



Stratford United Methodist Church

2023 Church Conference Packet

February 25, 2024

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Stratford United Methodist Church
Joint Cooperative Parish and Local Church Annual Conference
October 16, 2022

A combined Church Conference of the Greater Bridgeport Cooperative Parish and the Shoreline Cooperative Parish was held at the United Methodist Church of Westville beginning at 2:00 pm with a time of fellowship.

The meeting was opened by Rev. David Piscatelli, Greater Bridgeport Parish Coordinator, and Rev. Martha Epstein, Shoreline and Haven Cooperative Parish Coordinator. Opening worship was shared.

District Superintendent Alpher Sylvester declared Trustee Ballots voting open at 3:03 pm. He brought greetings and provided instructions for the individual church conferences.

Meeting of the Stratford UMC members began at 3:21 pm. Pastor Suhee Kim nominated Patricia Knebel to be a recording secretary. Church Conference reports were reviewed.

2021 Minutes: Frank Damiano made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 10, 2021, Combined Church Conference, and the October 12, 2021, Stratford Church Conference. Seconded by Burdette James. Approved unanimously.

District Superintendent Alpher Sylvester stopped by the SUMC meeting and presented Stratford's Faithful in Ministry certificate. He encouraged us to move forward from where we are.

Membership Report: We celebrated the addition of 7 confirmands in 2022. Two people who are newly attending the Chapel service have indicated interest in becoming members. (No vote needed.)

Clergy Compensation Report: The report has been approved by the Staff Parish Relations Committee. It includes a 4% raise both for the Pastor and the Music Director. Burdette James made a motion to accept the report, including the salary and benefits, as presented:

2023 Salary	\$60,432
Reimbursable Expenses	\$ 5,850
Health Insurance	\$19,200
Pension	\$ 8,913.72
CPP	\$ 2,266.20

Frank Damiano seconded. Approved unanimously.

Parsonage Report: The Parsonage Report was reviewed. Maintenance has been kept up. (No vote needed.)

Budget: The draft budget was reviewed. The final report will be voted on at the later Church Conference. Realistic estimates for utilities are being sought. There are many line items that cannot be reduced.

Report of the Trustees: The Report of the Trustees was reviewed and discussed. (No vote needed.)

Nominations Report: The report was reviewed and discussed. The final report will be voted on at the later Church Conference. The following changes and corrections were discussed:

- Finance: Judi Scofield needs to be replaced as Chairperson
- Staff Parish Relations: Meade Love Thomas will stay on the Committee but would like to be replaced as Chairperson
- Council Members at Large: maybe add Meade Love Thomas
- Finance Committee: add Jack Boynton along with Diane Troutman as Financial Secretary. Move Marianne Card from Assistant Treasurer to Counter.
- Daycare Committee: Lisa Vaccino may need to be replaced. More at large members needed to be added.
- Ministries of Nurture, Mission and Outreach: Change United Methodist Women to United Women in Faith.

Voting for Trustees was closed at 4:13 pm. All trustees nominees were elected unanimously:

- Class of 2023: Robin Oliver, replacing Lorraine Thomas, will begin immediately.
- Class of 2025: Cindy Booth, Barbara DeBiase, Jack Boynton

A motion was made by Burdette James to accept the draft nominations report with the understanding that there are changes and additions yet to be made prior to the later Church Conference. Seconded by Meade-Love Thomas. Approved unanimously.

Frank Damiano made a motion to adjourn the Stratford Church Conference. Seconded by Burdette James. Approved unanimously at 4:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Knebel

The Bridge Cooperative Parish Joint Church Conference was held on Sunday, October 29th, 2023 at Mary Taylor Memorial United Methodist Church along with the four other churches in our Bridge Coop:
Summerfield UMC
Golden Hill UMC
Fairfield Grace UMC
Stratford UMC

We gathered for fellowship and the ministry fair in the fellowship hall at 2:30, followed by worship in the Sanctuary at 3:00 PM.

