



Tony Ehrlich, 2011

*The First
Congregational Church
of Lee
An Open & Affirming
Congregation of the
United Church of Christ*

*2015 Annual Report
and materials for the
2016 Annual Meeting*

held on
Sunday, January 24, 2016



~ 2015 ~

Walter H Alter

Edith Pyle

John Kearin, Sr.

George Sampson

Dick Lawrence

Maddie Ohman

Norma Berry

Henry T Zukowski

Roy Anderson, Sr.

Walter M Pyle, Sr.

Robert Rhoades

Ronald P. Kershner

Donna Williams

Mike Forzano

Gerard Miller

Barbara C Puleri

Amie Vreeland

Myron Gregory

Aylmer Trivers

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Minutes of Previous Meetings

Minutes: Annual Meeting, January 18, 2015

First Congregational Church of Lee ANNUAL MEETING Minutes – JANUARY 18, 2015

The meeting was opened at 12:50 by Garth Story.

Present: 34 members.

Reverend Neil offered a devotion and a call to mission. He suggested a new structure of organization for our church utilizing ideas recently developed in several workshops and provided in the handout and laminated strips. “We are spiritual beings who are having a human experience; inviting, developing, strengthening disciples toward the full maturity of Christ.”

Memorials were read by Pastor Neil and followed by a moment of silent prayer.

It was noted that the date of the 2014 Annual Meeting Minutes of should be changed to January 19, 2014.

Motion – Melissa Myers – to dispense with the reading of the Minutes and accept the minutes as corrected; second Stan Rossier. Approved.

Moderator's Report: Garth Story reported that an audit of our financial records and procedures was performed by an independent auditor. The results indicate we are in good shape and are working towards upgrading our accounting software.

He also recognized Joan Zukowski for 20 years of keeping our weekly attendance.

Pastor's Report: Reverend Neil provided an overview of his activities during the past year and highlighted our involvement in the new initiative – the Berkshire Diaper Project which provides diapers to families in need through the Lee Food Pantry and other locations.

All Committee Reports are included in written form in the Annual Report packet handed out at this meeting.

Deacon's Report: Faith Neil reported that we have two new deacons – Midge and Walter Pyle.

Endowment Report: Garth Story indicated that we withdrew \$33,000.00 from our Investment Funds during the year, yet our current balance is only down by \$2,000.00.

Budget Report: Dave Markham complimented Al Triver's work on keeping track of and computerizing all our accounts.

Dave reviewed our 2014 budget vs. actual income and expenses. He reviewed the proposed 2015 budget.

Motion – Stan Rossier – To adopt the 2015 budget as presented; second Melissa Myers. Approved.

Approval of Slate of Officers: Several positions were identified and nominations made as follows.

Motion – Barbara Mahony – To nominate Ellen Krupka for Council at Large; second Faith Neil. Approved.

Motion – Barbara Mahony – To nominate Marilyn Rossier for Council at Large; second Melissa Myers. Approved.

Motion – Stan Rossier – To accept the Slate of Officers as presented; second Jane Gleason. Approved.

Motion – Melissa Myers – To adjourn the meeting at 1:35 PM; second Faith Neil. Approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane Gleason

For Judy Morehouse, Clerk

Clerk's Report for 2015

Our membership list is compiled of active and inactive members. To be considered active, a member must participate or support, or hopefully both. The current count of our membership to date is as follows.

Active Members 135 *on 2014/12/31*

Added by transfer or affirmation of faith 1 Rev. Mrs. Natalie Shiras

Added by associate member 1 Richard Lumma

Added by reactivation 1 Teresa Greene

Removals

by death 3 Roy M Andersen, Sr.

