

PILGRIM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

2023

**ANNUAL
REPORT**



535 Stow Street
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin 54935

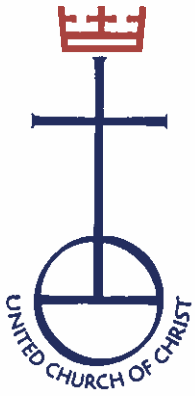
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Fond du Lac, Wisconsin 54935**

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023

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Pilgrim United Church of Christ

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January 9, 2024

Dear Members and Friends of Pilgrim Church:

We are inviting you to the Annual Congregational Meeting of Pilgrim United Church of Christ on Sunday, January 28, 2024 following our 9:00AM worship service.

Again, 2023 brought some major changes and transitions. The Council President's Report looks back over the year to summarize most of these significant events, so please review.

Pilgrim continues to do well and be a truly inclusive church, open to all. We are so fortunate to have Pastor Rob bringing his energy and vision to lead us. Also, the exceptional dedication of our members and staff.

Copies of the Annual Report Booklet will be available to you as follows: Via the weekly e-news, hard copies in the narthex or by mail. If you choose to get one in the mail, please call the office.

The agenda for the meeting will flow as follows:

- Declaration of a Quorum
- Opening Prayer
- Adoption of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held January 29, 2023
- Presentation and Approval of Officers and Ministry Members
- Presentation and Adoption of the 2024 Operating budget
- Approval of the Audit Committee Report
- Approval of the 2023 Annual Report
- Vote on WISE Covenant
- Any New business
- Recognitions
- Adjournment

We look forward to seeing you there.

Peace,

Patti Burns
Council President

Jim Bentley
Council Vice President

Rev. Rob Van Ess
Pastor & Teacher

Pilgrim United Church of Christ
Annual Meeting – Final Minutes
January 29, 2023

Church Council President Barb Geiger established that a quorum was present and the meeting was called to order.

Pastor Rob opened the meeting with a prayer.

The congregation was informed that there were 2 forms in which should be completed and returned. One is the Time and Talent questionnaire and the second is a form for update information of congregants' contact information for Cathy Drew the Administrative assistant.

The process for unanimous consent was explained.

1. Adoption of the congregational meeting from January 30, 2022. Ellen Sieglaff pointed out that under #2 the date for the Annual Report needed to be corrected.

With the correction to be made the minutes were approved with Unanimous Consent.

Adoption of the Congregational meeting on 2/13/2022 were approved as written through Unanimous Consent with no questions or corrections.

2. Presentation and Approval of Ministry/Committee Members

See the updates of Church Council members, President, Patti Burns and Vice President, Jim Bentley. Ministry/Committee Members as attached in annual report. Additional changes to be made include: under Stewardship/Finance additions of: Tina Potter, Bob Flaherty and Peter Vercouteren.

With above additions to the Stewardship/Finance committee and no questions this was adopted with Unanimous Consent.

3. 2023 Operating Budget.

Thank you to those that worked so hard on this budget. Treasurer Donna Jost and Jim Thomas.

A few significant changes compared to last year's budget were highlighted. The pastoral compensation was increased to meet association standards and was approved at the February 13, 2022 congregational meeting.

There was an increase in Custodial costs due to hiring a custodial service and there was a decrease in Garbage and Recycling costs due to changing vendors.

Linda Stutz made a comment regarding the budget report. According to the report there was a deficit of \$8000 in the 2022 budget. With the addition of the final SCRIP totals there was an addition of \$5000 which decreased the deficit to \$3000. This shows how important SCRIP sales are to our church.

Jim Thomas clarified that the \$8000 deficit was accurate as that did take into account the addition of \$5000 in the final numbers. He went on to explain that there were some one time expenses due to the settling of our new Pastor and they are not on going. Our Budget is fluid and does function in a deficit.

With no additional questions or changes the 2023 budget has been adopted as presented with Unanimous Consent.

3. 2022 Audit report.

Thank you to those that worked so diligently on the Audit. Jim Thomas, Randy Mittlestaedt and Avery Geiger.

With no questions or concerns the 2022 Audit was adopted as presented with Unanimous Consent.

4. Approval of the 2022 Annual Report.

Ellen Sieglaff pointed out that under new members there were an additional 3 new members which should be added to the New members total number. Those 3 additional members are the 3 individuals which were confirmed. With the addition of these 3 it brings up the new members from 10 to 13 new members for 2022.

With these changes and no additional questions the 2022 Annual Report is adopted with Unanimous Consent.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Gary Ring presented information about the 'Green Team' at Pilgrim UCC. Pilgrim UCC is no stranger to being a Green Church. There have been many Adult Education classes and presentations on caring for the Earth over the past 10 years. We have installed solar panels on the church roof, replaced light bulbs with LED light bulbs. Pastor Rob attended the UCC Annual Conference this past June and he brought the idea back to church the idea to have a Green Team here at Pilgrim.

A group of church members accepted the call to start a 'Green Team' this past September. This group has been meeting monthly. They have discussed what the goals for Pilgrim are in regards to what it means to be a 'Green' Church. One of the dreams for Pilgrim is to become a Creation Justice Church.

A Creation Justice church is being in line as being ONA or a WISE Church. Creation Justice combines the environmental justice movement of the 80's with addressing how factors such as race, class and global inequality are intertwined with environmental injustices. To become a Creation Justice Church we must complete an application which includes what we have already done and what develop a plan we want to expand on making Creation Justice a part of who we are. Creation Justice guides congregations in discerning how we can best embody a commitment to care for God's creation.

The Green Team is requesting a motion be set to consider Pilgrim becoming a Creative Justice Church and begin the process of application.

Tina Potter made a motion that the church consider Pilgrim becoming a Creative Justice Church. Carol Browning seconded the motion. With unanimous vote of yes the Motion is approved.

There will be a special congregational meeting in April.

The Green Team meets the 4th Monday of the month at 6pm at church.

RECOGNITION

Barb Geiger would like to recognize Sue Schmitz for being our Parish Nurse for at least two decades all done as a volunteer.

Neal Sieglaff for all his work he has done on all the technology at the church which includes the sound, lights and computers.

Patti Burns for being the Council Vice President for the past 2 years and all the support and assistance she has given to her as president.

Also to Pastor Rob for his leadership, teaching and support he has given since his arrival.

Patti Burns would like to recognize Barb Geiger for all her leadership over the past 4 years as first Vice President and then President.

With all business completed the 2023 Annual Congregational meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

Wendy Ellison, Council Secretary

Pastor's 2023 Annual Report
January 28, 2024

*"We want to bring our whole selves through the church doors, without leaving our hearts and minds behind...
Imagine if every church became a place where everyone is safe, but no one is comfortable.
Imagine if every church became a place where we told one another the truth."
– Rachel Held Evans (Searching For Sunday)*

Hello Pilgrims.

In last year's annual report (*my first as your pastor*) we talked about how I believe Pilgrim United Church of Christ is the best kept secret in Fond du Lac. In response I crafted a series of eight goals for us to work towards as a faith community inspired by one objective: We need to be seen. The local community needs to hear the unique and beautiful experience with the gospel of Jesus Christ we share here at the corner of Stow Street and Wilson Avenue.

