

Faith United Church of Christ
575 Richmond Road
Richmond Heights, Ohio



Year 2016

The Annual Report

Annual Congregational Meeting
December 11, 2016

Faith United Church of Christ
Richmond Heights, Ohio

The Annual Congregational Meeting
December 11, 2016
11:30 a.m.

Agenda

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|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Call to Order | The President of the Congregation |
| 2. Prayer | The Pastor |
| 3. Approval of Previous Minutes | The Secretary of the Congregation |
| 4. Discussion of Ministry Reports | Ministry Chairs |
| 5. Treasurer's Report | The Treasurer |
| 6. Presentation and Approval of the 2017 Budget | Finance Ministry |
| 7. Election of Officers and MLC Members | The President |
| 8. Other Business | The President |
| 9. Prayer | The Pastor |
| 10. Adjournment | The President |

Vital Statistics

Membership as of December 13, 2015 142

Changes in membership: Additions

New members:

Brandon Brunton
Kristen Brunton
Kathryn Mahoney
Spencer Presley

Total additions 4

Changes in membership: Losses

Death:

Hermine Jones
Margaret Kerstetter

Transfer, Request for Removal, or Removal:

Art and Pat Bacon (to Church of the Saviour UMC)
Mary and Ron Ober

Total losses 6

Total Membership as of December 11, 2016 140

A MOTION TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION

of Faith United Church of Christ, Richmond Heights, OH
to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation
on December 11, 2016

Rationale:

1. The Church already has an unofficial Assistant Treasurer (Kathy Lorentz), who assists the Treasurer (Phil Juarez) by performing the payroll functions, including issuing paychecks.
2. New security measures by the bank now require that all checks be signed by an Officer of the Church.

Proposed Amendment:

- **VI.1: Change** "The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Congregation constitute the Corporate Officers..." **to** "...Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer of the Congregation..."
- **VI.3.b: Change** "...with the exception of the Treasurer..." **to** "...with the exception of the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer..."
- **VI.8: Change** existing **VI.8** to **VI.9** and **insert** the following:
VI.8. Assistant Treasurer of the Congregation
The Assistant Treasurer may perform any of the functions and exercise any of the powers of the Treasurer as may be mutually agreed from time to time between the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer.
- **VII.1: Change** "...the elected officers defined above" **to** "...the elected officers defined above, with the exception of the Assistant Treasurer."

2016

FINAL REPORT- Building and Grounds Committee

December of the previous year saw the launch of the program to upgrade the antiquated and wasteful restroom toilets and eliminate chronic leakage from the various sink faucets throughout the building. The work was undertaken through **Joe Donia Plumbing** of South Euclid. February of this year saw the completion of the task. The upgrade project involved five (5) new closets (3 ADA height, 2 regular height) and rebuilds to several hand sinks. The interim cost of the progress at that time amounted to \$1748.25; due in part to the tax exempt status of the replacement parts. This expense was borne by the year 2015 special repairs account. February, 2016 saw the completion of the project with the all-inclusive cost finalized at \$2465.00 (**\$716.00 debited from 2016 account.**) A rough breakdown of the total expenditure = \$1615.00 (parts) and \$850.00 (labor). Water savings from replacement of the five 5-gal capacity with modern 1.6 gal/flush units will result in significant dollar savings over time, particularly during the months of preschool operation. (*Update 11/19/16: review of billings April through October indicates an 18% decrease in water cost over the similar months of 2015.*)

In early January full illumination was restored to the front lawn church billboard sign by the original installer **Signature Sign Co.** of Cleveland. Restoration required the complete replacement of all eight fluorescent tubes as well as the ballast starter unit. Work required extensive disassembly of the sign to access the internal electrical wiring. ***The three-hour job invoiced at \$530.22 was charged to Special Repairs account.*** (Background note: Sign replaced failing wooden original on 6/16/07 at a cost of \$3800. Only one other service call (3/11/09) has been needed –over a span on nearly seven years). Workman commented that several tubes were original to the installation. This is quite remarkable even with the long-standing reputation of fluorescent tube lighting.

