

NORTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
United Church of Christ
NEW HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT



Annual Meeting
November 12, 2023

North Congregational Church 2023 Annual Report

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North Congregational Church 2023 Annual Report

Pastor Report

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. ~ Isaiah 43: 19

So, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away.
Look! new things have come into being! ~ 2 Corinthians 5:17

This year the faithful people of North Congregational Church have been coping with mighty forces beyond their control. We have been struggling with issues of joy and sorry...hope and despair...stability and conflict... growth and decline...death and rebirth. We are in “transition,” the process of “becoming.” There is no promise in the Bible that says it will be painless and easy. There is no promise made by God or Christ that things will turn out the way we want. Like labor pain, an experience that is excruciating and yet desirable, it heralds a positive outcome — the birth of a child. We, the faithful people of North Congregational Church, are part of the new things that God is re-creating – God is re-birthing us, and each of us is one of the new things brought into being and New Life by Christ!

For years, you have witnessed the many-years of declining membership and fear for the future as you rely on the endowment fund to pay the expenses of the church. In your church profile, you described NCC as a church in process of major restructure, assessment of viability, physical relocation, [or] uniting or yoking with another congregation. And you have included three stated DTM Ministry goals in my call agreement: *(1) choosing and implementing at least three strategies for increasing membership; (2) exploring the possibility of merging with another church by engaging in conversation with at least three neighboring churches; and (3) if neither (1) or (2) are possible, assisting the congregation in defining and implementing the steps needed to become a legacy church.* These are not simple tasks accomplished by the pastor alone. None of these are done in isolation by me as pastor. The leadership and membership have covenanted also to share these responsibilities, for it is you, the congregation, who will ultimately vote on the future of the life of the church. It has been and is my honor and sacred responsibility to walk with you all through this process, to explore and discover what new life God has for this lovable and loving faith community. It is my prayer that God continue to sustain us in hope, inspiring us to explore and discover the new life God dreams for us, and enable us to do some new things to give that dream life!

There are many highlights I would like to lift up in this Annual Report, and room for only a few. I wish first to note that NCC has been holding things together through a complicated time in not only its history, but in time when our culture and the workings of the world have gotten more complex, more demanding, more mobile, more hostile, and more suspicious. These are difficult times for all churches, let alone a small congregation as this. For us, this year we have witnessed incredible dedication by church leadership to keep the NCC faith community connected to the presence of God and each other, as God prepares the way for this faith community not only to do new things, but, as I want to emphasize, become something new and wonderful. I pray we may continue to explore and discover together the New Life that God is dreaming for this faith community.

With grateful heart for all you have done in the name of Jesus Christ, our Rock and Redeemer.

Births, Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals:

Baptism: December 4, 2022 - Jayden Michael Sosnicki, born June 28, 2021

Transfers In: October 22, 2022 – Anne Marie and Eugene Janczak, from Winchester Center
Congregational Church UCC

Transfers Out: April 6, 2023 - Rebecca Glinsman, to First Congregational Church Canton Center UCC

ACCOMPLISHMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

These accomplishments are not mine alone, rather they are the result of the collaborative engagement with members of this congregation as together we have sought to discern the call God is making to this faith community.

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Discernment Work: Discernment is a process, and, in a sense, is never complete as we learn we are always seeking to discover what God has in store for us -- let us keep in mind that it is not about getting back to where we were, but about moving forward, as God leads us toward new life for this faith community. In the Fall of 2022, we began our formal discernment to assess the viability of the church through a series of Sacred Conversations in which we sought to answer three questions: Who Are We? Who Are Our Neighbors? And What is God Calling Us to Do? We met twice monthly October to the start of Advent in 2022, then again from February to May. We suspended our Sacred Conversations for the Summer and hoped to resume again in September 2023. Highlights of our discernment, which we put to action, are included in the Activities Report below.

Worship Sojourns: Worship Sojourns were continued into the current year on a less frequent basis. Originally begun as a whole-congregational mini-mission trip in which we shared our love of worship with sibling congregations, we pared back to once a month, then less frequently, as we engaged more in home-based worship and activities.

Growing the Church in Number: As pastor, I continued to encourage members of the congregation to reach out to and regather those absent members to return to a more active participation in worship attendance and church life. I supported the formation of the Big Ideas group in our last annual meeting, and a wealth of ideas came from their brainstorming sessions. I supported a majority of their ideas which were within the scope of the life of a vital congregation, including NCC hosting Blood Drive, bake sales, having a presence at the Litchfield Hills Triathlon, preparing for the Tag Sale, scheduling Christmas and Spring concerts, their consideration of mission trips, movie nights, renting the upstairs out to increase revenue, pursuing grants for capital projects. I encouraged them to form a publicity team; to expand the Tag Sale to include non-member vendor tables which would help draw a new and wider circle of people to the premises; and other ideas. This group met on days when I was not available so I could not attend on an ongoing basis.