In this year's report I want to review those goals and share what I have learned which leads me to a similar conclusion: We remain one of the best kept secrets in Fond du Lac. Not only do we need to be seen, this year I am adding that we need to look for opportunities to reach out into the community and establish new relationships where we have a chance to live into our faith and values.

Goal: Learn how to tell our story both individually and collectively. Reflection: We need to continue to work on this. Everyone has their own story to tell, and story telling takes time, and time is relative. Einstein deduced that the rate at which time passes depends on your frame of reference. Both lifelong and new members will each share the story of Pilgrim UCC in ways that the other may not even recognize. Both points of view are crucial to understanding who we are and who we are being called to become as the body of Christ. We need to create opportunities for our members both old and new to get to know each other, listen to each other's stories, and then discern together where God is calling us as a church. I believe the celebration of our 45th anniversary in March is a natural starting point to begin this good work in earnest. I also hope our 5-week Sunday night all-ages potluck, film series, and discussion: *A New Family: Throwing Open the Doors of the Sanctuary* (April 7 – May 5), will empower us to create space for deeper listening—to each other, our inner wisdom, and God's call.

Goal: We need to discover new ways to share how our welcoming statement, a vision for our beloved community, informs our faith and values. Reflection: Conventional wisdom provides our answer: Actions speak louder than words. This is the key to how we share our welcoming statement as a reflection of who we are and what we believe in; and this goes for any covenant we have or will adopt as a part of our faith and values. There comes a point where we need to stop exclusively talking about it and start doing something about it. Such as our work with the Holy Family Community Warming Shelter. I was honored to work on your behalf with a small team of community leaders who drew together a larger network of concerned citizens and nonprofits, local, civil, faith, and government organizations, who together made the new warming shelter a reality. In so doing we were able to demonstrate our values in our actions. Other examples are when we sent volunteers to help prep and package 800 free Thanksgiving meals at Immanuel Trinity Lutheran Church, or our ongoing partnership with Rosenow School, or our up and coming partnership with Café Q, a queer friendly safe space for youth to meet once a month in a safe and affirming environment, hosted by our friends at Open Circle Unitarian Universalist Church. Work like this goes farther than any advertising campaign, flyer, or social media post to show people who we are and what we believe in.

Goal: Continue our conversations about becoming a W.I.S.E. (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) Congregation. Reflection: Mission accomplished. I want to thank everyone who has worked so hard to lead our church-wide conversation on the W.I.S.E. covenant we will discuss and vote on in our 2023 annual meeting this report is being written for. Our emerging commitment to become more welcoming and inclusive of those living with mental health challenges, to be supportive of all who are affected by mental health conditions, and to engage in ways to live our commitment to be W.I.S.E. about mental health is a natural extension of our welcoming statement.

Goal: Begin a conversation about becoming a Creation Justice Church. Reflection: Mission accomplished. I want to thank everyone who has worked so hard to lead our church-wide conversation on becoming a Creation Justice Church. The continued efforts of the Green Team challenges us to live into the values we aspire to in this covenant. Being a Creation Justice church has led us to look at the choices we make in our daily lives, how we manage our land and building, and how we partner with outside organizations to advocate for sustainability and environmental activism. We have added a compost bin at the church as a way to model living into our values, we have moved towards using recyclable and biodegradable packaging and away from single use packaging and plastics. We also have a new project on the horizon, a natural landscaping proposal that would help us decrease our carbon footprint while affording us an ongoing educational opportunity that would inspire generations of responsible stewardship for our planet and its' resources.

Goal: Experiment with a nontraditional service. Reflection: Good goal, but we are not ready. This is one of my favorite goals. I love creating new opportunities for people to connect with each other and the Divine in worship. These sacred moments carry the power to touch both hearts and minds with the healing grace and mercy of God's never-ending love. With the exception of a one day 6-hour open house style prayer vigil in our sanctuary we have not been able to explore this goal any further. One of the most significant obstacles to achieve this goal is that our resources are limited. It is difficult to do something new when it takes all the resources we have, (time, talent, and funding) to do everything we have always done. This is a common experience in a faith community. In order to do something new something will need to change. And change is hard, and good, but still hard. There are no easy answers here. Doing something new always requires sacrifice. I also believe this issue, like any other issues identified in this report, are directly tied to the larger questions of where we believe God is calling us in the future and how we are going to live into that call.

Goal: Create a planned giving campaign. Mission Accomplished. After talking to the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ and reviewing the resources they offer we decided to do this on our own. We have created the Pilgrim United Church of Christ Legacy Society. The Society is comprised of Pilgrim United Church of Christ members who have made plans for a Legacy gift. These members may choose to be recognized for their foresight in helping Pilgrim United Church of Christ for generations to come or they may remain anonymous. We are working on a web page to hold the information and planning a kick off campaign for this special project later this year. With the changing nature of the church in our time we need to plan more for the future than we ever have in order to ensure our ability to proclaim the gospel for future generations.

Goal: Recreate the Youth Director position to better meet our needs. Mission accomplished. We have been blessed to have church members Steven and Rachel Wichowski serving as volunteer youth group leaders. The model we had several years ago no longer meets the needs of our youth and families and together we are discovering what works for us today. We also have benefitted from Deb Wamser's willingness to step up and help out in so many ways. Together Steven, Rachel, and Deb make a great team and I am excited for our youth and the many meaningful experiences they will be able to share with our church and each other. Here's to our mission trip to Knoxville in July of 2024!

Goal: Increase membership by 10% over the course of one year. We did really well! 10% of our membership based on last year's count would be 23 and we were honored to welcome 18 new members in 2024 (14 adults, 4 youth). We also had two members who moved out of town and 4 members who joined the great cloud of witnesses when they passed away last year. The statistical report included in this annual meeting packet will show we had a net gain of 9 new members. This is a good goal for us to carry from one year to the next. The new members we welcome today will become the next generation of leadership for our church. Our ability to reach and secure new members is essential to preserve the progressive Christian voice in the greater Fond du Lac community for years to come.

A new Goal for 2023: Engage in a period of discernment to determine where God is calling us into the future and then taking the time to imagine how we are going to make that happen. Reflection: In a time when many churches are closing we need to decide how we are being called to be the church in the future. Our aforementioned potluck, film series, and discussion based on the work of Rachel Held Evans is a good place to begin this conversation. We are also looking at a process for discernment called appreciative inquiry. Basically, it is a naming of the values and experiences for which people are deeply grateful and then a wondering about how to think forwardly with those in mind. The council and I are in conversations about how to best vision our future. Hold us in prayer. The opportunities are exciting and full of possibility. Stay tuned. Once we identify how to move forward you will be invited to become a part of the process. Join us for the all-ages potluck in April and the first week of May and help us hear where God is calling us as a church for the next generation.