The opening worship was shared by Nathan Williams (MTM UMC), Rachel Merva (MTM UMC), Beth Federici, Bridge Coop Parish Council co-chair (Golden Hill UMC). Roena Littlejohn, Conference Lay Leader (Golden Hill UMC), made an announcement about the Laity Convocation, which will be held at Golden Hill UMC in our Bridge cooperative parish.

District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Alpher Sylvester greeted all and recognized all clergy and laity present, and provided instructions for the individual church conferences.

DS Alpher Sylvester declared Trustee ballot voting open at 3:45.

Barbara DeBiase was elected to be recording secretary at this time.

Meeting of the Stratford UMC members began at 3:56 PM.

Pastor Suhee Kim welcomed 13 SUMC members.

DS Alpher Sylvester stopped by the SUMC meeting and presented SUMC's "Faithful in Ministry" certificate. He thanked us for being here today and encouraged us to engage in deeper conversation.

He thanked Rev. George Hilton for all he does, and brought greetings from Bishop Bickerton. DS Alpher Sylvester shared his love for Pastor Suhee and our beautiful church.

It was noted there are four forms that need to be completed by the end of November 2023:

- 1) Space assessment (inside and outside)
- 2) Digital assessment: Update website as this is the "face" of our Church
- 3) Conflict Resolution Plan
- 4) Assessing anti-racism resourcing needs in our Church

These reports need to be completed by the Parish, not Pastor Suhee.

DS Sylvester reminded us that our ancestors left us this building, we must do the work to sustain it.

Lay Speaker report: The following members are recognized as certified Lay Speakers for SUMC. Burdette James, Joyce Lewis, and Deborah Salsman.

It was noted that Betty McCready will be available as a Lay Speaker when needed, and we thank her for continuing in this capacity.

SPRC report: Meade Love Thomas made a motion to accept the Clergy Compensation report as follows, representing a 3% increase for Pastor, Church Secretary, and Music Director. It was seconded by Sonja Devitt, and so approved unanimously.

2023 Salary:	62,100
Reimbursable Expenses:	7,000
Health Insurance:	19,200
Pension:	9,159.75
CPP:	2,328.75

Parsonage Inspection report: The Parsonage report was reviewed. The Parsonage is in good condition, with repairs to the deck and other areas. Pastor Suhee thanked the Trustees, SPRC, Steve James, and others for their help maintaining the Parsonage and grounds.

Membership Report: We celebrated four baptisms. We are a welcoming church, continuing to encourage younger families to be a part of SUMC. Creativity is important, and we recently held a "Trunk or Treat" day together with Mary Taylor Memorial UMC. The children enjoyed pumpkin carving, trick-or-treating, and a scavenger hunt. The smell of popcorn permeated the air and was enjoyed by many!

Budget Report: The draft budget was reviewed. The final report will be voted on at the later Church Council.

Lay Leadership and Nominations Report: A motion was made by Sonja Devitt, seconded by John Cottrell, and so carried unanimously to approve/accept the report, with the following corrections:
Burdette James was elected to be the Chairperson of the Church Council.
Her name was removed from the Lay Member of Annual Conference and as Worship Chairperson.

Voting for Trustees was closed at 5:06 PM.
All Trustees nominees were elected with twelve voting members and one member abstention.
Vote counters: Pat Naylor, John Cottrell
CLASS OF 2026: Robyn Oliver, Marianne Card, Kenneth Lewis

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 PM with prayer and singing of the beloved hymn, "Here I Am, Lord"
"I will go Lord, if you lead me, I will hold Your people in my heart"

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara DeBiase

2023 Pastor's Report

Hebrews 11:1-3

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

I would like to start my Pastor's Report by giving thanks and praise to God for his continued blessings on us. As we work together to revitalize our church, I want to thank all of you for your hard work, talents, and dedication to serving God's ministry here at Stratford UMC. I express my deep appreciation to the members of our standing committees for the leadership they have provided so far and the generous support they have given me. Without your tireless efforts, my work as your Pastor would be in vain.