Highlights: In addition to preparing for and attending Council, Deacons, and Finance meetings, and providing pastoral care to parishioners, I lift up these activities that

DECEMBER 2022 – We suspended our Sacred Conversations and Sojourning during Advent. With Deacons and our Music Director, we prepared for the Season of Advent. On December 4th, the second Sunday of Advent and a Communion Sunday, I was delighted to welcome the extended Sosnicki family and celebrate the baptism of Jayden Michael Sosnicki, born June 28, 2021.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2023 – (i) Wrote memorandum to Council regarding moving forward on 2 fronts – growing the church and taking steps to become a legacy church, including seeing if we could free up restricted assets, and our fiduciary duty to maintain transparency within our membership, our wider faith community, and with those who might be seeking a church home at NCC. (ii) Encouraged all committees to meet monthly in order to ensure the smooth administration of the duties entrusted to us.

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2023 – (i) In our Sacred Conversations we explored the difference between what needs we perceive in the wider community and what needs actually exist. Areas of need we perceived were support for seniors, food support, and growing the church. (ii) As part of our exploration, Fran H. and Shirley McC interviewed Christine Hayward at the Selectmen's Office said they lacked specific information on needs and asked if NCC could help organize a Community Needs Assessment Survey. This request was an opportunity for us to be of service to our wider community in a unique way, and one that will certainly get NCC noticed. The matter was brought before Council and I put out requests to non-profit leaders I know for templates. (iii) I attended LNA Executive Committee Meeting, where my proposal on behalf of NCC for an LNA All Church Worship & Family Picnic for August (later set for Sept 10) was approved to be presented for a vote at the Annual Meeting, May 1st. My proposal was tabled for an LNA All Church Workshop on the impacts on churches of the rapidly changing culture of the 21st C society, especially post-covid. (iv) Our monthly Worship Sojourns continue to inspire our sibling LNA churches.

MARCH/APRIL 2023 – (i) In our Sacred Conversations, we continued our reflection on Who Are Our Neighbors? And What Needs Exist in our community, as well as how important it is to invite family, friends and neighbors to church. (ii) In talking about the Triathlon, a theme of Peace emerged – a theme that could be central to NCC's identity in the community. (iii)

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Publicity – at a recent meeting of Big Ideas, I suggested forming a Publicity Team. There were 3 volunteers. I met with Donna Howard about creating a publicity handbook and creating an outline for an interview-style news article.

APRIL/MAY 2023 – (i) Our Sacred Conversations focused on What Is God Calling Us To Do? Aka, What Is The Special Purpose of This Faith Community? We learned more about the changing landscape of society and how this impacts the way the general population, especially post-Boomers, view “church” – they are more inclined to support organizations that have more tangible and measurable impact in the world. (ii) Met with Christine Hayward regarding NCC’s willingness to develop a Community Needs Assessment Survey. (iii) Prepared and led with Deacon Frank Owen, our Second Annual Blessing of the Motorcycles. 15 bikers came to receive a blessing and enjoy fellowship with the congregation. (iv) Prepared, advertised, and conducted a special worship service inviting the public to honor those who gave their lives in service to this country. (v) As NCC Pastor, participated in the American Legion’s Memorial Day commemoration on the Pine Meadow Green. (vi) At the request of a few members, I initiated a weekly ½ hour of prayer in the sanctuary on Thursday evening at 5:00. Initial attendance in June was sparse and sporadic. (vii) In response to the desire of some folks who did not want to sojourn, and with the approval of Deacons, I planned and set aside time during my office hours in June to help laity become familiar with planning and preparing to hold lay-led worship.

MAY/JUNE 2023 – (i) For the second year, our Deacon’s Peace and Justice Ministry organized a multi- organization Gun Violence Awareness Vigil on the Pine Meadow Green, followed by a ceremony remembering the victims of gun violence and their families, and conducted a follow-up “gun safety awareness” pledge. (ii) With Gail Embry, helped organize congregational work parties to conduct a “Spring Cleaning” of the Sunday School rooms to prepare them for repairs and painting to spruce them up as potential renting space. (iii) All Church Family Picnic; Guest Speaker Charles Kuchenbrod on the changing face of American culture and its impact on churches, especially in a post-pandemic time, and NCC’s discernment of its future. (iv) Attended SNEUCC Annual Meeting in Worcester, MA on June 16 & 17, where I attended break out sessions on building community, on resiliency gleaned from the pandemic, and on visioning UCC’s global relationships and ministries and how local churches might participate. (v) Supported and encouraged members Shirley McCunn and Fran Herman engaged in the Peace and Justice Ministry of Refugee Resettlement. (v) Lay-led Worship Workshop: In addition to the head deacon, only one person attended the first of 4 sessions and at the end of June, given the lack of interest, I did not try to extend the offering.

JUNE/JULY 2023 - (i) Supported and participated in lifting up NCC’s presence in the community at the Triathlon. As when the congregation gathered into “work parties” to paint the lavatories, several members banded together to help clear out the upstairs rooms to sort our items to contribute to the Tag Sale and ready the rooms for painting – out of 5 rooms to be painted, we have 4 cleared and after a pre- paint cleaning in August, we’ve extended the plan to paint in September when the weather is a little cooler (we hope)! And, in the week before the Tag Sale, with Donna recovering, the same core crew diverted its attention from upstairs to set up for the Tag Sale. (ii) Disbanded prayer group and lay-led worship workshops due to no attendees.

