	28,948.76
Net Income	-4,499.21
Total Equity	1,024,569.07
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	1,136,720.33

Stewardship Report
Annual 2024 Winter Meeting
By Tom Yuhasey

The Stewardship Committee reports the completion of its 2024 pledge drive. While the number of pledges for 2024 so far is slightly less than last year as of this time, those who did respond were again very generous. We thank all who assisted in the pledge drive including those who spoke at Sunday services and those who helped in the tasks related to the mailing of the pledge requests.

Again, our hope remains that those who have yet to be heard from will come forward to share their abundance with us.

One encouraging point that needs to be mentioned was, last year, those who pledged ended up gifting the church with a sizeable amount above what they promised. Also, the number of congregants who have stepped up to take part in our Sunday services and volunteering their time and skills for projects and activities remains strong.

My personal hope for the future is others from the community will take note of our church's Just Peace work and join with us to assist in our efforts.

Finally, while I like to take credit for everything, I confess that stewardship efforts are a team accomplishment and the members of this team for this year are Pastor Enno, Kevin Levoir, Ranna Levoir, Carol Winter, Jenny Delfs, Neil Pederson and lastly, myself.

Time and Talent Workbook
Annual 2024 Winter Meeting

This summer and fall, our stewardship committee worked on a time and talent workbook because we have a lot of new people in our congregation and after the pandemic, we may have forgotten a thing or two and are also trying some new things. This Time and Talent Workbook on our website and on the table in the entryway, tries to lay out all the ways people in our church can volunteer and what is expected of them. We hope to have a Time and Talent Stewardship Drive sometime this year to help our church keep moving forward.

Pastoral Relations Report
Annual 2024 Winter Meeting

Report not available as of the date of publication.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Committee Members: Byron Aldrich, John and Barb Bottger, Jeff Kern, Ranna LeVoir, Gwen Mattice, Bruce Tyer, Pastor Enno

The Building and Grounds Committee is a hands-on committee that handled a wide variety of tasks, from ordinary maintenance, annual maintenance and unusual maintenance, to preparing the space for the day care, working towards making our space more energy efficient, to a year-long process culminating in the raising of funds to work with an architectural firm in creating a master plan for the future of the church building. Minutes to all of the Building and Grounds meetings are located in the office.

We are currently without a custodian and can use your help in providing temporary custodial duties and in recruiting a permanent custodian.

Here is a list (in no particular order) of our work/accomplishments from 2024:

Church Building and Grounds:

- Heating System issues temporarily resolved
- Tattered flag almost completely removed (Working on the last bit)
- Monkey bars platform replaced
- Chipmunk issue resolved
- Security System installed
- Toilet repaired
- Custodial duties performed
- Recycling and garbage delivered to respective facilities throughout the year
- Interfaced with Food Shelf coordinators
- Sidewalk and curb issues temporarily repaired
- Snowblowers repaired and tuned up (church and parsonage)
- Outdoor Advent Trees - installed, decorated and removed after the season. Special thanks to Dave Steckelberg for the signs this year!
- Lawn mowing and snow removal
- Organized a spring and fall work day
- Parking lot lines painted
- Windows washed
- Misc. painting done
- Extensions added to downspouts
- Outdoor faucets repaired
- Furniture and materials from South Room and Nursery (current Day Care rooms) relocated and repurposed
- Funds raised to hire ATSR Architects

Continued on next page.

Parsonage:

- Garage roof re-shingled (after wind damage)
- Washing machine repaired
- Dishwasher repaired
- Chimney cleaned
- Mold issue addressed
- Downstairs lighting issue addressed
- Made plans to rebuild the front deck and do maintenance on the back deck in the spring. Volunteers keep this in mind!

Memorial Committee Report – Winter Meeting January 2024

Memorial Committee participated in the August 2023 BOD meeting and at that time the following decisions were made:

- Ongoing plan to use Nosker funds for copyright expenses for music used in worship (will be needed for as long as we are putting taped worship service on our website).
- Suggestion made to use Bob Carter donations/funds to refresh the Fireside Room that is used weekly by numerous recovery groups.
- Other funds will be released to Buildings and Grounds. When Memorial Committee spoke with six families maintaining/improving our church building inside and outside was very important. Voted on and Approved.
- Going forward, will request written direction from families for use of memorial funds in a timely fashion.

Rooted and Rising Climate Action Group Annual Report 2023

Book Study: In February and March eight of us gathered in hybrid fashion to read *Inhabiting Eden: Christians, the Bible, and the Ecological Crisis* by Patricia K. Tull.