In March the services of **McPhillips Plumbing** were required in two (2) separate invoiced service calls to clear sanitary sewer drains in lower south end classroom toilets. Snaking required cutting into piping for access ports, then rebuilding upon completion. Serviceman reported “dirt in sinks” indicating possible downstream underground pipe-break. Second call for service a week later appears to have solved the issue. ***Expenditure for the combined two (2) calls totaled \$520.00 and was charged to Special Repairs account.***

Tree Service Now Inc. of Willoughby was commissioned in July to remove six (6) infested Scots Pine trees (two along the exit driveway in south yard; three along the north property line, plus the one lone large pine dying at the NW corner of the social hall front yard. Insect larva were found under the bark of the fallen trees possibly indicative of a disease known as Ring Collar Weevil. All limbs and branches were shredded. Trunks were truck-loaded and all were hauled off property. Stump grinding was included in the formal contract. **Total expenditure of \$1800 was charged to Special Repairs.** Five remaining pine trees on the side yards appear to have survived.

Fleming Bros. Snowplowing of Richmond Hts. has been awarded the 2016-2017 snowplowing contract at an annual price of \$2500. This contract is \$500 less than last year and includes hand shoveling of main doors to church and lower level preschool door. Per standard procedure plowing begins after 2 inches of fresh snowfall and is in effect from November 1, 2016 to last snowfall.

McNulty Roofing Inc. of Highland Hts. again provided gutter cleaning on a twice-a-year basis (spring and fall) for a charge of \$200.00 each visit.

Deluxe Heating and Cooling Inc. Mayfield Hts. conducted their standard annual boiler inspections and overhaul efforts in October. Work included cleaning pilots and burners. Thermostat and pump operations of the entire heating system were confirmed as well as that of the air handler equipment. Routine maintenance service cost amounted to \$236.00, tax exempt.

Champion Fire Equipment Inc. of Cleveland inspected and approved the fourteen (14) church building fire extinguishers as required by code. One (1) unit at expiration date was replaced. Total cost of this service was \$168.75; again, tax exempt.

Annual church boiler licensing by **FM Global** (also required by code) was conducted and approved without incident on October 12, by the visiting inspector. Gratis visit. Cost is now being absorbed by **Mennonite Insurance Co.**, Faith Church insurer. FM Global replaces the previous **Hartford Boiler** inspections for which the church was billed at approximately \$100.00.

At this writing, a MLC approved contract with **Tree Service Now Inc.** for the pruning of several large oak tree limbs and branches overhanging the parking lot at the SE corner of the building is awaiting realization pending the company time schedule, and with weather permitting. Several high ceiling vehicles (FedEx, UPS, RTA, shuttle buses, etc.) top out passing under when the trees are fully laden with foliage. RHFDD has also suggested that the condition needs "attention". The large oak tree spreading over the office roof and sidewalk is part of the job. The new contract for an agreed upon cost of \$1250.00 includes removal of the debris, clean-up and haul- way. A project update will be reported when activity concludes.

The B&G committee acknowledges all contributions of Faith members and friends during the year, who contribute their time and talents to improving our physical facility. Special thanks to Larry Huston who has repaired several decayed, wooden casement window frames/sills located around the social hall building.

Respectfully submitted this Saturday, November 19, 2016.

Dave Vesey, Maintenance Director

Building & Grounds committee: Mike Nedrow, Chair; Scott Dorey, Dave Holtz, Don Wilson, Contributing.

Faith Formation Ministry Report 2016

Karen Wagner left in December 2015 as the Director of FFM for Faith Church. As a committee, we took over the running of the church school program. At that time we still had three church school classes by age group. Quickly it became evident that we did not have the numbers of children on Sunday morning to run three classes. This year a new curriculum was purchased from Cokesbury to provide education via a one room school house method. I sent out letters to Faith families during the summer stating that all children would begin in worship at 10:00 then leave following the scripture readings. Church school would be multi-age with one teacher and one aide. I taught September and October and Sharon Jakse is teaching through Advent. The number of children present on any given Sunday is still very small with some Sundays having one or no children present. Faith Formation will be in discussion with MLC and Pastor Gene as we approach the new year about how best to move forward as ministry is service to the members of Faith UCC.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Jacquet, chair

Members of FFM: Sharon Jakse, Jill Dugovics, Leslie Houston, Kristin McLaughlin

Pastor's Report 2016

Gene McAfee

My annual report this year may be a bit briefer than previous reports have been because my active working year at Faith was briefer, by twenty-five percent, than previous years have been. I was privileged to spend the three autumn months of September, October, and most of November on sabbatical, researching the life of Peter Gomes, preacher in Harvard's Memorial Church from 1972 to 2011. My twelve-week sabbatical followed directly on my three-week summer vacation, giving me a generous break from regular pastoral responsibilities. Funding for my three, week-long research trips to Cambridge, MA, and pastoral coverage during my absence was provided by a Pastoral Study Project grant from the Louisville Institute.