JULY/AUGUST 2023 (i) LNA All Churches Tent Worship & Family Picnic – as lead organizer, I wrote the order of worship, selected music with the organist, and coordinated with sibling churches to prepare for the Sept. 10 event. (ii) Community Needs Assessment Survey – worked with Jon Benner and Fran Phelps to review the survey template and adapt it to New Hartford community. (iii) Attended Second Hour presentation at Goshen UCC on Drug Addiction and NARCAN training.

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2023 – (ii) As originator and lead church in organizing the LNA All Association Tent Worship & Family Picnic, prepared for and led worship to over ; A visit from our Conference Area Minister, The Rev. Terry Yasuko Ogawa to listen and talk about NCC and discernment of its future. Deacon’s Peace and Justice Ministry organized a petition to the Superintendents of local and regional schools encouraging them to raise the need for “gun safety awareness” amongst parents of school children. Received additional comments from parishioners to be incorporated into the Community Needs Assessment Survey.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2023 – Led a service of prayer, worship & communion on October 1st, followed by vacation, returning October 30th

North Congregational Church 2023 Annual Report

Moderator's Annual Report

North Congregational Church has continued to work through many challenges this past year. Declining membership and dwindling funds are big concerns. At the November 2022 annual meeting, an ad hoc committee was established to work on ideas for growth. There was great enthusiasm as folks stepped up to join committees to help reinvigorate the church. Each committee has been quite busy and the work of the past year is detailed in the following reports.

We continued to provide meeting space for the Boy Scouts of America led by Mark Perillo.

Under Rev. Kristie's guidance, the congregation met in sacred conversation to help us discern our path forward. The consensus has been to continue try to grow membership while also attempting to come to terms as a potential legacy church.

Our dear friends Dave and Cele Hoffman have had to curtail their involvement with NCC due to health concerns. We pray for their strength and healing.

A huge thank you is due to the many volunteers who work so hard to make our church what it is. These same folks have been involved for many years. But these volunteers have other life stresses that make it necessary to cut back in their service to the church.

Over the next several months with Pastor Kristie's guidance, the congregation will continue to be in conversation about the future of NCC. We strongly encourage everyone to be involved in this discernment process.

NCC is facing difficult decisions for the future; many folks are very attached to this place having been baptized here as infants. We were very lucky to have received an unrestricted endowment that has allowed us to thrive for so long. But the funds are finite. At the current rate of withdrawal and the small amount of annual pledging, we cannot last more than a few more years.

Please pray about these questions: Why do you come to NCC? What is your vision for our future?

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lachowicz, moderator

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Stewardship and Finance

The Church's annual 2023 budget meeting was held on November 13, 2022. The congregation was presented with a balanced budget while emphasizing the need to depend on the endowment to meet operating costs. The budget was approved unanimously. We chose not to conduct a pledge drive for 2023 but are grateful for those who faithfully contributed as in the past. A pledge drive is planned for 2024.

In February, the finance committee took on the task of searching for and reviewing old financial documents such as wills or other bequest instructions that might provide insight into the source of donated funds that are invested in the SNEUCC trust fund. We hope to use those documents to make a legal case to remove restrictions on the trust funds. We also searched for legal documents that pertain to the building and grounds and especially any that might apply to North Ecclesiastical Society, our legal title.

We looked into requesting a grant to help with building improvements; incomplete as of this writing.

\$425 was sent to the SNEUCC for the annual proportional giving request.

Net proceeds from 2023 fund raising activities: the tag sale held in August netted over \$2000. The Farmington Valley Band concert in April brought in \$162. We are anticipating additional income from a concert to be held in December.

- Account balances as of 12/31/2022
 - UCC trust funds: \$87,322; dividends \$1,736
 - Wells Fargo endowment: \$159,901
 - 2022 YTD earnings: \$8,979
 - 2022 YTD withdrawals: \$48,800
 - Wells Fargo restricted music fund: \$29,971; earnings: \$1,572; withdrawals \$0
- 2023 activity to date
 - UCC Trust Funds dividends: \$1,038
 - Wells Fargo Endowment earnings: \$3,317
 - Wells Fargo Endowment withdrawals: \$59,000
 - Wells Fargo restricted music fund earnings: \$1,130
 - Wells Fargo restricted music fund anticipated withdrawals: \$2,745

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lachowicz, endowment manager

Committee members: *Donna Howard*; *David McCunn*, Treasurer; *Marty Post*; *Susan Lachowicz*

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Deacons'

The Deacons started out 2023 with a Lenten practice – Water Wednesdays – where several members committed to drinking only water and foregoing other beverages on the Wednesdays in Lent, praying, and donating what they would usually spend on another drinks to our chosen charity, “Pure Water for the World”.

We contributed to the planning of Lenten and Easter services. In addition to weekly messages related to “Water Wednesdays”, we brought in a black-draped cross, distributed palm crosses, and decorated the sanctuary with lilies for Easter. Rev. Kristie led us in a very moving Maundy Thursday service where we shared a simple meal of soup and bread, and symbolically washed each other’s hands.

We continued the Mother’s Day tradition of distributing flowers in honor of mothers.