The book's thesis is that, as Christians, we are called to read Scripture, particularly Genesis, Chapters 1-4, as a story that reminds us of the interconnectedness of humans, animals, and the earth itself, and calls us to an attitude of respect, gratitude and care—as co-gardeners with God—for all creation. Change is urgently necessary if we are to preserve life as we know it on this planet. Yet change can happen only when a critical mass of people understand the challenges and insist on no longer doing business as usual.

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The challenges include overuse of water, land use and the disappearance of wild areas, the buildup of trash and toxic waste, the effects of fossil fuel use and its growing scarcity, and the effects of climate change. Each chapter includes questions for discussion, and personal experiences to try at home, from acquiring personal reusable water bottles to analysing the trash you generate.

Spring cleanup and planting: In late April we spent a Saturday cleaning up the church yard, including the garden beds, installing a composter bin, and planting a variety of shrub and tree saplings, for wildlife food and shade for the west side of church.

Rain garden maintenance: As soon as the weather permitted we returned our attention to the rain gardens by the city library. We cleaned up the closer garden and got it ready for the season, transplanting some new plants and weeding the space. Once we were satisfied with the progress we turned our attention to the garden in front of the wall and the Gunflint Trail sign.

After extensive weeding we transplanted several plants to the plot and kept after the weeds as the season progressed.

In the fall we took a look at the overgrown rain garden in front of the Four H Log Cabin and began to dig out invasive grasses and plants with a view to rehabilitating it. More work will be scheduled in spring.

Lawns to Legumes Grant Award: Several of us applied for a grant to purchase rain garden and other plants in place of traditional lawns. One of us received a grant from the lottery which we will use to buy more plants for the rain garden in front of the wall and possibly for the Four H garden.

Annual Report for Worship Committee 2023

Current members: Jenny Delfs, Linda Noble, Ann Russ, and Bruce Tyler

The Worship Committee meets monthly to plan and vision for our worship services, Sunday services and special.

Our Lenten Series last year was “Building Hope” which we did with the Spirit of the Wilderness Episcopal church, meeting on Wednesday evenings. We explored the themes of Cultivating Gratitude, Reframing Ways to Pray, Finding Vulnerability vs. Defensiveness, and Learning to Love our Enemies.

Our Holy Week services included Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Services. We decided to have 4 outdoor services over the summer on the third Sundays in June through September. In August, we were accompanied by members of the North Shore Swing Band. Thank you to everyone who helped set up and take down on each of those services.

We, once again, had a Season of Creation during the month of September and a Blessing of the Animals on the outdoor service.

In October, we had a blessed service led by Mike Debevec and his jazz crew.

In December, we had our Christmas Pageant and Christmas-Cookie Sale and when Christmas Eve fell upon Sunday, it was decided to just have an evening service.

We now have sign-ups for all the ways our church can contribute to the worship experience: Ushers, Greeters, Peace Poem and Liturgists, and Serving Coffee and Cookies. Please continue to volunteer ahead of time. (So we don't have to rely on just a few people to do it all.) Thank you to everyone who has pitched in!

We are blessed with a good tech crew: Steve Noble, Nina McClure, Steve Aldrich, and Tom Yuhasey, with Kileen Limvere as back-up. We have worked to improve the quality of the live service and recordings.

Thank you to Tom Yuhasey who twice filled the pulpit when Pastor Enno was away.

Pizza and Social Justice

Written by Kristin DeArruda Wharton

2023 was a big year for our youth programs!

- We continued monthly Wednesday gatherings of our 7-12th grade youth group: Pizza and Social Justice (PASJ), with the 2022/23 theme of "Social Justice movements." We had about 5-12 youth attending regularly. We met with community members to learn about their involvement in protesting the Vietnam War at the '68 DNC, the environmental movement, womyns' movements, and more.
- We held several fun overnights where we played games, cooked great food, and watched documentaries.
- We also had a few Friday-night family potlucks with youth and families of all ages.

In July, 3 youth and 3 adults from our church participated in an 8-day trip to Washington, DC (Capitol Hill) where we learned about advocating for social change and lobbying. We visited monuments and museums including the Holocaust Museum & memorial, and the Museum of African American culture and history. The youth (our group was part of a large delegation from MN and Dakota UCC) capped off the trip by meeting with Senator Tina Smith and Senator Amy Klobuchar to advocate for clean energy, farm bill provisions on fresh produce bucks for WIC and SNAP recipients, and the impacts of school gun violence on youth. It was a life changing trip, and we formed new relationships with youth from all over our UCC conference.

Thanks so much to all who supported this trip through donations and many other ways.

Resuming PASJ in the fall of 2023, the youth identified the theme of “rest and renewal” for this school year. Along with many (most?) teens in our country, these kids are very involved in activities and academics, and feel torn between physical rest, spending time with friends, family, unstructured time, and the demands of school. Enno presented the idea of “rest as resistance,” a growing “theology” and important aspect of activism, especially for marginalized and people of color. We’ve spent time on gratitude journaling, playing and downtime, and mind body skills like breathing, shaking dancing, and art/drawing. We intend to carry this theme through the school year. The kids were very receptive and engaged. Neil Pederson has joined our PASJ crew and we’re so grateful to have his presence and involvement.