I met with a Sabbatical Committee, composed of congregation president Gail Robertson Yusko and members Deanne Carroll and Ed Jacquet, three times during my time away. In addition to updating them orally on the progress of my project, I also submitted written reports to them prior to each of our meetings.

I will make a fuller, final report about my sabbatical to the congregation after a coffee hour in mid- to late-January, but here I can say that, from my perspective, the sabbatical experience was very successful. I proposed to interview people who knew Peter and transcribe those interviews for depositing with Peter's papers in the Manuscripts and Archives of the Andover Harvard Theological Library. I accomplished that mission, on time and under budget, thanks to the generous hospitality of Lowell House, where I served as resident dean of students (1995-2001), and my friends in North Reading, MA, Nancy Nienhuis and Tammy Zambo, with whom I stayed during my research trips.

I would like to record here my appreciation to the several classes of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee, who began suggesting some years ago that I arrange for a sabbatical; the members of the Faith congregation, who supported their suggestion; the Rev. Dr. Paul Biery and the Rev. Dr. Mendle Adams, who provided pastoral coverage during my absence; the members of my Sabbatical Committee; the chairs and members of the various ministries who filled in the gaps that opened during my absence; and the Louisville Institute for making this sabbatical financially feasible for our church.

Another highlight of the year for me was the four-week adult education series on Ecclesiastes that I led in June and July. With the change in our Sunday morning schedule to offer church school during worship, the opportunity for adult education must be found elsewhere during the week, and the pattern of offering the same class during the day on Wednesdays and after working hours on Thursdays for a few weeks during the summer seemed to work well for many folks at Faith. Such a summer series would complement our historic mid-week Lenten programs and increase our offerings for adult study. I hope to offer another Bible study next summer, following the same Wednesday-Thursday format, and regularly thereafter.

With the help of Autumn Abramczyk and members of our Prayer Team and Worship Ministry, we have increased our visits to shut-ins, and a successful Stewardship Campaign, led by Ken Vogt, will allow us to come very close to a balanced budget for next year. These are wonderful signs of vitality in our congregation.

At the same time, we are all aware of the dearth of children and young people in our congregation, and this has caused anxiety and distress to some of us. Several years ago, our Ministry Leadership Council recommended to the congregation, and the congregation approved, an increase in the hours for our Director of Faith Formation for Christian Education, Karen Wagner. At the time, we were running a not-insignificant deficit, but we felt that the investment was worth the risk; if anyone could grow our program for youth and families, we believed Karen could do it. After several years of trying to do so, while the number of young people continued slowly to decline, with the help of our association staff we came to realize that we need to think differently, creatively, and faithfully about what it means to be a mature church and how best to deploy our resources at this stage in our life. This is a vision and a future we will all need to help clarify and live into. As my friend and mentor, Peter Gomes, used to say to Harvard's graduating seniors: "You do have a future. You just don't know what it is yet." All of us who bear the responsibility of leadership at Faith covet your prayers and suggestions as we seek to make that faithful future ours.

In your service and in Christ's,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gene".

Gene McAfee

Pastor

22 November

Feast of St. Cecilia, virgin and martyr, and patron saint of musicians

Prayer Group Ministry Report 2016

***"I call upon you, O LORD; come quickly to me;
give ear to my voice when I call to you.***

***² Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and
the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice" Psalm 141***

Prayer Group meets on a quarterly basis to pray for those who were brought up during worship on Sunday mornings, our friends and neighbors, ourselves, our community, our country and our world.