Veterans were invited to a Service of Remembrance on the Sunday prior to Memorial Day, followed by our second annual Blessing of the Bikes. Several bikers joined us for a short service outside; afterwards we gathered for fellowship.

In June we honored National Gun Violence Awareness Day/Wear Orange Weekend with a vigil on the Pine Meadow Green. Several NCC members and others accepted the challenge to take one or more actions to reduce gun violence, such as learning about gun safety, familiarizing ourselves with some of the victims of gun violence, contacting elected officials, and donating to groups working to end gun violence.

An additional measure to reduce gun violence was initiated in October: Fran H. and Fran P. developed a petition to obtain signatures which will be brought to our local school superintendents encouraging them to communicate with parents about the importance of safe gun storage.

Rev. Kristie offered a time of silent prayer in the sanctuary during June.

We continued to Sojourn at neighboring churches, which has provided insights into different styles of worship and mission activities, and linked us with sister churches. For those who did not choose to Sojourn, Rev. Kristie provided a template for an abbreviated worship service to be held in the sanctuary and offered a workshop in leading worship.

The Deacons led the following services: 8/27 service based on a Romans passage, and later in October during Rev. Kristie’s vacation, a service based on a scripture passage with reflections led by Clarence. Together with Shirley McCunn, we developed and led a service of hymns with background on the composers and reflections.

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In September we welcomed Fran Phelps as our newest Deacon. We look forward to the perspectives and insights that Fran will offer.

Our beloved sister Deacon, Cele Hoffman, faced many health challenges over the past year which prevented her from participating in worship. However, Cele continues to brighten the days of our church family with her courageous spirit and important ministry of card-writing, and has been deemed "Honorary Deacon".

Our prayer chain has continued to provide the important ministry of regularly praying for requests received from the congregation. The group is currently comprised of Carol Beaudoin, Joan Egbertson, Fran Herman, Cele Hoffman, Donna Howard, Sue Lachowicz, Shirley McCunn, Angie and Clarence Moore, Frank Owens, Fran Phelps, Phyllis Rigby, Rev. Kristie, Rev. Yost. New members are always welcome; if you would like to join, please contact Fran Herman.

We continue to give thanks for our small but caring church family, and for joys great and small. We trust that God will provide us with guidance for the path ahead so that we can continue to do God's work in our corner of the world.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Herman, chair of deacons

2023 Deacons: Fran Herman, Cele Hoffman, Clarence Moore, Frank Owens, Fran Phelps

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Personnel Committee

2023 brought a new addition to our NCC team: our sexton, Brian Sabia. Brian has worked in maintenance for several years and brings many solid skills to this position. He has proven to be reliable and flexible, and has cheerfully assisted with extra projects, such as installing new lights in the sanctuary, as well as set up for the tag sale and blood drive.

Our secretary, Suzanne Czerwinski, continues to be a valuable member of our staff. Her courteous and friendly demeanor - in person and on the phone – are a welcoming portal to our church for members, friends and strangers.

Rev. Kristie entered her second year with NCC as Designated Term Minister, and has continued to work to guide our congregation through this challenging phase of our church's life. As part of her scope of work, she has overseen our secretary's daily tasks and participated in the secretary's performance evaluation. As per her contract, Church Council performs Rev. Kristie's review of ministry.

This year, the Personnel Committee instituted a communication notebook system which both Suzanne and Brian have been using. The notebooks provide an easily accessed record of hours worked and tasks accomplished.

The Committee continues to perform annual employee evaluations in October.

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Herman

2023 Committee members: Jon Benner, Fran Herman, Chairperson and Deacon Representative, Jane King, Susan Lachowicz, Moderator, the Rev. Kristie Rubendunst, Pastor

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Treasurer's Report

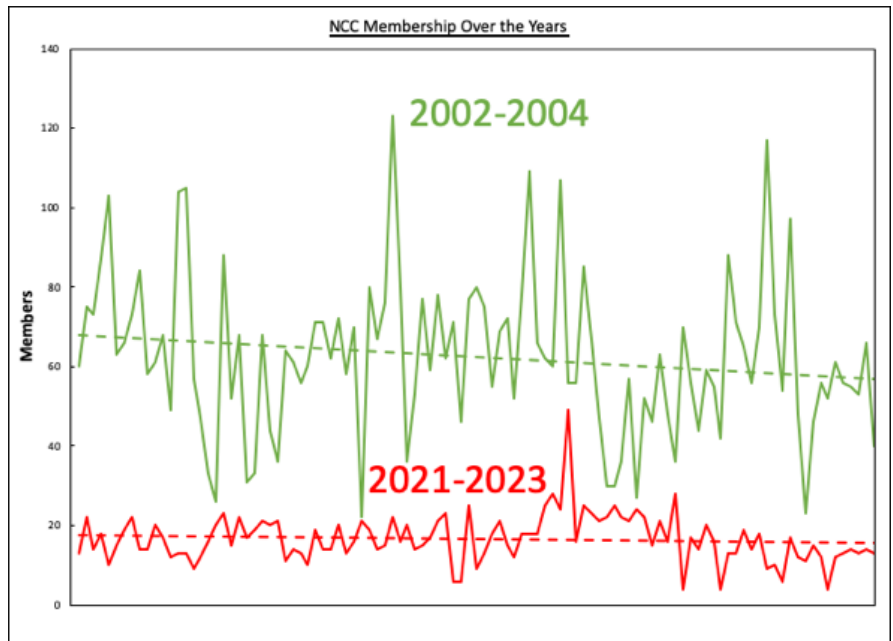
Sunday attendance has been declining

2002-2004

- Average 61 people/week
- 43 adults
- Attendance declining
- 18 children/week
- Robust Sunday School