Finally, I want to take a moment and thank everyone for your support of our ministries. We continue to adjust to a world post pandemic. Can you believe 2023 was only the first full calendar year since the 2020 shutdown that we have been able to be open and not shut down for a time or two due to Covid? I am grateful for an experienced, passionate, and open-minded council. Their leadership in this time of transition is inspiring. Our current staff: Cathy Drew (*Administrative Assistant*), Karen Goodacre (*Sunday School Coordinator*), Sue Schmitz (*Parish Nurse - volunteer*), Zach Ball (*Choir Director*), Neil Sieglaff (*Digital Magician - volunteer*), and Chris Deaner Rodgers (*Worship Musician*), and former staff member Rob Edmundson (*Adult Education Coordinator*), and of course Peg Bradley and the entire Adult Education Committee who has filled Rob's role while we continue to look for another Adult Education Coordinator, made my job easier every day of the week. Their willingness to serve and their attention to detail is a gift. The members of the various special ministry teams and committees make ministry happen. I am grateful to be able to learn from their knowledge of our history and traditions. I am also grateful for the Herculean efforts of our fund raising teams, both the Ham Dinner and rummage sale folks, who know what they are doing and do it so well. Their efforts on our behalf and the participation of everyone who helps them is essential for our success. Ultimately, the best efforts of all of our members and friends has been life giving to so many people across the city. Our shared commitment to the gospel, to welcome all people, to be generous and kind to each other, has nurtured my faith on both the good days and the bad days while I continue to find my voice as your pastor and teacher. Thank you for your love for Jesus, the church, and the gospel.

Amen and alleluia,



Rev. Rob Van Ess

Pastor's Statistical Records for 2023

Membership, January 1, 2023 230
Membership, December 31, 2023: 239

Confirmation: 0

Sacrament of Baptism:

Jaxin Westphal: July 16, 2023 (Child)
Total 0*

Moved to Inactive List:

Julie Schroeder: October 5, 2023
Total: -1

Moved to Active List:

0
Total: 0

Transfer In:

Total: 0

Transfer Out:

Jeff Siemers
Total: -1

New Members:

Julie Schroeder: February 5, 2023
Jerry & Dixie Sullivan: February 28, 2023
Luke, Merry, & Lucia (child), Walter: March 19, 2023
Jim & Deb Wamser;
Pearl (child), & Paisley (child) Diorio: April 16, 2023
Diana Beck: July 23, 2023
Donna Schellpfeffer: August 20, 2023
Brandon, Jill, & Dexter (child) Petersen: October 22, 2023
Kevin & Mary Berens: October 22, 2023
Maxwell Hoyer & Lucia Golla November 12, 2023
Total: +15 Adult (+4 Children)*

Removed From Rolls:

0
Total: 0

Memorials and Funerals:

Betty Balthazor: January 4, 2023
Sharon Murphy: January 16, 2023
Ben Roder: February 8, 2023
June Fohl: November 16, 2023
Total: -4

Non Member Funerals

Bill Schellpfeffer: May 28, 2023
Katie Lyn Mittelstaedt: September 23, 2023

Total Loss in Membership: 6

Total Gain in Membership: 15

Average Attendance (In Person/ Online) 2023
(Rounded down)

January (5 Sundays): 66/ 9
February: 57 (4 Sundays): 76/ 9
March: (4 Sundays): 61/ 10
April: (5 Sundays): 88/ 11
May (4 Sundays): 66/ 9
June (4 Sundays): 46/ 7
July (5 Sundays): 56/ 9
August (4 Sundays, 1 Sun not recorded): 57/ 7 (2 Sun online not recorded)
September (4 Sundays): 63/3
October (5 Sundays): 64/ 9 (2 Sun online not recorded)
November (4 Sundays): 69/ 12
December (5 Sundays including 9 AM 12/25 Sun service): 71/ 12

Average Weekly Sunday Attendance: 65

Average Weekly Sunday Online Attendance: 8

Ash Wednesday: Not Recorded
Maundy Thursday: April 6: Not Recorded (at Church of Peace w/ Pilgrim)
Good Friday: April 7: 57 (at Pilgrim w/ Church of Peace)
Easter Sunday: April 9: 137
Blue Christmas Service: December 21: 40
Christmas Eve Service (9AM): 80
Christmas Eve Service: (9PM): 89

*Total is for the purpose of voting membership. The practice of this church is to not include children who have not been confirmed as voting members.

Pilgrim United Church of Christ

Annual Congregational Meeting, January 28, 2024

Term Ends 12/31/2024

President	Patti Burns
Vice President	Jim Bentley
Secretary	Wendy Ellison
Treasurer	Donna Jost
Assistant Treasurers	Connie Anderson Bobbie Flaherty
Financial Assistant	Dianne Bentley

Ministries-

Christian Education

Karen Goodacre (thru '24)
Chris Clementi (thru '24)
Susan Holl (thru '25)
Alia Abler (thru '24)

Lay Life

Patty Minter CR (thru '25)
Kaitlyn Zick (thru '25)
Judie Behnke (thru '24)
Sue Roloff (thru '25)

Christian Outreach

Jill Barbeau CR (thru '25)
Peg Bradley (thru '24)
Joni Greenfield (thru '24)
Barb Spies (thru '25)
Jean Wright (thru '24)

Membership & Evangelism

Fran Schmid CR (thru '24)
Randy Stutz (thru '24)
Judy Goetsch (thru '25)
Gail Schmidt (thru '25)
Sue Schmitz (thru '25)

Stewardship & Finance

Ron McCreedy CR (thru '25)
Tina Potter (thru '24)
Pete Vercouteren (thru '25)

Worship

Linda Stutz CR (thru '24)
Jim Bentley (thru '24)
Mary Christenson (thru '25)
Steven Wicichowski (thru '25)

Property & Maintenance

Avery Geiger CR (thru '24)
Dave Overbo (thru '24)
Bill Burns (thru '25)
Neal Sieglaff (thru '25)

Christian Education Children and Youth Annual Report 2023

While we began 2023 (January) continuing with our two room Sunday school, we decided in October of 2023 (near the start of the new program year) to go to a traditional one-room Sunday school model. This was due to the increased low number of students attending in our younger classroom. Our attendance has definitely been a factor in this decision.

In addition to their weekly offering money, the Sunday school program has decided to continue to collect monthly items needed to be donated to the St. Katharine Drexel Homeless Shelter.

We have been averaging anywhere from 4 to 7 students depending on the Sunday. We offered a continental breakfast at our Rally Day held in September, open to all members of the congregation as a variety of announcements were made such as Sunday school happenings, Adult Ed schedule, youth mission trip information and children's bell choir to name a few. We had 47 people in attendance.

There were not any students confirmed in the spring of 2023 but we have started our new confirmation classes in the fall of 2023 and currently have 9 students attending. Each student has a mentor and Bibles were purchased for all the confirmands.

During the summer, church camp was offered and 2 youth attended Pilgrim Center and were given scholarships.

In August we held our FREE community Family Fun Night held outside on Pilgrim's lawn and we saw our largest attendance ever, there were 125 people in attendance. Also in August we held a Jr. and Sr. High youth group event starting with pizza and conversation at church and then an evening of fun and fellowship at the Ledgeview Bowling Lanes (the extreme heat prevented us from taking them to the Fondy Sports Park). 13 youth participated.

We are pleased to announce that Rachel and Steven Wicichowski have graciously volunteered to head up our Jr. and Sr. youth groups for the upcoming program year as well as our mission trip in July of 2024.

We had 3 youth and 1 chaperone attend the Knock Knock Retreat at Daycholah Center in November.

We held a collection of coins for Heifer International in the spring and \$168.56 was raised and the CE ministry brought it up to an even \$170.00. Karen waited until she was able to do a triple match for the money collected and then purchased 3 sheep, 3 flocks of Chicks, and 3 Honeybee Hives.

The children chose to donate the birthday dimes (and dollars) collected this past year to Hope on the Block.

