

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



Year 2018

The Annual Report

Annual Congregational Meeting  
December 9, 2018

## Vital Statistics

Membership as of December 17, 2017 142

### *Changes in membership: Additions*

#### New members:

Freda Sonnie

Total additions 1

### *Changes in membership: Losses*

#### Death:

Peter Macewan

Bill Polkon

Roy Restel

Freda Sonnie

Joan Workman

Total losses 5

Total Membership as of December 9, 2018 138

#### Baptism:

Jacqueline Olivia Mork Kennedy (April 22, 2018)

2018

## FINAL REPORT- Building and Grounds Committee

Very early in January we called upon **J. Donia Plumbing** to clear several problem sink drains in the restrooms and custodial closets. Futile snaking efforts were ultimately replaced by the use of what is fittingly referred to as an “air cannon”. Labor and parts to replace traps amounted to a 10% discounted charge of \$272.65.

In mid-January an all-volunteer work Saturday was held to spruce up the social hall appearance. Walls and wall radiator covers were scrubbed to remove several signs of wear, tear and spillage. Efforts extended to the hallways and rest rooms. Ground level classroom windows were washed as the weather cooperated on this particular day. A moderate, but enthusiastic turnout accomplished a great deal.

**Tyco Security (ADT)** annual inspection of fire protection system was performed in early April. Testing of the detection system ceiling units was performed silently via the temporary disconnection of the ear-piercing alarm sound at the control box. This method avoided the past disruption of any preschool activity.

**Fulton Power House LLC** performed restorative repairs to the Sears Craftsman tractor/mower as well as routine maintenance (blade sharpening, deck leveling; new spark plug; air / fuel/oil filters; etc.). Special repairs were needed to replace the fatigue-failure of the front axle/bushings assembly. This extensive effort preceding the spring growing season amounted to a total cost \$426.17, tax exempt. Service response and performance by owner Dave Fulton has been exemplary. Dave is the husband of one of our Faith Preschool teachers.

**Ken's Parkhill Roofing** was called in April to identify and subsequently resolve our flat roof water leak problems coming through the narthex ceiling light and tiles at the main front door. Workmen reported that they had discovered that some synthetic roofing panel seams had lifted thereby letting the water escape through the cracks. A Parkhill workman labored for two hours to reseal and re-tape the joint connections. Parkhill expressed confidence in eliminating the source. This corrective work was honored by the contractor within the existing 5-year warranty period.

On June 15, **McPhillips Plumbing** performed the successful mandatory testing of the church's city water connection back-flow valve which assures the direction of flow is always into the building. The cost of this annual inspection has been increased \$5.00 over last year to \$150.00.

**McNulty Roofing Inc.** of Highland Hts. again provided gutter cleaning service on a twice-yearly basis (spring (2/21) and fall at an increased charge of \$300 each service call (up from \$200 ea.).

Call went out in June **to Parkhill Roofing** to inspect and determine source of roof leak developed over third set of windows west side of social hall. Visual inspection by extension-ladder revealed probable source via cracked tile. Parkhill declined to quote on repair efforts and transferred us over to repair specialists **Homestead Roofing** of S. Euclid. Homestead technicians performed a complete social hall and office roof inspection which resulted in a contract proposal totaling \$5530.00. In light of the fact that their on-the-spot temporary fix has proven successful, it was decided to table any further action at this writing.

On the morning of July 7 an overnight criminal break-in was discovered by R. Goss to have occurred by forcible entry into the lower level via the ladies restroom window. The preschool director's office was entered by breaking a door glass panel and was pilfered to some extent. The perpetrator(s) then went upstairs and "broke" into the pastor's study. Subsequently, a police report was filed during visitation by police while detectives gathered evidence. It's assumed the thief (or thieves) were looking for cash (none available per standard office practice) as no electronic equipment was found to be missing. The incident is open-ended at this writing. The damages have been repaired through **Reid Carpentry Inc.** (\$275.00) and B&G efforts.

On July 20, the **Richmond Hts. Fire Department** visited the church with six (6) fire fighters to familiarize fire and safety personnel with the facility. R. Goss escorted the entourage throughout the half-hour tour of the floor plan and utilities control equipment.