2021-2023

- Average 17 people/week
- 16 adults
- 2 children
- Attendance steady



Major Income/Expense

Total Expenses

- Administration
 - *Realm*
 - *Two Swing Signs*
- Compensation
 - *Housing allowance*
 - *Wages*
- Insurance
 - *Property*
- Utilities
 - *Oil*
 - *Electricity*
 - *Phone/Internet*
- Property
 - *Snow plow*
 - *Paint, lights*
 - *C&G oil burner*
 - *Inspections*

\$103,280

\$2,035

\$494

\$396

\$54,894

\$30,000

\$13,514

\$8,732

\$7,941

\$15,947

\$11,419

\$2,676

\$1,585

\$4,825

\$1,555

\$1,396

\$948

\$642

Total Income

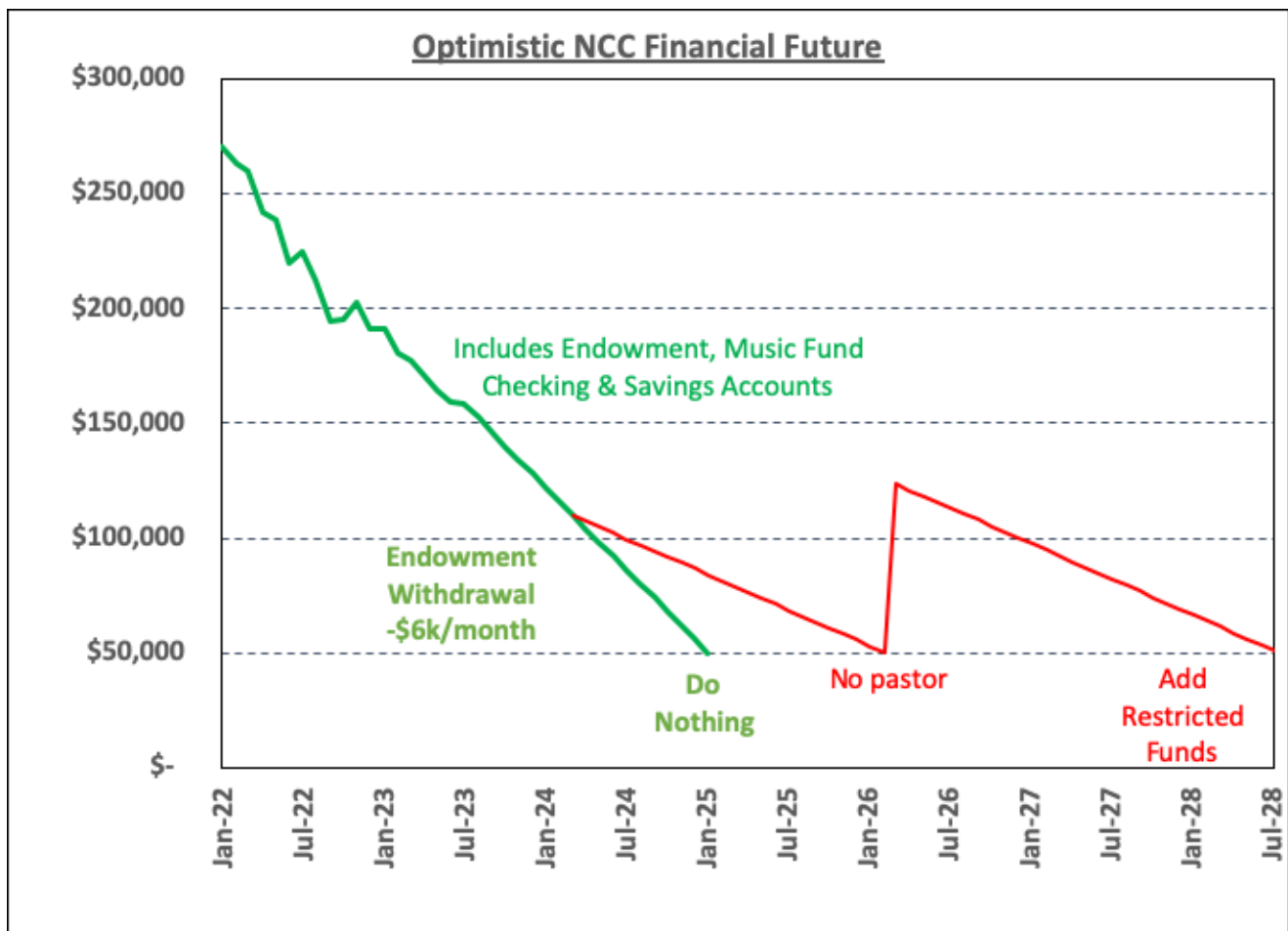
\$110,787

- Endowment \$81,000
- Fund Raising \$2,170
- Offering \$16,900

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Optimistic Possible Financial Future

