



2023 Annual Report

as presented at the 199th Annual Meeting
on January 28, 2024



Congregational Church of Laconia
United Church of Christ
603.524.0668
churchoffice@laconiaucc.org

Church Staff

Rev. Campbell Lovett, Interim Pastor

Carolyn Jorgensen, Financial Secretary
carolyn@laconiaucc.org

K. Robert Bengtson, Music Director
krbengtson@mowglis.org

Karen McDowell, Communications Associate
churchoffice@laconiaucc.org

Chuck Laurent, Sexton
sexton@laconiaucc.org

Mike Marshall, Media Technician

NH Conference, UCC | 140 Sheep Davis Rd., Pembroke, NH 03275-3711

www.nhucc.org | 888-642-8229 | 603-225-6647

The Rev. Gordon M. Rankin - Conference Minister

603.715.9527 | grankin@nhcucc.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Church Contact Information	2
Agenda	4
Minutes of Annual Meeting (1/29/2023)	5
Minutes of Special Meeting (4/16/23)	6
Minutes of Special Meeting (12/10/23)	7
Mission Statement	8
ONA Statement	8
Church Service Award Recipients	9
Deacon Emeritus Award	9
Membership Anniversaries	10
Church Clerk Report	10
Interim Pastor Report	11
Moderator Report	12
Financial Report & Proposed Budget	14
Historical Preservation Committee	18
Director of Music Report	20
Diaconate Report	21
Dorcas Fund Report	21
Altar Guild Report	22
Caring Connections Report	22
Educational Ministries Report	24
Property and Finance Report	25
Parish Activities Committee Report	26
Worship & Music Committee Report	27
Outreach Ministry Report	29
Nominating Committee Report	30
Service of Affirmation of Lay Ministry	33

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LACONIA
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AGENDA FOR THE 199TH ANNUAL MEETING
Business Meeting at 10:45 AM – *In Person and on Zoom*
Presiding, Wayne Domin, Moderator

10:45	Call to Meeting Opening Prayer	Martha Clement, Recording Clerk Rev. Louise Bastille
-------	-----------------------------------	---

10:50	Approval of Minutes: 198 th Annual Meeting 1/29/23 Special Meeting - Bylaws change - 4/16/23 Special Meeting to Call Reverend Eliza Tweedy 12/10/23	Wayne Domin, Moderator
-------	---	------------------------

10:55	Renaming of the Parish House	Diane Tinkam
-------	------------------------------	--------------

11:05	Membership Anniversaries Deacon Emeritus Award Church Service Award Presentation	Wayne Domin Margie Kreitler & Diane Wells Wayne Domin
-------	--	---

11:20	Annual Reports/Year in Review	Wayne Domin
-------	-------------------------------	-------------

11:30	Financial Report and 2024 Budget	Hollis Thompson, Treasurer
-------	----------------------------------	----------------------------

11:50	Nominating Committee Report Election of Officers/Committee Members	Martha Clement, Chair Wayne Domin
-------	---	--------------------------------------

	Service of Affirmation	Rev. Louise Bastille
--	------------------------	----------------------

12:00	Other Business	Wayne Domin
-------	----------------	-------------

	Benediction	Rev. Louise Bastille
--	-------------	----------------------

Hymn #295 I sing a song of the Saints of God

	Adjournment	Wayne Domin
--	-------------	-------------

*Pot Luck Luncheon in the Church Hall featuring recipes from Church cookbooks since 1902.
Start celebrating the 200th anniversary year of The Congregational Church of Laconia!!*

**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LACONIA, UCC MINUTES
OF THE 198th ANNUAL MEETING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 2023
Church Sanctuary and Zoom**

Moderator Don Clarke called the meeting to order. Don Clarke affirmed that a quorum was present. According to the bylaws a quorum is 5% of membership @256 members a quorum is 13 or more members. He noted that there was one person attending the meeting on zoom.

Rev. Campbell Lovett opened the meeting with a prayer.

The Call to the meeting was read by Jean Clarke, Acting Recording Clerk.

Approve Minutes of the 197th Annual Meeting - January 30, 2022: Don opened the floor for questions/concerns with last year's Annual Meeting Minutes. Pat Wood motioned to approve the 197th Annual Meeting Minutes as presented and Tammy Emond seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Membership Anniversaries: Don highlighted the membership anniversaries from the Annual Report. We recognized people who have been members for over 40, 50, 60, 70 and 80 plus years. Caring Connections members recognized the 13 members we lost to death this year. The current membership count is 256.

Deacon Emeritus Award Presentation: Margie Kreidler presented this year's Deacon Emeritus Award to Don Clarke. Margie read "the way Don lives out his life each day embodies the attributes of a true Deacon. Don's 'what can I do for you?' has touched many lives in the church and community."

Church Service Award Presentation: Don welcomed Wayne Domin, Vice Moderator, to present this year's CSA. Wayne presented this year's CSA to Hollis and Greg Thompson and highlighted their behind-the-scenes commitment to a wide range of church programs and activities. From the display of flags on Memorial Day to the Pumpkin Fest and Thanksgiving Dinner, Hollis and Greg have played an integral part in the life of our church. Hollis and Greg received a standing ovation.

Annual Reports/Year in Review: Don reviewed some highlights from the Annual Reports of various committees and staff members. Jean Clarke made a motion to accept the committee reports as printed in the Annual Report. Wayne Domin seconded. John Intorcio noted that there were 11 members removed from membership by death and 3 additions by new members and letter of transfer. Motion passed unanimously.

2022 Financial Report and 2023 Budget: Hollis Thompson, Treasurer, presented the proposed budget for 2023 and the report for 2022. Hollis provided several highlights from the 2022 report. There were no questions from the members present. Hollis provided several highlights from the 2023 proposed budget including: some committee budgets were reduced, a 5% pay raise for all staff, and facility/office and other expense increases. Pat Wood made a motion to accept the proposed 2023 budget as presented. Lorraine Barrows seconded the motion. There were several questions that were addressed by Hollis. John Walker made an amended motion that the congregation take up to 4.5% of a 4-year average from the consolidated fund as needed to balance the budget. The amended motion was seconded by Mark Townsend. There was much discussion regarding the pros and cons to this amendment. John Walker withdrew his amended motion and Mark Townsend withdrew his second. There was some discussion on the original motion to accept the proposed 2023 budget. Motion passed unanimously.

Nominating Committee Report: Wayne noted that the Nominating Committee Report was included in the Annual Report. There is an opening for a Recording Clerk, two openings on Property and Finance, one

opening on Diaconate (Don Clarke volunteered to serve), one opening on Educational Ministries for a high school student, one opening on Outreach, and all other committees are filled. Luann Mussari noted a correction to the report for Music and Worship Committee: Kathy Giovanni 24 (1) is in her second year of her first term on Music and Worship. Wayne made a motion to accept the Nominating Committee Report as presented with one correction noted above. Hollis Thompson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Election of Officers/Committee Members/Installation: Rev. Lovett led us in a Service of Affirmation of Lay Ministry.

Other Business:

Luann Mussari noted that there is a Safety and Security ad hoc committee to address the need to protect church property and ensure the safety of the people of our church community, friends and neighbors. There will be two meetings after the church worship service in February to hear the thoughts and ideas of church members on this topic.

A Bylaws ad hoc committee led by Sue Smith is being formed to review and revise the church's bylaws. A copy of the current bylaws can be sent electronically or is available in printed format in the church office. Please check with Sue if you would like more information on this exciting and long-awaited endeavor.

Jaylene Bengtson, Search Committee member, reported that the Search Committee has met several times in the last few weeks. They have been getting to know each other and are enthusiastic about taking the next steps on this spiritual journey. Currently, they are reviewing the 2017 church profile developed by the prior Search Committee. The church profile is one tool of many that provides potential candidates for the Pastor position with an in depth look at our church. From there, they will create a new profile and will be gathering input from the congregation so that everyone can be involved in developing this document. Your voice will be heard! Your opinion matters! and reach out to any member of the Search Committee if you have questions or ideas.

Closing: Don formally handed off the Moderator's gavel to Wayne Domin. Wayne thanked Don for his faithful leadership and "respectful, conscientious and sacrificial service." Wayne stated that he was looking forward to 2023 and working together in service to God and the church.

Benediction: Rev. Lovett led us in a benediction.

Meeting Adjourned: 12:15 pm

Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ

Jean Clarke, Interim Clerk

Minutes of Special Meeting Sunday, April 16, 2023
Re: Proposed Amendments to the Church's Bylaws

Moderator Wayne Domin opened the meeting immediately following the worship service (10:32) in the church sanctuary, for the purpose and presentation of, and action upon, the proposed Amendments to the Church's Bylaws.

It was determined that a quorum was present. (Only 13 members currently needed to fulfill that.)

Interim Pastor, Campbell Lovett, opened the meeting with a prayer.