On December 17th, 2023, a representative from this non-profit organization came to share during worship a little bit about their organization and then accept a check in the amount of \$656.12.

Monthly Intergenerational Family Fun Nights continued throughout the program year. Throughout the months we saw the attendance stay steady and even continue to grow for some events.the months were as follows:

January - BINGO – 25 attended

February – Bowling - 19 attended

March - Movie Night - 23 attended

April - Game Night - 12 attended

May - Outdoor Games Night - 22 attended

August - COMMUNITY Family Fun Night - 125 attended

September – Game Night – 13 attended

October – Blanket Tying – 16 attended

November – Chili Cook-Off – 12 attended

December – Christmas Caroling – 23 attended

Annual Report 2023 – Lay Life

This past year has been a time for numerous changes and growth. We still are doing pretty much the same thing but are at times asked to help out other committees for their events and Pastor Rob for other functions that may come up.

Diners Club has been having a good attendance with about 18-25 each time. Suggestions about where to go each month are always welcomed.

Coffee hour has been doing well and it was noted that there doesn't have to be a reason to do one at the beginning of the month unless noted.

Lay Life did put on a coffee hour April 4 which was Palm Sunday, a special meeting and also an art exhibit by the Art Association. Coffee, lemonade, bars, veggies, cheese and sausage were served.

May 7 was Recognition & Appreciation Sunday for Sunday school teachers, shepherds and children. Cake, coffee and lemonade was served.

December 17 Lay Life will be serving coffee, lemonade and cookies in the sanctuary after church and children's program.

Looking forward to 2024.

Patty Minter - Council Rep.

2023 Yearly Report for Membership and Evangelism Ministry

2023 has seen increased activity by this Ministry. We started with the Time and Talent Surveys, updating and distributing it to members. The results were tabulated by Sue Schmitz and leaders of each ministry were given names of those who expressed an interest in their committee.

A canopy was purchased for use in various community events. It has served well in the events as described later.

We hosted two newcomer pot luck suppers, one on March 2 and the other on October 26. The first one was well attended and enjoyed by all. Due to several scheduling conflicts, the second one had fewer attendees. Thanks to all who participated and brought a dish to pass.

We organized 3 community events this year:

- Celebrate CommUnity was held at the fairgrounds Expo building on February 18. This was very well attended and had many interesting features. We had several members helping out by tending the booth and answering any questions that arose.
- Pride Picnic was held at Lakeside Park on June 25. This was the first use of the new purple canopy. With its vented top, it withstood winds that came with a few showers. It was easy to pick out from other white canopies. Pastor Rob again offered glitter blessings and chatted with numerous visitors. Thanks to the members who helped staff the booth and donated candy or other items.
- Fond due Fest was held downtown on September 9. We offered free water in bio-degradable cups and several printed items pertaining to Creation Justice, The water ran out around 3 P.M. since it was a warm and sunny day. We also were able to display a new flag and table covering. The event drew a large crowd and many people stopped by.

The Ministry purchased a new furniture storage and display unit, covered with a glass protective top for the Welcome Center. The center is situated on the north wall under the windows at the entrance and has provided much needed storage and a display area on top.

The Health Ministry has resumed blood pressure readings for members about once per quarter.

- The WISE task force was formed and has progressed to presenting a covenant to the congregation at the next annual meeting. The covenant deals with making those with mental health issues feel welcome and comfortable in our church. Thanks to Sue Schmitz who has been heading the task force, as well as the members and advisor who have contributed.

Having had a number of new members this year, we are discussing ways to introduce them to the congregation. We would like to have someone write brief articles for the Quill and have been developing a short list of questions to ask and report the responses.

Judie Behnke has been sending out cards for celebrations and "thinking of you" to members unable to get to services. Thank you, Judie.

Thanks to Judy Goetsch for hosting many of our meetings this year. Thanks also to the members of M&E ministry, Gail Schmitz, Sue Schmitz, Judy Goetsch, Judie Behnke, and Randy Stutz.

Report by Fran Schmid, Chairperson

Stewardship & Finance 2023 Annual Report

The Stewardship Committee started the year by Thanking the Congregation at a Worship Service in January for their support of our Annual Pledge Drive for the 2023 Church Budget.

The Stewardship Committee met on a regular basis during 2023 to review the monthly reports produced by our Church Treasurer. First, the "Statement of Financial Position" containing Pilgrim Church – Assets and Liabilities, Second, the "Dedicated Accounts" containing Pilgrim Church – Dedicated Funds, Outreach Appeals, plus Trust & Memorial Funds, and "Statement of Activities". Containing Pilgrim Church - "Income" Offerings and Other Income – Fallfest, Scrip, & Rummage Sales, etc. and "Expenses" OCWM, Pastoral Compensation, Staff Compensation, Committee Programs, Administration, Property & Maintenance, and Other Expenses. The monthly reports were generally on target for that particular time of year, Income is High at the beginning of the year, tapers off during summer, and finishes in good shape. Our major Fund Raisers did very well and were above projected amounts: Fallfest - an extra \$2,852, Rummage Sales – an extra \$4,121. Staff compensation area was not fully used because of vacancies in Adult Education and Youth Coordinators positions. The total Income for the year 2023 was \$231,200, exceeding the budgeted amount of \$221,300.

The first 5 months of the years we continued discussions on Planned Giving, a continuation of discussions started in 2022, which followed some UCC Planned Giving Guide Lines, and we sat in on Webinar discussions with the Wisconsin Conference Leadership and other Wisconsin UCC Churches. The Stewardship Committee made a report to the Pilgrim Church Council with the following recommendations. We will not pursue joining the Wisconsin UCC Guide Lines for Planned Giving, because it requires 10% of all Planned Giving initiated by Pilgrim Members to the Wisconsin UCC, and we currently have Giving Programs in place to give to State and National UCC Programs.

We believe any Monetary Gifts to Pilgrim Church by its Members should remain with Pilgrim Church and should be handled by the Memorial Committee, following the requests of the Pilgrim Members. A Legacy Giving document will be developed to give guidance to Individuals and Families of Pilgrim Church, who wish to donate Memorial Gifts on behalf of Loved Ones, which could be in the form of a Family Will, Trust Fund, Investment Portfolio, Specific CD, etc. This document should contain ideas and methods that members might wish to use in remembering the Church in their passing in the future. The Church might consider a Legacy Plaque to recognize donations.

We also believe Our Pastor should have a list of Pilgrim Church Needs that can help him in providing suggestions to Pilgrim Families, who wish to donate their Memorial gifts towards specific Church needs, when a family member has passed. These Church Needs should be generated by Our Church Committees.

In September a Stewardship Campaign plan was developed for Our Annual Stewardship Giving Pledge Drive for the 2024 Budget. Theme was "Because of YOU, Our Church Changes Lives" with electronic mailings, Friday e-mails, bulletin inserts, displays in Narthex, and Sunday Mission Moments by Pilgrim Members. In December formal letters were mailed to Pilgrim Members and Friends for our Annual Pledge Drive, with a return form for their "Estimate of Giving Pledge". Our Annual Pledge Drive Total was \$160,435.60 for the 2024 Budget. We Thank the Congregation for supporting the Pilgrim Church Annual Pledge Drive.

