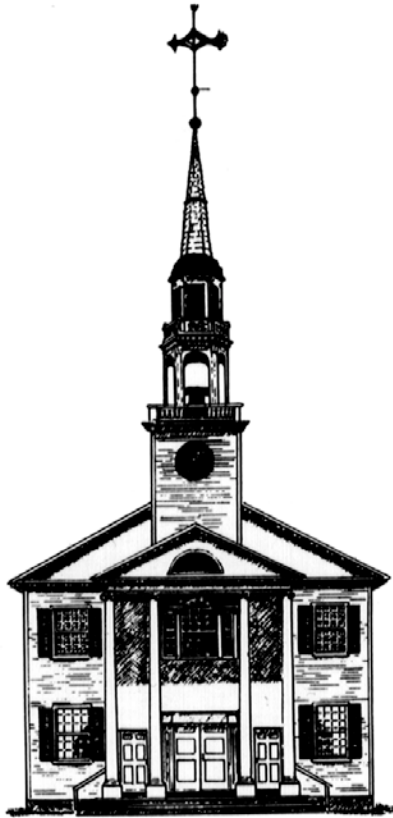


ANNUAL REPORT

2015



**NORWICH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
NORWICH, VERMONT**

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A: Warning: 2015 Annual Meeting of the Norwich Congregational Church, UCC

Notice is hereby given of the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Norwich Congregational Church, UCC to be held after worship on Sunday, February 7, 2016 to transact the following business:

- to hold opening prayer;
- to elect a Moderator and an Assistant Moderator;
- to approve the minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting;*
- to discuss and adopt a budget for 2016;
- to hear and act upon the reports of officers and committees
- to vote on the following resolution:

Resolved:

To authorize the members of the Norwich Congregational Church, UCC to act in a manner consistent with the Ministries Model of governance as developed by the Church Council. The Ministries Model replaces the current Boards and Committees with Deacon Leaders and 4 Ministries: Spiritual Formation and Nurture, Outreach, Worship, and Stewardship.

In accordance with Article XII of the by-laws, adopted February 10, 2013, the following by-laws will be suspended for the period between February 7, 2016, and the Annual Meeting in 2017:

- *Article VI. Relationship Among Church Bodies and with the Congregation;*
- *Article VII. Church Council, Paragraphs 1 and 2;*
- *Article VIII. Boards; and*
- *Article IX. Committees, Paragraphs 1-7.*

In addition, for the period of the suspension, when the current, unsuspended by-laws refer to "Church Council," they will be interpreted to refer to the "Deacon Leaders" under the Ministries Model.

Also, when the current, unsuspended by-laws refer to "Trustees" or "Board of Trustees," they will be interpreted to refer to the "Stewardship Ministry" under the Ministries Model.

During the period of the suspension, it is intended that the by-laws be interpreted in a way both to support the trial implementation of the Ministries Model and to ensure the mission and legal operation of the Church.

- to elect officers and Ministry leaders for 2016
- to conduct whatever other business may properly be brought before the meeting

The meeting will be preceded by a potluck lunch; please bring food to share. In case of inclement weather, the Annual Meeting will be held at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, February 9, 2016.

**Minutes will be printed in the Annual Report*

B: Draft Minutes of the 2014 Annual Meeting held on Sunday, February 8, 2015

John Severinghaus called the meeting to order at 11:48 AM. In attendance were 40 people, as counted by the Clerk.

Mary Brownlow gave the opening prayer.

Judy Pond moved to elect John Severinghaus as Moderator and Carolyn Mertz as Assistant Moderator; Chuck Egner seconded. John and Carolyn were elected by a unanimous vote.

Doug James moved to approve the Minutes of the 2013 Annual Meeting; Chuck Egner seconded. Linda Himadi noted the misspelling of Nichole on page 4 of the Annual Report. The minutes as corrected were approved by a unanimous vote.

Gary Brooks made a motion to accept the report and adopt the 2015 budget as presented by the Board of Trustees; Heidi Webster seconded.

Discussion of report:

- Priscilla Vincent asked for a copy of the Long Range Planning Committee Report. The report was distributed to those that requested it.
- Doug James reported that Nichole Hastings will be leaving at the end of March. Amy Frost will be expanding her role as Office Manager and assume the bookkeeping responsibilities.

- Carolyn Mertz questioned whether there were sufficient controls in place for a single position.
- Mark Beliveau said that he was comfortable with the current controls. Someone else would be signing checks and there would continue to be oversight by the Trustees.

Discussion of budget:

- Carolyn Mertz expressed concern that the DRP Project income masked the current year deficit of nearly \$4,000 and the need to boost pledging amount.
- Mark Beliveau responded by saying the deficit could have been eliminated by transferring the funds that were budgeted from the parsonage sales interest income. The Church has a strong cash balance and it was decided not to transfer the funds.
- Deb Berryman asked about the \$17,000 budgeted for OCWM. Mary Brownlow explained that OCWM was an acronym for Our Church's Wider Mission and this amount went to the UCC Conference. Conference guidelines suggest contributing 10% of the overall Church budget. Our contribution is below the guidelines.
- Deb Berryman asked if future reports could be provided electronically.
- Mary reported that the number of households receiving the Annual Report has dropped below 200 and our ability to use bulk mailing. There is a broader distribution of the Lifeline and the office is currently evaluating electronic distribution. There was a note in the last Lifeline asking people to send an email to the Church office if they would like to discontinue their mailed copy.
- Judy Pond said that philosophically she preferred electronic distribution however personally, she enjoys the paper copy.
- Peter Mertz suggested we survey people and ask for their preference.
- Gretchen Maynard asked how many people use pledge envelopes. Mary Brownlow explained there was a minimum order amount required for pledge envelopes and less opportunity for cost savings.
- Deb Berryman asked for explanation of the 7000 DRP Expenses account. Mark Beliveau explained that this was a new account in 2014 for the Dominican Republic Project expenses. This amount is offset by the DRP Income account.
- Carolyn Mertz requested that future budgets be presented alongside prior year actual amounts.
- Peter Mertz asked how the money from the Sabbatical Fund will move. Mark Beliveau explained that in addition to the \$10,500 in the Sabbatical Fund, there is \$6,000 available from the Lilly Grant for a Sabbatical Interim Minister. The Lilly Grant funds will be exhausted first and then the Sabbatical Fund money will be used to cover interim minister expenses. There is also an additional \$9,000 from the Lilly Grant available for congregational renewal programs and activities.
- Gretchen Maynard asked about the budgeted income from the Parsonage Sales Interest of \$21,570. Gary Brooks explained that the Parsonage Sales Interest Income has been used to balance the budget. Lower pledges this year have increased the amount needed to balance the budget. In 2014, we budgeted \$12,000 but didn't have to utilize it.
- Barbara Duncan reported that there are 15 people who generally pledge but didn't this year and urged everyone to consider the importance of pledge amounts.
- Carolyn Mertz asked for clarification of the Lilly Grant amounts. Mark Beliveau explained that the Church gets \$15,000 of the \$39,900 received from the Lilly Grant. \$9,000 of the Church's portion will be used for programming and \$6,000 for supplemental pastoral expenses. The remaining \$29,900 is designated for Mary.

- Chipper Ashley responded to general concerns about whether the Church is living within its means by relying on the parsonage interest income to balance the budget. He noted the current Trust Fund balance of \$747,018 as compared to the 2008 balance of \$264,455.
- Peter Mertz mentioned that we will have 4.5% of the income from the funds received on the parsonage sale after the loan balloons in 2017.
- Doug James noted the work of the Long Range Planning Committee and suggested we take advantage of the resources and opportunities to renew ourselves this year.
- Mary Brownlow urged everyone to read the non-exhaustive laundry list of possible initiatives outlined in the Long Range Planning Committee Report.

The Board of Trustees report and budget for 2015 were accepted by a unanimous vote.

Chipper Ashley moved to elect new and confirm existing officers, boards and committees as recommended by the Nominating Committee; Chuck Egner seconded.

Discussion of motion to elect:

- Hillary White asked that the misspelling of her name be corrected.
- Priscilla Vincent noted that most of the positions being filled were for one year and that refilling positions next year will be challenging. It is the hope of the Nominating Committee that we will restructure.
- Linda Himadi noted the misspelling of Evelyn Ellis under the Music Committee.

The motion to elect and confirm the slate of candidates as discussed and corrected was passed by a unanimous vote. Carolyn Mertz moved to accept reports C – K and M – Q of the pastor, officers, boards and committees as submitted; Barbara Duncan seconded.