Norma S Berry

Aylmer (Al) Raynolds Trivers

Membership 2015/12/31 135

Baptisms 1 Olivia Esther Nichols

Weddings 2 Thomas Andrew Dougherty & Adrienne Rochelle Detrick

Kevin Giambertone & Karen Maria Crandall

Respectfully Submitted,

J. Morehouse

Membership Roster 12/31/2015

Members and Friends

Archibald, Heather
Arnold, John & Gloria
Bailey, Brian
Birch, Dolores
Blakeslee, Carol
Bleston, Shirley
Brazee, Marie
Brown, Dianna
Bugley, Bob
Burdick, Ken
Carrington, Marion
Chaffee, Evelyn
Charter, Sally
Chrisman, Rick & Cindy
Clayson, Lindsay
Clayson, Susan
Clifford, Charlie & Holly
Coffey, Marlyn C.
Colli, Maria
Congdon, Martha & Angelini, Kate
Cosmus, Jack
Cosmus, Naomi
Cozzaglio, Sandra & Stephen
D'Elia, Doratheia (Dottie)
Davis, Cara Barkett
Davis, Church
DelSignor, Sarah & James
DelSignor, Kate
DiMario, Kathy
Drenga, Craig & Jessica
Driscoll, Monda
Dutton, Debbie & Ted
Faivre, Delores (Dee)
Fassell, Isabel
Fennelly, Catherine
Fennelly, Darrell & Marcy
Fennelly, Marilyn & Bill
Fix, Gary & Anne
Fontana, Rita
Franchere, Timothy
Francis, Ruth
Fraser, Dorothy P (DeeDee)
Gaiton, Pat
Gangloff, Raymond & Carolyn
Giarolo, Jessica
Gleason, Jane & Ralph
Gregg, Harrison
Gregg, Isabel
Gregg, Rick
Greene, Teresa
Hack, William
Harwood, Denise & John
Haynes, Charles
Height, Jo-Ellen & Gordon
Hunter, Don
Jahn, Peter & Lorraine
Jorzczak, Paul & Victoria
Kellog, Barry & Sally
Ketchen, Andrew & Grace
Klahn, Wanda & Bill
Krupka, Ellen
Kruse, Karina
Lanoue, Lynn & Harlan
Lenfest, Michael & Cristina
LePrevost, Gerald & Sandra
Lloyd, Lexie
Lockenwitz, Arlene
Loring, Russell
Lumma, Richard
MacNayr, Emmilyn
MacNayr, Matthew
Mahony, Barbara
Markham, Cristina
Markham, David & Margaret
Maroni, Sheila
Martin, Laura & Jeff
Martin, Timothy & Patricia (Niti)
Matarazzo, Julie
Matarazzo, Robert & Betsy
McKeon, Will
McKinstry, Rev. Janet
McNutt, Judy
Melbourne, Ruth F
Miller, Gerard & Elaine
Miller, Hannah
Miller, Jordan
Miller, Samantha
Miller, Susan
Monachina, Paul & Joyce
Monteleone, Kellie & Jeffrey Jr.
Moore, Michelle
Morehouse, Merrill & Karen
Morehouse, Pamela
Morehouse, Rainsford (Ray) & Judith
Morrison, James
Mougin, Debbie
Myers, Karl & Melissa
Naventi, Michael & Pamela
Niebuhr, Christopher
Neil, Rev. Bill & Faith
Ohman, Conrad & Margaret (Margy)
Olds, Judy
Perry, Barbara & Crosby
Phillips, Dorothy
Picado, Marco
Puleri, Richard & Michele
Pyle, Walter & Midge
Raymond, Neil
Renner, Chenoe
Renner, David
Renner, Zoe
Richard, David & Patricia
Rizzardini, Edward & Karen
Roosa, Michael
Roosa, Peter & Tari
Rossier, Stanley & Marilyn
Shepardson, Diane (Dee)
Shepardson, Kristen
Shiras, Rev. Mrs. Natalie
Simmons, Fred
Smothers, Linda
Snow, Benjamin
Snow, Danna & P. Brian
Snow, Jonathan
Snow, Katrina
Spalinger, Richard & Jeanette
Stone, David
Stone, Robert Francis & Susan
Story, Garth & Karen
Thomas III, Edward
Tillotson, Brian & Bonnie
Touponce, Jessica
Tremblay, Madelyn
Trivers, Midge
Tucker, Nancy
Tucker, Susan
Wadsworth, James
Walker, Cheryl
Walker, William
Warner, Liz
Wheeler, Charles & Diane
Williams, Amy & Josh
Zukowski, Joan

Treasurer's Report – 2015

Please refer to page 15 *Budget for 2016* which includes the budget and actuals for 2015.

Overall for 2015 income and expenditures closely tracked budgets. Overall offering totals were \$107,928 which is 97% of planned. Building usage and fund raisers exceeded planned budget resulting in overall income exceeding planned, \$134,184 actual vs. \$132,190 planned.

On the expense side the church benefitted from lower energy costs. Overall gas and electricity were below plan by \$4250. Salaries and benefits were in line with planned. The only items worth noting are OCWM and Mass Conference payment of \$5500 which was not budgeted and the facilities projects which were \$6333 below planned. Overall Expenses were below plan by \$5257.

I very much want to thank the collectors, Carol, Betsy and Debbie for outstanding work every week and thank Carol for agreeing to support the treasurer.

In closing I would like to acknowledge the contributions of our previous treasurer Al Trivers who suddenly passed away in June. I had the opportunity to work with Al for the last 5 years. Al is the one responsible to integrating our financial system and making the jobs of the bill payers and collectors manageable. The church has a first class accounting system with a trained volunteer staff because of Al. Al was a great American and tireless worker for the church and we all will be forever grateful to Al for his dedicated service. I think of him every time that I tend to the church finances. I greatly miss him.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Markham (1/10/2016)

Moderator's Report - 2015

This has been a year of more forward progress for our church. You can read through the accompanying reports and see that there is good news on many fronts. There are several noteworthy items to mention here, however, as they mark significant outreach on the part of the church. We have had a presence at Berkshire Interfaith Organizing (BIO). That group is working to assist those that have significant needs in “staying afloat” in Berkshire County. One of the most significant needs they are working on is transportation. Another outreach ministry is the Christmas programs. Jim and crew again did a wonderful job and that work is making a mark in the community. The tree lighting and carol sing in the park, followed by hot chocolate and cookies in our parlor, the two concerts by the choir and bell choir, the children's pageant, and the scripture, carols and communion services on Christmas Eve brought over five hundred people to our church. The trip to Appalachia by our young people and the formation of a Venture Scout program are other areas of outreach. The Farmers Market, which we sponsor, is getting bigger and better. The Jazz Weekend is growing with its Saturday theme of Art, Food and Jazz. People are always amazed by our beautiful church, inside and out.