We assist the Prayer square ministry which is an interfaith outreach organization that combines the gift of prayer with the gift of a hand-tied quilt. A prayer square is appropriate for someone who is experiencing physical, emotional, spiritual, or some other life crisis, and who feels they could benefit from being "covered in prayer", with the quilt being that tangible sign of God's ever present Grace. To date we have dedicated and prayed over approximately 30 prayer squares. If you have someone who you think may benefit from a prayer square you need to ask this person if they would like a prayer square with the explanation above and then please fill out a request form and get the information to Sue Jaquet. It can take up to 2-3 weeks for a prayer square to be made and dedicated at Faith UCC.

The prayer group also assists with the Monthly Brookdale Services on the third Tuesday of the month. This service is led by Rev. Gene, Don Post, Donna Nedrow and many of the members of Faith Church. If you would like to be a part of the Brookdale services please join us the Third Tuesday at 11:30am

The Prayer Group now has a card ministry in which we have cards available during coffee hour for those in need for prayers of get well wishes, thinking of you and sympathy. Thank you to **Sharon Jakse** for supplying Faith with these cards.

We also go out to visit our members who are in need of companionship and a friendly visit with the help of **Autumn Abramczyk** and **Rose McIntyre**. Many of our members have visited our members in the hospital, at home or in Physical Rehabilitation facilities. We provided canvas bags of food during the Thanksgiving Holiday with the assistance of food donated by friends of **Anne Marie Dorey**.

Thank you to our prayer group members: **Sharon Jakse, Sue Jaquet, Roberta McGrath, Marilyn Glover, Jean Sinzinger, Sally Templar, Donna Nedrow and Gene McAfee.**

President's Report – 2016

We've experienced a number of challenges and changes this year, and I believe we are ending on a positive note!

For the first time in many years, we did not have a paid director of Faith Formation. Those responsibilities were successfully taken on by the Faith Formation Ministry chaired by Nancy Jacquet.

MLC appointed a Re-Visioning Working Group consisting of Pastor Gene, Phil Juarez, Cheryl Goggans and Jim Christensen. This group is the result of last year's annual meeting when we agreed that a new vision and strategic plan are needed for Faith. The Appreciative Inquiry process model is being used because it aims to build – or rebuild – organizations around what works, rather than trying to fix what doesn't. The "Discovery" phase of the process was completed, but the "Dream" and "Design" phases proved to be more challenging with our limited resources. It was decided to concentrate for the time being on community involvement as something that works and continue with the formal process in 2017. Towards that goal, the following activities have occurred or are in process:

- Continuation of Loaves and Fishes meals for the inner-city needy.
- Use of social hall by Ohio Freedom For All Americans for training volunteers.
- Participation in the Richmond Hts. Schools' Community Unity Fair in August.
- Donations of school supply collection for Richmond Hts. Elementary School, as well as personal hygiene products for needy students, and volunteers for various lunch clubs for 5th graders.
- Hosting a culinary club for high school students in our kitchen, which so far appears to be very successful.
- Donations to US Together - a Non Profit Refugee Resettlement Agency.

Coordinator of Music Life Jordan Matthews organized our first ever musical concert featuring the choir, small groups, solos, and music students to raise money for the music program. Our organ scholar, Yu-Hsuan Lu Huang, left to return to her native Taiwan. In August, Jordan resigned to take advantage of an opportunity to teach English in South Korea. Keith Stiver was hired to fill Jordan and Yu-Hsuan's positions as Coordinator of Music Life and Organ Scholar. We are grateful for the gifts and contributions of all of these talented musicians!

Pastor Gene took a 3 month sabbatical, returning Nov. 22nd. The purpose was two-fold: conduct interviews to collect information for a future biography of the late Peter Gomes, as well as R & R. He did a great job making sure that all committees and staff were well prepared for his absence. The Sabbatical committee, consisting of Deanne Carroll, Ed Jacquet, and me, met with Pastor Gene three times as planned. We are thankful to Rick Lorentz, Rev. Dr. Paul Biery, and Rev. Mendle Adams for filling the pulpit during this time.

The capital campaign slowed down this year as research was done on the condition of the chimney. After several weather delays, it was determined that the chimney is not in imminent danger of collapse. Attention then shifted to the parking lot and the expansion of the island and resealing and restriping of the remainder of the asphalt. This work will be scheduled as early in the spring as possible.