Discussion of Reports:

Pastor and Church Council Reports:

- Mary Brownlow said that a Church restructure was in order and that positions and responsibilities needed to change in accordance with how things currently get done. For example, the Clerk position historically kept a book with the written records of the Church. Records are now kept on a computer and maintained by the Church office.
- Chuck Egner reported that the Church Council had discussed and considered changes to the structure but decided that implementation during a sabbatical year would not be prudent.
- Rita Severinghaus asked if we are working on a Church restructure.
- Hillary White said that the Church Council will be having an ongoing conversation of restructure and would welcome anyone to the discussion. Hillary also shared her plans to create a part 2 of the “Who we are” pamphlet. She would like to create a pamphlet focused on who we are to community outside of our Church with the idea of bringing in new members.
- Gary Brooks urged the Council to consider the report of the Long Range Planning Committee.

Deacons:

- On behalf of herself and Dick Broussard, Hillary White thanked every member of the Church for the opportunity to serve as deacons.

Christian Education:

- Priscilla Vincent thanked Kathy and Danielle for their work with the children and said that it was one of the most effective ways to attract new members.

Mission:

- Heidi Webster noted a correction to the report. At the top of page 17, the word “being” should be removed.

Woodworth:

- Mark Beliveau noted that the difference between the funds available on the report and the amount on the balance sheet were due to timing.

Music:

- Dick McGaw said what a pleasure it was to work with Kathy and Tacy and expressed gratitude to both of them for a superlative job.

Sabbatical Planning Committee:

- Willemein Miller spoke on behalf of Bob Miller encouraging everyone to share their ideas and to participate in the activities being planned.
- Tacy Colaiacomo noted the misspelling of her last name.

Investment Committee

- Carolyn Mertz noted that the 3.4% increase in the fund balance did not reflect the investment return.
- Carolyn Mertz reported that the minimal income from the Clevie White Fund in 2014 was due to an error reported in the previous year. The Clevie White Memorial Fund was established to support music and mission in the church. In spirit of continuing the legacy of their son, Tilda and Stu White made a gracious donation of \$600 to support music and mission in 2014.

The reports were accepted as discussed and corrected by a unanimous vote.

Other Business:

- Carolyn Mertz gave a special commendation to the work of the Hospitality Committee.
- Kathy Sherlock-Green said how much she enjoyed the Tapas and Treasures event and expressed her gratitude for everyone who was involved.
- Heidi Webster asked everyone to save April 24th for the next Tapas and Treasures event and to be thinking about the talents and treasures they can share.

Gretchen Maynard made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Chuck Egner seconded. The meeting was adjourned by a unanimous vote at 12:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Egner, Clerk

C: Pastor’s Annual Report 2015

A year ago, I ended my annual report to the congregation with the salutation, “In the name of the one who makes all things new.” This year, with the official sabbatical time of clergy and congregational renewal in our past, it seems a good time to remember what is new and what is unchanged: what the year 2015 has brought us.

In some ways, the year was shaped by the approach to, and end of, my sabbatical, which lasted from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Along with members of the Ad Hoc Sabbatical Planning Committee, led by Bob Miller, I worked on planning events for the NCC UCC Summer of Song. At the same time, I was finalizing my own plans for travel, classes, workshops and conferences. In both cases, I wanted to leave enough room for serendipitous interactions, while ensuring that enough of a framework was in place for many different kinds of participation.

My sabbatical time was wonderful: with rest, reflection, reading, hiking, classroom learning and worship experiences that are not available in the Upper Valley. There was a week-long workshop on Medieval and Renaissance Music (named “Councils and Heretics”!) in Oakland, CA in early July and a week-long workshop on Baroque and Folk Music in Totnes, Devon, UK in early August. I worshiped at an Episcopal church while in San Francisco, and joined their choir. I took a class at San Francisco Theological Seminary with John Bell. I attended a conference on Christian Congregational Music from a Global Perspective at a seminary near Oxford in the UK. Wonderful as it was, by the week before Labor Day I was ready to come home and rejoin the congregation of the NCC UCC. I was grateful that Jo Shelnutt had devoted herself to you as your pastor for three months, and that church leaders stepped up their participation to make the summer go smoothly.

In spite of the 3-month interruption, lots of other work went on. The Church Council, under Hillary White’s leadership, worked hard on the reorganization project. This was a daunting task as we tried to re-imagine our work for a 21st century world: to capitalize on our strengths and streamline our processes. The resolution to be presented at Annual Meeting reflects many conversations and hours of work. It is hoped that we can develop the new “Ministries Model” of governance over the coming year.

Some of my work takes place in the sanctuary and office; some of it happens in homes and at the hospital; and some is really outreach to the larger church and the larger community. I sit (along with Susan White) on the Windsor-Orange Association Council - a sort of sub-set of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ. The Council deals with pastors and churches of the 24 churches of our Association: licensing lay pastors, shepherding students through the ordination process, and assisting churches as they go through transitions. This is meaningful and enlightening work, and I am glad to offer time to our denomination this way. I also work collegially with other pastors: I participated in 2 installations this year and offer pastoral back-up at times to colleagues on vacation. Ecumenically, I attended meetings of local churches addressing the refugee crisis this fall. We hosted a presentation, with ecumenical sponsors, in November on medical crises in Israel/Palestine. And I worked with Aging in Place Norwich on their May Forum entitled “Before We Go.” As the church seeks to be meaningful to our culture and community, I feel that it is important for us to be a place for open discussion. As a faith community we can model concern, curiosity and civil discourse.

All of these activities are very rewarding. But the truly meaningful moments for me are those when our relationships – with God, with one another, and with the larger world – are made visible and real. Watching people welcome strangers who come through our doors, seeing people embrace old friends, watching people comfort someone in grief, hearing people harmonize in song...in all these ways I see the renewal of God’s ever-present Spirit among us. Though the theme of the sabbatical was congregational and clergy renewal through music, it is the renewal of these deep connections, old and new, that really matters.

As always, I want to thank each member and friend who has worked to make our shared faith visible: those who hold elected positions of leadership, as well as those who selflessly volunteer whenever there is a need. There are too many to name, so I won’t try. I have been especially conscious of those who have worked on boards and committees with reduced numbers, and admired their perseverance.

The 200th anniversary of our church building (in 1817, it was known as the Meeting House on Norwich Plain) will take place in 2017. Over the last 200 years, the building has been a constant in the center of town, but many things about our worship, our expressions of faith, our understandings of Scripture, and our place in secular culture have changed. I believe that the constant is not the building, but the lively and creative Spirit moving through the Body of Christ in this place. The building contains (at times) and

represents (at times) a larger spiritual reality. I hope that we will begin in 2016 to think about what this means, so that we can celebrate our bicentennial with joy and hope.

Mary

D: Church Council Report 2015

The Norwich Congregational Church UCC is blessed to have so many dedicated people who give of their time, talent, substance and influence. We are, however, at a juncture where we would benefit substantially from changes in church organization and culture that: 1) promote a more manageable, sustainable and supportive structure, 2) preserve and support the wonderful energies already evident, and 3) emphasize a participatory structure where everyone is involved vs a more hierarchical structure where leaders and boards and committees do most of the work. While the church has tasked Church Council with a reorganization plan, it cannot be emphasized enough that no amount of reorganization will help us without a concomitant change toward a more participatory structure that allows us to evolve into a church community that is always striving to be more relevant to our local geographic community while staying true to who we are.

Over the past year, as Church Council has urged everyone within our church to **communicate more effectively** with our local geographic community and with each other within our own congregation, we are starting to see this kind of change spread throughout our church. This past summer, by many accounts, the bountiful rewards of such an approach was evident during the pastoral sabbatical months, thanks to the efforts by Bob Miller and the Sabbatical Planning group and many others who helped execute the Summer of Song. The Board of Mission also focused on improving communication channels, and others are putting efforts into improving communications. This next year provides an opportunity to continue this important goal.