In Mid-December, the Stewardship Committee discussed Committee Budget requests and the Pledge Campaign, and a Budget meeting will be held in January with the Church Council. Pastoral Compensation is also a topic to be discussed with the Personnel Committee and Church Council. Decisions will be made based on the 2024 Budget Review as well and will be voted on at our Pilgrim Church Annual Meeting January 28, 2024.

Stewardship and Finance Members - Bayard Frederick, Tina Potter, Pete Vercooteren & Ron McCreedy

Annual Report Worship Ministry 2023

Members of ministry include Mary Christenson, secretary, Jim Bentley, Steven Wicichowski, and Linda Stutz, chair/council representative.

I will begin this year by saying Thank you to the members of the ministry for their work and support during this past year. Our goal as a ministry is to support our Pastor with the needs for our worship services and the ministry has done this well in 2023.

We are blessed to have a fantastic music staff. Chris Diener-Rogers has done an outstanding job providing beautiful music for our worship services. She demonstrates professionalism with her music choices, endless practice and wonderful music for our worship services. She also accompanies our choir which is so appreciated.

Zach Ball continues to be our Choir director. He has found some beautiful new pieces for our choir to sing and has brought wonderful energy to the performances. We appreciate all of his professionalism.

A special Thank you goes out to our dedicated bell choir members. Lead by Ellen Siegleff, our bell choir is outstanding. Their dedication to practice and performances is very appreciated as the bells offer beautiful music to enhance our worship services. An extra Thank you goes out to Ellen and her team as our bells needed their maintenance session this past summer. This is a very involved process as the bells must be packaged and mailed a certain way. Ellen takes care of all of this, and our ministry appreciates her attention to the details, so our bells remain in fantastic working condition.

The worship ministry also wants to acknowledge the work of Neal Sieglaff regarding our online service technology. We are so blessed to have Neal's expertise regarding our service and slides for service. Neal is assisted by Matt Clementi and Vicky Deitenberger. Also, Chris Frederick, Franklin Rogers, and Randy Stutz provide the slides on Sunday Morning Services. Thanks to Cathy Drew and Chris Frederick for making the slides for service. All these people work behind the scenes to offer all of use a very user-friendly service experience. Thank you to all of you.

The worship ministry enjoys working with Pastor Rob to explore ways to enhance the worship experience. We are blessed to have Pastor Rob and all his energy to plan for various seasons in our church life and ways to make worship services meaningful. We hope that worship provides ways for each of us to take the good news out into our community to live what Jesus would do. We look forward to what 2024 will bring.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Stutz

Property & Maintenance 2023 Annual Report

I would like to do is thank Bill Burns, Dave Overbo, and Neal Sieglaff for being dedicated members of the PM ministry. I would like to thank Doug Baltz for the many hours he spends mowing lawn, edging sidewalks, removing leaves, maintaining equipment and other projects. I would also like to thank Pete Vercoouteren for arranging and paying for lawn fertilization and for helping with lighting issues.

I would like to acknowledge the Catherine and Don Krail bequest given to the Maintenance & Capital Improvements Trust Fund. \$73,152 has been gifted.

JP Tank did not renew our snow removal contract. Retained the services of Paul's Snowplowing.

Major Repair and Maintenance Expenses:

\$854 – convert north central door to push type door handle

\$742 – replace two parking lot lights

\$504 – Cintas fire extinguisher inspection

Tasks completed:

Monitor and update thermostats, lawn mowing, change kitchen door code and janitor box code, installed a window in the pastor's office door, coordinated installation of a push bar for the exit door by the Pastors office, replaced the sanctuary sound mixer, installed a window in the "mailbox" office door and Pastor's office, added supports to strengthen the shelves holding the roasters, addressed our northwest neighbor offer to remove the northwest hedge and replace part of it with a fence, replaced the outdoor lights for the sanctuary NE door, the east side of the car port, and the garage, obtain estimate to paint sanctuary, met with Accurate-Airtight Exteriors to do an energy audit, the gutters were cleaned and secured, the lawn was rolled, main water meter was replaced by the city, two non-working lights in nursery were converted to LED, garage door was wrapped in aluminum, riding lawnmower starter solenoid was replaced, removed the tree at NE corner of sanctuary and trimmed many trees, kitchen door latch needed adjusting, the glass cover for the coffee table was replaced, removed dead branches from the north hedge, air conditioning unit for fellowship hall had a loose wire on circuit breaker, air conditioner for sanctuary needed a fan motor capacitor, one air conditioner for Narthex needs replacing, address janitorial service concerns, the car port hinge replaced by Tri City Glass, a women's toilet was repaired, a malfunctioning fluorescent light in Pastor's office was converted it to LED, two emergency exit lights needed new batteries, find a snow removal service, replaced both alter lights with LEDs, assisted with hanging the Christmas decorations, glossed over the property insurance proposal for 2024, created a budget.

Avery Geiger, Chair

Bill Burns

Dave Overbo

Neal Sieglaff

Creation Justice - Green Team - Annual Report, 2023

The year 2023 started with the Green Team introducing the concept of becoming a Creation Justice Congregation to church members.

In March, the church council made the Green Team a standing committee.

In April, a special congregational meeting was held to vote on our proposed Creation Justice Covenant and approve becoming a Creation Justice congregation. Both received unanimous approval.

Our application was accepted and Pilgrim is now a Creation Justice Congregation.

Creation Justice outreach activities and projects included:

- distributing the Fond du Lac recycling brochure to church households,
- teaming up with Sustain Fond du Lac promoting the purchase of compost bins. Sixteen bins were purchased by Pilgrim households
- providing a bin for church members to use. Ten people attended the tutorial on using the bin.
- designating a portion of the lawn as "No Mow May"
- collecting aluminum cans for recycling. The 116 pounds of cans collected were recycled for \$52.00. This was donated to the youth mission trip.
- featuring our Creation Justice ministry at the Fond du fest booth and handing out the recycling brochure.
- celebrating the Season of Creation throughout the month of September with sermons on the environment and mission moments on refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle.
- Pastor Rob held a blessing of the animals service on Oct 1st.
- creating an information center in the narthex.

Behind the scenes activities included:

- Initiating an energy audit of the church,
- attending webinars on accessing energy rebates available through the Inflation Reduction Act,
- establishing an affiliation with Interfaith Power and Light-a regional leader in environmental stewardship and climate action,
- attending a UCC Creation Justice retreat at Daycholah Center
- submitting and receiving a \$1,000.00 environmental justice grant from the Wisconsin Conference Creation Justice team.
- Pastor Rob attended a three-day retreat on Environmental Justice.

The goal of the \$1,000 grant was to determine the feasibility and process for converting a portion of the church turf lawn to native landscape. By using native plants in even a portion of our green space we will absorb more carbon, and provide habitat that supports pollinators, animals and the many other microorganisms in a healthy ecosystem. To avoid costly missteps and increase our understanding of the best practices, we hired a Wisconsin based consulting ecologist to do an on site evaluation. He encouraged us to establish a native meadow planting on the rectangle of turf between the two driveways. We are now in the process of seeking council and congregation input, and identifying what resources are needed and available to do this.

Committee meetings are held the 4th Monday of most months. New members are always welcomed.