We continued to move our bookkeeping into Church Windows. Al Trivers had a great start on that and we were shocked to have him leave us too soon. Dave Markham with Carol Blakeslee, Debby Dutton, and Sally Charter moved in to shuffle some positions so we could keep on going. We now have a pretty nice system that will, for the future, provide better information on our financial affairs. We had a change in our staff when Michelle Bouche, our Administrative Assistant, accepted a full-time position at the Kushi Institute in Becket. Tari Roosa has very ably stepped into that position. Welcome aboard, Tari.

Bill Neil and I and the Church Council and many of you have had input into an overall operating change for the church. Our current structure with a Council and lots of smaller committees has not been well coordinated and some of us are on lots of committees. We need to be able to do some better planning and evaluation of our Mission, Ministry, Management and Maintenance, so we have come up with two new overall committees. ***Mission and***

Ministry will plan for our worship and all that entails, for mission and justice in the world around us, and for our spiritual growth through Christian education. *Management and Maintenance* will do financial planning and organization and also plan for the ongoing upkeep of the physical church building. Those who teach, paint, sing, go to Appalachia, hammer, wind clocks, cook, clean, rake, make sure we have flowers, usher, greet, and the list goes on and on... all share in the real work of the church. I thank you for all you did in 2015 and all you'll do in 2016!

Respectfully Submitted,

Garth Story

Report of the Pastor – 2015

Rev. Bill Neil

2015 has included wonderful celebrations and significant sorrows: a baptism, marriages, deaths, illnesses, and challenges. Funerals which I officiated included: James Blache, J. Richard Lawrence, Norma Berry, Roy Andersen, Sr., Barbara Swartz, John Kearin, Robert Rhoades, Donna Williams, Ameer Vreeland, Chris Peregrou, and Maddie Ohman. In addition, I was able to attend those for: Blanche Matazarro, Aylmer Trivers, and Henry Zukowski. Additional losses of which I am aware include: George Sampson, Gerard Miller, Edith and Walter Pyle, and Mr. Kershner. Our baptism was Olivia Esther Nichols, daughter of Sarah (Brown) and Kirk Nichols. My weddings were with Karen Crandall and Kevin Giambertone and Adrienne Dedrick and Tom Dougherty.

Other celebrations during the year: Three Eagle Scouts – Michael Roosa, Alex Johnson, and Jakob Touponce; 50th Anniversary for Ray and Judy Morehouse; 10th Birthday for Raeanne Hickson, and 95th Birthday for Rita Fontana; New Members – Rev. Natalie Shiras by Transfer, Terry Green by reactivation, and Rich Lumma as Associate member; A Blessing of the Blankets for immigrants entering Arizona; Ron Ramsey and Samantha Talora Concert; Jazz Weekend Series; Annual Craft Fair, Laurel Lake Picnic, and Christmas Bazaar; Founders' Weekend Float and Festival Latino; A new Venture Crew sponsored by our church; Two Nights of our Sounds of the Season Christmas Concert!

Included in my pastoral work is my participation with our Youth as they served the meal for the Outdoor Cathedral in Pittsfield several times; my enjoyment of what may be the last Hay Ride through Fairmount Cemetery; my preparing and leading a two part Lenten workshop on Sharing Our Stories; my leading an ongoing small group, "From Less Stress to Happiness;" my participation as often as possible with Dr. Charlie Haynes' Bible Study; my attendance at the showing of "Cracking the Codes," a documentary on racism screened in our Chapel by Gwendolyn Van Sant and Rev. Natalie Shiras of Multicultural Bridge; and my involvement with our annual stewardship campaign, A Future and a Hope.

Another significant task this year is our ongoing work on revising the structure of our church committees and meetings. Our hope is to consolidate several smaller groups into two primary groups. One will focus on Mission and Ministry. The other will focus on Maintenance and Management. A smaller Church Council will meet to hold everything together. Short term teams will form around specific tasks. A major transition was required when Michelle Bouche, our long time Administrative Assistant, announced her plan to take another position. We are extremely fortunate to have Tari Roosa as her very capable replacement.

My work as a pastor involves me with our Berkshire Association of the United Church of Christ. In that area, I have continued to serve as the Secretary of our Executive Committee and the Chair of our Committee on Church and Ministry. I have attended Installations, Workshops, and our Fall Gathering. I have also been actively working with Berkshire Interfaith Organizing which I serve as Treasurer. Our Founding Convention was held last January with a strong turn out from our congregation. In addition, I have been able to serve on the Board of InterValley Projects which is the umbrella organization to which BIO and six other regional community organizations belong. I was also privileged to serve as a Delegate to the General Synod of the United Church of Christ in Cleveland. This was my second Synod.