It is equally important that we **develop more participatory habits**, so Church Council has kept this in mind while focusing on the Reorganization Project. Our focus has been to **promote a structure that supports Renewal and Transformation**, allowing each of us to support one another “in Community” as each of us travels along our path, our life’s journey. After a year of studying how we can support and protect the energies of our members while transitioning toward a more sustainable structural organization model, Church Council now has recommendations for achieving these goals. **We propose an organizational model where all the current energies of the church will have protected homes within the new structure, although the structure will change from 12 Boards and Committees (and 66 positions for the Nominating Committee to fill) to 5 Ministries (and 23 positions for the Nominating Committee to fill).**

Within that structure, we are suggesting **redefining the Deacons to Deacon Leaders** who will serve in 2016 as both the visioning body and the voting body. A primary goal is to act as additional “arms” for the pastor to work within the congregation. In order to break down “silos” that might spring up around each Ministry, another primary role of the new Deacon Leaders will be to “take the pulse” of the other 4 Ministries and thereby help **facilitate a “web of connectivity and communication” throughout the church and with our community.** To do this, Deacon Leaders will establish liaison or point people as needed to help the Deacon Leaders infuse communication and participation in all that we do.

What we ask of ourselves:

1. **Transformational journey:** We ask that each person take personal responsibility to contribute toward our primary goals of being inviting and welcoming, nurturing and embracing, renewing and empowering, strengthening, inspiring and transforming – wherever you are within your sacred journey with God and each other.
2. **Find your “home”:** We ask that each of you find your “home” within the relevant ministry (ministries) either in a way that helps preserve institutional memory (doing what is similar to what

you did in 2015) and/or in ways that use your time, talent, substance and/or influence most effectively.

3. **Web of connectivity and communication:** We ask that each person take personal responsibility to help spread a culture that promotes a web of connectivity and communication, both within the church and within our local geographic community.

Respectfully submitted by Hillary White, Chair of Church Council for 2015,

On behalf of the Church Council: Mary Brownlow (Pastor), Doug James and alternate Chuck Egner (Trustees), Bob Miller and alternate Susan White or Laura Beliveau (Deacons), Heidi Webster (Mission), Dawn Thomas (Christian Education)

E: Deacons Report

The Board of Deacons is tasked within the By-Laws to help guide the spiritual ministry of the Church, including worship, proclamation, service and fellowship. The Deacons' first task is described as one of discernment: to explore areas of church life that need attention, in order to fulfill its ministry.

The 2014 Annual Report described the Deacon goals and duties in a way that bears repeating here: "Our goals have been to help administer to members in need in a confidential and trusting way, to facilitate back-and-forth conversations between pastor and congregation on how to make our worship services meaningful in an evolving way, to facilitate communication and sharing of the many gifts within our congregation that are ready to be shared, to greet and be welcoming to members before and after the services with heartfelt warmth, to rediscover and renew our core values, to discover, identify and promote ways we are evolving as a church, and to support our pastor in her growth and outreach."

The church year 2015 was an active year for the Deacons due to the Rev. Mary Brownlow's sabbatical from May 25 to September 8, 2015, the work associated with finding and hiring a Sabbatical Interim Minister, the Rev. Jo Shelnutt, supporting Rev. Shelnutt through the interim period, welcoming Rev. Brownlow back from her sabbatical, and providing input into the restructuring model planned for 2016.

Spring 2015

While the Deacons had no direct responsibility for planning or administering the Summer of Song sabbatical activities, the Deacons had an important role in supporting the program and ensuring that the spiritual and worship needs of the congregation were met during the transition from Rev. Brownlow's leadership to Rev. Shelnutt's leadership and back to Rev. Brownlow upon her return. The first Deacon task of the year was to serve as a Search Committee to locate a Sabbatical Interim Minister. The Deacons developed a "job description" for the summer position and a list of qualities that we were looking for in a sabbatical interim minister. We then cast as broad a net as possible to find someone who would both support the Summer of Song program and be a good fit with our congregation. The leading candidate in our search efforts was the Rev. Jo Shelnutt, an established UCC minister in the Upper Valley who is also a classically trained musician.

In addition to the usual Deacon work with respect to Sunday worship and addressing the needs of the congregation, Spring 2015 also involved the support of Rev. Brownlow in her transition planning prior to the departure for her sabbatical and preparations for the transition to the leadership of Rev. Shelnutt.

Summer 2015

We welcomed Rev. Shelnutt to the Norwich Congregational Church on June 7, 2015. Prior to that date and throughout the summer, the Deacons worked closely with Rev. Shelnutt to inform her of the church's worship traditions and practices as well as the important needs of congregation members. During the summer, the Deacons served both in their traditional Deacon roles in supporting worship and tracking and responding to the needs and concerns of the congregation, as well as in a role as a *de facto* Pastoral Relations Committee in support of Rev. Shelnutt.

On June 14, 2015, the Deacons continued the tradition of hosting a breakfast for young families prior to the Children’s Sunday Service. It was once again a wonderful success, and we thank the Board of Christian Education and Stan Williams for their collaboration in putting together the breakfast. In late June, after internal discussions and discussions with Rev. Shelnutt and the Board of Mission, Head Deacon Bob Miller sent a letter on behalf of the Norwich Congregational Church to the Emanuel AME church in Charleston, SC, expressing our church’s condolences, solidarity, and Christian love in the difficult time following the June 17, 2015, shootings at Emanuel AME.

We are very appreciative of the leadership of Rev. Shelnutt throughout the summer sabbatical period. We also appreciate the efforts of the Sabbatical Planning Committee and those congregation members who participated and gave so generously of their time and talents during the NCC Summer of Song. It was a memorable and joyful time for many in our church. A congregational survey conducted at the end of the summer produced 29 responses expressing almost unanimous appreciation and positive feedback for Rev. Shelnutt’s pastoral leadership and sharing of musical talents.

Fall 2015

We welcomed Rev. Brownlow back from her sabbatical during the week of September 7, 2015. We held two meetings with Rev. Brownlow in September to update her on the needs of the congregation and the events of the summer, to hear about her sabbatical, to facilitate her transition back into church life, and to make plans for fall and Advent worship activities. The fall and early winter have also been a time in which the Deacons have considered and provided significant input on the restructuring plans and model being developed by the Church Council. The Deacons expressed support for a church governing structure that both encourages broader connections and participation among members and those who attend the NCC while lessening the burden on the few volunteers who step forward to accept leadership positions.

We have been honored to serve as Deacons in 2015 for a church and faith community that embraces the Christian principles of openness, acceptance, service, thoughtful prayer and action, stewardship, justice, compassion, and above all, love for God and for one another.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Miller, Mary Magavern, Susan White, and Laura Beliveau

F: Clerk’s Report 2015

Membership:	240 Members; 8 Associate Members	
Baptisms:	None	
Confirmations:	None	
Deaths:	Millie Lupien	2/ 26/15
	Isabel Riley	5/24/15
	William Wanner	6/21/15
	Freda Stephens	7/29/15
	Fred Carleton	8/23/15
	Ray Theriault	9/20/15
Transfers Out:	None	
New Members:	John Langhus	3/15/15
	Jennifer Langhus	“
	Judy McKeown	“
	Matthew Stover	“
	Sonya Stover	“
	Bradley Fuller	12/13/15

If you notice errors or omissions, please contact the church office.

G: Flower Committee Annual Report 2015

The chief responsibility of the Flower Committee is to schedule the donation of altar flowers. The Holiday flowers for Christmas and Easter are a joint effort between the church office, the Flower Committee and many wonderful volunteers.

At Advent and Christmas time there are special donations, such the Altar wreath given in loving memory of Betty and Woody Woodworth by this congregation. When they were alive, they always donated this particular wreath. Our two front door wreaths were donated by Mary Magavern this year. Gretchen Maynard and her family gave the sanctuary wreaths. All the lovely decorations were beautifully hung around by members of the congregation at the beginning of Advent. The sanctuary tree and the Parish Hall tree were lovely.. We wish to thank all of those who helped out this year. On Palm Sunday, the Flower Committee provides a “greens” arrangement as well as palms for the service.

On Easter and Christmas Eve, those who wish, may, donate Easter lilies or poinsettias to add to the floral decorations. This year we had many poinsettias, which added enormous beauty on Christmas Eve and the weeks following. Many thanks from your grateful flower committee and general congregation to those who donated poinsettias; and to those who donated lilies at, Easter time.

We wish to thank Marty James who cares for and occasionally rehabilitates the lovely geraniums our we have in the sanctuary, in the halls and in the Parish Hall. Thank you also to Marty James and Stan Williams, and their “out- side” garden committee who maintain the church gardens. The Flower Committee extends sincere thanks to the congregation for its generous and thoughtful support in providing us with the many different kinds of floral arrangements that add such beauty to our Church and to the worship services.