Team members

Peg Bradley

Tracy Abler

Gary Ring

Rachel Wicichowski

Pete Vercouteren

Barbara Roder

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Committee Members Appointed by Church Council

Pastoral Relations

Tracy Abler (thru '25)
Peg Bradley (thru '25)
Gary Greenfield (thru '24)
Tony Prus (thru '25)
Brian Christenson (thru '25)

Memorial Committee

Patti Burns (thru '25)
Jane Flaherty (thru '25)
Chris Frederick (thru '25)

Safe Church

Bobbie Flaherty (thru '25)
Tony Prus (thru '25)

Sanctuary Visual Design

Fran Schmid
Patti Burns

Scrip

Karen Goodacre

Adult Education

Carol Browning
Peg Bradley
Judy Reinke
Linda Stutz
Neal Sieglaff
Sandy Baker
Joni Greenfield

Auditing

Ron McCreedy
Randy Mittelstaedt
Kevin Berens

Trust

**Matt Clementi
Bobbie Flaherty
Brian Christenson
Sue Roloff**

Historian

Chris Frederick

Constitutional Review

**Barb Geiger
Connie Anderson**

Nominating

**Jim Bentley
Barb Geiger**

Ham Dinner

Randy Stutz	Chairperson & Publicity
Ron McCreedy	Resource Person
Randy Stutz	Ticket Sales
Jean Cornell	Dinner Coordinator
Linda Stutz	Kitchen Coordinator
Jim & Anne Thomas	Carry-out Coordinators
Mary Christensen	Consultant

Personnel Committee

**Jim Bentley
Wendy Ellison
Patti Burns**

2023 MEMORIAL FUND REPORT

Starting Balance:	\$2930.24
Memorials Received:	\$625.00
Disbursements:	\$2515.58
Ending Balance:	\$1039.66

Memorials Received:

In memory of Betty Balthazor

Disbursements:

New Drapes for Lounge	\$1195.00
Dry Ease Whiteboard & Marker Set	\$324.60
Utility Kitchen Cart	\$256.98
Down payment for Welcoming Center Credenza	\$739.00

The Memorial Fund Committee is very appreciative of all memorials that are received.

Any requests for funds must be submitted via the request form to the Committee Chair. The request form can be obtained from the church office. For a copy of the Memorial Fund Administration & Appropriation Procedure Policy, please contact the church office.

Sincerely,

Chris Frederick, Chairperson

Committee Members: Chris Frederick, Patricia Burns, Jane Flaherty and Diana Hammer

SCRIP Program

2023 Annual Report

The SCRIP program continues to be an easy way for members to increase their giving to the church without any additional out of pocket expense to them.

The SCRIP program works by people purchasing gift cards to area businesses for the denomination of their choosing for that very amount and the Pilgrim SCRIP program receives a percentage back from each card sold.

The more people use this user friendly program, the more money we can help to put into the church's budget. Please stop by the SCRIP table on any Sunday morning if you have questions or give Karen a call at 920-904-5740.

The SCRIP income totals for 2023 can be referenced in the annual financial summary statement, but I can say we are continuing to profit for the church from this very worthwhile program.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Goodacre

SCRIP Coordinator

Annual Report 2023 - Adult Education

The Adult Education program at Pilgrim continued to thrive during 2023. Rob Edmonson was hired as the new Adult Education Coordinator in January. Both Adult Forum (Sunday, 10:15-11:15AM) and Expanding Horizons (Wednesday, 9:30-11:00AM) met in the lounge. We were all happy to meet in the smaller area after the threat of Covid had diminished. Discussion is much easier in the smaller setting.

Average Attendance Jan.-May

Adult Forum - 22

Expanding Horizons - 19

Winter/Spring Classes Adult Forum

Care of the Caregiver

Food Insecurity in FDL County

Witness at the Cross: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Friday

The Arc Fond du Lac

The Law of Blood: Thinking and Acting as a Nazi

Building Community & A Better Police

Sexuality and the Bible

Building Compassion - Documentary

Winter/Spring Classes Expanding Horizons

Christian Nationalism

An Introduction to Ash Wednesday/An Introduction to Lent

Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World

Gospel According to John

Mindfulness Series

In addition to these classes, Pastor Rob led an evening series titled Reclaiming Christianity.

Rob Edmonson resigned in August and the Personnel Committee began a search for a replacement. Until someone is hired, Peg Bradley is serving as Adult Education Coordinator.

The ability for people to attend by Zoom continues to be an asset. Throughout the year we have had attendees join us from Fond du Lac, Florida and El Salvador.

Average Attendance Sept.-Dec.

Adult Forum - 23

Expanding Horizons - 18

For the Fall Semester these numbers represent 64 different people.

Fall Classes Adult Forum

The Supreme Court

Rawhide

Sabbath

NAMI

Do Nothing Course

Sermon Talk Back

A Thanksgiving Reflection: Come Before Winter

Aging & Disability Resource Center

Forward Services

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History of the Color Red

Fall Classes Expanding Horizons

WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged for Mental Health)

Illuminating Project

El Salvador

One Woman Play - Oscar Romero

Parliament of the World's Religions

Unholy Ghosts: The Racist Roots of our Faith & Politics

Christmas On The Screen: Reviewing the Evolution of American Spirituality

In an effort to reach all members and friends of Pilgrim we are discussing the addition of new programs and/or classes at a variety of times. We also hope to find new ways to advertise our classes through the use of social media.

The Adult Education Committee is extremely grateful to the 23 people who taught classes in 2023 including church members and people from the broader community. We continue to be grateful to Neal Sieglaff who is so faithful in providing technical assistance to our teachers.

Peg Bradley, Neal Sieglaff, Joni Greenfield, Linda Stutz, Carol Browning, Rachel Wicichowski
The Adult Education Committee

Trust Fund Annual Report 2023

Members

Bobbie Flaherty, Chair; Brian Christian, Matt Clementi, Susan Roloff resigned in April 2023

United Church Foundation Balanced Funds as of September 30, 2023

Shares	85,259.0442
Share Price	12.4700
Book	311,814.81
Market Value	1,068,366.38

United Church Foundation Balanced Funds as of September 30, 2023 (Maintenance & Capital Fund)

Shares	1,552.42
Unit Price	13.20
Book	11,200.00
Market Value	88,883.88*

Donation from Catherine Krail Estate in July of 2023 of \$73,152.43

Income

United Church Foundation Balanced Fund Distribution

4 th QTR 2022	\$3,548.75
1 st QTR 2023	\$4,383.90
2 nd QTR 2023	\$6,836.35
3 rd QTR 2023	<u>\$5,399.25</u>
Total	\$20,168.25

United Church Foundation Balanced Fund Distribution (Maintenance & Capital Fund)

4 th QTR 2022	\$64.62
1 st QTR 2023	\$79.82
2 nd QTR 2023	\$124.48
3 rd QTR 2023	<u>\$449.20</u>
Total	\$718.12

Distributions 2023

Organization	2023
Pilgrim UCC (30% Trust Fund to Council)	\$ 6050.48
Pilgrim UCC Maintenance and Capital	\$ 718.12
St Vincent DePaul Society (Katherine Drexel Homeless Shelter)	\$ 1,000.00
Fond du Lac Food Pantry	\$ 1,000.00
Salvation Army	\$ 2,352.14
Bookworm Gardens	\$ 200.00
Solutions Center	\$ 1,500.00
Back Bay Mission	\$ 500.00
Feed America NE WI	\$ 500.00
FdL HS Challenge Days	\$ 500.00
FdL Humane Society	\$ 200.00
Holy Family Warming Shelter	\$ 1,000.00
Mercy Ships	\$ 500.00
Rawhide	\$ 500.00
Rosenow Elementary School	\$ 878.00
The ARC of FDL	\$ 1,000.00
UCC Global Funds	\$ 1,500.00
Boys and Girls Club of FDL	\$ 500.00
United Way of FDL	\$ 500.00
Total Monies Distributed in 2021	\$ 21,463.66

The Trust Fund Committee met in May and November 2023 to determine where funds should be distributed.