I had a hernia repair surgery after Easter. I am four years out from my prostate surgery with no detectable PSA! My family vacation included the amazing joy of spending time with all of my children and grandchildren at once. This feat is rarely accomplished as my older daughter lives in Ireland with her husband and two daughters. I am nearing the end of my final Training in Spiritual Direction with deep appreciation.

Pastoral Emergency Fund – 2015

First Congregational Church of Lee, U.C.C.

Beginning Balance: 1/1/2015

\$598.45

Income from Donations	\$969.76
Expenditures	\$1,271.01
Ending Balance: 12/31/2015	\$297.20

Gift cards were purchased at Price Chopper and Wal-Mart. These were given to individuals and families. Two significant payments were made for rent and fuel. Forty dollars was paid to the Western Mass. Council of the BSA to charter a new Venture Club.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Bill Neil

COMMITTEE & MINISTRY REPORTS

Christian Education Committee – 2015 Report

Committee Members: Jo-ellen Height (chairperson), Sarah DelSignor, Tari Roosa, and Danna Snow.

Christian Education Director/Youth Coordinator: Elaine M. Miller

Christian Education committee meets each month to plan and implement programming for children, youth and families.

During 2015 we continued with our curriculum Feasting On The Word. This curriculum has been praised by children, youth, and teachers. This interactive curriculum was purchased as a multi-age pack for children ages four through fifth grade and youth pack for youth in grades six and up. Teachers include: John Arnold, Danna Snow, Tari Roosa, and Judy Morehouse.

Nursery care is provided for children age birth to age four.

Total enrollment for church school is 12 children and youth.

Christian Education sponsored events including Heifer Project, Mother's Day flowers, Children's Day program, Rally Day, Harvest party, baskets at the bazaar, and a Christmas Eve pageant.

We also sponsor a child through Child Sponsorship Program.

Youth Group Report 2015

Leaders: Elaine M. Miller, Denise Harwood and Matt MacNayr

Youth Group members: Jack Cosmus, Naomi Cosmus, Kate DelSignor, Tim Franchere, Corey Gaherty, Emmilyn MacNayr, Will McKeon, Jordan Miller, Hannah Miller, Zoe Renner, Michael Roosa, Daniel Snow, Katrina Snow, Asa Stone, and Samantha Touponce.

The youth group continues to be active in the life of the church and the community.

Activities for 2015 Lee Food Pantry, community suppers, Souper Bowl of Caring, Appalachia Service Project, Construct Walk for the homeless, Cathedral on the Lawn at St. Joseph's Church, and staffing of the kitchen and youth table at the holiday church fair.

In July, 21 youth and adults traveled to Rainelle, West Virginia to help rebuild homes for three families living in poverty. Adult participants included Sue Clayson, Lindsay Clayson, Denise Harwood, Matt MacNayr, Elaine Miller, Jerry Miller, Samantha Miller and Zachary Sorrentino.

Youth participants included Jack Cosmus, Naomi Cosmus, Kate DelSignor, Timmy Franchere, Corey Gaherty, Emmilyn MacNayr, Will McKeon, Hannah Miller, Jordan Miller, Zoe Renner, Michael Roosa, Maggie Schmidt, Katrina Snow, and Samantha Touponce. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the congregation for the continuous support of our mission and outreach endeavors. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Diaconate Committee (Deacons) – 2015 Report

It's been a good year for our Deacons as we have supported Pastor Bill Neil in serving our church and community.

We have supported in serving Communion, providing bread, wine & grape juice plus always having gluten free bread for those who need.

We have shared in the church service with reading scripture & responsive readings. Plus help with services when we have a guest speaker.

We have kept track of shut-ins and Nursing Home members with visits and bringing cheer.

During Funerals we have helped by greeting people and being present for comfort.

We successfully planned a Laity Sunday Oct 18 2015. Four of our church members spoke for 5 minutes or so on their spiritual passions and service to others. Those speakers doing a wonderful job included Barbara Mahoney , Tim Martin , Rich Lumma and Natalie Shiras .

There is a proposed structure being discussed Jan. 24th at our Annual church meeting. There are to be three basic teams: Mission & Ministry .. Management & Maintenance ... plus Church Council.

Deacons will be part of the first team, Mission & Ministry . Meeting every other month, the third Wednesday @ 7pm. This will start Jan. 20th 2016
March 16th , May 18th , July 20th, September 21st, and November 16th .

Making a difference in peoples' lives is one of the most important things any of us can do !

Respectfully Submitted,
Faith Neil (Chair of Deacons)

Endowment/Invested Funds Committee – 2015 Report

As of December 31, 2015 the balance in the Endowment/Invested Funds was \$204,600.95 compared to \$241,371.13 at the end of 2014.