Respectfully submitted,

Tilda White, Deb van Arman

H: 2015 Christian Education Report

- Youth Programs
 - Nursery
 - Rose Lippman continues to provide nursery care 10-15 minutes before, and during service.
 - Ages 3 and up
 - Danielle Taylor continues to serve as Sunday School Coordinator, using the lectionary-based “Seasons of the Spirit” curriculum well suited to our mixture of different aged children.
 - Preschoolers have been incorporated into the Sunday School with the grade-schoolers with the help of Julia Anderson
 - Drama Camp
 - The third annual Drama Camp, a collaboration between Christian Education and Music Committees, was held at the end of June. Eighteen campers took part in the play, “Oh Jonah”.
 - We again thank Danielle Taylor, Kathy Sherlock-Green and Tacy Colaiacomo for their talents and hard work making this a success.
 - New this year
 - Sixth and 7th-grade Sunday School classes started in December and will continue into the new year. Classes are held after Rev. Brownlow’s sermon, and continue through coffee hour. The first was lead by Brittney and Ryan Calsbeek.
 - Monthly Middle School Youth Group led by Rev. Brownlow was started this year. Activities have included preparing food for the stewardship brunch and helping serve at “Tapas and Treasures”.

- The acolyte program is being resurrected with the help of Ann Beams, with children serving on the second Sunday of the month.
 - There is an effort to include our younger members in various functions including scripture reading, prayer requests and the offertory.
- Adult Education
 - The longstanding Bible Study program continues, using the lectionary readings as points of discussion.
 - The Centering Prayer Group continues. The group meets weekly and is open to church members as well as the community. Items discussed included “The Rebirthing of God; Christianity’s Struggle for New Beginnings” by John Philip Newell.
 - Lenten activities
 - This year we incorporated an on-line book study using “The Rebirthing of God; Christianity’s Struggle for New Beginnings” by John Philip Newell, concluding with a “Second Hour” live discussion.
 - On-Line Activities
 - TED Talks
 - “How to Overcome Our Biases? Walk Boldly Towards Them” by Verna Myers. Followed by a “Second Hour” discussion.
 - Book discussion
 - “Tattoos on the Heart” by Gregory Boyle, on-line discussion led by Ann Beams. Followed by a “Second Hour” discussion.
 - Second Hour Discussions
 - “Digging Deeper; The Lords Prayer” led by Kenneth Cracknell
 - “Wolf Hall Religion” led by Susan White
 - “The Great Commission” led by Kenneth Cracknell
 - TED Talk “How to Overcome Our Biases? Walk Boldly Towards Them” by Verna Myers.
 - Book Discussion “Tattoos on the Heart” by Gregory Boyle, discussion led by Ann Beams.
 - Church Restructuring
 - The current proposal places education under the “Spiritual Formation and Nurture Ministry” as the church undergoes organizational evolution.

Summary

The Board of Christian Education this year implemented changes that increased involvement of children in weekly services as well as expanded activities specific to older youth groups. The annual Drama Camp continues to be popular and successful. This year also saw the exploration of on-line activities to supplement and enrich our ongoing adult education.

We would like to thank Rev. Mary Brownlow, Danielle Taylor, Julia Anderson, Rose Lippman, Kathy Sherlock-Green, Tacy Colaiacomo for their talents and efforts in supporting our youth educational mission. We would also like to thank those who have contributed to our adult education offerings.

Respectfully submitted by the Board of Christian Education,

Ann Beams, Brittny Calsbeek, Molly Caterini, and Dawn Thomas

I: Board of Mission Report 2015

The Board of Mission is charged with promoting the mission of the United Church of Christ and encouraging Congregational response to mission support through service, monthly mission giving and special offerings.

The Board would like express our sincere appreciation to Mary Brownlow for her assistance, wisdom, guidance and institutional memory; and to office manager / bookkeeper Amy Frost for her able and willing assistance in both her roles. We would also like to thank Carol Loveland who coordinated the volunteers for the Listen Dinners and to all the people who volunteered to help prepare and serve Listen and Dismas House dinners in 2015.

Information

The Mission Board’s goal is to keep the Congregation informed regarding our activities and donations on a regular basis through the Lifeline, Sunday Service program, two bulletin boards in parish hall and the weekly Church email notices. We also act as a clearinghouse for information received regarding programs of other faith based organizations and like minded charities.

2015 Donations

The Board made contributions, both in-kind and financial to the organizations and projects as shown below.

2015 NCC Mission Budget Allocation

Local Mission (Acct 6315)	Donation
DR Projects – Learning Center	\$ 1,000.00
UCC Disaster Ministries – Nepal Earthquake Relief	\$ 1,000.00
Dismas Dinner (Dinner Reimbursements)	\$ 85.27
Upper Valley Haven	\$ 1,000.00
Second Growth	\$ 1,000.00
Vermont Foodbank	\$ 1,000.00
Hartford Dismas House	\$ 200.00
Bugbee Senior Center - Home Delivered Meals	\$ 714.73
	\$ 6,000.00

Specific Funds

Clevie White (Acct 6325)	
To: Clevie White Independent Living Fund at HCRS	\$ 304.00
To: PINS Stocking Stuffers	\$ 100.00
Sargent Fund (Acct 6335) To: PINS Back to School & Stocking Stuffers	\$ 118.00
Hazen Fund (Acct 6345) To: WISE	\$ 90.00
Ellison Fund (Acct 6355) To: WISE	\$ 221.00
Pass Through Account* (Acct 2237) To: The Kate Gerke Fund at VIPL	\$ 287.41
* (funds from 2014)	\$ 1,120.1

\$7,120.41 Total

Budget & Special Fund Donation Recipient Notes

DR Projects – Learning Center: Dominican Republic Projects (DRP) is committed to cross-cultural understanding and self-sustaining initiatives in health, education and the environment in the town of Cotui, Dominican Republic. DRP operates under the auspices of Norwich Congregational Church-UCC. The “Learning Center” initiative will supply books, a bookcase that would protect the books from damage, a bench for students to sit on, laminated educational posters and perhaps other learning tools to support literacy in low resource communities in Cotui, D.R.

UCC Wider Church Ministries (Nepal Earthquake Relief): UCC Disaster Ministries, through the ACT Alliance, has provided funds for the immediate response to the disaster with medicine, food, water, temporary shelter, kitchen supplies, quilts, basic household equipment and other items for survivors. In addition, they have provided funds for long-term livelihood recovery projects and

training, including restoration of livestock, poultry and seeds. UCC Disaster Ministries has set a goal of building 50 new, permanent, earthquake-resistant homes in Nepal and will partner with The Fuller Center for Housing for construction of first 12 new, permanent, earthquake-resistant homes in Trishuli. Fundraising for these and other projects is ongoing.

Hartford Dismas House: Dismas House's purpose is to provide a safe and secure living environment for recently released, nonviolent prisoners and to help reconcile these persons with society. The Mission board coordinates volunteers and reimburses expenses for Monthly Dinners for the residents of the House. In addition a financial donation was made to the organization.

Upper Valley Haven Food Shelf: The Haven's Food Shelf provides a week's supply of healthy groceries once a month (including meat, dairy and produce), and unlimited access to bread and produce to anyone in need. They offer a Healthy Eating Program which addresses food shelf visitors' needs for inexpensive and healthy eating options. It is designed to serve everyone who comes through the doors of the Haven. The program consists of developing healthy and budget-conscious recipes, on-site food preparation using ingredients found at the Food Shelf, and food sampling for clients with hand-outs of the corresponding recipes.

Second Growth: Second Growth's mission is to reduce substance abuse and violence for adolescents. They work in the schools and the community to provide training, individual counseling, group support, and prevention education for young people. Their goal is to "build the strength and resiliency skills of youth in order to improve their outcomes and help them safely navigate adolescence".

Vermont Foodbank: The core function of the Vermont Foodbank is to provide fresh produce, shelf-stable food, and prepared meals to their 225 network partners. Those network partners include food shelves, meal sites, senior centers and after-school program, serving 153,000 Vermonters annually. Other programs include: *Community Kitchen Academy*, *VT Fresh*, the *Gleaning Program* and *Pick for Your Neighbor*. The Vermont Foodbank also has a number of programs that are geared towards the needs of Vermont's children.

The NCC Clevie White Fund donation was given to the Clevie White Independent Living Fund within Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS) Vermont. This grant supports the HCRS staff that helps clients move from community care to their own apartments. The Clevie White Fund was established at our church in 1996, in memory of Clevie White, son of Tilda and Stuart White, brother to Laura Bradley White. Clevie died in his late 20's after a long battle with ALS and a bout of cancer.