Also, in July a **BK Electric Co.** proposal to restore the long-failed south exit driveway globe light was rejected due to the cost involved (going under the asphalt with buried wiring). Instead a test solar activated lantern style light fixture was purchased (~\$107.00) and installed on the high surface following removal of the existing globe fixture. The jury is still out on this as the emitted lumens are not satisfactory. Alternatives (e.g. cluster lighting) are under consideration. See further in this report.

**Premier Ceiling Inc.** was employed in mid-August to replace sagging ceiling tiles in the downstairs teacher's lounge (old library) in the northwest corner; the tiles/brackets supports of which were disrupted by June 2014 drain line installation of upstairs small kitchen hand sink. I had hoped that lateral compression would suffice; but apparently, not. The professional renovation efforts cost of \$375.00 were charged to special repairs.

**Fleming Bros. Snowplowing** of Richmond Hts. has again been awarded the 2018-2019 snowplowing contract at the same annual cost of \$2500. The contract includes hand shoveling of main doors and lower level preschool entrance. Per standard procedure plowing begins 1<sup>st</sup> 2" snowfall to the last. Island footprint again marked by traffic cones to delineate curb border.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of September, two service techs From **BK Electric Inc.** of Mentor labored for six (6) hours to restore to full operation the two (of four) yard light fixtures illuminating the west (front) of the social hall building which have been dark since 2016. The electrical short between the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> mounts required the hand trenching of 25' of ground and the subsequent installation of new buried wire-bearing conduit. The fractured mount (#4) closest to the entrance drive was replaced in kind with a new unit. The total cost detailed in the BK proposal of 5/21/18 was \$985.00. The charge was debited to the Special repairs account.

Champion Fire Equipment Co. of Cleveland again inspected, tagged and checked tamper tags for the fourteen (14) fire extinguishers mounted throughout the facility for the current year 2018-2019 as required by code. The large K-Class 6-liter chrome unit in the kitchen was replaced due to its six-year expiration date. Total cost of this service was \$ 255.55, tax exempt.

In early October **Tree Service Now** was employed to remove a massive broken limb split from the large oak tree outside the lower level entrance, left suspended high in the tree-- held up by the limbs below. The accepted bid included compensation for the damages to the yard light during stump grinding in 2016. The total cost was \$700.00, tax exempt, charged to the special repairs account.

An experiment (mentioned in page 2) is underway to substitute the defunct globe light on the south side of the exit driveway with three (3) LED solar powered lantern lights cluster-mounted on the high point of the brick gateway. Upon recognition that replacement buried wire installation was too cost prohibitive, this approach suggested itself, if the lumens emitted were sufficient to mark the spot. Time testing through the “dark” days of winter should tell us what we need to know. Don Wilson is spearheading this operation. He has devoted considerable time, effort and materials to present an attractive yard feature.

Annual church boiler licensing renewal was conducted by **FM Global** and awarded without a major incident on October 1. Two (2) minor points were addressed and corrected. Faith Church is routinely reimbursed by **Mennonite Insurance Co.**, our insurer, for the \$53.25 cost, each boiler, for the State of Ohio certificates.

**Deluxe Heating & Cooling Inc.** Mayfield Hts. conducted their normal annual boiler inspection and service efforts in October. Work included cleaning pilots and burners of 1<sup>st</sup> stage boiler #1. Checked 2<sup>nd</sup> stage boiler #2 safety switches. Proved out relief valves both boilers. Zone valve actuators verified. Thermostat, pump operations and limit controls of the entire heating system were cycled and confirmed along with that of the air handler unit, incl. bearings greased, drive belt tightened. Faith Routine Maintenance account was debited \$259.00, tax exempt.

As part of our stated intention to maintain some semblance of control over our parking lot deterioration via professional upkeep, we have received from our de facto asphalt contractor **Surface Engineering** a price quote (\$3359.00) for repair of three (3) areas detailed (by myself and Surface Representative Ron Simmons) to be most in need of correction. Unfortunately, time constraints and circumstances prevailed to cause postponement of this work into next year.

The B&G committee acknowledges all contributions of Faith members and friends during the year, who expended their time, efforts, and talents to improving our physical facility. Special recognition goes out to Scott Dorey who volunteered his time and labor to painting the lower level women’s restroom panel partitions. And, for installing new ceiling lighting fixtures in two downstairs classrooms. Thanks also to the Huston family and gardening club friends for their work at the butterfly way station and the church sign mound.

Respectfully submitted this Saturday, November 20 2018.