Despite the challenges we faced in 2023, we accomplished many things with the help of God. This year, we celebrated the four baptisms: Everest James Bentley, Scarlett Ann Murolo, Avery Joyce Steinbeiser, and Wylen Lowrey Flader. Although we didn't have a confirmation class this year, I was blessed to join our annual trip to the Appalachian Service Project in West Virginia. In September, we had another successful Rally Sunday with the celebration of ASP members, leaders, and the Sunday School. What a joy to have the church picnic on our front lawn! Our joint Advent Sunday service with First Baptist Church was held on December 3rd. We celebrated 52 years of our fellowship, and the beautiful luncheon was followed by an awesome and energetic service at First Baptist Church.

In 2023, our leaders took the initiative to explore ways to repurpose the church buildings or use the church property as an asset to vitalize the church after several roundtable discussions. This initiative has led our leaders to explore affordable housing development. After a long conversation and negotiation with Connecticut Housing Partners (aka Mutual Housing of Southwestern Connecticut), we came to an agreement to lease the back half of the church property to CHP so that they could build at least 57 units of affordable housing and a new space approximately of 5600 sq ft for the church. I am especially thankful for the enormous work of the newly formed Building Committee, the Board of Trustees, and the Church Council. Please refer to the detailed reports from the council chair and building committee for this project.

We continued our missions to feed people at the Lord's Kitchen, Golden Hill UMC, and our Neighborhood Breakfast. This year, we had several new mission initiatives that brought the congregation joy in helping others in need.

With the help of the Visitation Chair, Joyce Lewis, I have continued to visit our homebound members. We have experienced great loss in the passing of Rev. Dr. Donald Kirkham, Pastor Emeritus, and 13 other church members in 2023.

On July 1, I became a coordinator for the newly formed "Bridge" Cooperative Parish of five churches (Fairfield Grace, Golden Hill, Summerfield, Stratford, and Mary Taylor Memorial). The Cooperative Parish Council was formed in December 2021 to address the administrative and missional needs of the Bridge Cooperative Parish. The Council meets every other month to discuss the needs of the Coop Parish and collaborate on mission projects within the Bridge Coop Parish. Mary Taylor Memorial and Stratford continued to plan and host monthly youth and family coop programs, including family movie nights, Trunk or Treat and crafts.

As we renew our commitment to Christ, I encourage you to focus on the mission and vitality of the Church and to strive towards the goal of winning the prize for which God has called us in Christ. Let us continue to work diligently to bring the kingdom of God to earth.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Suhee Kim

Pastor's Continuing Education

Since 2016, I have served on the Board of Ordained Ministry and participated in the commissioning and ordination interviews. I also serve as a clergy mentor to provisional clergy. I attend the annual Festival of Homiletics conference in May. I also took a few webinar courses on various topics relevant to ministry. I wish to dedicate more time to continuing education next year.

Report of the Membership Secretary 2023

<u>Total professing members reported at close of last year's Charge Conference</u>	<u>746</u>
<u>Received this year on Profession of Christian Faith</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Restored by affirmation (or correction to previous years report)</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Received from other United Methodist Churches</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Received from other denominations</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Restored as Associate Members from other United Methodist Churches</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Removed or corrected by Charge Conference action:</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Withdrawn</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Removed by transfer to other United Methodist Churches</u> Dan Burns, Susan Burns, Barbara Waters	
<u>Removed by transfer to other denominations</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Removed by death</u>	<u>14</u>
Gordon Kristiansen (12/6/22), Richard Tyler (1/23/23), Gloria Allen Duggan (5/20/23), Ruth Evelyn Semancik (5/24/23), Jane Hansen (7/4/23), Denise L. (Bailey) Maseto (7/27/23), Frances D. Brown (3/14/23), Pearl Thurkettle (8/27/23), Gilber E. Schuessler (9/7/23), William Gordon Troutman (11/8/23), Dr. Rev. Donald H. Kirkham (12/4/23), Cynthia Persson Hermanson (12/10/23), Janet Sherbo (12/17/23), Jean Harriett Lanz (12/27/23)	
<u>Total professing members at the close of this year</u>	<u>732</u>

Total Infant Baptisms-Preparatory Members:

Everest James Bentley (July 23rd, 2023)
Scarlett Ann Murolo (September 17th, 2023)
Avery Joyce Steinbeiser (October 15th, 2023)
Wylen Lowrey Flader (October 22nd, 2023)

Respectfully submitted,

Suhee Kim

Rev. Suhee Kim (12/31/2023)

New York Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church

Annual Report of Clergy in Retired Connection*, Retired Clergy Residing outside the bounds of the Conference, Clergy on Voluntary Leave of Absence: Family and Transitional.