PINS Programs: Deb Berryman coordinated programs which the Board and NCC members have supported for several years. Funds were provided this year from the Sargent Fund, to support the purchase of back to school supplies in the fall and stocking stuffers at Christmas for local children in Foster care. The Clevie White Fund also donated to the PINS Program.

WISE: The Mission of WISE is to empower victims of domestic and sexual violence and stalking to become safe and self-reliant through crisis intervention and support services. WISE advances social justice through community education, training and public policy. Funding for the donation to WISE came from the Hazen & Ellison Funds.

Vermont Interfaith Power & Light: **Vermont Interfaith Power & Light (VTIPL)** exists to serve Vermont faith communities in their efforts to address the climate crisis. VTIPL helps faith communities and their individual members to be better stewards of Creation by using energy wisely, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Katy Gerke Memorial Program Vermont Interfaith Power and Light, helps in making Christian churches more energy efficient by providing a limited

number of matching grant awards to churches in Vermont and twelve New Hampshire towns, for energy audits or energy efficiency improvements.

In-Kind Contributions - Upper Valley Focus

Listen Community Dinners: Carol Loveland has been coordinating volunteers from the Church, who prepare bi-monthly Community Dinners at the Listen location in White River Junction.

Dismas House Dinners: NCC volunteers under the leadership of Jeff Nielsen are preparing, serving and participating in one dinner a month at Hartford Dismas House

2015 Monthly Mission Collections

	Recipients*	
January / February	Listen Center	\$ 356.08
March / April	One Great Hour of Sharing (UCC)	\$ 575.00
May / June:	DR Projects – The Learning Center	\$ 708.00
July / August	PeaceTrees Vietnam	\$ 1,755.00
September / October	Neighbors in Need (UCC)	\$ 516.00
Nov / December	The Christmas Fund (UCC)	\$ 706.00

The Christmas Eve Offerings (for the Pastor’s Discretionary Fund) \$ 5,155.30

*Descriptions of each recipient appeared in the Lifeline and are available from the Mission Board

Respectfully Submitted,

The Board of Mission:

Deb Berryman, Doug Britton, Vicky Fish, Jeff Nielsen and Heidi Webster

J: Dominican Republic Project

The Dominican Republic Projects (DR Projects) marks 17 years since its first effort to bring assistance to marginalized communities in Cotui, a town in the rural central region of the country. The mission of this effort has been to spearhead sustainable community development in areas of health, education and the environment. Our efforts have earned the recognition and support of many local organizations in Cotui. Team trips have visited regularly since 2003 when Doug and Judy Moore joined us on a community center construction effort.

The Dominican non-profit founded by Rita in 2012, **Fundación Uniendo Manos Dominicanas** (joining Dominican hands), represents our DR Projects initiatives in the Dominican Republic. Many of our programs will remain collaborative ventures between two cultures. Summer of 2015 DRP/UMD had the privilege to be once again selected by Dartmouth College Dickey Center and the Global Health Initiative (GHI) funding two undergraduates the village of Las Auyamas, Cotui. Rita has been working with this particular community for about 9 years.

The students continued work started in 2014 by two medical students offering basic health training and health education. They also dedicated some time to work with the community on painting the classroom that will have the future Reading Corner mentioned below.

Again, all benefitted, the students through their experience living in an under resourced community, and the residents who today share knowledge and information with each other on nutrition, diabetes education, tuberculosis and overall health prevention.

Las Auyamas is a community that has received many service work trip participants. In addition this is the primary site for the Child Sponsor Program funded through donations from friends in the US.

In January 2015 more than 17 graduate students and professors from Elon University, North Carolina, Department of Visual Arts and Communication joined Rita for one week in Cotui. The students developed professional websites for the women's co-op: **CREELAdr.org**, and the Lions Club Nursing Home and Health Center: **hogarcotui.org**. We hope this will offer more visibility and growth opportunities to these efforts.

In January 2016 a health team formed by undergraduate nursing students and professors from Endicott College, MA, Nurse Practitioners and an MD from VT will be joining Rita to continue support to our village health initiatives by providing hypertension/Diabetes, Breast Exam health screenings, and pediatric services to include Fluoride Varnish application and distribution of toothpaste/toothbrushes donated by Upper Valley dentists. A Dominican friend from Hanover will join us as volunteer interpreter. An April team trip is in the planning stages. This service trip will mark the beginning of collaborations between NCC and the Church of Christ at Dartmouth College. Several high school students and the Associate Pastor will form part of the team of parents and students from both churches. One of our NCC families will travel for the 3-4th time with us! The Board of Missions has funded support for an education pilot project to create a "Reading Corner" in one village primary school. Reports and photos have been submitted to BOM on this first K-5 school selected. About 300 books await book covers, cataloguing and shelving. There are many other activities being planned for this visit, including inauguration of the space, and many reading moments.

Other elementary school parents and teachers have learned of the effort in Las Auyamas and have expressed an interest in future selection.

While small, we hope our efforts continue to be sustaining, with opportunities for bridges of care, cultural understanding and social justice in communities challenged by the limitations created by economic poverty.

*Respectfully submitted,
Margarita Ruiz Severinghaus*

K: Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee would like to thank all who have served faithfully as officers, board members, and committee members over the past year. As the restructuring process continues, we are putting together a report which reflects the proposed changed structure from a number of boards and committees to a Ministry Model, with 4 areas of ministry in which all may participate, plus a team of deacon leaders. There will also be a slate of officers. This will be ready to present at annual meeting on February 7.

L: Board of Trustees Report

2015 has been a financially stable and successful year. The budget assumed that we would need to access Parsonage interest money but it was not needed and the year ended with a surplus of \$1165. This was due to a mix of gifts, successful fund raising (Tapas and Treasures), the support of the Lilly Grant, and caution in spending. The 2016 budget has similar assumptions but we have tried to keep the potential need to access Parsonage interest low and may well not need to use it. Parsonage interest will disappear in January of 2017 when we no longer hold the mortgage. We have raised salaries 3% except for Amy Frost. She has taken over Nichole's duties so we have restructured her salary. Amy has done an outstanding job. Joanne Egner has taken over the Treasurer's duties and is also outstanding. The Giving Committee results were excellent this year thanks to Ann Beams and Barbara Duncan.

There are a number of other issues pending.

- Chipper Ashley has been in charge of repairing the steeple clock and now is near to restoring the bell ringing on the hour. The neighborhood appears to be supportive.

- We got an initial estimate about building a deck adjacent to the Parish Hall which was high so we tabled the issue and will readdress in the spring.
- We are revising the collector's role to simplify it and avoid the need for two persons. The offering will now be placed in the bank and the collector will count it later at a convenient time with Amy after she has retrieved it from the bank.
- We continue to have interest in solar energy and will continue to explore those possibilities.
- The trustees are supportive of the proposed restructuring of the Church and look forward to new opportunities.

Respectfully submitted, Doug James

Members: Chuck Egner, Dan VanDorn, Gary Brooks (Secretary) and Doug James (Chair) Ex Officio: Mary Brownlow (Pastor), Joanne Egner (Treasurer)

M: Stewardship Committee Report

This year's goals for our church giving emphasis were to be simple, personal, and effective. Included elements were:

1. Short "Lifeline" articles related to church giving, January-September.
2. A two week "campaign" beginning with letters sent the weekend before Sunday, November 1; words from the committee members and from the pastor in church on November 1, 8, and 15; a session with the Trustees on November 8; and a concluding "thank you" brunch on November 15.
3. Personal thank you notes for pledges and gifts received.
4. Follow up reminder notes and additional pledge cards sent the first week of December; phone calls made on December 18.
5. New personal elements included; individualized postscripts by 10 church members; the "thank you" brunch was made by our youth group, under Mary's supervision; and the brunch was set up and hosted by our Sunday School, under Danielle's supervision. The Sunday School also made origami "thank you" gifts. Barbara and I thank you, all, for your great help!
6. We encouraged people to consider online giving as an alternative to other forms of giving (monthly, quarterly, yearly checks and weekly pledge envelopes.)

As of December 30, 2015) we have received 89 pledges, for a total amount of \$196,120 and some gifts (not pledges) for a total amount of \$7,350 support of our church's life and work in 2016. We still expect that a few more pledges and gifts will come in. It will be fun to see how God leads us in using these resources most faithfully in the year ahead!

Some additional comments:

1. Most pledges were the same as the year before, or an increase from the year before. A very few decreased. We had a few new pledges, and lost a few pledges, mostly due to relocation or a church member's death in the past year.
2. In many givers' minds, there is not much of a distinction between a pledge and a gift as a practical matter.
3. We are grateful for every pledge and every gift!