**Dave Vesey, Facilities Director**

Building & Grounds committee: Gayle Yusko MLC Chair; Dave Holtz, Don Wilson

From the Coordinator of Musical Life

This has been a busy year in the musical life of Faith Church. The Chancel Choir sang often and well. In addition to most Sundays during Ordinary Time, they sang every Sunday of Advent and Lent, Christmas Eve and Easter, and Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. They took on some challenges, and rose to the occasion each time. I anticipate this pattern continuing.

In addition to the Choir and small groups and soloists from within, we have enjoyed the talents of various soloists and guest musicians.

The Bell Choir has experienced great improvement over the past year, and has been playing more frequently. It is my intent to continue that trend, playing more often, in different configurations, and in different types of pieces. It is my hope that the Bell Choir and Chancel Choir will perform a joint piece sometime this year.

Looking forward, I have begun investigating the possibility of a choir festival for next Advent, inviting three choirs to join ours in presenting music of the season, both individually and in a mass choir. I am looking into bringing more styles of music into our worship services for all groups, including, and perhaps most especially the congregation.

Our instruments continue to serve us well. There are some concerns, though. The organ continues to present new mechanical issues, such as pipes not speaking, some not wanting to stop speaking, and the aging of the console. All of this is normal in an instrument of this age, and they will be addressed as need be. At some point, however, there will need to be an overhaul of the instrument. Working with the Muller Organ Company, we will hold that off as long as possible.

Our handbells are in need of some maintenance, as well. Every so often it is advisable to have the bells gone over by a certified technician, to keep them operating in optimal form. I hope to have our four-octave set refurbished, perhaps in 2020. There are a couple that are in more immediate need, and I am looking into having those serviced as soon as possible.

Sadly, we lost Joan Workman this year. It was a great privilege to be a part of her memorial service. Despite the deep feelings of loss, the choir sang for the service to honor our friend and colleague.

As with any group, members come and members go. We have been, and will always be happy to welcome new members to the Chancel Choir and the Bell Choir.

It continues to be my joy to serve at Faith Church, and I look forward to many more years of joining you in worshipping our God.

Respectfully submitted,  
D. Keith Stiver, MM

**Faith United Church of Christ**  
**Annual Pastor's Report**  
**2018**

“Just as the gospel is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves, from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God.” -- Colossians 1.6

Because of the timing of submission of information for the annual report to the congregation, it looks like Faith has declined by five members this year: Scottie MacEwan, Bill Poklon, Roy Restel, Freda Sonnie, and Joan Workman. In fact, our membership is holding steady, because, on the first Sunday in December -- a few days after information for this report must be submitted -- we will be receiving five new (or returning) members formally into membership: Amy Brunkus, Joanne Eloff, Ellen Holly, the Rev. Barbara Pryor, and Carolyn Trodden. Their official presence among us will be included in next year's report.

We're holding our own. That's how I would summarize Faith for his past year, from a pastoral perspective. We continue to meet the challenges facing all mainline denominations -- challenges which, increasingly, are facing not-so-mainline denominations, as well -- with the sensible grace and courage that has been a hallmark of Faith for as long as I've been here.

We celebrated fifteen years together this past October. That was a milestone and it was definitely worth celebrating. Pastorates of our length are less common than they used to be, for a variety of reasons. Pastors tend to serve their congregations, on average, about six years now, which is what I intended to serve Faith when I arrived in 2003.

But things change, and for me, one of the things that had to change was my perception of time. Church time is different from business or academic time because most of the folks who do the work of a church like Faith -- which relies heavily on its volunteers -- get together weekly, not daily, and that naturally s-l-o-w-s things down.

And that's okay. It just means that we have to adjust our thinking about how quickly we can get things done. I believe that there is work for us to do together in ministry and you seem to agree, so we're still at it.

I do hope you'll let me know when that fact seems to change. I don't want to out-stay my welcome or, more accurately, my usefulness to Faith. I am mindful that burnout is a serious occupational hazard for pastors, and as I approach my sixtieth year, I am conscious of no longer being young. I recall coming across, a few years ago, a copy of Paul Rohrbaugh's letter of resignation

from Faith, in which he cited his age and energy level as two reasons for him to resign. I mention this to all of you to let you know that while I'm not planning to leave Faith anytime soon, I am sufficiently self-aware to keep looking for signs that my ministry with you is less effective than you deserve. If I'm overlooking some of those signs, please bring them to my attention for the sake of our shared ministry.