Report to Charge Conference

This report form is provided to help fulfill the Disciplinary requirements of the 2012 Book of Discipline. The Book of Discipline specifies that persons covered in these paragraphs shall report annually to the Conference where membership is held. Further, each respondent must also designate a charge conference (§1358.5).

Clergy residing outside the boundaries of the annual conference where their membership is held, shall forward annually to the charge conference where membership is held a report of their Christian and ministerial conduct, signed by the district superintendent or pastor of the affiliate charge conference where they reside (§1358.5).

Clergy on Voluntary Leave of Absence shall submit an annual report to the charge conference, pastor in charge, and Board of Ordained Ministry (§1354.8).

Name: Rev. J. George Hilton Date: Oct. 6, 2023
Charge Conference Membership: Stratford

Since the last Charge Conference, I performed and recorded the following pastoral functions:

Baptism (Name(s)): 0 Where Recorded

Marriage (Names): 0 Where Recorded

Funeral (Name(s)): 1
Julie Huey
Smithtown NY

Other Pastoral Functions:
Where Recorded
Sermons Wesley Heights 13
Holy Communion Wesley Heights 12
Holy Communion Crosby Commons 1
Cantata Narrator Sumc 2
Assisted Holy Communion Sumc 8
Sermons Sumc 3
Holy Communion Sumc 1

Signed: J. George Hilton

*Send reports to: Charge Conference, Pastor, Conference Secretary (confsecy@nyac.com)

**THE STRATFORD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
STRATFORD, CONNECTICUT**

2024 CHURCH SERVANTS

* to be elected at Church Conference on Sunday, October 29, 2023

I) LAY LEADERSHIP

Lay Leader	Frank Damiano*
Lay Members of Annual Conference	Frank Damiano*, Margaret Damiano*, Burdette James*
Lay Speakers	Burdette James*, Joyce Lewis*, Deborah Salsman*
Cooperative Parish Council representatives	Frank Damiano, Pat Knebel

II) CHURCH COUNCIL

Chairperson	Burdette James (<i>Elected by the Council</i>)
Lay Leader	Frank Damiano*
Secretary	Barbara DeBiase*

Chairpersons/Representatives of Work Areas

Board of Trustees	Steve James <i>Elected by the Trustees</i> ¹
Daycare	Stefanie Knight & Frank Damiano*
Finance	Steve Robertson*
Missions	Pam Robertson*
Staff Parish Relations	Meade Love Thomas
Sunday School	Stefanie Knight
Treasurer	Margaret Damiano
Worship	Burdette James
Cooperative Parish Council	Patricia Knebel, Frank Damiano
<u>Members at Large</u>	Diane Troutman*, Patricia Naylor* Meade Love Thomas*, Sonja Devitt*

III) ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES

A) Board of Trustees

President ² (2024)	Steve James (elected by trustees)
Secretary (2024)	Barbara DeBaise (elected by trustees)
Treasurer (2024)	Robyn Oliver (elected by trustees)

2024	2025	2026
Steve James	Cindy Booth	Robyn Oliver*
Calvin Robertson	Barbara DeBaise	Marianne Card*
Joan Gomez Vinluan	Jack Boynton	Kenneth Lewis*

¹ To be elected by the Board of Trustees in 2022 (The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016, ¶ 2530.2)

² Chairperson, secretary, and treasurer are elected by the Board of Trustees (*Ibid.* ¶ 2530.2)