Wayne announced that we would be following Roberts Rules of Order; John Kreitler would serve as Parliamentarian. Wayne gave a brief overview of the process of getting to this meeting which began in 2019. Leadership changed, copies of the Bylaws were in flux, COVID came, Zoom meetings, etc. The Ad hoc Committee of Sue Smith, Ted Tunnicliffe, Sandy Brallier, and Ashley Coddington reconvened and met with John Walker, Wayne Domin, and Pastor Campbell Lovett to refine the Bylaws to better reflect the current demographics of this congregation and have current, understandable, practical Bylaws that represent and align with our Mission. This meeting was also available via Zoom, with thanks to Mike Marshall and Rich Morgan.

The motion to “approve the 2023 by-laws as amended and presented” was made by John Walker, seconded by Alida Millham. Paper copies of the current bylaws with differences highlighted in red were available to all. Sue Smith gave a brief overview and explanation of the changes within each page. Article III, “Membership” was questioned how members changed from active to ‘inactive status’. Ultimately it is only the person themselves who decides inactive status. Another question within Membership determined there are now 20-30 “associate members.” Aside from those points, the rest of the changes went without discussion. Mark Townsend called the vote; it passed unanimously. Rev. Lovett reflected that the bylaws is a living document, a guideline that may be ever-changing. He ended the meeting with a prayer. Wayne closed the meeting with a gavel at 10:50.

Faithfully submitted,
Martha Clement

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Congregational Church of Laconia, UCC Sunday, December 10, 2023

The meeting opened at 10:48 a.m. with Moderator Wayne Domin reading the notice and call of the meeting “to consider and act upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee to call our next settled Pastor and Teacher of the Church. All Members and Associate Members shall be entitled to vote in person or by electronic means.”

It was noted that the quorum was met with at least 10% of the membership in attendance and via Zoom. Kathy Giovanni, Chair of the Search Committee, offered the opening prayer.

Wayne reported that Roberts Rules of Order would be followed for the duration of the meeting and John Kreitler was serving as Parliamentarian. He then recognized and thanked the members of the Search Committee for their diligence, efficiency and energy. Kathy reiterated a thank you to all spouses of those members for the time they had given.

The meeting was called to order at 10:53. Kathy Giovanni moved the motion that “we accept Reverend Eliza Tweedy as the next settled pastor and teacher of the Congregational Church of Laconia, UCC.” Diane Tinkham seconded the motion.

Wayne opened the meeting for comments and questions. Most questions centered around the logistics of housing, travel, hours in the office, which were answered by members of the Search Committee. Wayne stated her start date would be March 1, and Rev. Lovett would be working on a ‘bridge’ transition.

Wayne re-stated the motion and asked for the vote verbally by “yes” or “no” at 11:05. The motion passed unanimously in house and online.

The meeting adjourned at 11:08. Eliza and her family returned to the sanctuary with a standing ovation.

Faithfully submitted,
Martha Clement

Congregational Church of Laconia United Church of Christ

Mission Statement

The Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ, is a welcoming Christian community with a scriptural foundation seeking justice and peace for all.

We aspire:

- To promote vibrant public and personal worship;
- To inspire the spiritual development of every person;
- To provide a place of warm and friendly community gathering;
- To express our concern for our neighbors near, and far, through sharing and caring;
- To express the joy of our communion with God and with each other as revealed through Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit to guide and sustain us.

Open and Affirming Statement

Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

We, the Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ, join our brothers and sisters in this community, this nation and this world who are committed to work for justice and peace. We are guided by the all-inclusive love of Jesus in our affirmation of others. We walk humbly with God and stand with those who suffer discrimination, isolation and alienation to create a safe place, striving for wholeness and healing for all.

We strive to be open to and affirming of all people regardless of race, ethnicity, religious belief, faith history, socioeconomic status, age, marital status, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

No matter who we are or where we are on life's path, through grace we make this journey together so that our love for God and for our neighbors may flourish.

Adopted November 19, 2017

CHURCH SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

1967: January 26	Alex Abercrombie	2005: January 30	David & Beverly Martin
1968: January 24	Norman & Dorothy Weeks	2006: January 29	Edmond & Gertrude Gove
1969: January 22	Wilbur Folsom	2007: January 28	Donald & Miriam Kent
1970: March 8	Horace & Mildred Ballard	2008: January 27	John & Elsie Burbank
1971: January 27	Everett J. Sanborn	2009: January 25	Bobbie Thomas
1972: January 26	Marion Louie Garland	2010: January 31	Lois Plimpton
1973: January 24	Richard, Priscilla, Catherine, Jeff & Richard Colby	2011: January 30	Dan & Diane Tinkham
1974: January 30	Paul Newell Stewart	2012: January 29	Diane Wells
1975: January 29	Whitman & Beth Ide	2013: January 27	Donald & Jean Clarke
1976: January 29	Earle & Muriel Kinsman	2014: January 26	Stanley & Sandra Brallier and Tina Levasseur
1977: January 26	Harold & Elvira Howe	2015: January 25	Pauline Towle
1978: January 25	Walter A. Brooks	2016: January 24	Pat Masters
1979: July 23, 1978	Thomas & Cathy Davis	2017: January 22	John Kreidler
1980: January 27	Dorothy Erdmann Eckels	2018: January 28	Andy & Kathy Giovanni
1981: January 25	Fritz & Beulah Gustafson	2019: January 27	Brad & LuAnn Geltz
1982: January 24	Barbara M. Thomas	2020: January 26	Alida Milham
1983: January 30	Robert & Clara Turner	2021: January 31	Mike Marshall
1984: January 29	E. Sheldon Harris	2022: January 30	David & Susan Smith
1985: January 27	Janet Ide Aldrich	2023: January 29	Hollis & Greg Thompson
1986: January 26	Dana Stearns Redington		
1987: January 27	Dorothy L. Cotnoir		
1988: January 31	Roxanna H.J. Tillotson		
1989: January 29	Mendon & Bette MacDonald		
1990: January 28	Clement & Ruth Lyon		
1991: January 27	Robert M. Harrington		
1992: January 26	Robert & Helen Livingston		
1993: January 31	Mary Lou Grevatt		
1994: January 30	Robert & Helen Holbrook		
1995: January 29	Esther Davis Joyal		
1996: January 28	Paul & Vera Shenk		
1997: January 26	John & Evelyn Millar		
1998: January 25	Muriel Berry		
1999: January 24	Warren & Martha Clement		
2000: January 30	Melvin & Evelyn MacMillan		
2001: January 28	David Frederick Frost		
2002: January 27	John & Donalda Richards		
2003: January 26	Bernard W. Chapman		
2004: January 25	Arthur & Jo Connelly		

DEACON EMERITUS – Life Term

The Diaconate voted to change the Honorary Deacon and Deaconess Award to Deacon Emeritus (which stands for Deacon for life). The criteria for people to be considered include:

1. Someone who has been a deacon or Deaconess
2. Person who is spiritual of nature
3. Person who has name recognition within the congregation

Elsie Burbank John Burbank Mary Lou Grevatt Helen Holbrook Elizabeth Howard
 Bette MacDonald Donalda Richards John Richards Clara Turner Mildred Walton
 Joan Thurston Joan Bell Peg Petrie Kay Vercoe Bernie Chapman Don Clarke

HONOR ROLL OF MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES 2023

70 years+
John Gauthier

60 to 70 years
Mary Conly -- Wayne Fletcher -- Robert Harrington -- Nancy Hemlin
Marilyn Lynch -- David Lynch -- Helen Joyal -- Alida Millham -- Phyl Vose

50 - 60 years
Russell Beane -- Steven Bobotas -- Shirley Clough -- Jean Davie -- J. Allen Gauthier
Rebecca Guyer -- Kathleen Harriman -- Carolyn Jorgensen -- Gene Raymond

40 -50 years
James Bobotas -- Arthur Burbank -- Penelope Burke -- Raymond Burke -- Charlotte Cilley -- Martha Clement
Warren Clement -- Wayne Domin -- Paul DuPont -- Gail Dyer -- Rodney Dyer -- Tammy Emond
Beverly Fortson -- David Frost -- Carolyn Furber. -- David Furber -- Dawn Gilbert
Mary Lou Grevatt.-- Betsy Kelly -- Delano Kennard -- Pam Kyle -- Diane Maher -- Jerry Maher
Bobbie Morin -- Cindy Nutter-- Jonathan Plimpton -- James Sessler -- Sally Sessler -- Elaine Smith-- Gretta
Smith Ruth Stuart -- Barbara Sweetser -- Patrick Wood -- Jan Woodland -- Claudia Wright
Berton Yeaton -- Judith Yeaton

REPORT OF THE CHURCH CLERK

January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023

IN MEMORIAM

"I am sure that neither death, nor life... nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

Romans 8:38-9

Virginia Reiley Wakeman (3/29/23)
Terry Turcotte (6/27/23)
Peter Millham (7/1/23)
Jacqueline Shoemaker (7/13/23)
Jane Ross (7/19/23)

Florence Merrill (9/25/23)
John Burbank (10/15/23)
Carol Veer (11/16/23)
Jack Weeks (12/7/23)

MEMBERSHIP

Removals by death = 9
Additions by Affirmation of Faith = 2
Additions by Confirmation = 0
December 31, 2023

249

Net Loss -7

2023 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INTERIM PASTOR

Love God, Love Neighbor, Include Everyone

In this report, I'd like to share about my time at Congregational Church of Laconia as *Interim, Pastor*, and *Community Member* – with many sincere thanks.