- March 2024
 - Remove Pastor
 - Liquidate WF Music Fund
- February 2026
 - Liquidate UCC Restricted Funds
- July 2028
 - \$50k minimum threshold met
 - Must close



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NCC 2024 Budget

<u>North Congregational Church</u>	<u>2023 budget</u>	<u>2023 actual</u>	<u>2024 budget</u>
<u>Income</u>	\$ 92,985	\$ 110,787.13	\$ 94,335
Employee Withholding	\$ 1,510	\$ 5,675.36	\$ 1,510
CT Paid Leave	\$ 50	\$ 67.61	\$ 50
Life & Disability Insurance	\$ 550	\$ 2,586.02	\$ 550
Medicare	\$ 80	\$ 79.91	\$ 80
Social Security	\$ 330	\$ 341.82	\$ 330
TSA	\$ 500	\$ 2,600.00	\$ 500
Endowment Income	\$ 73,500	\$ 82,721.67	\$ 73,500
Endowment Transfer	\$ 72,000	\$ 81,000.00	\$ 72,000
UCC Dividends	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,721.67	\$ 1,500
Fund Raising	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,170.05	\$ 3,650
Concerts	\$ -	\$ 162.00	\$ 1,350
Tag Sale	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,008.05	\$ 2,300
Memorial Fund	\$ -	\$ 50.00	\$ -
Missions	\$ -	\$ 1,397.00	\$ -
Bake Sale	\$ -	\$ 614.00	\$ -
Neighbor to Neighbor	\$ -	\$ 48.00	\$ -
Ukraine Relief	\$ -	\$ 407.00	\$ -
Water Wednesday	\$ -	\$ 328.00	\$ -
Offering	\$ 15,000	\$ 16,899.70	\$ 15,000
General Fund	\$ 15,000	\$ 16,899.70	\$ 15,000
Property	\$ 575	\$ 632.50	\$ 575
Basement Rental	\$ 575	\$ 500.00	\$ 575
PVCC Plow Share	\$ -	\$ 132.50	\$ -
Transfer from Savings	\$ -	\$ 1,017.35	\$ -
Worship	\$ 100	\$ 223.50	\$ 100
Fellowship	\$ -	\$ 28.50	\$ -
Flowers	\$ 100	\$ 195.00	\$ 100
<u>Expense</u>	\$ (92,985)	\$ (103,279.83)	\$ (94,335)
Administration	\$ (946)	\$ (2,034.79)	\$ (1,596)
Advertising	\$ -	\$ (645.90)	\$ -
Bank charge	\$ -	\$ (285.59)	\$ -
Office Expenses	\$ (850)	\$ (1,007.30)	\$ (1,500)
Website	\$ (96)	\$ (96.00)	\$ (96)
Christian Education	\$ -	\$ (69.50)	\$ (100)
Supplies	\$ -	\$ (69.50)	\$ (100)
Compensation	\$ (56,305)	\$ (54,894.30)	\$ (56,305)
Background Check	\$ -	\$ (11.00)	\$ -
CT Paid Leave	\$ (50)	\$ (71.37)	\$ (50)
Federal Tax (Form 941)	\$ (1,600)	\$ (535.17)	\$ (1,600)
Minister Benefits	\$ (37,295)	\$ (40,762.82)	\$ (37,295)
Housing Allowance	\$ (30,000)	\$ (30,000.10)	\$ (30,000)
Life & Disability Additional Insurance	\$ -	\$ (1,887.00)	\$ -
Life & Disability Insurance	\$ (1,788)	\$ (911.61)	\$ (1,788)
Social Security & Medicare Offset	\$ (2,907)	\$ (2,907.06)	\$ (2,907)
Pension (Annuity)	\$ (2,600)	\$ (2,665.25)	\$ (2,600)