The assets in the Endowment Fund are summarized below:

	12/31/14 <u>Balance</u>	% of <u>Account</u>	12/31/15 <u>Balance</u>	% of <u>Account</u>
Cash	\$3,279	1%	\$21,262	10%
Fixed Income	\$16,722	7%	\$0.00	0%
Equities - US & International	\$198,468	83%	\$173,575	85%
Other Assets	\$22,901	9%	\$9,764	5%
Total	\$241,371	100%	\$204,601	100%

ACCOUNT REVIEW

	2014	2015
Beginning Balance	\$243,992	\$241,371
Income Earned	\$5,968	\$5,568
Withdrawals	(\$33,000)	(\$30,000)
Management Fees	(\$2,524)	(\$2,256)
Other	(\$92)	(\$30)
Change in Asset Value	\$27,027	(\$10,052)
Ending Balance	\$241,371	\$204,601

The asset allocation is Balanced Growth.

Twice in 2015, the monthly withdrawal of \$3,000.00 from the Endowment/Invested Funds was cancelled.

Portfolio Return for the time period January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015 was (-3.18%) compared to (-0.73%) for the S&P 500.

Portfolio Return since inception of account is 6.42% (September 20, 2013 - December 31, 2015).

Webb Lydon Group of RBC Wealth Management recommends that we continue to follow our Investment Policy Statement notwithstanding the current market turbulence.

The balance in the Endowment/Invested Funds continues to decrease due to i) zero cash inflows and ii) withdrawals required to cover budget deficits. The members of the committee continue to be concerned and recommend that the Church pursue other sources of revenue that will preserve the Endowment/Invested Funds for the future.

Respectively submitted,

Ruth Francis, chair; Charlie Clifford, Dee Dee Fraser, Tim Martin, members

Facilities Committee – 2015 Report

Committee Members: John Arnold, Ralph Gleason, Ellen Krupka, Niti Martin, Tim Martin, Margy Ohman and Garth Story

Wiring and Lighting: A lot of work went into adding additional outlets where needed and upgrading wiring to existing outlets. Another major work was replacing the balcony “eyeball” lights with LED flood lights. These primarily add additional overhead lighting, but also highlight our beautiful trompe l’oeil painting on the ceiling and walls. We have Dave Markham to thank for a lot of this work. We are also very close to getting the outside front lights hung and illuminated. The existing wiring was probably part of the original electrification of the building with old “knob and tube” wiring. That stuff is not quite up to code!! Of course there isn’t any easy way to get wires through the walls from here to there, so this was quite a project. By the time you read this we will probably also have new chandelier bulbs in the sanctuary. This entailed quite a long search for the right LED bulb. Many LED bulbs are on the white/blue end of the spectrum. Warmer colors are more expensive to make. Finally we found a warm white bulb with the standard socket-end that wasn’t terribly expensive.

Yard Work: Several times we had outside yard clean up days scheduled. Thanks to all of you who helped out, including our Boy Scouts! That helps a lot to keep us looking good.

Handicapped Parking: We have started to work on the area that was designated, in an earlier architectural study, for handicapped parking. Many yards of unconsolidated soil and other material was removed and replaced with ground-up asphalt. We put in about 15 yds. of this asphalt and compressed it. Tommy Touponce of Meadow Farms gave us a good deal on the material and then loaned us his roller to do the compacting. Thanks to Tommy for the

assistance. We'll add more asphalt in the spring and eventually be able to get that area paved. It then will be fairly simple to add a nicer ramp out back to be up to code, at least in the back yard.

Painting: Time flies! It may be hard to believe but we painted our church over 4 years ago. If any of you still have a traditional New England home with painted siding, you know about the seeming need to keep right on painting around and around the house. We seem to be doing very well over all. The back of the education/office wing has some paint issues. We had some peeling there within a couple of years and that area needed work again. It was also apparent that the watermark area, the broad band around the bottom of the clapboard siding, was in need of paint. We scheduled a painting day in early summer and had a great crew turn out with paintbrushes in hand and in that one paint day alone, we scraped, primed and repainted most of the areas that were showing their wood. Lots of people helped out on this project and again our thanks goes out to all who chipped in. Tim and Niti spent some extra time painting around the front doors to get them looking good again.

Lots of other shorter projects happened, including the refinish of the community room floor. Its sort of ongoing with a building this big and with its age, *One Hundred and Fifty Eight* years old. We're actually doing pretty well.

Respectfully submitted,

Garth Story, Chair

Hospitality Ministry – 2015 Report

Gloria Arnold, Jane Gleason, Barbara Mahony, Margaret Markham, Faith Neil, Karen Story.