There are a variety of ways to understand the role of interim pastor. In some ways, I have worked in a few of those roles as *placeholder, bridge, and transitional pastor*.

- I have been a “placeholder” in the pastoral office while the Search Committee did its work of seeking and calling. It has been a good fourteen months of being the pastoral cog in the mission and ministry operation of the church.
- Some call this a “bridge” time that connects one settled pastor to the next. Thus, I have bridged the time between Rev. Neil Wilson’s retirement and Rev. Eliza Tweedy’s arrival. From a wider perspective, I was also with you during a time when our world bridged from pandemic to endemic. Together, we have been a part of significant moments in the history of this church and nation.
- Others define the interim role as “transitional pastor.” In that role I have helped the church work through five phases of interim ministry – from grieving the departure of Rev. Wilson to helping generate excitement about the arrival of Rev. Tweedy – and all the many good efforts in between. Thank you for allowing me to be your interim.

I have also served in the role of Pastor in a mutual ministry in your midst. You have entrusted me with the pastoral care of this church, and I have been honored to serve in this way. We have experienced (and experimented) with a variety of worship styles; we have shared a few seasonal programs that have enriched our spirits; and I have engaged with many of you in times of illness, infirmity, and grief. Thank you for trusting me to be your pastor.

One of the joys of a leadership position at Congregational Church of Laconia is the instant respect garnered by members of the community – far beyond anything I deserved. I engaged with civic leaders regarding challenges to the Laconia community by those who undermine the common good by acts of racism, bigotry, and hate. Laconia civic and religious leaders have responded with unity, courage, and strength. I found many good colleagues among ecumenical and interfaith partners in the Lakes Region and our clergy meetings were important for building a spirit of cooperation. And, as some of you know, I was a big supporter of Laconia commercial enterprises that served coffee, made sandwiches (or burritos), fixed bicycles, sold books, framed prints, served lunch, cut hair (infrequently), and offered personal training. Thank you for encouraging me to be a member of the wider community.

Surely, I could expand each of these paragraphs with pages of examples. However, allow me simply to add some of my takeaways about this church:

- You are a lay-led church of very committed people. I have been impressed with the way that lay leaders open and close meetings in prayer; participate fully in programs and worship and step up to serve on committees. This is an impressive feature of the church and will keep you in good stead in the future.
- You are hard workers! Fairs, Scarves in the Square, special music, bazaars, auctions, meal prep and serving, food pantry stocking, serving with the Association and Conference, watering flower buckets, leading Bible studies, visiting members and friends, writing devotionals, praying for the community. I truly believe that a strong work ethic is in the spiritual DNA of this congregation.

- You are willing to have fun and share your good humor. I have had many, many fun moments in your midst. We have worked hard together, but we have also had a great time together! I forgot how difficult full-time parish ministry was (after 10 years away in Conference Ministry), but your openness to change, your sense of humor, your grace, and your affirmation have made all the hard work and busy schedule wonderful. Thank you for being a vibrant, fun-loving, and spiritually deep congregation.
- You have a great blend of lay leaders and church staff. I have enjoyed working with such dedicated leaders. I have enjoyed being on the staff team with Bob, Carolyn, Chuck, Karen, and Mike – as well as a number of office volunteers who assist in busy seasons. I have also appreciated the opportunities to serve with the officers of the church in visioning and planning. You are in good hands!

I do think that your best days are yet to come, Congregational Church of Laconia! Thank you for inviting me to join you on the journey in that direction! Peace be with you.

Campbell Lovett
Interim Pastor

REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION FROM THE MODERATOR 12,900 PEOPLE ENCOUNTERS

Where do I begin?

Our church is the body of Christ; begin with the Bible! My favorite Apostle, Paul, wrote in Philippians: 1: v: 27: *“Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.”*

The Congregational Church of Laconia is a great and noble community of believers who exhibit the gift of grace and gratitude in many ways.

I am thankful for our rigorous Congregational Spirit, very active membership, and strong lay leadership. My fellow officers are extraordinary. Our Church Council and standing Committees in addition to many devoted, hardworking, and effective appointed Ad hoc committees display and accomplish our church mission for the congregation and community, near and far. It has been exciting, intellectually stimulating and often eye-opening to experience the behind-the-scenes accomplishments of many members and our wonderful staff. Thank you, Bob, Carolyn, Karen, Mike, and Chuck.

We have been blessed the last 14 ¼ months as Interim Pastor and Reverend Campbell Lovett and his wife Eileen helped us arise as the Phoenix from the post-Covid ashes. We celebrated his retirement at a Farewell Dear Friend party on his “last”, (really last?) day – 12/31/23.

I cherish a special place in my heart for mentors Don Clarke, John Walker, and Brad Geltz. Thank you for your support and faith in me.

Our church membership is excited about welcoming our 20th Pastor and Teacher, Rev. Eliza Tweedy, on February 12, 2024. A hearty round of applause for the Pastor Search Committee! Together, we will celebrate our 200th year of existence as a church.

We had a special congregational meeting on April 16, 2023, to unanimously approve a revised and updated bylaws. Thank you to Chair Sue Smith and the Bylaws Committee for reviving a multiple year effort interrupted by the dastardly Covid pandemic.

My role as Moderator is both complicated and simple. I believe in precision, attention to detail, being a transparent team leader and cheerleader, encouraging effective and empathetic communication and participation

of all members of our team. I intend to not micromanage but rely on the competency and dedication of excellent people. My agenda is that the LCC not only survive but THRIVE!

Returning to Paul in Ephesians 2: v: 8 “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, ...” However, we do live out our faith by works, too numerous to type. But in summary, I have decided to give an informed approximate total of what I wish to call *People Encounters* (not counting church service attendance, dinners, concerts, Christmas Fair, rummage sales, free veggie Thursdays, Dorcas Fund requests, and possibly others). My rough total is 12,900+ *People Encounters* for this year on this property. This includes 43 meetings a week by 32 separate groups, as well as visits to the Little Free Food Pantry, medical equipment lending closet, Got Lunch, and so much more. Thank you, Carolyn Jorgensen, for providing data.

In closing, we are a congregation seeking to Love God, Love Neighbor, and Include Everyone! Please stay active as a family of believers and doers! May the Peace of Christ, Love of Christ, Grace of Christ be with us all!

Wayne Domin, Moderator

01/22/2024

	2023 Budget	Operating Results	Overage (Unrealized) Amounts	2024 Proposed Budget
Income				
Pledged Offerings	192,000.00	192,317.66	317.66	192,000.00
Unpledged Offerings	20,500.00	19,315.37	(1,184.63)	20,500.00
Consolidated Fund	12,000.00	15,825.21	3,825.21	15,830.00
Restricted Funds	20,000.00	21,503.79	1,503.79	21,500.00
Frank Busiel	15,000.00	20,194.00	5,194.00	20,190.00
Edith George Funds	68,000.00	72,000.00	4,000.00	72,000.00
Fund Raising less expenses	5,000.00	6,813.11	1,813.11	7,560.00
Building Use Donations	5,000.00	3,953.00	(1,047.00)	3,700.00
Community Loan Fund	500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00
Got Lunch/Got Literacy Sponsor Fee	3,500.00	4,733.09	1,233.09	3,800.00
Total Income	341,500.00	357,155.23	15,655.23	357,580.00
Withdrawal from Consolidated Fund to Balance the Budg		6,245.00		60,884.00
		363,400.23		418,464.00
Expenditures				
Our Church's Wider Mission	27,350.00	27,348.00	(2.00)	28,000.00
Merrimack Association Dues	3,200.00	4,087.50	887.50	3,900.00
Mission Support	30,550.00	31,435.50	885.50	31,900.00
Diaconate	2,800.00	1,477.78	(1322.22)	2,200.00
Ministry of Outreach	7,500.00	7,180.68	(319.32)	7,500.00
Educational Ministries	2,300.00	1,010.84	(1289.16)	2,200.00
Worship & Music Committee	7,800.00	7,059.15	(740.85)	8,000.00
Altar Guild	300.00	154.58	(145.42)	300.00
Parish Activities Committee	500.00	1,334.53	834.53	700.00
Historical Preservation	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,000.00
Stewardship	350.00	308.16	(41.84)	350.00
Conference Delegate	0.00	350.00	350.00	0.00
Search Committee	2,500.00	520.54	(1979.46)	0.00
Committee Expenses	24,050.00	19,396.26	(4,653.74)	24,250.00
Senior Pastor - Salary, Housing, Annunity	90,000.00	85,330.09	(4,669.91)	112,540.00
Lay Staff combined Payroll & Annunity	124,607.00	112,755.28	(11,851.72)	119,764.00
Vacation Coverage - Financial Secretary	500.00	757.50	257.50	800.00
Christmas Bonus Pastor & Lay Staff	3,400.00	3,285.71	(114.29)	3,250.00
Compensation	218,507.00	202,128.58	(16,378.42)	236,354.00