B. Staff Parish Relations Committee

Chairperson
 Pastor
 Lay Leader

Rev. Suhee Kim
 Frank Damiano

2024	2025	2026
Rebecca DeBiase	Catherine Ford	Barbara DeBiase*
Bonnie Peloso	Deborah Salsman	Deborah Lockwood*
	Meade Love Thomas	Robyn Oliver*

C. Finance Committee

Chairperson
 Financial Secretary
 Assistant Financial Secretary
 Treasurer
 Assistant Treasurer
 Trustees Treasurer
 Daycare Treasurer (*ex officio*)
 Counters

Steven Robertson*
 Marianne Card*
 Jack Boynton
 Margaret Damiano
 Marianne Card
 Robyn Oliver (to be elected again in 2024)
 Alice Chueka
 Diane Troutman (coordinator)
 Bonnie Peloso, Bob Peloso, Frank Damiano,
 Burdette James, Judi Scofield, Heidi Hickey
 Chris Muller, Catherine Ford, Robert Ford

D. Lay Leadership and Nominations Committee

Chairperson
 Lay Leader

Rev. Suhee Kim
 Frank Damiano

2024	2025	2026
Ruth Bentley	Joyce Lewis	Lisa Vaccino*

E. Daycare Committee

Chairperson
 Daycare Director
 Daycare Treasurer
 SPRC Representative
 Trustees Representative
 Finance Representative
 Pastor (*ex officio*)
 Education consultant
 At Large member

Stefanie Knight & Frank Damiano
 Beth Buckmir
 Alice Chueka
 Deborah Salsman
 Steve James
 Margaret Damiano
 Rev. Suhee Kim (pastor)
 Lisa Vaccino
 Paula Russell

F. Building Committee

Chairperson
Members

Jack Boynton
Patricia Naylor, John Cottrell, Sonja Devitt,
Steven James, Frank Damiano,
Margaret Damiano, Pam Robertson

G. Historical Committee

Chairperson
Members

Phebe Kirkham
Chris Fuller, Mike Kranyak

H. Memorial Committee

Chairperson (Lay Leader)
Church Council Chairperson
President of the Board of the Trustees
Sunday School / Education Chairperson
Worship Chairperson
Members At Large
Ex Officio Members
Pastor
Music Committee, Parsonage Committee, Property Committee

Frank Damiano
Sonja Devitt
Steve James
Stefanie Knight
Burdette James
Chris Fuller

Rev. Suhee Kim

IV) MINISTRIES OF NURTURE, MISSION AND OUTREACH

A) Visitation

Coordinator
Members

Joyce Lewis
June Evitts, Chris Fuller, Joyce Fuller,
Diane Troutman

B) Sunday School

Sunday School Coordinator
Sunday School teachers

Stefanie Knight
Stefanie Knight, Peggy Damiano,
Cortney Squezello, Heidi Hickey,
Frank Damiano

C) Missions

Chairperson
Ministries of the Missions Committee
Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport
A.S.P.
Covenant-to-Care
Crop Walk
Golden Hill Community Suppers
Neighborhood Breakfast
Lord's Kitchen

Pam Robertson
Barbara DeBiase
Ed & Judi Scofield
Marianne Card
Scott Graham, Tammy Merry.
Pat Knebel
Pam Robertson
Frank & Peggy Damiano, Cindy Booth

E) Thrift Shop

Chairpersons
Members

David Reilly & Mary Ellen Reilly
June Evitts, Cortney Squezello,
Joyce Lewis, Diana Kunkel, Paula Russell
JoAnn Schif

STRATFORD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
REPORT FROM THE 2023 CHURCH COUNCIL TO THE ANNUAL CHURCH CONFERENCE,
FEBRUARY 25, 2024

The Church Council is the executive agency of the Charge Conference. It has general oversight of the administration and program of the local church, and is responsible for the local church's strategy for mission. The mission of the church is "to make disciples of Jesus Christ." The Council is comprised of the elected chairpersons of each of the committees in the church.