During 2015 members of the Hospitality Committee have continued to greet guests and welcome them to our worship service. Guests are acknowledged during announcements at the start of worship and encouraged to join us for coffee hour, where members of the congregation have the opportunity to chat with them as well. With the generous assistance of members of our congregation we were once again able to provide refreshments following the Christmas Concert. We continue to coordinate the sponsoring of coffee hour by different church ministries on a rotating basis throughout the year. We sponsored our sixth annual church picnic at Laurel Lake in August.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Gleason, Chair

Missions Ministry – 2015 Report

This has been a busy and productive year for the mission ministry thanks to our generous congregation. In January, 24 fleece blankets were made and shipped to unaccompanied immigrant children in Phoenix, Arizona. About 12 ladies participated skillfully – enjoyed lunch and fellowship. Throughout the year, we support and work at the Lee Food Pantry – we can always use more willing hands. Special offerings were OGHS in March, food collection in April, Blanket drive for CWS in May. Habitat for Humanity benefits 10% of our bazaar total. Food sales at Easter and Founder's Day contributed to UCC Syrian refugee relief, Construct, the food pantry and UNICEF. A new project was Christmas greeting to church members from members with donations distributed to Soldier On, Lee Youth Association, and Syrian refugees through UCC. Greetings were placed on a Christmas tree and names pasted. So you see, we had a very productive year! We also started refurbishing edges of the aisle pieces.

Respectfully submitted,

M Rossier, D D'Elia, M Trivers, J Morehouse, and all of you!

Prayer Shawl Ministry 2015

The Prayer Shawl Ministry was founded in March of 2007. Since our founding, we have knit and distributed 117 shawls, 5 just this year. We have a devoted core of knitters. While we are silent for 15 minutes, we weave a prayer into our shawls (it's difficult to be silent). Generally, we have a wonderful time of fellowship and we celebrate birthdays as

well. We invite knitters to join us on the first and third Tuesday from 12 – 2 pm in the parlor. Knitters are Dee Dee Fraser, Carol Blakeslee, Joan Zukowski, Sheila Maroni, Anne Fix, Judy Morehouse, and Martha Congdon who knits at home!

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Morehouse

Music Committee – 2015 Report

The choir sang year round again this year, including the summer months, and participated in the following **special services** under the direction of Jim Morrison:

- Maundy Thursday
- Easter Sunday
- Town tree lighting ceremony
- Caroling at area nursing homes
- Sounds of Christmas concerts
- Christmas Eve Services

Other highlights of the year:

Rev Thomas Damrosch and Noah Palmer filled in for the church services during Jim’s vacation in February/March.

Ron Ramsay and Samantha Talora and friends presented a concert at the church in March. Ron played both the piano and organ.

Judy Olds directed an adult bell choir which performed at Fairview Commons in March, in church at Easter, on July 19, and for the Sounds of Christmas concerts. New music folder/stands and table foam were purchased to replace the old supplies.

The music committee and choir helped host the coffee hour during the month of June.

The choir sang songs based on specific themes during the summer months.

On December 18th and 19th, 400 people packed the sanctuary as Jim directed a Christmas concert combining vocalists and instrumentalists, and Judy Olds directed the bell choir. Donations will be used for church outreach.

Once again, the pipe organ is fully functioning and used during the Sunday services.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Myers, Chair

Stewardship – 2015 Report

Last fall we adopted the theme: *Trust in the Promise*, based on Jeremiah 29:10-14. “I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD; they are plans for peace, not disaster, to give you a future filled with hope.” As we review 2015 and move into 2016, we are invited to trust God’s promise of a future filled with hope. The results of our stewardship give courage to that hope! Last year saw the loss of three faithful members: Roy Anderson, Sr., Norma Berry, and our Treasurer, Al Trivers. We welcomed Rev. Natalie Shiras, Rich Lumma, and Terry Green into our membership. If we hear from just a few more members, our 2016 pledges will number almost 70 givers for about \$96,000! Increased income from building usage and decreased utility costs are also helping. In addition to our financial pledges, we received seventeen Time and Talent Pledges. These vary from offering to cook casseroles to pulling weeds to visiting those who are ill. The ultimate goal of our stewardship and our discipleship is our growth toward the full maturity of Christ. We again thank our faithful officers: Dave Markham, Carol Blakeslee, Betsy Matarazzo, and Debbie Dutton. We remember Al Trivers and his many years of devoted service. We welcome Sally Charter, our newest assistant!

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Bill Neil Charlie Clifford For Our Stewardship Committee

ANNUAL MEETING - JANUARY 24, 2016

2016 Annual Meeting AGENDA

Call to Order

Opening Devotions - Bill

In Memoriam

Minutes Read (Last Annual Meeting) *

Treasurer's Report - 2015 Budget Year *

Moderator's Report * - Garth

Pastor's Report * - Bill

Report of Committees *

Old Business

New Business

Budget for 2015 *

Approval of the slate of officers *

Approval of the slate of officers

Approval of the following two motions:

MOTION 1: To form two new committees that will effectively replace the existing committee structure. They will be named the Mission and Ministry Committee and the Management and Maintenance Committee and be in effect for the fiscal year 2016. They will each meet at least 6 times yearly and have the functions described in the Document A attached and labeled First Congregational Church Operating Structure, a chart with an accompanying description (Document A).