Recently, in a conversation with a new member, I raised the happy fact of the presence of babies in worship from time to time -- four infants on one recent Sunday. Faith stands ready to support any young parents who wish to have care for their child or children during worship; we simply need the commitment of enough parents on a regular basis to make this happen. (The same is true for church school.) Our current lack of both nursery and church school need not be seen as permanent; things have changed to bring us to this juncture, and things will continue to change to take us to another place. In the meantime, we simply need to remain open and flexible and willing to consider all options that could make our future bright.

Speaking of change. . . . Faith is now part of the Living Water Association (whose name comes from John 4:10), the new, merged association of the former Western Reserve Association and Eastern Ohio Association. Economics forced us to make this change, but like all changes, it opens up possibilities. We are now part of four, rather than five, associations in the Ohio Conference of the United Church of Christ, and the Ohio Conference itself has begun conversations about its own need for restructuring. I have raised this topic with our Ministry Leadership Council and will continue to discuss it with them -- and, eventually, with the entire congregation -- as the restructuring process proceeds. I will do my best to keep you informed of that process.

Our aging physical plant continues to demand our attention and monetary resources, and a recent innovation on MLC has given the vice-president of the congregation a liaison role with the Building and Grounds Committee and our Facilities Director to help us stay on top of our property's demands. Thanks to President Barb Holtz for initiating that innovation, and to Gail Yusko, who currently serves as our congregation's vice-president.

Finally, let me speak to the matter of safety and security. We're all aware of the tragic killings at houses of worship in our country over the past few years. People at worship are what safety officials call "soft" targets for those who seek to harm others, especially with military-grade weapons. While we remain embroiled as a nation in questions of gun violence and constitutional rights, there are things we can do as a congregation to make ourselves less vulnerable to harm. At the annual meeting of our association earlier this month, I attended a

workshop entitled "Church Safety 101," provided by the chief of police in Bay Village who also attends Avon Lake UCC. Some of Chief Mark Spaetzle's recommendations we will be incorporating into our own safety and security training workshop planned for next spring. We will also be coordinating our efforts with our Preschool, which has already benefited from safety training with the Richmond Heights Police and Fire Departments. I have also been in contact with John Bouhall, our insurance agent, to secure the resources available to us from the UCC Pension Boards and other providers. A team will be assembled of the folks most able to help keep us safe and secure, especially on Sundays, to begin developing both a plan and training for our ushers, greeters, and liturgists. You will hear more about this in coming months, and your suggestions would be welcomed by Barb Holtz or me.

Faith remains a spiritually healthy and vibrant congregation -- bearing the fruit of the gospel, as Paul said of the Colossian congregation -- which I am privileged and proud to serve. Let's keep it up. Thank you all for your faithful ministry that takes so many forms. God bless you, each and every one.

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

Gene McAfee

Pastor and Teacher

17 November 2018

Feast of Hilda of Whitby (c. 614-680), teacher, abbess, and saint

## Prayer Team Ministry Annual Report 2018

### *A Prayer For The World*

*Let the rain come and wash away the ancient grudges, the bitter hatreds held and nurtured over generations. Let the rain wash away the memory of the hurt, the neglect. Then let the sun come out and fill the sky with rainbows. Let the warmth of the sun heal us wherever we are broken. Let it burn away the fog so that we can see each other clearly. So that we can see beyond labels, beyond accents, gender or skin color. Let the warmth and brightness of the sun melt our selfishness. So that we can share the joys and feel the sorrows of our neighbors. And let the light of the sun be so strong that we will see all people as our neighbors. Let the earth, nourished by rain, bring forth flowers to surround us with beauty. And let the mountains teach our hearts to reach upward to heaven. Amen. —Rabbi Harold S. Kushner*

With so much going on in the world today I go back to the prayer above to remind all of us to pray for the world. Faith UCC's Prayer Group continues to meet 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. To date we have dedicated and prayed over approximately 30 prayer squares, a few that were presented at our members funeral services. 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 Jacquet. so it can be dedicated at Faith UCC.