BUDGET REPORT FOR 2023 AND PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2024

			Overage	2023	
	2023	Operating	(Unrealized)	Proposed	
	Budget	Results	Amounts	Budget	
Health Insurance	14,235.00	8,583.66	(5,651.34)	16,570.00	
Senior Pastor - Professional Expense	750.00	68.77	(681.23)	750.00	
Senior Pastor - Continuing Education	850.00	0.00	(850.00)	850.00	
Substitute Pastors	1,600.00	1,000.00	(600.00)	2,000.00	
Substitute Organists	600.00	300.00	(300.00)	600.00	
Social Security (Lay workers)	9,500.00	8,640.12	(859.88)	8,900.00	
Worker's Comp Insurance	2,600.00	1,321.50	(1,278.50)	1,300.00	
Payroll Service	1,225.00	1,333.60	108.60	1,230.00	
Taxes & Benefits	31,360.00	21,247.65	(10,112.35)	32,200.00	
Program Supplies & Expenses	250.00	695.09	445.09	760.00	
Telephone	2,200.00	2,398.83	198.83	2,640.00	
Postage	1,500.00	1,584.04	84.04	1,740.00	
Office Supplies & Expenses	4,000.00	4,492.19	492.19	4,940.00	
Office Equipment	6,000.00	5,613.42	(386.58)	6,170.00	
Marketing & Community Relations	2,400.00	3,861.50	1,461.50	3,860.00	
Bank Loan - Interest and Fees	50.00	206.50	156.50	130.00	
Administrative Expenses	16,400.00	18,851.57	2,451.57	20,240.00	
Property & Liability Insurance	12,482.00	17,537.50	5,055.50	14,915.00	*
Fuel, Electric, Water/Sewer	30,000.00	30,114.88	114.88	31,610.00	
Efficiency Lighting installments	1,511.00	1,846.35	335.35	2,015.00	**
Cable & Internet	1,500.00	1,846.35	346.35	1,990.00	
Building Supplies/Maintenance/Contracts	6,200.00	8,186.91	1,986.91	9,010.00	
Repairs & Improvements	6,000.00	6,345.93	345.93	6,980.00	
Snow Clearing / Cleaning Service	2,850.00	978.50	(1,871.50)	3,450.00	
Paper & Cleaning Supplies	1,000.00	497.55	(502.45)	550.00	
Church Garden	2,800.00	2,986.70	186.70	3,000.00	
Properties Expense	64,343.00	70,340.67	5,997.67	73,520.00	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	385,210.00	363,400.23	(21,809.77)	418,464.00	
Actual Income vs expense difference	\$363,400.23	\$363,400.23	\$0.00	\$0	
Consolidated fund withdrawals					
net difference	\$0.00		\$0.00		

Taylor Transfers to Gen Fund for Pastor & Organist 8770 -8770 0

* 1st pymt for 2024 made Property & Liability Insurance

** 167.85x12 Efficiency Lighting installments

2023 Investment Portfolio Review

Fund	2022 Beginning Balance	Transfers	Withdrawals	Correcting entries	Interest Earned	Market Value Change	2022 Ending Balance
Ash Fund	121,902.97	(5,840.57)			2,188.03	9,746.57	127,997.00
Brooks Income Fund	6,616.71	0.00			1,621.26	605.37	8,843.34
Brooks Repair Fund	83,566.04	0.00	(4,045.20)		6,586.56		86,107.40
Capital Improvement	12,139.44	0.00			223.99	992.51	13,355.94
Consolidated Fund	850,892.21	(15,825.21)	(6,245.00)		-	84,696.82	913,518.82
* DCA Repair Fund	147,051.42	(6,934.09)			2,640.11	11,711.76	154,469.20
Flora Stone Bible Fund	9,131.21	(461.18)			163.59	725.90	9,559.52
Founders Fund	27,903.19	0.00			514.96	2,281.32	30,699.47
Parsonage Fund	146,659.59	(4,262.75)			2,661.19	11,799.34	156,857.37
Taylor Fund Pastor	116,719.32	(5,517.66)			2,094.95	9,255.87	122,552.48
Taylor Fund Organist	55,967.08	(2,701.37)			4,494.35	1,004.54	58,764.60
* Warner Fund	56,775.91	(13,054.25)			890.03	2,284.11	46,895.80
	1,635,325.09	(54,597.08)	(10,290.20)	0.00	24,079.02	135,104.11	1,729,620.94

TOTAL \$ 27,350.

Amount is Divided by 4 and made in Quarterly payments

BUDGET REPORT FOR 2023

FUNDS HELD OUTSIDE BUDGET

	2023			2023
	Beginning Balanc	Income	Expense	End Balance
10 Campership Fund	1,058.65	2,176.00	2,012.62	1,222.03
11 Mission Trip Fund	87.35	1,400.00	1,400.00	87.35
12 Medical Supplies Fund	932.50	611.00	692.77	850.73
13 Synod Observer Fund	1,306.00	0.00	0.00	1,306.00
14 Flower Fund Holiday & Sidewalk	(229.19)	885.00	370.81	285.00
15 Holbrook Piano Fund	1,120.50	0.00	0.00	1,120.50
16 Pastor - Cont. Ed Fund	3,365.00	850.00	0.00	4,215.00
17 Parish Activities Fund	1,265.65	450.00	54.78	1,660.87
18 Stitches of Love Fd (moved to Outreach	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
19 Hazel Duke Thanksgiving Dinner	1,636.11	30.00	1,015.69	650.42
20 Founders Fund Holding	4,000.00	0.00	0.00	4,000.00
21 Piano Maintenance Fund	900.00	0.00	0.00	900.00
22 Handbell Refurbishing	3,458.77	500.00	0.00	3,958.77
23 Jail Ministry Fund	103.83	0.00	0.00	103.83
24 Soda Sales	419.83	622.00	753.18	288.65
25				
26	19,425.00	7,524.00	6,299.85	20,649.15
27				
28				
29				
30				

Special Offerings Itemizations

Special Offerings - Itemization

36 OGHS	2000
37 Neighbors In Need	470
38 Christmas Fund	1495
39 Strengthen the Church	682
40	
41 Total Special Offerings	4647

Historical Preservation Committee Annual Report for 2023



This has been an exciting year for the Historical Preservation Committee as we prepare for our two hundred celebration in 2024.

The HPC has worked with church committees to provide a museum quality space in the Garden elevator entrance to the church to display each committee's good works over the history of our church. As well as offering a moment of history during services on Sunday and through the News Blast and Tower Tidings.

To kick this project off the Music and Worship Committee along with our Organist, Bob Bengtson provided us a

wonderful display of photos of the choir and posters of music concerts over the years. The display included operettas written by our former choir director, Beth Ide.

Also on display were Bells and chimes from the organ.

The Historical Preservation Committees offering showed photos our first meeting house which was in the Jewett house on Gilford Ave. The display included photos from our churches over the years including moving the church from the corner of Church Street and Main Street to across from the train station as well as the building of our current stone church.

Some of these photos found their way into the Property and Finance display. Photos and architect plans were displayed. A favorite photo was of building the tower and window.

Outreach offered a display in the Narthex of the many ways we reached out to support our community. Some of the ways included mission trips, providing meals to Hands Across the Table, to Belknap house, the Medical Supply Closet, and the Little Pantry. In the Garden level entrance, one found information about Got Lunch, which started here at our church eleven years ago.

Come fall the Diaconate including Caring Connections shared a wonderful timeline of the Diaconate in our Church, the many ways Caring Connections have supported our church members and display of communion artifacts.

In the future there will be displays by Parish Activities, Educational Ministries and Women's Fellowship.

The other project HPC has been involved in has been to set up a steering committee for the 200th anniversary celebration. This great committee includes Hollis Thompson, Maurine Bastille, Diane Wells, Margie Kreidler, Janet Heslam, Jerilyn O'Hearn, Carolyn Jorgensen, Martha Clement, Betty Bergstrom, Diane Tinkham, Louise Bastille, and Beth Shehadi. The committee has been busy planning events leading up to the anniversary date of our church founding in July 1824. Included below is our tentative schedule of events for 2024!

CELEBRATIONS 2024! FOUNDED IN FAITH , FORWARD IN SPIRIT!

January – Annual Meeting January 28, 2024

Potluck Supper using recipes from Church Cookbooks from the past.

Parish Activities and Diaconate (membership)-Hollis Thompson, Betty Bergstrom, Beth Shehadi

Renaming the Parish House – Annual Meeting. - Diane Tinkham, Kathy Giovanni, Bob Harrington, Carolyn Jorgensen, Beth Shehadi

February -Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024

Memorabilia -Book Marks for the 200th including a bit of church history.

Hollis Thompson, Beth Shehadi

March - Easter March 31, 2024.