MOTION 2: To suspend for one year the parts of the First Congregational Church of Lee, By-Laws that functionally overlap with the two new committees formed for 2016. All other operational functions of the by-laws will remain in effect including the powers of the Church Council. (Motions 1 and 2 include Document A)

Other Business

Motion to Adjourn

Stand for Lord's Prayer

Budget for 2016

Comparative Budget 01/04/2016 2016 Proposed vs. 2015 Actual

	<u>Budget 2015</u>	<u>Actuals 2015</u>	<u>Proposed Budget 2016</u>	<u>Change 2015/2016</u>
INCOME				
Offerings				
Pledge Contributions	\$91,190.00	\$90,121.00	\$92,000.00	1%
Non Pledge Contributions	\$16,000.00	\$ 14,347.00	\$ 14,000.00	-13%
Loose Offerings	\$4,500.00	\$3,460.00	\$4,000.00	-11%
Fund Raisers	\$5,750.00	\$6,765.00	\$7,000.00	22%
Christmas Bazaar	\$4,500.00	\$4,731.00		
Aug Church Craft Fair	\$1,000.00	\$1,593.00		
Misc Fund Raisers	\$ 250.00	\$ 441.00		
Building Usage	\$9,000.00	\$ 10,126.00	\$ 11,000.00	22%
Rental				
Event Donations				
Farmers Market				
Memorial Donations		\$2,600.00	\$3,000.00	
Misc. Income			\$2,500.00	
Total Income	\$132,190.00	\$134,184.00	\$133,500.00	1%
EXPENSES				
Pastor Salary				
Pastor Salary	\$38,762.00	\$ 41,214.00	\$ 43,305.00	
Housing Allowance	\$27,687.00	\$ 25,232.00	\$ 24,480.00	
SS Offset	\$5,097.00	\$5,088.00	\$5,190.00	
Pastor Salary Total	\$ 71,546.00	\$71,534.00	\$72,975.00	2%
Benefits and Reimbursements				
Medical Insurance	\$10,732.00	\$ 10,668.00	\$ 10,500.00	
Pastor Life Ins	\$ 361.00	\$ 361.00	\$ 361.00	
Cont. Ed	\$ 400.00	\$ 67.00	\$ 400.00	
Business Travel	\$2,400.00	\$2,291.00	\$2,400.00	
Professional Expenses	\$ 800.00	\$ 628.00	\$ 800.00	
Sabbatical Reserve	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	
Total Benefits and Reimbursements	\$ 15,443.00	\$14,765.00	\$15,211.00	-2%

Comparative Budget 01/04/2016
2016 Proposed vs. 2015 Actual

	<u>Budget 2015</u>	<u>Actuals 2015</u>	<u>Proposed Budget 2016</u>	<u>Change 2015/2016</u>
Director Christian Ed.	\$5,931.00	\$5,800.00	\$6,049.62	2%
Music Director	\$8,813.00	\$8,813.00	\$8,989.26	2%
Custodian	\$9,119.00	\$ 10,500.00	\$9,301.38	2%
Administrative Assistant	\$17,316.00	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 17,662.32	2%
Total Staff Compensation	\$ 41,179.00	\$42,613.00	\$42,002.58	2%
Mission and Ministry				
Christian Education	\$ 500.00	\$ 425.00	\$ 500.00	
Music	\$ 300.00	\$1,400.00	\$ 600.00	
Vitality, Hospitality Diaconate		\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	
Guest Ministers	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	
Feeding Lee	\$ 700.00		\$ 500.00	
United Church (OCWM+MA)		\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00	
OGHS	\$ 600.00	\$ 550.00		
Other Missions			\$1,000.00	
Conferences/Delegates	\$ 300.00	\$ -	\$ 300.00	
Subtotal Mission and Ministry	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 8,875.00	\$ 9,400.00	
Management & Maintenance				
Gas	\$12,500.00	\$9,500.00	\$9,500.00	
Electric	\$5,000.00	\$3,750.00	\$4,000.00	
Telephone	\$1,500.00	\$1,531.00	\$1,500.00	
Water/Sewer	\$ 400.00	\$ 466.00	\$ 450.00	
Custodial Supplies	\$1,300.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	
Snow Removal	\$ 450.00	\$ 60.00	\$ 100.00	
Garbage	\$ 538.00	\$ 506.00	\$ 506.00	
Property /Workers Comp Insurance	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00	
Office Supplies	\$3,800.00	\$3,200.00	\$3,500.00	
Maintenance		\$ 282.00	\$ 500.00	
Facilities Projects	\$10,000.00	\$3,667.00	\$ 10,000.00	
Subtotal Operating Expenses	\$ 41,988.00	\$30,262.00	\$37,356.00	-11%
Total Expenses	\$173,306.00	\$168,049.00	\$176,944.58	2%
Budget - Surplus / (Deficit)	\$(41,116.00)	\$(33,865.00)	\$(43,444.58)	6%

Nominations, Church Leadership for 2016

Note: Persons may be nominated from the floor to fill vacancies provided they are present and agree to serve.

The following lists are for people who have signed up for a particular role in the church operations for 2016 as of January 18, 2016.