Annual Report Submitted by Bobbie Flaherty

Ham Dinner and Fallfest 2023

The Ham Dinner was once again a drive thru only event. The weather was perfect. The day started out with food preparation in the kitchen early in the morning. We continue to see new faces helping out preparing all the fixings to our wonderful dinner. The fellowship that occurs is amazing if you happen to be around peeling potatoes, mixing soups preparing dinner rolls and butter, slicing pies and cakes etc. This is what community is all about.

We served over 800 dinners. What a great accomplishment. Many thanks for all who helped out on t day, sold tickets, or gave cash donations to help of supplies.

At the end we took in \$17,852.30 with expenses of \$5,254.18.

With sincere appreciation.

Randy Stutz

Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2023

	Year Begin Balance	Balance Last Month	This Month Change	Year to Date Balance
Assets				
CASH ACCOUNTS				
Checking - Natl Exch Bank	121,589	56,396	20,367	76,763
Scrip Checking	20,078	14,101	(3,345)	10,756
Investments	103,098	104,526	(2,266)	102,260
Petty Cash	50	50	0	50
CASH ACCOUNTS Totals:	244,815	175,073	14,756	189,829
EQUIPMRNT & ACTIVITY				
Copier/Printer	2,407	370	(185)	185
Scrip Inventory	6,361	6,065	436	6,501
EQUIPMRNT & ACTIVITY Totals:	8,769	6,435	251	6,686
Total Assets:	253,583	181,508	15,007	196,515
Liabilities				
EMPLOYEE WITHHOLDINGS				
Social Security Epee & Epyr	328	300	(7)	293
Medicare	(762)	(913)	(18)	(931)
Federal Withholding Tax	1,064	1,030	(10)	1,020
WI Withholding Tax	562	342	171	513
Pastor's Pre-tax Retire. Contrib.	150	450	0	450
EMPLOYEE WITHHOLDINGS Totals:	1,342	1,209	135	1,344
Total Liabilities:	1,342	1,209	135	1,344
Net Assets				
Members' Cash Equity	129,574	124,648	(2,400)	122,248
Dedicated Accounts				
Without Donor Restrictions	22,423	24,847	(1,086)	23,761
With Donor Restrictions	100,245	33,846	(3,921)	29,925
Dedicated Accounts Totals:	122,668	58,693	(5,007)	53,686
Current Period Changes to Net Assets	0	(3,042)	22,278	19,236
Total Net Assets:	252,242	180,299	14,871	195,171
Total Liabilities & Net Assets:	253,583	181,508	15,007	196,515

Dedicated Accounts

December 31, 2023

Account Description	Beginning Balance	Month Credits	Month Debits	YTD Credits	YTD Debits	Ending Balance
DEDICATED FUNDS						
Building Fund	14,974	3,926	4,195	5,075	4,195	15,854
Environmental Projects	3,891	0	3,891	0	3,891	0
Funeral Lunches etc.	1,655	0	0	0	11	1,644
Handbell Maintenance	1,146	0	0	0	1,146	0
Christian Outreach Cash	416	0	0	0	380	36
Fair Trade Coffee Inventory	512	331	0	1,407	1,903	16
Youth Mission Trip	2,482	1,510	309	6,949	5,564	3,867
KIVA	100	0	1,310	1,310	1,310	100
Pastor's Discretion	466	0	0	160	241	385
Pastor's Sabbatical	13,643	0	0	0	0	13,643
Sabbatical Congregation Support	1,270	0	0	0	0	1,270
Prepaid 2024 Pledges	0	200	0	200	0	200
Krail Trust Fund	67,500	0	0	5,652	73,152	0
Technology Donations	910	0	0	0	658	251
Sieglauff/Mundi Donation (Music Fund)	672	0	0	1,440	865	1,247
Green Team	0	0	583	1,000	588	412
DEDICATED FUNDS Totals:	109,637	5,968	10,288	23,193	93,904	38,926
OUTREACH APPEALS						
Blanket Sunday	0	0	0	530	530	0
Christmas Fund (Vets. Cross)	0	412	0	412	0	412
Disaster Relief	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bible w/ Bagels Offerings	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neighbors in Need	0	0	0	0	0	0
One Great Hour of Sharing	0	0	0	5,034	5,034	0
Strengthen the Church	0	0	0	2,270	2,270	0
Special Appeals	0	0	0	8,944	8,574	370
Alternative Gift Fair	0	3,840	3,840	3,840	3,840	0
Birthday Coins	0	0	656	656	656	0
OUTREACH APPEALS Totals:	0	4,252	4,497	21,686	20,905	782
TEMPORARY CUSTODY						
Trust Fund	13,030	0	467	6,050	5,103	13,978
Memorial Fund	0	25	0	1,346	1,346	0
TEMPORARY CUSTODY Totals:	13,030	25	467	7,396	6,448	13,978
Total for selected dedicated accounts:	122,667.71	10,244.62	15,251.66	52,275.01	121,256.46	53,686.26

Statement of Activities
Including Proposed 2024 Budget
 December 31, 2023

Account Shortcut and Description	2023	2022	2023	2023	2024
	YTD Actual	YTD Last Year	YTD as % of Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Next Year Annual Budget
Income					
OFFERINGS					
8 Donations General Fund	188,881	181,245	99	190,000	190,000
10 Sunday Cash	2,242	1,886	112	2,000	2,000
17 Sunday School Income	159	181	63	250	250
OFFERINGS Totals:	191,282	183,312	99	192,250	192,250
OTHER INCOME					
12 Wedding & Rent	1,065	585	355	300	500
80 Investment Earning & Expense	(837)	888	(37)	2,250	5,000
11 Fall Festival Income	17,852	15,400	119	15,000	15,000
14 Scrip Income	5,143	5,894	103	5,000	5,000
100 Rummage Sale Income	10,121	3,192	169	6,000	6,000
16 Misc Income	40	(325)	8	500	100
OTHER INCOME Totals:	33,383	25,633	115	29,050	31,600
Income Totals:	224,665	208,945	102	221,300	223,850
Expense					
MISSION DISBURSEMENTS					
32 Our Church's Wider Mission	5,500	10,500	50	11,000	11,000
PASTORAL COMPENSATION					
18 Pastor's Salary	42,000	41,550	100	42,000	43,680
19 Housing Allowance	24,000	22,200	100	24,000	24,960
20 SocSec Allowance	5,049	4,877	100	5,049	5,251
21 Pension & Annuity	8,470	6,824	92	9,240	9,610
22 Clergy Health Insurance	7,309	5,435	113	6,445	6,329
85 Clergy Dental Insurance	1,357	845	100	1,353	1,407
101 Clergy Vision Insurance	645	403	100	645	645
23 Life/Disability Insurance	908	1,753	92	990	1,030
PASTORAL COMPENSATION Totals:	89,738	83,888	100	89,722	92,911
STAFF COMPENSATION					
38 Office Manager	17,544	17,965	99	17,680	18,387
55 Youth Ministry Director	0	0	0	1,000	1,000
41 Sunday School Director	7,258	8,906	66	11,012	11,452
28 Adult Ed Coordinator	5,182	9,716	48	10,795	10,000
27 Church Organist	8,368	8,560	84	10,011	10,411
112 Choir Accompanist	1,050	700	52	2,030	700
68 Vacation Organist	1,375	1,575	183	750	750
29 Choir Director	2,887	2,748	105	2,748	2,858