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NCC 2024 Budget

<u>North Congregational Church</u>	<u>2023 budget</u>	<u>2023 actual</u>	<u>2024 budget</u>
TSA	\$ -	\$ (2,391.80)	\$ -
Wages	\$ (17,360)	\$ (13,513.94)	\$ (17,360)
Minister	\$ (8,000)	\$ (7,999.94)	\$ (8,000)
Secretary	\$ (4,680)	\$ (3,064.00)	\$ (4,680)
Sexton	\$ (4,680)	\$ (2,450.00)	\$ (4,680)
Dues	\$ (950)	\$ (512.50)	\$ (950)
Litchfield North Association	\$ (100)	\$ (87.50)	\$ (100)
Proportional Giving	\$ (850)	\$ (425.00)	\$ (850)
Insurance	\$ (8,800)	\$ (8,732.34)	\$ (8,800)
Property	\$ (8,000)	\$ (7,941.34)	\$ (8,000)
Workers Compensation	\$ (800)	\$ (791.00)	\$ (800)
Missions	\$ (800)	\$ (929.00)	\$ (800)
Charity	\$ (800)	\$ (553.00)	\$ (800)
Neighbors In Need	\$ -	\$ (48.00)	\$ -
Water Wednesdays	\$ -	\$ (328.00)	\$ -
Music	\$ (6,300)	\$ (6,116.52)	\$ (6,300)
Concert	\$ -	\$ (300.00)	\$ -
Instrument Maintenance	\$ -	\$ (445.00)	\$ -
Music Supplies	\$ -	\$ (21.52)	\$ -
Substitute Musician	\$ (6,300)	\$ (5,350.00)	\$ (6,300)
Property	\$ (4,900)	\$ (4,825.47)	\$ (4,900)
Inspection	\$ (400)	\$ (641.80)	\$ (400)
Maintenance	\$ (2,000)	\$ (1,183.36)	\$ (2,000)
Projects	\$ -	\$ (1,395.31)	\$ -
Snow Plowing	\$ (2,500)	\$ (1,555.00)	\$ (2,500)
Supplies	\$ -	\$ (50.00)	\$ -
Transfer to Savings	\$ -	\$ (9,260.00)	\$ -
Utilities	\$ (13,534)	\$ (15,564.90)	\$ (13,534)
Electricity	\$ (1,800)	\$ (2,440.41)	\$ (1,800)
Oil	\$ (10,414)	\$ (11,418.58)	\$ (10,414)
Propane	\$ (20)	\$ (15.57)	\$ (20)
Telephone/Internet	\$ (1,100)	\$ (1,438.74)	\$ (1,100)
Water	\$ (200)	\$ (251.60)	\$ (200)
Worship	\$ (450)	\$ (340.51)	\$ (1,050)
Confirmation & Baptism	\$ -	\$ (68.96)	\$ (50)
Deaconate Supplies	\$ -	\$ (10.99)	\$ (50)
Fellowship	\$ (350)	\$ (60.56)	\$ (350)
Flowers	\$ (100)	\$ (200.00)	\$ (100)
Substitute Minister	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (500)
Honorarium	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (500)
Bank Balance as of 9/30/22		\$ 980.75	
Bank Balance as of 9/30/23		\$ 8,488.05	
<u>Difference</u>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

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Trustees

Sunday attendance continues to decline.

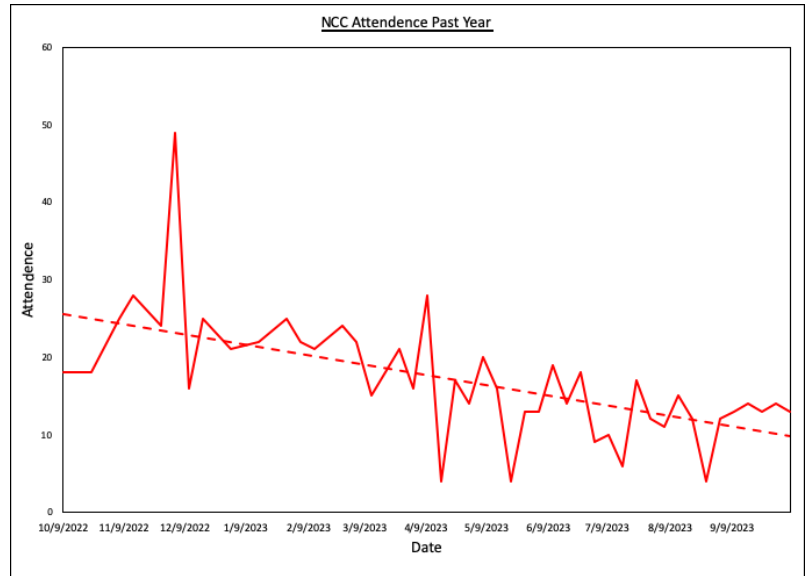
List of Trustees for 2023/2024:

The list of Trustees for the coming year are:

- David Hoffman
- David McCunn
- Frank Owens
- Jon Benner

Accomplishments:

- Many thanks to Frank who volunteered to mow the lawn all summer.
- Four bathrooms and choir area painted.
 - New sink vanity in ladies room (thanks to Donna)
- Low power LED lights installed in sanctuary ceiling.
- Front ramp paved (again thanks to Frank).
- Obtained three proposals for fixing sanctuary front steps.
 - Grant never written.
- Found & hired new sexton (Brian).
- Two Alphabet swing signs were purchased & assembled.
- Website updated regularly.
 - Online presence needs attention.
- Both oil burners have been serviced.
- The annual plowing contract was approved. Prices same as last year.
- The basement has been used for storing tag sale items as well as rented space for the Farmington Valley Band music.
- Performed regular building maintenance & inspections.



Respectfully submitted,
David McCunn
Trustee Chair/Treasurer

North Congregational Church 2023 Annual Report

Missions and Outreach

2023 Membership: Gail Embrey, Rebecca Glinsman, Donna Howard (chair), Jane King, Shirley McCunn, Karen Murray, Fran Phelps, Mary Wilson.

Financial Contributions. Our congregation's contributions this year include:

UCC Special Offerings:

Christmas Fund (Veterans of the Crc	\$ 0.00
Neighbors in Need	\$ 0.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ 0.00

Local and International Donations:

Neighbor to Neighbor	\$ 48.00
Ukraine Relief	\$407.00

Budget: Our budget is \$800 this year. Missions members voted to donate \$800 to the purchase of a new dishwasher, so we can efficiently serve community meals in 2024 and future years.