Church Officers:

Moderator - Walter Pyle	Assistant Moderator - Garth Story
Treasurer - Dave Markham	Assistant Treasurer _____
Clerk - Judy Morehouse	
Delegates - Barbara Mahony	_____
Collector - Debby Dutton	Assistant Collector - Betsy Matarazzo

Ministry and Mission: Chair _____

Dana Snow Faith Neil Marilyn Rossier
Stan Rossier Maddie Tremblay Tari Roosa
Ex officio Members are: Bill Neil, Walter Pyle, Elaine Miller and Jim Morrison

Maintenance and Management: Chair _____

Garth Story Tim Martin Ellen Krupka
Ralph Gleason Sandra Cozzaglio Sue Stone
Sue Miller Deedee Fraser
Ex officio Members are: Bill Neil, Walter Pyle, and Dave Markham

The Personnel Committee by definition is the Assistant Moderator, Treasurer, Reps. from Pastoral Relations, Ministry and Missions and Maintenance and Management.

The **Church Council (If motions are adopted)** will be: Moderator, Asst. Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk, Pastor, and Chairs of Maintenance and Management with one other from the two committees.

Volunteers:

Deacons: Faith Neil, Tim Martin, Stan Rossier, Jane Gleason

Flowers: Midge Trivers, Judy Morehouse, Carol Blakeslee

Greeters: Raeanne Hickson, Marco Picado, Jane Gleason, Joyce and Paul Monachina

Hospitality: Karen Story, Margaret Markham, Jane Gleason

Missions: Judy Morehouse, Midge Trivers, Marilyn Rossier, Dottie D'Elia

Pastoral Relations: Stan Rossier

Sabbatical Team: Marilyn Rossier

Ushers: Bob Matarazzo, John Arnold, Dorothy Phillips, Dave Markham, Margy Ohman

Work Crew: John Arnold, Garth Story, Tim Martin, Dave Markham, Ellen Krupka

First Congregational Church Operating Structure

(updated Dec 18, 2015)

Mission and Ministry Committee	Management and Maintenance Committee	Church Council Committee
<i>Possible</i> Mission and Ministry Teams:	<i>Possible</i> Management and Maintenance Teams	<i>Possible</i> subcommittees
<u>Faith Formation</u> - Christian Education <u>Worship</u> - Music, Flowers, Deacons, Ushers <u>Outreach</u> - Mission and Justice <u>Support</u> - Hospitality, Publicity	<u>Property Upkeep</u> - Property, Insurance, Cleaning, Mowing, etc. <u>Church History</u> - Archives, Record Keeping <u>Financial</u> - Accounting, Money Management, Audit <u>Invested</u> - Long term outlook, BGP relations	<u>Personnel</u> - Records, Evaluation and Hiring <u>Stewardship</u> - Annual appeal, Fundraising <u>Nominating</u> - Leadership training and development Delegates to MACUCC, Berkshire Association, plus
<i>Meetings:</i> January, March, May, July, September, November	<i>Meetings:</i> February, April, June, August, October, December	<i>Meetings:</i> 4 times a year

Pastor, Moderator, Music Director, CE Directors	Pastor, Moderator, Treasurer	Pastor, Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk, Chairs of <i>Mission and Ministry</i> and <i>Management and Maintenance Committees</i>
Others by self-selection annually	Others by self-selection annually	Plus one other person from each of the two Committees

Church Operating Structure Page 2 - Descriptions

Mission and Ministry Committee- Meets- Jan., March, May, July, Sept., Nov.

Members- Pastor, Moderator, Music and Christian Ed. Directors
Others by self selection annually.

Possible Mission and Ministry teams: These are working groups under the committee above.
They only would meet as necessary to perform their work as directed by the committee above.

Faith Formation -Christian Education

Worship- Music, Flowers, Deacons, Ushers

Outreach- Mission and Justice (local community and wider mission)

Support- Hospitality, Publicity

Management and Maintenance Committee- Meets- Feb., April, June, Aug., Oct., Dec.

Members- Pastor, Moderator, Treasurer
Others by self selection annually.

Possible Management and Maintenance Teams: (working groups)

Property Upkeep- Property, Insurance, Cleaning, Mowing, etc.

Church History- Archives, Record Keeping

Financial- Accounting, Money Management, Audit

Invested- Long term outlook, BGP relations

Church Council Committee- Meets four times a year tbd.

Members- Pastor, Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk, Chairs of Mission and Ministry and Management and Maintenance committees, Plus one other person from each of the two committees.

Possible subcommittees of the Church Council;

Personnel - Records, Evaluation and Hiring

Stewardship - Annual appeal

Nominating - Leadership training and development

Delegates to MACUCC plus

Church Staff

Pastor _____ The Reverend William R. Neil
Director of Christian Education _____ Elaine Miller
Director of Music _____ Jim Morrison
Office Administrator _____ Tari Wheeler Roosa
Sexton _____ Glenn Withers



The First Congregational Church of Lee

An Open & Affirming Congregation of the

United Church of Christ



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