Updated history book with timeline. Cost for booklet \$5.00 -Diane Wells, Martha Clement, Janet Heslam, Bob Harrington, Beth Shehadi

April -Lunch and Learn presentation – Warren Huse -Jerilyn O” Hearn and Diane Tinkham

May - Celebration Banner to hang on the front of the church -Hollis Thompson

Memorial Day weekend - History Walk (like a story walk at library) – Lamine Posters placed around the church with church history. - Maurine and Richard Bastille

Memorial Day Flags – Hollis and Greg Thompson

June - Summer Vesper Service at Eds Chapel - June 21, 2024 - Maureen Bastille, Louise Bastille, Diaconate and Worship and Music

July - July 28, 2023, Worship Service

To celebrate the beginning of the Church (July 1824)

With a reception to follow the service - Diane Wells, Hollis Thompson Parish Activities, Diaconate, Worship and Music,

In closing to paraphrase the song “ Seasons of Love” from the play “RENT”

In one hundred and five million, twelve hundred thousand (105,120,000) minutes

How do you measure 200 years in the life of our church.

How about love?

It's time now to sing out

Though the story never ends

Let's celebrate!

Remember two hundred years in the life of our church!

Remember the love, Love, Sweet love,

Seasons of love, Measure two hundred years, in Seasons of Love!

Respectfully submitted in Love by Beth Shehadi and Hollis Thompson

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC REPORT

Dear Friends,

In preparing for this Annual Report, it has been fun to review the numerous and varied musical doings of our church. To get underway, I will reflect the members of our CHANCEL CHOIR:

SOPRANO: Jaylene Bengtson, Diane Lockwood, Beth Shehadi, Janet Simmon, and Michelle Wein

ALTO: Claire Bragg, Judy Genre, Kathy Giovanni, Dee Laurent, Alida Millham, LuAnn Mussari, and Diane Wells

TENOR: Mary-Ellen Azem, Lorraine Barrows, and John Kreitler

BASS: Granville Barrows, Stan Brallier, Wayne Domin, Bob Harrington, and Rich Morgan

At our church, the Choir is far more than a musical entity which sings faithfully and well at 40 Sunday services a year. It is a very supportive community; one in which all contribute their gifts in their own unique and generous ways. In January, we were sorry to see Soprano Rita Krupp and her husband, Jerry, move to North Carolina. And, on October 18th, we sang at the memorial ceremony for our robust Bass and personality, John Burbank! We are very much missing them both!

Stepping up to the plate for the 2023 SPECIAL SUMMER MUSIC were:

Jaylene Bengtson, Soprano; Lorraine Barrows, Piano and Bob Bengtson, Organ; Dee Laurent, Alto; Jaylene Bengtson, Soprano; Kathy Giovanni, Alto; Gaynelle Gosselin, Soprano; Camp Mowglis Brass with Rich Morgan, Director and Jay Gulitti, Guitar; John Cosgriff, Cello; Lorraine Barrows, Piano and Tenor, and Gran Barrows, Bass; Phil Breton, Oboe and Piano; Power Chords Directed by Lorraine Barrows; The Three Basses: Gran Barrows, Bob Harrington, and Stan Brallier.

How much we all enjoyed and appreciated them!

On September 24th, after much planning and effort by our Worship & Music Committee, we were treated to the JAZZ ENSEMBLE from First Church, Concord at our Fall Fellowship Supper. Performing were: Pastor Emilia Halstead, Vocalist; Tim Wildman, Keyboard; Joey Placenti, Saxophone and Flute; Jock Irvine, Bass; Ed Drazcka, Drums. Playing a mixture of sacred and popular tunes, they were fabulous and their time with us will long be remembered!

Then, in our sanctuary On October 22nd, following much anticipation, we welcomed internationally acclaimed pianist, recording artist and a friend of this church, HENRY WONG DOE. To say that the large audience he attracted was dazzled by his brilliant and vivacious performance is no overstatement! Beginning with a Beethoven Sonata and closing with a Chopin encore, it was a rare opportunity to experience a truly great pianist!

- K. Robert Bengtson

DIACONATE ANNUAL REPORT

What a busy year it has been! Along with all of our ongoing activities, such as weekly home devotions, Caring Connections, communion, Dorcas Fund etc., we did some new things this year.

We assisted Pastor Campbell Lovett with worship services at Belknap County nursing home and at the Taylor Community. We offered a Lenten series, “March(ing) in the Light of God”, in March. Lorraine Barrows started a community chorus in collaboration with Powerhouse Theater. In July, we did another Laity Sunday worship service with the Worship and Music committee and other volunteers.

In August, we had an all-church picnic at Ila Mattila’s home. A fun time was had by all. There was lots of great food, swimming, boat rides and fellowship. We even had a thunderstorm and a good downpour to add a little excitement to the day! Thank you again Ila for offering your home for this event. It was wonderful!

We had another Advent Event program in December entitled “You Can’t Handel the Truth”. A study of Isaiah 40 and Handel’s Messiah. Goody bags were put together and delivered to folks on the Caring Connections list. Caring Connections continues to be very active. Thank you to all who help out with letters, food, rides and visits. Your help is invaluable!

Thank you to Campbell for all of his help, guidance and ideas during this interim time. Thank you to everyone on the Diaconate for all of the work you do. It is true that many hands make light work! The next year should be an exciting one as we welcome our new settled pastor!

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Bergstrom

DORCAS FUND ANNUAL REPORT -- 1/1/2023-12/31/2023

This year was an active year for expenditures from the Dorcas Fund with below average donations during the year.

Fund balance 1/1/2023:	\$20,387.29
Income for the year:	\$ 711.89
Expense for the year:	\$ 4,303.71
Fund balance 12/31/2023:	\$16,795.47

The activity for the year was in three categories:

Gasoline vouchers for out-of-county travel to appointments totaled \$545.00.

Payments made to avoid electricity shut-offs totaled \$1,191.65.

Other payments made at Pastor’s discretion totaled \$2,567.06.

Payments were made on behalf of church members and friends, and those made on behalf of non-members were limited to Laconia residents and there was a cap for the year specified in the Dorcas Fund guidelines for each recipient.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Harrington
Dorcas Fund Treasurer

Altar Guild Annual Report for 2023

I would like to thank the members of the Altar Guild for their continued dedication in keeping the pulpit clean and decorating for special occasions. There are flowers on the altar every Sunday because of their continued diligence and loyalty. I am most thankful for all that they do. Also, a huge thank you to the Caring Connections people that help make sure the flowers that are donated find a home to brighten someone's day.

Thank you to Diane Lockwood for making sure the Chapel hangings are changed with the seasons and a huge thank you to all the team members for their continued conscientiousness making sure flowers are on the altar every Sunday as well as all they do to decorate the pulpit and altar for the holidays and changing seasons. We met in November to discuss decorating for Harvest, and a timeline and schedule of the Christmas Season Sanctuary decorations. Our goal is to make sure the Sanctuary always looks festive. Thankfully we always have enough volunteers to get the job done. Moulton Farms supplied some of the gourds and pumpkins to decorate the altar, reminding us of the plenty around us at Thanksgiving time. Great appreciation to Warren Clement for purchasing the Poinsettias for Christmas and getting them into the sanctuary.

Our list of volunteers has had some changes; Thankfully Dawn Dupak has joined the group, and now we just have one opening for a person to take on the month of May 2024. If you would like to have flowers placed on the altar at any time, please contact the member listed below for the month you would like. Thank you to all who make contributions and for the flowers that are delivered to shut-ins. Listed are the current members:

ALTAR GUILD MEMBERS 2024

January: **Dawn Dupak** (973)714-6871; February, **Diane Wells** (603)527-1701; March: **Maurine Bastille**: (603)293-0353; April: **Louise Bastille** (603)293-0182; May: (vacant); June: **Carolyn Hunt** (603)524-5779; July: **Margie Kreidler** (603)260-3673; August: **Mary-Ellen Azem** (603)455-0972; September: **Catherine Tokarz** (603)998-3811; October: **Diane Lockwood** (603)524-3076; November: **John Gill** (603)520-4248; December: **Claudia Wright**; (603)387-5275

Respectfully Submitted Claudia Wright,
Altar Guild Coordinator

Caring Connections Annual Report 2023

As part of the celebration of our 200th Anniversary, Diane Wells created a notebook telling how Caring Connections came into being. It seems fitting to share her opening letter.

THE STORY OF HOW CARING CONNECTIONS GOT STARTED

The story of visitation in the last 25 years is an interesting one. It has always been a commitment to be fulfilled by Deacons, the board that is to support the spiritual growth of the church members of Laconia Congregational Church. I know that Ellis Howard and Cindy Shippee led a visitation team, but it was a very small group.

When I became a deacon there was a time when a church member visited a shut-in and was asked if they came because they wanted to or had to! She was not a deacon, but loved visiting. So, a discussion began on how we could improve our care for lonely and/or sick members once they were at home. Our ministers would do hospital visits, what came next? At that time there had been a UCC interest in starting Health Ministries in churches. So, a group who had nursing experience or visiting training decided to meet and

discuss these needs. Rev. Grevatt was retiring and did wonderful visiting, so this need was felt. Ruth Stewart opened her home and we met with the guidance of Alida Millham and others who made a plan.