It was a joy to work with my committee partner and friend Barbara Duncan and with our pastor,

Mary Brownlow as well as Amy Frost who was a wonderful help in the office. Barbara and I enjoyed being in touch with church members and friends, and working with the children, youth and adults who helped us in our tasks.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Beams

N: Walter and Elizabeth Woodworth Fund Report

The Woodworth Committee discussed and approved two requests for funding in 2015.

In **February 2015**, the Committee approved funding of \$1,188.20 to support Kathy Sherlock Green's attendance at the American Choral Director's Association (ACDA) National Conference in Salt Lake City on February 24- March 1, 2015.

She attended the conference to inform and enhance her work as a choral director at NCC and as a sponsor for two singers from our Junior Choir who will be representing our church as members of the Children's Honor Choir. Kathy has been sponsoring and accompanying singers from our Junior and Youth Choir programs in ACDA Honor Choir programs since 2006. In the past she covered all of her own expenses for these trips but this year asked for funding to cover airline expenses and the cost for attending the conference. Round trip ticket \$889.20 Registration fee for 2015 National ACDA Conference \$299.00. Total requested funds= \$1,188.20

In **July 2015**, the Committee voted in favor of Tacy's \$3,600 proposal to continue her organ lessons with Diane Meredith Belcher at Saint Thomas in Hanover, beginning November 1, 2015. These funds would provide another 12 months of organ instruction for Tacy. The cost would be \$3600: 3 lessons a month, @\$100 a lesson, for 12 months.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Woodworth Committee, Mimi Simpson

O: Music Staff Reports

When you take everything else away, it's all about the people. While our year was rich with music, what I will remember is all the members of our congregation and others who joined us in making and sharing music in 2015. Because of an extraordinary year, I chose to end it, on Christmas Eve, with musical offerings from the youngest to the nearly oldest in our church. It was a joy to accompany Izzy Calsbeek, age 4, as she played glockenspiel for *Ding Dong Merrily on High*. And it was equally joyful to accompany Dick McGaw, age 86, as he sung a beautiful rendition of *O Holy Night*. There were many other sparkling and touching offerings from children, teenagers, college students, and a grandmother and her grandson. And this didn't even include the music from Kathy and our wonderful choirs!

On another note, it continues to be my honor and privilege to offer music for memorial services. Every service is special, and I know in my heart that church exists, in part, to send each person off with a blessing. We are diminished by each loss, every year. It was with extra sadness that I participated in services this year for Joan Wanner's husband, Bill, and for Mitzi Carleton's husband, Fred. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of all of your lives.

Last, thank you to Bob Miller, without whom we could not have offered what we did this year in our music program. He helped so many times and so much that it would be impossible to remember every instance!

*Respectfully submitted,
Tacy Colaiacomo, Organist*

You will read a lot about special musical events at NCC during 2015 in Bob Miller's report on Mary's sabbatical. A highlight for our choral program was the opportunity to premier an original composition and to share it with the congregation. Our Senior Choir, Youth Choir and Junior Choir combined with several local musicians under the leadership of composer Kathy Eddy to premier "Joy Like a River of Brightness" in the worship service on September 27th. This new choral work was specifically written for our community of singers to celebrate the culmination of our Summer of Music to Feed the Soul. It was the centerpiece of an inspirational and musical celebration that invited all members of the congregation to sing along. Opportunities like this do not come along often. We were truly blessed.

Another exciting choral development last year was the merger of our Junior and Youth Choirs into the newly formed Hallelujah Hollah Choir. This group of young singers consists of kids from grades 4-12. They meet for weekly rehearsals on Sundays and sing in the worship service on the second Sunday of each month. In place of the Junior Choir Advent Musical, they presented a story with narration and song based on a Russian Christmas folktale called “Babushka.” By all accounts it was a great success.

Welcome to the NCC family HHC!

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Sherlock-Green, Director of Choral Music

P: Report from Ad-Hoc Sabbatical Planning Committee

“Renew, rejoice, respond” was the refrain that rang out during the Norwich Congregational Church’s Summer of Music to Feed the Soul, a time of sacred music and trying out new things made possible in large part by a grant by the Lilly Endowment.

The Lilly Endowment’s “Clergy Renewal Program” is “a program designed to strengthen Christian congregations by providing opportunities for pastors to step away briefly from the persistent obligations of daily parish life and to engage in a period of renewal and reflection.” A unique aspect of the program is the requirement that the pastor and the congregation embark on a parallel track of renewal during the sabbatical. As described in the 2014 Annual Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Sabbatical Planning, the Rev. Mary Brownlow and a grant-writing committee decided to structure Lilly Grant sabbatical renewal activities around the theme of sacred music.

The Lilly Grant application pointed to five principles to support planning activities and the actual congregational renewal process:

1. The broadest possible **Congregational Participation**;
2. **Diversity** of participants, musical styles, and musical eras;
3. The building and enhancement of **Congregational Connections**;
4. **Community Outreach and Participation**; and
5. Individual and congregational **Spiritual Renewal** through sharing, broadening and building on our strengths.

To foster participation and help in planning renewal activities, the Church Council appointed an Ad Hoc Committee on Sabbatical Planning. The committee’s purpose was to be a catalytic, creative force behind the planning and use of the Lilly Grant funds to achieve the congregational renewal goals through the use of music that “makes our hearts sing.” The committee consisted of Kathy Sherlock-Green, Tacy Calaiacomo, Evelyn Ellis, Jane Helms, Doug Lufkin, and Bob Miller. We worked closely with Rev. Brownlow before her departure, and then with Sabbatical Interim Minister the Rev. Jo Shelnett during the sabbatical period, to plan, schedule and hold musical and other events that supported our renewal goals.

The events planned by the committee and/or supported by the Lilly Grant during the Summer of Music to Feed the Soul included:

May 2015

- Hosting of Junior Choir Festival
- Musical Workshop with the Rev. Kathy Wonson Eddy, “Sacred Time, Sacred Space”
- Dartmouth College Gospel Choir “Road Trip”
- Pentecost Service and Farewell to Rev. Brownlow

June 2015

- Welcoming of Rev. Shelnett
- Evelyn Ellis Recital, “Peaceful Music for the Soul”
- Village Harmony Alumni Ensemble, “Harmony Singing from Across the World”

- The Rev. Thomas Kinder Workshop on “Centering Prayer and Renewal”
- Youth Summer Drama Camp, “Oh, Jonah!”
- Prof. Anthony Leach Workshop and Sunday Worship on Gospel Music

July 2015

- Sunday Worship: Gospel Bluegrass with Bruce and Caleb Freeberg
- Sunday Worship: Four Sundays of Opera North Young Artists
- Gospel Hymn Sing and Potluck with Bruce and Caleb Freeberg
- Village Harmony Teen World Music Ensemble

August 2015

- Music on the Green: Carter Glass Band
- Writing Workshop with the Rev. Maren Tirabassi
- Arts and Banner Making Workshop with the Rev. Mandy Lape-Freeberg
- Music on the Green: Nisht Geferlach Klezmer Band

September 2015

- Sunday Worship and Musical Farewell for Rev. Shelnut
- Sunday Worship, Welcome Back for Rev. Brownlow, Annual Church Picnic
- Musical Celebration Service and Performance of “Joy Like a River,” a commissioned piece written for the NCC by the Rev. Kathy Wonson Eddy

October 2015

- Michael Arnowitz Piano Concert

These events, performances and workshops created many wonderful opportunities for congregation and community members to participate in diverse offerings and make lasting connections with each other in a spiritually-centered environment. And while the scheduled events were memorable and drew many new faces into our church, some of the most joyous and spiritually uplifting moments came during the performances by volunteer congregation members at Sunday morning worship services.

When we began the Summer of Music to Feed the Soul, the church was embarking on a wilderness journey of sorts. Rev. Brownlow would be unavailable, we would be welcoming in a new, unknown leader in Rev. Shelnut, and we would be pursuing a musical and spiritual undertaking unlike any before. Along the way, we have learned many things about ourselves, each other, and our church family – things which will hopefully lead us to become a richer, deeper and more complex faith community.

It is our hope that the summer program will serve as a catalyst for continued participation “from the pews” in the joint enterprise and mission that is our church community. We hope congregants will continue to step forward both musically, as our young people did at the first service on Christmas Eve, and in other ways, sharing our gifts and talents to foster an environment of continuous renewal and growth.