Activities (alphabetically arranged!):

Covenant to Care: Our commitment continues. Our 2022 Christmas gift list included 22 children. Covenant to Care is right now preparing their list of kids for 2023; they hope we will support 25 kids this year.

Book Group: Missions is now officially sponsoring this fun activity. Our winter book, "Anxious for Nothing" had 8 NCC members reading. Illnesses cramped our style later in the year, but we are now collecting suggestions for our next reading adventure, beginning in January 2024.

Food Collection: The church continues to support the Open Door. The Hoffmans and Fran Herman continue food collection.

Knitting Ministry: No requests for prayer shawls or baptismal blankets this year. If you know of someone suffering a life-threatening illness or of a child soon to be baptized soon in our church, please contact Donna.

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Missions Bulletin Board: Our bulletin board is back next to the front door of the fellowship hall, sharing half our board with Project: Big Idea. Due to our many projects, we have combined Missions meetings with Big Idea meetings, and are meeting roughly twice each month.

Missions Retreat: Due to COVID-19 and other illnesses, cancelled. We plan to resume in 2024.

Bake Sale: On April 29th we held a bake sale at 2 locations – church and Foodtown in New Hartford. We included a collection jar to send relief to 2 orphanages in Ukraine. We earned \$614 for the church general fund (\$250 covered our outreach table at the Litchfield Triathlon). For Ukraine, we earned a total of \$407, between the bake sale and another collection at the Tag Sale.

Litchfield County Triathlon: On July 8th, we were Copper Level sponsors at Brodie Park, reaching about 500+ attendees. Kudos to Jon Benner, Marty Post, and Rev. Kristie for hard work setting up and covering our outreach table. Missions plans to be a stronger presence in our community henceforth.

Tag Sale/Rummage Sale: The sale was on July 21 and 22. Once again Missions ladies and helpful gentlemen rose to the challenge and had a lot of fun. We earned \$2008 for the General Fund. Unsold items went to San Juan Center in Hartford for their thrift shop and to non-profit thrift shops in Winsted. The guys “manned” our new “Ring the Bell” activity and gave bell ringers the opportunity to see our church sanctuary. We had 45 folks try their hand at ringing the bell for a donation of \$2 each.

Thanks to all as we start our 5-year countdown to our 200th anniversary. Your love for our church and community rings out!

Donna Howard, Missions Chair

North Congregational Church 2023 Annual Report

Music Committee Report

Music Committee: Jon Benner, Sue Lachowicz, Clarence Moore, Theresa Moore, Fran Phelps

This has been a wonderful year for music in our worship!

Worship

Shirley has worked with Rev. Kristie to pick suitable hymns that reflect the lectionary readings and the themes of the services. Likewise the selection of anthems for the choir enhances the themes.

Choir

- The choir has led the congregation very ably in hymn singing. Most weeks it has also sung two anthems, one for the Offertory and one for Prelude or Postlude and sometimes an Amen to conclude prayers. It is able to do three part music because of the abilities and hard work of its members. Rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings and before the Sunday service. It is truly a blessing to have such talent shared with the congregation each week! For much of the year we were also blessed to have AnnMarie and Gene Janczak join us. Many thanks to all of the following singers:
- Soprano: Sue Lachowicz, AnnMarie Janczak, Karissa Moore, Theresa Moore
- Alto: Fran Phelps, Fran Herman
- Bass: Jon Benner, Clarence Moore, Gene Janczak
- In September the tent meeting on Winchester Center green introduced us to members of different UCC churches. Shirley led a choir of NCC and Winchester Center UCC members and later in October when we sojourned at that church a combined choir sang the two anthems. Some of these singers will join us in our Advent cantata. showing a further strengthening of ties between the two churches.
- Further evidence of the interest in sharing sacred music will be shown this Advent when a combined choir will be performing *Follow the Star, Follow the King*, a Christmas cantata for choir and narrators. The performance takes approximately 25 minutes and includes many favorite carols as it progresses from the Old Testament prophecies through to the birth of the baby Jesus. Singers and narrators from Winchester Center UCC church will be joining North Congregational for this special occasion and also singers from two other churches. There is potential for more inter church choral performances outside of the regular worship times to accommodate singers who are needed in their own church choirs.

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- The choir led a Hymn Sunday in October. Hymns were selected from a variety of eras and composers and the choir read some interesting facts about each one. The congregation thoroughly enjoyed singing the hymns and learning the history about what inspired the hymn writers.

Concert

In May the Farmington Valley Band returned once again for its 14th visit. It was a joy to hear the wonderful music and see the enthusiasm of the audience, many returning each year for this occasion. Afterwards the band brought food to share at the reception.

Instruments

- The organ was checked in August after a few issues had arisen. A battery was replaced and it is working adequately now.
- The upright piano in the choir room was tuned and is in good shape.

Thank you to everyone who has helped to make this year's music program so successful!

Respectfully submitted

Shirley McCunn

Organist/Choir Director