So, in 2007 the new Caring Connection was formed. At our meeting, through the Diaconate and minister, it was decided to ask people who were interested in being on a team who enjoyed visiting. We would hold training and set up teams so intentional caring occurred. Charlotte Leavitt and Alida Millham helped us get started. CARING CONNECTION BECAME A REALITY!

Enjoy this history to see how the group got started. It was always under the direction of a deacon with the help of team leaders. Following in the binder are the lists of who were the visitors and who they visited. Guidelines were established and the captains of each team met often to keep in touch with their team members. Changes were made as group living became more prevalent, but our purpose was to be sure that all church members knew they were cared for and that their church was strong in spiritual love for all.

A short history of Caring Connections by someone who has been part of the joyous ride for almost 20 years.

- Diane Wells

That brings us up to today! What a joy it has been to work beside Rev. Campbell Lovett in the caring ministry of our church. He pulled us in as needed and we kept him informed of pastoral needs that arose. Campbell, the congregation is grateful for your pastoral presence in times of illness, hardship, and loss. You have also celebrated our joys! Thank you! Now, we look forward to welcoming our new pastor, the Rev. Eliza Tweedy and hope to be a good support for her. Welcome Rev. Tweedy!

As mentioned last year, we expanded the leadership of the Caring Connections to coordinators with specific tasks. Penny Lamarre is in charge of meals. *Thank you everyone that cooked and delivered a meal!* Diane Lockwood oversees rides to medical appointments. Diane thanks all who gave rides this year: *Joe Smath, Marilyn Lynch, John Gill, Barbara Sweetser, Janet Simon, Mary Ellen Azem, Claudia Wright, Hollis Thompson, Diane Wells, and Louise Bastille!* Many rides were needed, and we can always use more drivers to help out. Margie Kreidler is coordinating rides to church. *This is newly added this year and we thank you Margie!* We can't always promise a ride, but we'll do our best. Mary Ellen Azem takes care of roses on the altar honoring 90th, 95th, and 100 + birthdays. *How wonderful to have three roses placed last year for John Gauthier, who celebrated his 103rd birthday!* Diane Wells and Louise Bastille oversee our visitation needs, matching those who wish to be visited with visitors. Our visitors are the heart of Caring Connections, bringing church to those who cannot get to Sunday services.

God bless our visitors...*Mary Ellen Azem, Louise Bastille, John Gill, Janet Janke, Margie Kreidler, Penny Lamarre, Diane Lockwood, Marilyn Lynch, Ila Mattila, Jeri O'Hearn and Diane Wells.*

Caring Connection appreciates the Diaconate sending cards to our older church members. *Thank you to Catharine Tokarz for faithfully sending out those cards!* The deacons also oversee Home Devotions. *Thank you, coordinator Janet Simmon!* This mailing is sent out each week with the help of Karen McDowell, church office. *Thank you, Karen!* It includes the Sunday bulletin, copy of sermon, note from one of our Deacons and a Still Speaking Devotional from our United Church of Christ. Visitors often hear how very much they appreciate receiving the mailing and personal notes. Diaconate, with the help of Caring Connections, put together Christmas Bags for our shut-ins! The bags overflowed with cookies, candy, breads and more along with beautiful placemats made by the Belknap Mill Quilters Guild. Thank you! Once again it was a great joy to go caroling to some of our church members and their friends at St. Francis Rehabilitation Center, Taylor Community, and Sunrise Towers (Bob

Harrington Campus!) *Bless you Hollis Thompson for welcoming the carolers back to the church with the Hot Cocoa and Cookies!*

Caring Connections Annual Training Event was held on April 27, 2023, 10 a.m. in the Parish House Library. A highlight of the meeting was a PowerPoint presentation with photos of our visitors and those they visit! This was a fun meeting and well attended by our visitors, new volunteers, and members of Diaconate. Mary Ellen Azem welcomed us with an opening prayer. Diane Wells gave the history of our Caring Connections. Rev. Campbell Lovett shared about the vital role of Caring Connections during the Interim time. Penny Lamarre, Diane Lockwood, and Mary Ellen Azem shared about making meals, offering rides, and roses. Don Clarke and Diane Wells shared the importance of remembering birthdays. Louise read the names of beloved church members who passed since our last meeting as their visitor shared a memory and lit a candle. Resources were shared with a time for concerns and new ideas. Diane Lockwood offered the closing prayer.

Caring Connections seeks to tenderly care for those grieving. Our prayers surround the families of beloved church members that died this past year:

Virginia“Gini” Wakeman, Peter Millham, Jacqueline Shoemaker, Terry Turcotte, Jane Ross, Florence Merrill, John Burbank, Carole Veer, John “Jack” Weeks.

We also hold in our prayers all of you who lost precious spouses, beloved children, dear parents, family members and friends. Peace and comfort we pray for you.

Submitted by Connections Coordinators: Diane Wells, Penny Lamarre, Mary Ellen Azem, Diane Lockwood, and Louise Bastille

Educational Ministries Committee

Horton Center continues to offer church members and friends an opportunity to explore their faith, build relationships, and enjoy the outdoors on beautiful Pine Mountain. We had children, youth and adults participating in a variety of week-long camps over the summer. Everyone came back with stories to tell and photos to share. Church members support children and families through the **Horton Center Challenge** established in 2022. This year, in addition to the *Challenge*, the EMC committee sponsored the Church Christmas card and every donation went directly to the Campership Fund. The Fund ensures that every child who attends camp is granted a full scholarship. As so many in our congregation can testify, a summer camp experience can be life changing. Check out the opportunities for you in 2024 by going to: www.hortoncenter.org.

Faith Formation continues to meet on the second Sunday of the month. We have a multi-age group that gathers on one day rather than limited participation scattered on occasional Sundays. Other EMC activities included the design and oversight of the **Prayground** in the Chapel section of the sanctuary. The Prayground is intended to keep young children busy as their families attend the worship service. The area includes toys, books, and craft activities for “nursery aged” children and their families.

This year the **Lunch and Learn** series continued with a schedule of monthly noontime programs. The format followed a casual bring-your-own-lunch and learn about community programs, activities and events that are interesting and educational. In 2023 programs included: a tour of the church organ with Bob Bengtson; NH Alliance for Braver Angels with Muff Kruse; Concord Hospital Laconia’s mental health services with Corey Gately; Prescott Farm’s environmental education programming; the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu; an overview of Citizen’s Climate Lobby; Rock, Steady, Boxing – a Parkinson’s exercise program and many more. If you have an idea for a program, please reach out to an EMC committee member. More to come in 2024!

A very popular on-going activity includes the ***Sunday afternoon walks*** which continued with walks around Franklin Falls Dam, the Chamberlain-Reynolds Forest in Center Harbor, Canterbury Shaker Village and Prescott Farm in Laconia, NH. The walks attract many enthusiastic walkers especially in the winter, spring and fall months.

Members of our committee and other church friends participated in creating the ***Vacation Bible School*** that we offered this summer. The adult enthusiasm was amazing! We invited children entering grades 1-6 from any of the Merrimack Association Churches to participate in a free, 3-day VBS adventure. There was a lot of singing and game playing, projects, and Bible stories from Rev. Lovett. Three youth from our congregation, Ellen, Haily, and Lyllah, were very helpful as volunteers and had fun as well. A special thanks to Lorraine Barrows for being the resident musician and sharing her enthusiasm and energy!

In a model similar to our VBS program, we invited area UCC youth to participate in our 2023-2024 ***Laconia Confirmation Experience***. This new approach has been meaningful for the six youth participants, and it provides fellowship for those who are the only Confirmand in their church. Diane Tinkham is serving as the facilitator, and we appreciate the variety of visiting ministers/specialists at each group meeting. We've been enjoying engaging discussions, providing opportunities to learn, and going to other Houses of Worship, and having fun together! The youth have chosen Mentors from their own congregations, and we hope that it will encourage the connection to their home churches. There are suggested activities for the Confirmands/Mentors to do in between the monthly group meetings. We hope that this flexibility meets the needs/schedules of today's youth as we work to offer them a meaningful Confirmation experience.

Thanks to our wonderful committee members who volunteered countless hours to make the above-noted activities and events happen! We are grateful for all of the ideas, laughter, commitment, and energy when we come together.

In Christ's love,

Diane Tinkham & Jean Clarke
Mary Ellen Azem
Carolyn Jorgenson
Muff Kruse
Jaylene Bengtsen
Catherine Tokarz

Property and Finance Committee Annual Report for 2023

Our 2023 committee members are: Dee Laurent, Chair, Granville Barrows, Vice-Chair, Bob Hunt, Char Landow, Dave Shaw, John Intorcio and John Walker. I would like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to Char Landow and John Walker for serving on our committee. Your contributions have been invaluable and we appreciate your dedication and service. You will be missed.

Thank you to Dave Shaw and John Intorcio for joining us this year and sharing your talents and insights as we worked to serve and care for our property, facilities and congregation. Special thanks to Bob Hunt for preparing our minutes, Hollis Thompson, Treasurer, for her financial guidance, our Interim Pastor Campbell Lovett for his support and encouragement and to Chuck Laurent for his constant care of our facilities and grounds. I especially want to thank the congregation for its continued support through your pledges, skills, talents and suggestions.