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2023 2022 2023 2023 2024

Account Shortcut and Description	YTD Actual	YTD Last Year	YTD as % of Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Next Year Annual Budget
86 Vacation Pulpit Supply	534	510	31	1,700	1,700
2 Child Care - Nursery	0	0	0	250	250
52 Custodian	6,460	4,035	96	6,720	7,020
42 Social Security Employer Share	3,063	3,560	72	4,229	4,116
STAFF COMPENSATION Totals:	53,721	58,275	78	68,925	68,644
PROGRAMS					
26 Worship Expense	2,346	2,161	94	2,500	3,500
76 Handbell Maint	2,309	0	77	3,000	0
24 Christian Ed - Child & Youth	3,481	1,998	139	2,500	2,500
91 Christian Ed - Adult	1,812	2,809	72	2,500	3,000
25 LayLife & Leadership	119	96	40	300	300
81 Stewardship & Finance	43	0	0	0	50
147 Online Giving Fees	998	826	133	750	850
30 Christian Outreach	245	280	245	100	100
31 Membership & Evangelism	955	524	95	1,000	1,125
65 Health Ministry Supplies	0	0	0	100	100
104 Green Team Expense	0	0	0	0	500
94 Coffee, Refreshments, etc.	367	468	73	500	500
PROGRAMS Totals:	12,674	9,162	96	13,250	12,525
ADMINISTRATION					
149 Pastor's Moving Expense	0	5,787	0	0	0
36 Pastor's Auto Expense	0	37	0	500	500
141 Pastor's Books, Resources & Cont Ed	31	442	6	500	500
37 Pastor's Cont Ed, etc	325	25	0	0	500
78 Personnel Search Expense	0	623	0	0	200
43 Office Supplies	3,912	4,432	130	3,000	3,000
44 Postage	1,206	1,543	80	1,500	1,500
45 Telephone	440	720	44	1,000	500
46 Delegate Expense	125	677	25	500	500
35 NE Association Dues	806	1,022	79	1,022	1,022
66 Computer Software	2,989	2,765	100	3,000	3,000
49 Misc Expense	655	2,923	131	500	500
ADMINISTRATION Totals:	10,488	20,996	91	11,522	11,722
PROPERTY & MAINTENANCE					
50 Utilities (Elect, Gas & Water)	6,513	7,332	100	6,500	7,300
51 Insurance (Prop, Liab & Wk Cmp)	6,453	6,937	91	7,100	8,575
53 Custodial Supplies	343	168	86	400	400
54 Snow Plowing	7,417	2,000	225	3,300	5,000
58 Copier Maint	585	487	96	612	612
99 Copier Amortize	2,222	2,222	100	2,222	185
59 Repairs & Maint	3,262	4,570	109	3,000	3,000
60 Recycle & Waste Disp	1,258	2,721	108	1,170	1,170
PROPERTY & MAINTENANCE Totals:	28,053	26,437	115	24,304	26,242
OTHER EXPENSE					
82 Fall Festival Expense	5,254	5,500	96	5,500	5,500
145 Pastoral Search	0	2,251	0	0	0

2023 2022 2023 2023 2024

Account Shortcut and Description	YTD Actual	YTD Last Year	YTD as % of Annual Budget	Annual Budget	Next Year Annual Budget
OTHER EXPENSE Totals:	5,254	7,751	96	5,500	5,500
Expense Totals:	205,429	217,008	92	224,223	228,544
Income - Expense:	19,236	(8,063)		(2,923)	(4,694)

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2023 Wisconsin Conference UCC Year-In-Review

"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all ... while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ." Titus 2: 11-13

I greet you in the joyful spirit of Epiphany. The words of Titus remind us that between the grace of God that came to Bethlehem in the birth of Jesus and the full manifestation of God's glory on Earth, we in the United Church of Christ are called to bear witness to the love of Christ every day.

The love of Christ is faithful in every generation. Four years after COVID-19 radically changed our lives, congregations are still adjusting to new realities. Many have faced significant declines and are enduring the anxiety that accompanies concerns about sustainability. Yet most have embraced new technologies, and nearly all congregations can point to bright spots of ministry that have unleashed new energy. COVID affected the wider church as well. In early 2023, we made the painful decision to sell the Trost Center in DeForest and shift the Conference offices to Daycholah Center on Green Lake, enabling a closer partnership with United Church Camps Inc. and providing UCCI with a financial boost.

The love of Christ is courageous in the face of challenges. Our associate conference ministers – the Revs. Jane Anderson, Rachel Bauman and Michael Jones -- continue to guide congregations through the search process at a time when the candidate pool is small, and the number of part-time pastorates is increasing. We consider every creative pastoral option and use the leadership and ministry skills courses of the Damascus Project to train future pastoral leaders. The Rev. Dr. Stephanie Perdeu, director of the Damascus Project, secured a \$500,000 Lilly Endowment grant that – over the next five years – will widen our pool of learners through expanded course offerings at very reasonable costs. The Damascus Project is the shared educational ministry of the Minnesota and Wisconsin conferences.

The love of Christ demands justice for the oppressed. The justice working groups and Supportive Ministries Team continue to provide resources for local congregations and a collective voice supporting the poor and marginalized. The Damascus Project introduced an implicit bias course, part of our emphasis on anti-racism training. One of our newer working groups – Older Adult Ministries – has produced significant resources for local churches that seek to cultivate deeper connections with seniors. The Creation Care Team, the Immigration Justice Work Group and the Alliance for Justice, which focuses on honoring indigenous peoples, are empowering local congregations with resources to advance these vital ministries.

The love of Christ brings generosity to the world. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the 210 UCC congregations of the Wisconsin Conference remain remarkably generous. Your support through Our Church's Wider Mission provides three-quarters of the Conference budget and all sorts of resourcing, training, programs and an incredible global mission outreach. We are deeply grateful to all those who have made commitments to the Leadership Forward Campaign. Already, Leadership Forward has received pledges totaling \$1 million. In addition, the Wisconsin Foundation UCC now holds investments of roughly \$17 million on behalf of several congregations and the Conference. The Foundation provides an ideal opportunity for your congregation to achieve excellent financial returns through socially responsible investments.

The love of Christ builds beloved community. In our wider conference life, we are asking this question: "How can we better connect, resource and support each other, as local churches, pastors and lay leaders?" The question has prompted us to rethink church governance structures and to imagine new forms of collaboration. Meanwhile, the staff continues to cultivate care and connection with one another and to build relationships throughout the Conference. At the beginning of 2023 we welcomed ACM Michael Jones and just recently introduced our newest staff member, Carla Myers, who succeeds Susan Taylor as office coordinator. Though Sue is mostly retired, we're happy that she has agreed to work a few hours a week to coordinate the search-and-call process.

Submitted with a grateful heart in the love of Christ,
The Rev. Franz Rigert