Conversations have been percolating since we returned from the DC trip about starting up the UCC/UUA lifespan sexuality education program called Our Whole Lives (OWL). Connecting with other church groups on the DC trip, we learned what a cornerstone OWL programs are for most UCC youth programs. At the same time, several parents have expressed a desire to start up a program within the structure of our PASJ and youth program. And the youth are very interested in OWL. We’re working with Rev. Kevin Brown of Mn conference and a group of parents (Kristin Wharton, Lisa Tracy, Martha Williams, Neil Pederson), and pastor Enno to work on a plan to potentially start a high school OWL cohort next fall. Stay tuned for much more information. OWL programs are a strong ministry of many UCC congregations, and we think it could be an important part of our church’s mission in our community and for our youth and families.

I want to extend many thanks to Pastor Enno & Kileen, the youth and families, Neil Pederson, all who have contributed time, money, food, cookies, prayers, intentions, and more. It’s been such a joy and delight for me to spend time with these incredible youth and witness our program slowly grow and evolve. Thank you for the opportunity and your support.

Kristin Wharton



Food Committee

Nancy Starr, Ranna LeVoir, Carol Bennett, Ann Russ

The food committee communicates (primarily by email) as needed to provide or coordinate food for memorial services, after church special occasion potlucks, after church treats, or other events. We recognize that eating together is a community-building activity that is an important part of church life.

2023 activities included: Memorial for Bob Carter and various meals such as Mardi Gras, harvest potluck, and a potluck meal for international workers.

Thanksgiving Dinner 2023

After three years of pandemic-limited dinners, the congregation offered a real sit-down family-style, Thanksgiving dinner to the wider community this year. What a joy it was to see around 90 folks seated at beautifully dressed tables in the Fellowship Hall. In addition, about 45 meals were delivered to or picked up by folks.

In the weeks before the dinner, several folks spent two Saturdays cleaning the kitchens, counting dishes and silverware to make sure we had enough for everyone, making sure the roasters worked, and that tablecloths and napkins were clean.

On Wednesday morning, a dozen folks gathered to bake pumpkin pies, chop vegetables for stuffing and relish trays, and get ready for the big day. A crew also set up and dressed tables. Special thanks to Kathy Ann who folded beautiful fan-fold napkins for 120 place settings!

Thursday morning early, a crew began roasting turkeys, making mashed potatoes and sweet potatoes, stuffing, green-bean casserole, gravy and relish trays. By 10:30 another crew began carving the cooked turkeys—roasted on site, or brought in by at-home roasters. Thanks to everyone—too numerous to name—who cooked, carved, dished up or cleared tables and washed dishes.

Special thanks also to Helen Carter for handling take-out and delivery reservations and Donna and Orvis Lunke who delivered meals to the homebound. And thanks to Neil Pederson, who designed a beautiful poster for the dinner and to Leesann Foris and Chris Silence who delivered them around town. Jeff Kern deserves a heartfelt thank you for helping with set up beforehand, arriving early on Thursday to help roast and then carve turkeys, and staying late to make sure every dish, pot, and pan was clean and put away.

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Thank you too to the many members who donated milk, coffee, half and half, and butter; celery and onions; olives, beets, and pickles for the relish trays; candy and nuts for the nut cups.

Next year is our Fiftieth Anniversary Dinner. We hope it will be even grander and more well attended than ever.

Co-Chairs: Jen Delfs and Bruce Tyler

W.O.W Report for 2023

Wow for 2023 was busy, we checked out about 65 bikes, and many, but not all, have been returned. Several workers donated their \$30 refund to the program. several required multiple fixes; mostly flat tires, but some more complex. Steve did backup for Jeff when Jeff was out of town. Jeff did most of the interface with foreign workers. I think it was John who did many test rides.

The bike room is overflowing. Almost no room to do repairs without moving bikes out of the room. We received about a dozen donations of bikes. -most need some work.

The big plus is that Beth and Tim Kennedy have offered one of their rental garages for us to use as storage. The caveat is that the garage is full of renters' stuff- past and present. Tim and I have spent several days going through it but there's more work to do.

It still looks promising, but the main problem is deciding how to dispose of stuff. I've put lots on my curb and most have been taken, but there's more.

Interesting interactions with the workers; I took one girl to the ER. She cut her hand doing dishes and didn't know where to go for help. I called the ambulance and drove to her residence. I took her in my truck- she was fine. Catalin (from Romania) drew a picture of me. See attached. That was a high for me!