Church and Office Security:

We upgraded to a wired camera system that included 6 cameras, enabling us to have a greater ability to monitor access to the Church and the Parish House. Thank you to Granville for putting in a great deal of effort to get the wiring in. Thank you to Rich Morgan for helping the committee to make the best choice for our security. Lighting around the buildings/grounds was improved. The light at the Pleasant Street entrance was refurbished and the wattage increased. Narcan was put in place & staff were trained on how to use it appropriately if necessary.

Grounds:

The bushes to the left of the Pleasant Street stairs were removed and replaced with similar landscaping that is on the right side. Thank you to Granville Barrows and Dave Shaw for their hard work in removing the bushes. A leaking backflow valve in the automatic sprinkler system was repaired and passed inspection. We renewed our contract for snow removal.

Office/Building Maintenance & Improvement:

Thanks to a very generous donation, a new commercial freezer was purchased to replace our aging/failing freezer. The refrigerator needed a freon refill and the grease trap was cleaned out. Two electrical outlets were added in the Peace Garden entryway to enable our church to better meet the needs for events such as Pumpkin Fest & Hazel Duke Thanksgiving dinner. Our annual inspections were completed. A bench was removed to provide better wheelchair/walker access in the sanctuary.

Continued Technology Improvements:

Two speakers and 1 amp that had failed were replaced. A new computer was purchased to enhance our livestreaming capabilities. The Financial Secretary's computer was replaced.

We look forward to the coming year as we welcome new members to the committee, a new Pastor, and our celebration of 200 years!

Parish Activities Committee Annual Report for 2023

Members of the Parish Activities Committee are responsible for the Church Kitchen and the Church Hall. We are responsible for keeping the supplies needed for any activities such as our weekly coffee hour, receptions for special occasions or for a memorial reception. Our time of "Coffee and Conversation" has changed some over the years with COVID and the need to reduce the amount of food we had for each Sunday. We have a schedule now for coffee and drinks only, with each committee taking a turn to provide a full coffee, and refreshments on the Second Sunday of the month.

A little problem with one of our freezers, who decided it could no longer be in service. This happened a couple of months before our greatest time of need, Pumpkin Festival and Hazel Duke Thanksgiving Dinner. With the generosity of one of our church members, we were able to replace it with a very nice freezer. We have also had to service the refrigerator in the kitchen a couple of times, but this most recent time, I think they were able to make it better.

Along comes the Hazel Duke dinner and the bottom oven decided it would not heat enough to cook turkeys are anything else. They made it through and served almost 200 dinners through take-out.

This year the church held an auction in the church hall, a rummage sale in the Fall and a Christmas Fair in November. They were successful.

One of the toughest tasks is to keep clutter from the pantry floor. The boxes for storage are well used, and the table covers have been washed and are now hanging in the hall. This provides us with a little more storage room and keeps the covers from wrinkling.

A few of us have briefly discussed painting the church hall to make it look fresher and brighter. Maybe that would be a great project for 2024.

There is still a dry erase board on the refrigerator in the kitchen for listing items needed when they are getting low and a cabinet to check for backup supplies like cleaning supplies, paper towels, gloves, dish soap, sandwich bags and others of various sizes.

A great big thank you to all who have served the Parish Activities Committee over the life of our church. For 2024, our committee will consist of Betty Bergstrom, Connie Clark, Roberta Neylon, Elvena Anderson, Janet Janke, Diane Lockwood, and Hollis Thompson, and we take volunteers to help.

Respectfully submitted,

Hollis Thompson

Hollis Thompson

Worship & Music Committee 2023

The entirety of our worship experience in 2023 has been enlivened and led by the interim ministry of the Rev. Campbell Lovett. His creativity and humor have kept us on our toes and opened us to the moving of the Spirit. We are grateful for the time he and Eileen have spent *with us on the journey* to a new settled ministry and wish them Godspeed as they move forward from here.

In January, the committee was the first to put up a historical display in the elevator foyer in preparation for the 200th anniversary of the church. We hope we set the bar high for other groups featured in succeeding months.

The Covid status of Belknap County was still “red” in January, and masking was still highly recommended. Luckily, this quickly and precipitously declined making communal worship more comfortable for many. We must all continue our vigilance regarding Covid, however, to protect each other from illness to the extent that we can.

Susan Smith joined our committee. She will bring a new perspective to us to which we very much look forward. No new Bell Choir Director has been found since Chandra Hazelton’s resignation. It is our sincere hope that our bells will one day ring again when the time is right!

Our awareness was raised about our safety and security during worship through guided conversations (and coffee!) in February/March. Recommendations taken to and subsequently approved by Council were:

- A middle-ground approach should be followed.
- Staff, committees, and members are encouraged to speak to Council or Property & Finance regarding any concerns; and
- The impact of any projects on *welcome* should be assessed and *welcome* deliberately augmented if negatively affected.

In June, Rich Morgan installed new amplifiers and speakers. Mike Marshal is compiling a media tech manual and is maintaining a station for microphones at the media desk. He has also purchased chargers and rechargeable batteries to keep microphones fully charged.

In October, John Intorcio, with limited training, attempted to livestream our Sunday service in the absence of Mike. By Christmas Eve, he was a master of the medium! Thanks to ALL our “techies” for making our services accessible far beyond our sanctuary!

Since November, we are once again passing the plates for the collection of the morning offering. It has proven to be an effective way to ensure that contributions stay timely which assures the missions and ministries of the church have what they need.

Campbell mixed it up in style and format for sermons during the year. While not an exhaustive list, you may well remember the lenten series Lookin’ for Love in All the Wrong Places with a music video of *Leaning In: A Prayer of Intention*; the sermon introduction written by Artificial Intelligence in various voices including that of Thomas the Tank Engine; Broadway Sunday featuring the Power Chords; the All-Saints Day service of candle lighting and naming those who we lost this year; and a modern Pageant Prequel—unmuted! Engagement was high and, we hope, all took blessings and personal challenges for the living of our days from these experiences.

Musically, our choir sang many familiar favorites as well as a good number of never-before-sung anthems to enhance our worship experiences. The 20 faithful singers must be sincerely thanked for their ministry of music. Bob Bengtson fully enjoyed the close collaboration he shared with Campbell in planning for music that supported the mood and themes of each service throughout the year.

Beyond that, we hosted several extraordinary musical events that were very well-received. In September, Church Hall was transformed to a jazz supper club for a Jazz Pot Luck featuring Emilia Halstead and her Jazz Ensemble from First Church, Concord. In October, Henry Wong Doe, a talented pianist with Gilford ties who has been using our Steinway grand piano while visiting the area for a number of years, played a varied and magnificent piano recital which was followed by an appetizer reception. In December, in thanks for the use of the church for rehearsals, Lorraine Barrows directed her Power Chords in a Broadway and holiday hits concert which was followed by cookies and punch.

We give thanks for all of you who have participated in the worship and music ministries of our church. May we all take to heart the entreaty to: *Love God, Love Neighbor, Include Everyone.*

Committee Members:

Claire Bragg, Kathy Giovanni, LuAnn Mussari (chair), Sylvia Quackenbush, Susan Smith

Ex-officio members: Bob Bengtson, Mike Marshall

2024 Monthly Online Greeter Schedule:

Sue Smith	1st Sunday
Martha Clement	2nd Sunday
Louise Bastille	3rd Sunday
Catherine Tokarz	4th Sunday
Brad Geltz	5th Sundays and additional substitute

2024 Greeter/Usher Schedule*:

January	Peter & Dawn Dupak
February	Brad Geltz & Sandy Brallier
March	Dan & Diane Tinkham
April	Margie Kreidler & Betty Bergstrom
May	Dave & Sue Smith
June	Hollis Thompson & Janet Janke
July	Brad Geltz & LuAnn Mussari
August	John Walker & Muff Kruse
September	Catherine Tokarz & Louise Bastille
October	Ted & Linda Tunnicliffe
November	Warren & Martha Clement
December	Don & Jean Clarke

*Penny La Marre has offered to be an on-call sub.

Outreach Ministry

Outreach Ministry is proud to say that our congregation continued being a 5 for 5 Church! That means we contributed to all of important Special Offerings of the Wider UCC, including:

- Our Churches Wider Mission (OCWM): This is the money through which we support the Wider Church. The amount is determined by formula based on our income and is tallied in the budget worksheets.
- One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS): \$2,005.00
- Strengthen the Church (STC): \$682.00
- Neighbors in Need (NIN): \$470.00
- The Christmas Fund: \$1455.00

Look on-line at www.ucc.org to learn more about each of these! You also raised funds for special projects, including Disaster Relief for the fires in Maui (\$1,310.00) and our first mission fundraiser with the Merrimack Association to help erase Medical Debt (\$686.00).