It has been my honor to serve as this congregation's president for the past three years. Thanks to Pastor Gene, our staff, ministry chairs, and all our volunteers for your dedication and support.

Gail Robertson Yusko

The Worship, Arts and Spiritual Formation Ministry

Annual Report 2016

The mandate that was established in 2002 for The Worship Ministry reminds us what this ministry strives to accomplish each year. The mandate states: *"The Worship, Arts and Spiritual Formation Ministries mandate shall be to enhance and support the worship experience and biblical and theological education of the congregation of Faith UCC, by creating an environment that promotes spiritual formation for all generations through the celebration of praise, the liturgical arts, music and education."*

Thank you to the members of this ministry who meet on a quarterly basis to plan worship and work to fulfill this mandate for all at Faith UCC each year. Our members of Worship Ministry are: **Kay Gardiner, Marilyn Glover, Sue Jacquet, Cynthia Mahoney, Roberta McGrath, Donna Nedrow, Sally Templar, and Rev. Gene McAfee.** We welcome to our ministry in January, **Rose McIntyre.** As always if you are interested in being a member of the Worship Ministry we would love for you to join us next year.

The report begins with the liturgical calendar. The church year begins with Advent 2015. The Advent banners were brought in at the beginning of each Sunday of Advent by a youth of Faith UCC again as we will do this Advent season. Worship Ministry offered a Blue Christmas service for those people who struggle during the Holiday. We had a number of people from Faith and some members of the community join us for this special Service on December 6 in the social hall with refreshments that followed.

We celebrated our Christmas Eve Family Service at 5:00 pm, Pot Luck Dinner at 6:00 pm and then celebrated our Christmas Eve Service of Rail Communion and Candle lighting at 8:00 pm. I was away during Christmas this year and thank the Worship Ministry for stepping up during this time getting the sanctuary ready for service and helping with the potluck. This year 2016 Christmas Eve service will be one service at 7:30pm with the Potluck beforehand at 6:00pm.

Other special services we had during the liturgical year: Ash Wednesday Service which began the season in Lent and Holy week services which began with Palm Sunday. We continue to pass out Eco friendly Palms for Palm Sunday each year. Eco-palms are sustainably harvested and fair trade. We also celebrated services this past year with a Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service with communion at 7:30 pm, Good Friday Stations of the at noon and Easter Sunday Morning Service after our potluck breakfast. We celebrated Pentecost, World Communion Sunday, All Saints Sunday where we remembered those who have died the past year and finally ending the church year with the Reign of Christ. Many of you may notice the change in the Altar Paraments which symbolize the change of seasons in the liturgical year.

We had a special fundraiser concert put together by our Coordinator of Music, **Jordan Matthews** on May 1. This fundraiser was set to help with funding the music budget for Faith. Thank you to the soloists, hand bells and choir who worked so hard to make this a very beautiful concert.

We continue to strive to promote spiritual formation and education by working alongside FFM and with our liturgists. We continue to provide liturgist training to help the Sunday morning duties go smoothly. This year our liturgist education was offered throughout the year. **Liturgist Workshops 2016 -- Making a Good Thing Better!** They were held January 12th, April 13th, June 11th, August 13th and October 27th.

We have worked alongside FFM throughout the church year and continue to do so in this transition time rethinking how to include youth in worship.

We said goodbye to our organ scholar; Yu-Hsian Lu and Coordinator of Music Life Mr. Jordan Mathews. Once again with the help from Frank Yusko, Donna Nedrow and Gene McAfee we hired **Keith Stiver** in the combined position as Organ Scholar/Coordinator of Music Life. Welcome Keith to Faith UCC, whose first day here at Faith was Gene's first day away on his sabbatical.

Speaking of Rev. Gene's sabbatical: thank you to all the volunteers who worked so hard to help make worship fulfilling each Sunday. Thank you to our interim pastors **Paul Biery** and **Mendle Adams** and to **Rick Lorentz** who brought us thought provoking services each Sunday in Gene's absence. A special thank you to **Rev. Gene McAfee** for your leadership, teaching, inspiration and dedication to Faith UCC. We hope you enjoyed your sabbatical this year.

God's Blessing and Shalom,
Donna Nedrow (Chair of Worship)