In closing, we thank Rev. Brownlow and Rev. Shelnut, who led us through the many hours of planning and putting into action our ambitious plans. We thank the many performers and presenters from outside our church community who shared their musical and other gifts with us. And finally, we thank those from our church who participated and gave of themselves, in small and large ways, to make this summer happen. Rejoice, renew, respond!

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Miller on behalf of the Ad Hoc Sabbatical Planning Committee, Kathy Sherlock-Green, Tacy Calaiacomo, Evelyn Ellis, Jane Helms, Doug Lufkin, and Bob Miller.

Q: Investment Committee Annual Report 2015

The Investment Committee oversees church funds that have been given in the past for general use or for specific purposes. **As of year-end 2015, the Trust Funds balance totaled \$746,280 a slight decrease of \$738 compared to the year-end 2014 value of \$747,018.** The primary drivers of this change in value were: negative investment performance; withdrawals to fund the Church budget; and the positive impact of monthly payments from the mortgage (see Table 1).

These monies are primarily invested in two of the United Church Foundation's family of socially responsible funds: 5.4% in an equity fund, 86.1% in a moderate balanced fund – a 65/35 mix of stocks and bonds. 8.5% is held in a Vanguard fund which invests in Intermediate Term US Treasury obligations (see Table 2). The investment mix at year-end was approximately 61% equity and 39% fixed income and cash in line with our targeted asset allocation.

The allocation of investment funds to individual trust accounts is shown (see Table 3). Also shown is the ten year historical perspective on the value of NCC Trust fund accounts (see Table 4). The total value of church funds has doubled in the past decade driven primarily by proceeds from the 2011 sale of the parsonage and bequests.

Each year, the church budgets 4.5% of its "Unrestricted" endowment (36.2% of the total) to fund annual operating expenses based on a conservative spending formula that is consistent with the practice of many other endowments. Disbursements from the various Restricted Purpose and Unrestricted accounts totaled \$12,079 during the past year. For 2015, the Investment Committee recommended a transfer of up to \$12,558 from the Unrestricted funds, up to \$5,114 from the Restricted funds, and up to \$12,393 from the current year interest payments on the mortgage as needed to fund operating expenses, subject to Congregational approval of the budget.

During past years, the church has received very substantial bequests which materially increased its endowment. **The Investment Committee would encourage those of you who are drawing up or changing your will to consider including a legacy gift to the NCC Trust Fund.**

*Respectfully submitted,
On behalf of NCC Investment Committee
Carolyn Mertz*

Table 1: Changes in Value of Investment Accounts during 2015

Balance as of 12/31/2014	\$747,018
Transfers out:	
For 2015 expenditures	-12,079
Transfers in:	
From mortgage payments	27,292
Net change in investment value	-15,951
Ending Balance as of 12/31/2015	\$746,280

Table 2: Trust Fund Holdings as of December 31, 2015

United Church Foundation Moderate Balanced Fund (65% equities; 35% bonds)	\$642,366
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United Church Foundation Equity Fund	40,621
(55% domestic core equity; 20% small cap equity; 25% international equity)	
Vanguard Intermediate term Treasury Fund (US Treasury Bonds)	63,294
Total Investment Funds	\$746,280

Table 3: Allocation of Investment Funds to Individual Trust Accounts as of 12/31/2015

Unrestricted Use Funds	Amount	Percentage	
General	\$241,458	32.4%	
Flower Fund	17,832	2.4%	
Help for Needy Fund	1,863	0.2%	
Ellison Fund			
SAM	4,591	0.6%	
Music	4,591	0.6%	
Subtotal Unrestricted Funds	270,315	36.2%	
Restricted Purpose Funds			
Sargent Painting Fund	\$31,628	4.2%	
Charles Judd Clock Repair Fund	22,597	3.0%	
Pastoral Ministry & Housing Support	288,375	38.6%	
Preaching Fund	33,995	4.6%	
Clevie White Memorial Fund	17,770	2.4%	
Subtotal Restricted Use Funds	422,073	56.6%	
Restricted Purpose – Income Only Funds (incl. interest balances)			Interest Balance
Waterman Building Maintenance Fund	\$33,446	4.5%	\$2,639
Merrill Bible Fund	4,709	0.6%	74
Mitten Fund	15,737	2.1%	242
Subtotal Income Use Only Funds	53,892	7.2%	
Total Trust Funds	\$746,280	100.0%	

NOTE: Columns may not add due to rounding. Pastoral Ministry and Housing Support is a new fund that segregates the proceeds from the Parsonage sale, including interest received on the mortgage note.

Table 4: Ten Year Historical Perspective on the Value of Trust Fund Accounts

Balance as of 12/31/2006	\$383,217
Balance as of 12/31/2007	\$381,965
Balance as of 12/31/2008	\$264,455
Balance as of 12/31/2009	\$284,409
Balance as of 12/31/2010	\$308,859
Balance as of 12/31/2011	\$366,443
Balance as of 12/31/2012	\$491,206
Balance as of 12/31/2013	\$722,759
Balance as of 12/31/2014	\$747,018
Balance as of 12/31/2015	\$746,280

R: 2015 Actual vs Budget and 2016 Budget

	2015 Actual	2015 Budget	2016 Budget
Income			
4000 Trust Funds			
4001 Unrestricted Trust Funds	9,669.00	9,670.00	11,206.00
4005Spear Preaching Fund	-	-	1,523.00
4010 Waterman Maintenance Fund	-	-	2,499.00
4015 Flower Fund	859.00	859.00	836.00
4016 Clevie White Fund - Music	404.00	404.00	414.00
4020 Sargent (Mitten) Fund	118.00	118.00	202.00
4022 Clevie White Fund - Mission	404.00	404.00	414.00
4025 Hazen (Help for Needy) Fund	90.00	90.00	87.00
4030 Ellison(Music) Fund	221.00	221.00	215.00
4035 Ellison (Mission) Fund	221.00	221.00	215.00
4038 Parsonage Sales Int. Income	-	21,570.00	6,121.00
4039 Clock Fund	-	1,500.00	1,000.00
4040 Merrill (Bible) Fund	93.00	93.00	-
Total 4000 Trust Funds	12,079.00	35,150.00	24,732.00
4100 Collections			
4105 Pledges	190,735.39	188,205.00	197,320.00
4106 Pledge paid for previous years	275.00	5,000.00	1,200.00
4110 Weekly Anonymous Cash	3,166.00	3,500.00	3,500.00
4113 Non-Pledge Gifts	24,625.39	13,000.00	21,000.00
Total 4100 Collections	218,801.78	209,705.00	223,020.00
4200 Misc Revenue			
4210 Rummage Sale	3,063.32	2,500.00	2,500.00
4211 Fundraising	6,959.00	6,000.00	1,000.00
Total 4200 Misc Revenue	10,027.91	8,500.00	3,500.00
4212 Christian Ed Income	700.00	500.00	500.00
4215 DRP Income - General Fund	200.00	12,000.00	12,000.00
4216 DRP Team Trips	1,550.00	-	
4217 DRP Child Sponsorship Income	1,550.00	-	
4218 DRP Womens Coop	9,954.00	-	
4220 DRP Community Development Fund	1,708.00	-	
Total 4215 DRP Income - General Fund	14,962.00	12,000.00	12,000.00
4300 Lilly Grant Income	14,908.06	15,000.00	-
4800 Rental Income			