On your behalf, Outreach Ministry supported a wide variety of ministries that act both locally and globally, reaching out to local groups that serve the folks we meet on the sidewalk and many others we will never meet. Think about the lives you helped change through Outreach's discretionary spending:

- OneLife Africa: You sponsored a gifted high school student in Kenya, giving them the chance to go to advanced schooling. This program is extra special because it is run by Stephanie and Andrew Onguka, daughter and son-in-law of Linda and Ted Tunnicliffe!
- Kids Health India - Ann Peck's Smokeless Stove Project
- Horton Center - Our Church Camp in Gorham

- Maine Seacoast Mission - 8 of us visited to help out for a week!
- New Beginnings – Women’s Shelter and Domestic Abuse Program
- NHCUCC Women’s Fellowship
- Re-Member - Pine Ridge Reservation
- Isaiah 61 – Homeless Shelter
- YMCA Palestine – a Justice Ministry
- Convalescent Supply Closet - Shelving
- Church of Another Chance – A ministry inspired by Rev. Scott Jamieson
- Disaster Relief – Earthquakes in Turkey and Pakistan
- Lakes Region Mental Health
- Our own Little Free Food Pantry
- Church World Service – Disaster Relief and Mother’s Day Blankets

We also held a successful Pumpkin Festival and served 200+ during the Hazel Duke Thanksgiving Dinner!
Wow, you were busy in 2023! Keep Reaching Out!
Claudia Wright, Diane Lockwood, Janet Jenke, Dan Tinkham, Elvena Anderson, Brad Geltz.

Nominating Committee

Terms run through the end of January of the year listed; number of terms served is shown in parentheses. Names in bold have been nominated for election at this 2024 Annual Meeting.

Church Officers – 1 Year Term

Moderator (limit of 2)	Wayne Domin (2)	603 455-6653
Vice-Moderator (limit of 2)	Kathy Giovanni (1)	603 344-5718
Treasurer (limit of 6)	Hollis Thompson (4)	512-970-6592
Recording Clerk (limit of 6)	John Walker (1)	603 520-4383

Council Members At Large – Three Year Term (limit of 2)

Andy Giovanni 25 (2)	603 344-5181
Beth Shehadi 26 (2)	603 528-6057
Sandy Brallier 27 (1)	603 630-2953

**COMMITTEES ARE ELECTED FOR A 2-YEAR TERM BUT MAY
SERVE FOR 3 CONSECUTIVE TERMS**

Property and Finance – Two Year Term (8 members + Treasurer with vote)

Dee Laurent 25 (2)	603 524-7334
Bob Hunt 26(2)	603 524-5779
Granville Barrows 26(2)	603 553-3680
John Intorcio 25 (1)	978 387-7164
Dave Shaw 25 (1)	603 998-6344
Greg Thompson 26 (1)	512 713-5544
Peter Dupak 26 (1)	917 428-7891
Betty Bergstrom 26 (1)	413 531-6748

Diaconate – Two Year Term. (17 members)

Matt Fink 26 (ad hoc)	603 528-8021	Alida Millham 25 (2)	603 524-1278
Judy Genre 25(1)	603 524-5056	Patrick Wood 25 (2)	603 528-2119
Marilyn Lynch 25(1)	603 387-2436	Louise Bastille 26 (2)	603 293-0182
Diane Wells 26 (3)	603 253-9555	Penny Lamarre 26 (2)	603 520-6456
Ila Mattila 26(3)	603 527-9476	Margie Kreidler 26 (3)	603 260-3673
Mark Townsend 25(1)	518 372-1097	Bob Harrington 26 (1)	603 393-7660
Catherine Tokarz 25(1)	603 998-3811	LuAnn Mussari 26 (1)	603 527-0929

Two more members needed

Educational Ministry – Two Year Term (7 members + 1 HS Student)

Diane Tinkham 26(3)	603 524-2901
Carolyn Jorgensen 25 (2)	603 630-0232
Jaylene Bengtson 26 (3)	603 528-8021
Jean Clarke 26 (2)	603 455-9702
Muff Kruse 26 (2)	603 568-9780
Claudia Wright 26 (1)	603 387-5275
Martha Clement 26 (1)	603 520-8219

Needed : one high school student

Ministry of Outreach – Two Year Term (7 members)

Janet Jenke 26 (3)	603 527-3436
Dan Tinkham 25(3)	703 623-7785
Brad Geltz 25(2)	603 393-8786
Elvena Anderson 25(2)	603 219-5384
Tammy Emond 26 (1)	603 455-6037
Shawn Intorccio 26 (1)	978 387-7164
Dave Barth 26 (1)	603 527-8022
Mary Carpenter (ad hoc)	203 690-2451

Worship and Music – Two Year Term (5 members + Director of Music)

Sue Smith 25 (1)	603 387-4861
Kathy Giovanni 26 (2)	603 344-5718
Lorraine Barrows 26(1)	603 553-3609
Don Clarke 26 (1)	603 455-9909
Janet Simmon 26 (1)	202 751-6655

Parish Activities – Two Year Term (7 members)

Elvena Anderson 25 (2)	603 219-5384
Janet Janke 26 (1)	603 527-3436
Diane Lockwood 25 (3)	603 524-3076
Hollis Thompson 26 (3)	512 970-6592
Connie Clark 25 (1)	
Roberta Neylon 26 (3)	603 520-7968
Betty Bergstrom 25 (1)	413 531-6748

CHURCH HISTORIAN – Ad Hoc Committee appointed by Council

Co-Chairs : Hollis Thompson 512 970-6592 Beth Shehadi 603 528-6057

CHURCH LIBRARIAN – Appointed by Council
Greg Thompson 512 713-5544

ASSOCIATION DELEGATES – One Year Term

Ex-officio

Kathy Giovanni

Wayne Domin 603 455-6653

Alternate Delegates – One Year Term (to achieve voting delegation of two)

Margie Kreitler 603 279-6150

Martha Clement 603 520-8219

CONFERENCE DELEGATES – One Year Term

Ex-officio

Kathy Giovanni

Wayne Domin 603 455-6653

Martha Clement 603 520-8219

Margie Kreitler 603 279-6150

Standing Delegate – One Year Term

Janet Simmon 603 524-7890

Diane Wells 603 527-1401

Alternates (to achieve voting delegation of six)

Diane Tinkham 603 455-2427

Betty Bergstrom 413 531-6748

Andy Giovanni 603 344-5181

At Conference meetings we are entitled to be represented by three delegates, plus one delegate per one hundred additional members or major fraction thereof in excess of the first one hundred; plus one youth delegate.

Service of Affirmation of Lay Ministry

Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ

Introduction

Pastor: Affirmation of ministry is the act whereby a local church of the United Church of Christ recognizes the diverse gifts of its members and celebrates the particular ministry of each person in the life of our church.

All: There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit gives them.

Pastor: There are different ways of serving but the same God is served.

All: The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all.

Pastor: Christ is like a single body which has many different parts.

All: All of us are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it.

Litany of Installation

Pastor: Would those of you who have been elected to serve in the ministries of this church as officers and members of committees please stand?

Sisters and brothers in Christ, it is an honor to be entrusted with responsibility and service in the ministry of the church.

Having prayerfully considered the duties and responsibilities of your ministry, are you prepared to serve with the help of God in Christ's name?

Elected: I am.

Pastor: Do you promise to exercise your ministry diligently and faithfully, showing forth the love of Christ?

Elected: I do, relying on God's grace.

Congregational Commitment

Pastor: Members of this household of faith, you have heard the promises of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Let us affirm our intention to live in covenant with them. Will those of you who are able please stand and join in making this covenant:

All: We gather in celebration of the joy that is ours to be partners with you in the service of Jesus Christ. We promise to love you, honor your leadership, and assist you that together we may be a faithful church of Jesus Christ.

Pastor: Let us pray: Eternal God, you have called these people to serve you in this household of faith and in the world. Send your Holy Spirit on them that they may serve among us with honor and faithfulness. Help them to be diligent in their duties that your church may prosper in the mission you place before it. May their example prove worthy for all of us to follow, as we are united in Christ's ministry. Amen.

In the name of Jesus Christ and on behalf of the people of the Congregational Church of Laconia, United Church of Christ, I rejoice in proclaiming that you are recognized and affirmed in your ministry among us. May God's blessings be with you and with us all. Amen.



CELEBRATIONS 2024!

FOUNDED IN FAITH , FORWARD IN SPIRIT!

January – Annual Meeting January 28, 2024

Potluck Supper using recipes from Church Cookbooks from the past.
Parish Activities and Diaconate (membership)
Renaming the Parish House – Annual Meeting.

February -Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024

Memorabilia -Book Marks for the 200th including a bit of church history.

March - Easter March 31, 2024.

Updated history book with timeline. Cost for booklet \$5.00

April -Lunch and Learn presentation – Warren Huse

May - Celebration Banner to hang on the front of the church.

Memorial Day weekend - History Walk (like a story walk at library) – Laminate Posters placed around the church with church history. Memorial Day Flags

June - Summer Vesper Service at Eds Chapel - June 21, 2024

July - July 28, 2023, Worship Service

To celebrate the beginning of the Church (July 1824)
With a reception to follow the service