We visit our members in need of companionship and a friendly visit in the hospital, at home or in Physical Rehabilitation facilities along with assisting with the Monthly Brookdale Services on the third Tuesday of the month. This service is led by Rev. Gene, 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

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

Submitted by: Donna Nedrow

Members of Faith United Church of Christ,

It's hard to believe my term as your president is coming to a close. As always, thank you for putting your trust in me to lead our Ministry Leadership team. We could not do what we do without your prayers and support.

This focus verse and quote guided our collective spirit, mind, and heart:

*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.*

~ 1 Peter 4:10

*The best way to lose yourself is to find yourself in the service of others.*

~ Gandhi

During our retreat in January, we revisited Faith's purpose and goals as well as 2017 accomplishments and undone tasks. More confident in our identity, we moved our focus from Invitation and Visibility to Invitation and Witness. Our discussion asked such questions as:

- Why do people join a church and then disappear?
- Why is it easy for us to witness as an environmentalist, educator, healer, etc. but often difficult to witness as a person of God?
- How can we connect with our millennial members?

We had many answers but had just as many questions. I hope this discussion continues as Faith UCC works to remain relevant to our community, members, and beyond.

In planning specific tasks for 2018, we focused on **Invitation** and **Witness**:

Invitation (How our building's appearance and member hospitality welcome all)

- Create landscape plan for church grounds and Green Team for upkeep
- Hospitality/Safety training for Sunday morning service volunteers
- Building & Grounds work plan
- Reach out to young families regarding nursery care on Sunday morning

Witness (How we walk our faith walk, sharing God's love with all people)

- Community services/events (e.g., pet blessing, Richmond Heights schools kickoff event, culinary club)
- Feature article in Euclid Creek Watershed newsletter about our parking lot island project
- Summer study and book group posted on Facebook
- Continued relationship with Brookdale neighbors and Loaves & Fishes.

Did we complete all our tasks on our list? Yes and no and sort of. But that's the beauty of God's call. It's never complete because invitation to and witness of God's love and grace is endless! As we look toward 2019, I pray that our congregation continues to live with hope and abandon, not fearing the future but realizing that what lies ahead is determined by how we live today. Thank you again for allowing me the honor of serving you.

Peace,  
Barb Holtz

## The Worship, Arts and Spiritual Formation Ministry Annual Report 2018

The mandate that was established in 2002 for The Worship Ministry which helps remind us what this ministry strives to accomplish each year 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."*

This report as always begins with the liturgical calendar. The church year begins with Advent 2017. The Advent candles were lit each Sunday and Advent Banners were up front each Sunday. We celebrated our Christmas Eve with a 4:30 pm Communion and Candlelight Service followed by Potluck Dinner at 5:15 pm and a Candle Light Service at 7:00 pm. Worship Ministry decided that for Christmas Eve 2018 we would go back to Potluck at 6:00pm and one Christmas Eve Service of Rail Communion and Candle lighting at 7:30 pm.

Other special services we had during the liturgical year were: Ash Wednesday Service which began the season in Lent along with Holy week services which began with Palm Sunday. Our Lenten Study continued the Wednesdays during Lent with a meal and study on *Living Joyfully* with the **Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World.**

We also recognized services with Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service with communion at 7:30 pm in the social hall, Good Friday Stations of the Cross at noon and Easter Sunday Morning Service after our potluck breakfast. We celebrated Pentecost, World Communion Sunday Reformation Sunday, (where members of the Reformation tour to Europe spoke), Bread for the World Sunday, All Saints Sunday where we remembered Scottie MacEwan, Bill Polkon, Roy Restal and Freda Sonnie who died the past year, ending the year with the Reign of Christ on Nov. 25. Many of you may notice the change in the Altar Paraments which symbolize the change of seasons in the liturgical year.

We continue to promote spiritual formation and education by working alongside Rev. Gene, our liturgists, members of the church and the community. I hope many of you have signed up for the Advent Study on the book of Revelation.

With members of Faith's Prayer Group Ministry we continue to provide a monthly Worship Service at Brookdale Senior Living across the street on the third Tuesday of the month at 11:30 am.

As I head off to Arizona for the winter, I thank the members of this ministry for all your help and hard work: **Marilyn Glover, Sue Jacquet, Rose McIntyre, Keith Stiver, Sally Templar, Sharon Jakse and Rev. Gene McAfee. We welcome Barb Holtz this coming church year.** If you are interested in being a member of the Worship Ministry, we would love for you to join us.

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