4805 Use of Facility	16,249.50	19,000.00	18,000.00
Total 4800 Rental Income	16,249.50	19,000.00	18,000.00
4900 Interest Incomes			
4905 Church MM Interest Income	16.11	-	-
4910 WW Money Market Interest	65.68	50.00	50.00
Total 4900 Interest Incomes	81.79	50.00	50.00
Total Income	287,810.04	299,905.00	281,802.00
Expenses			
6000 Pastoral			
6005 Senior Pastor-Salary	46,548.86	46,543.00	47,940.00
6007 Pastor - Lilly	6,000.00	6,000.00	-
6010 Car/Pastor	356.50	647.00	667.00
6015 House-Pastor	18,625.14	18,618.00	19,177.00
6020 Payroll Taxes-Pastor	4,635.53	4,630.00	4,769.00
6025 Health Insurance - Pastor	7,029.00	6,809.00	7,400.00
6027 Dental Ins-Pastor	489.00	499.00	500.00
6035 Continuing Ed/Pastor	929.28	500.00	1,500.00
6040 Shipping Charges	-	50.00	-
6043 Book Allowance-Pastor	221.97	300.00	350.00
6045 Sabbatical	2,500.00	-	2,500.00
6050 Life/Disability Ins/Pastor	963.10	977.00	1,007.00
6055 Annuity/Pastor	8,988.86	9,123.00	9,397.00
Total 6000 Pastoral	97,287.24	94,696.00	95,207.00
6080 UCC Denominational Ministries			
6082 VT Conf UCC Per Capita	3,349.72	3,400.00	3,400.00
6083 OCWM Basic Support	17,000.00	17,000.00	17,000.00
6084 Delegate	295.00	350.00	350.00
Total 6080 UCC Denominational Ministries	20,644.72	20,750.00	20,750.00
6100 Worship			
6105 Supplies - Worship	742.87	600.00	750.00
6110 Guest Preacher	200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
6115 Advertisement	172.80	450.00	250.00
Total 6100 Worship	1,115.67	2,250.00	2,200.00
6200 Christian Ed			
6215 Supplies - Christian Ed.	163.12	1,000.00	800.00
6216 Sunday School Coordinator	6,998.59	6,987.00	7,197.00
6217 Payroll Taxes Coordinator	584.14	694.00	612.00
6218 Nursery Attendant	655.00	1,600.00	800.00
6225 Bibles	-	93.00	-

6235 Adult Ed	179.09	150.00	200.00
6236 Adult Retreats	50.85	100.00	100.00
6240 Youth Ed	47.60	275.00	275.00
6241 Summer Programs	793.44	500.00	500.00
6255 Equipment Expenses	-	100.00	-
Total 6200 Christian Ed	9,471.83	11,499.00	10,484.00
6300 Board of Mission			
6315 Local Mission	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
6325 Clevie White	404.00	404.00	414.00
6335 Sargent Fund (Mitten)	117.82	118.00	202.00
6345 Hazen Fund	90.00	90.00	87.00
6355 Ellison Fund Expense	221.00	221.00	215.00
Total 6300 Board of Mission	6,832.82	6,833.00	6,918.00
6400 Music			
6405 Senior Choir Dir	10,400.23	10,483.00	10,798.00
6406 Junior Choir Dir	8,100.12	8,107.00	8,351.00
6407 Payroll Tax-Music	3,010.98	3,167.00	3,101.00
6408 Organist	17,307.92	17,291.00	17,810.00
6420 Musicians	371.00	600.00	600.00
6425 Vac Organ	925.00	900.00	900.00
6430 Music-Sr. Choir	156.98	300.00	300.00
6435 Maint	1,186.00	1,600.00	1,600.00
6445 Music Jr	137.05	250.00	250.00
6447 Jr/Yth Choir Accom	3,551.10	3,468.00	3,573.00
6455 Continuing Ed	-	100.00	-
6460 Guild	-	250.00	250.00
6465 Equipment Expense	-	100.00	-
6475 C. White Trust Fund	404.00	404.00	414.00
6485 Ellison Fund	100.00	221.00	215.00
Total 6400 Music	45,650.38	47,241.00	48,162.00
6500 Office & Accounting			
6505 Office Manager	14,670.50	14,936.00	18,900.00
6506 Payroll Tax-Office	1,122.27	1,494.00	1,446.00
6508 Bookkeeping Services	2,903.00	9,392.00	-
6509 Payroll Tax-Bookkeeping	222.08	761.00	-
6510 Accounting Services	1,932.70	600.00	2,000.00
6512 Copier	3,939.70	4,600.00	4,000.00
6515 Supplies - Office	867.59	1,400.00	1,000.00
6520 Telephone & Internet Service	2,121.20	2,000.00	2,200.00

6525 Postage	916.34	1,200.00	800.00
6535 PO Box Fee	88.00	84.00	88.00
6540 Lifeline	1,510.00	2,000.00	600.00
6550 Continuing Ed-Office Mgr		200.00	-
6555 Computer Expenses	263.00	1,000.00	500.00
Total 6500 Office & Accounting	30,556.38	39,667.00	31,534.00
6600 Building			
6605 Sexton	6,300.32	6,324.00	6,514.00
6607 Payroll Taxes-Sexton	481.93	490.00	499.00
6610 Cleaning	11,238.50	11,258.00	11,596.00
6615 Payroll Taxes - Cleaning	859.74	918.00	888.00
6620 Supplies - Building	718.61	1,000.00	800.00
6625 Rubbish	360.00	300.00	400.00
6635 Insurance	8,530.62	8,300.00	8,800.00
6639 Elevator Maintenance	1,968.19	1,300.00	1,300.00
6640 Fuel Oil	8,206.38	8,500.00	8,000.00
6642 Furnace/Water Htr Service	300.00	500.00	500.00
6645 Electric	2,752.35	3,000.00	3,000.00
6650 Water Usage	167.97	400.00	250.00
6655 Propane	997.27	1,100.00	1,100.00
6660 Maj Main	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
6661 Maintenance Capital Reserve	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,500.00
6662 Equipment		500.00	-
6664 Clock Maintenance/Repair	325.00	1,500.00	1,000.00
6665 Snow/Lawn Care	826.97	1,000.00	1,000.00
6675 Fire/Security Alarm	1,213.38	1,500.00	1,250.00
Total 6600 Building	47,247.23	49,890.00	49,397.00
6700 Miscellaneous			
6701 Misc - Other	73.36	250.00	-
6705 Hosp Com	164.00	500.00	500.00
6710 Church Expenses - Lilly	8,865.04	9,000.00	-
6720 Flower	177.93	500.00	500.00
6730 Stewardship Committee	98.00	500.00	500.00
6740 Worker's Compensation	3,080.00	3,800.00	3,200.00
6780 Brokerage/ Electronic Fees	349.00	400.00	400.00
6781 Bank Fee	62.00	50.00	50.00
Total 6700 Miscellaneous	12,869.33	15,000.00	5,150.00
6800 Unresolved Exp	-	100.00	-
7000 DRP Expenses	1,386.60	12,000.00	12,000.00

7002 DRP Child Sponsorship	2,625.00	-	
7003 DRP Womens Co-op	10,029.49	-	
7005 DRP Community Development	527.00		
Total 7000 DRP Expenses	14,568.09	12,000.00	12,000.00
Total Expenses	286,243.69	299,926.00	281,802.00
Net Operating Income	1,566.35	(21.00)	-
Other Expenses			
Reconciliation Discrepancies	6.76	(21.00)	-
Total Other Expenses	6.76	(21.00)	-
Net Other Income	(6.76)	21.00	-
Net Income	1,559.59	-	
Less DRP Income	393.91		
Net Income less DRP Income	1,165.68		

S: Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2015

	<u>Total</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
1100 Ledyard Operating Checking	65,939.48
1107 Dominican Republic Projects	9,643.70
1109 Ledyard Woodworth MM	78,558.53
Total Bank Accounts	154,141.71
Accounts Receivable	
1200 Accounts Receivable	520.00
Total Accounts Receivable	520.00
Total Current Assets	154,661.71
Fixed Assets	
1275 Parsonage Sale Agreement	240,652.95
Total Fixed Assets	240,652.95
Other Assets	
1802 UCF Investment Account	682,986.46
1803 Vanguard IT Treasury Fund	63,293.59
Total Other Assets	746,280.05
TOTAL ASSETS	1,141,594.71
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	

Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2050 Accounts Payable	4,798.32
Total Accounts Payable	4,798.32
Other Current Liabilities	
2130 EE 401K Withholdings	1,691.66
2210 Next Year's Pledges	23,150.00
2220 Woodworth for Organ	53.77
2226 Lilly Grant	751.46
2230 Mission	5,856.30
2233 Hospitality Donations	182.82
2245 Grand Piano Reserve	1,028.42
2260 Sabbatical Fund	3,676.72
Total Other Current Liabilities	36,391.15
Total Current Liabilities	41,189.47
Long-Term Liabilities	
2265 Reserve Capital Maintenance	3,526.50
2901 Woodworth Fund Balance	78,558.53
Total Long-Term Liabilities	82,085.03
Total Liabilities	123,274.50
Equity	
2700 Retained Earnings	20,577.83
2800 Parsonage Capital	240,652.95
2802 UCF Trust Balance	682,986.46
2803 Vanguard- Parsonage Fund	63,293.59
2804 DRP Equity	9,249.79
32000 Unrestricted Net Assets	-
Net Income	1,559.59
Total Equity	1,018,320.21
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	1,141,594.71

Norwich Congregational Church
P.O. Box 236
Norwich, VT 05055

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