This past year (2023), we have been blessed by the pastoral skills, leadership, energy, and expertise of the second full year of Pastor Suhee Kim's appointment. She is ably assisted in the church office by Beth Sullivan, our church secretary. We continue to also be blessed by our multi-talented Minister of Music, Chris Muller, who is now in his eighth year of dedicated service to us.

We are mourning the death of our beloved Pastor Emeritus, the Rev. Dr. Donald H. Kirkham, who passed away on December 4, 2023. He was pastor of SUMC from 1984 to 1993.

Although we have resumed normal activities, we have been affected by a few outbreaks of COVID-19 in our Daycare/Preschool, choir, and congregation as a whole. We continue to take precautions, and masking is optional.

Stratford United Methodist Church (SUMC) is an active participant in The Bridge Cooperative Parish, for which our pastor is Coordinator. The other churches in the Parish are Mary Taylor Memorial (Milford), Golden Hill and Summerfield (Bridgeport), and Fairfield Grace. Our lay representatives are Pat Knebel and Frank Damiano. As we all get used to this new structure, we anticipate a number of opportunities to share mission and social activities.

Despite slowly dwindling membership and increased financial demands, our commitment and involvement in mission and our community remain strong. Our mission activities include:

- Our neighborhood breakfasts (third Saturday morning of each month)
- The Lord's Kitchen (coordinated by the Stratford Clergy Association)
- Golden Hill Community Suppers (coordinated by the Greater Bridgeport Council of Churches)
- Appalachian Service Project (ASP) – we send a team every year
- Our Thrift Shop
- "Take a Coat; Leave a Coat" – new this year on our front lawn Nov. & Dec.
- Pumpkin Patch (both a fundraiser and opportunity for outreach)
- Sterling House Food Pantry – This is a year-round activity, with special push by the Sunday School on Super ("Souper") Bowl Sunday, at which time they serve homemade soup at Coffee Hour.
- Donation of stuffed animals to children who have suffered trauma

For any who may have missed it, in June, our Chairperson of Mission, Pam Richardson, was the recipient of the 2023 Stratford Partnership for Youth and Families MEDALS (Making Extraordinary Differences and Leading Stratford) award.

Other community involvements include participation in the annual Martin Luther King service, our pastor's active participation in the Stratford Clergy Association, and participation every three weeks in Stratford-wide Community Conversations led by the former editor of the *Stratford Star*.

We continued our 52-year tradition of joint worship and lunch with the First Baptist Church on the first Sunday of Advent. 2024 is our turn to host.

Under the leadership of Chris Muller, we made a significant investment to enhance congregational worship experience, installing large TV screens on either side of the chancel and updated audio and streaming equipment. Under his leadership, the local chapter of the American Guild of Organists held a workshop in our sanctuary entitled “Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza” open to all children and teenagers to learn about the organ and then build one from an organ kit.

Other musical highlights included:

- Half-hour noontime organ meditations on Thursdays during Lent and Advent
- Cantatas by the choir on Palm Sunday and the Sunday before Christmas, the latter including the Christmas pageant by the Sunday School
- A guitar concert by Christian Aja for the benefit of Ukraine relief

In 2022, we held several church-wide roundtables and work sessions to begin to address our dwindling membership, financial shortfalls, maintenance needs, and future viability. We studied what we could determine to be our realistic options. It was the unanimous consensus of those attending a special Church Council work session on September 27, 2022, that we **commit to remaining in this location and make our ministry here work.**

Early in 2023, we formed an exploratory committee to further this commitment. An opportunity emerged for us to work in partnership with the nonprofit developer, Connecticut Housing Partners (aka Mutual Housing of Southwestern Connecticut) to develop some of our property into 57 units of affordable rental housing. This would necessitate the demolition of our educational and program wing and enter into a long-term (98 years) ground lease on which they would build a large apartment building. We could sub-lease a large portion of the first floor of the apartment building for a kitchen and program space to replace the current uses of the present back wing of our church.

To explore this further, we appointed and authorized a Building Committee: Jack Boynton, Chairperson, Steve James (chair of Trustees), Frank Damiano (Lay Leader), Peggy Damiano (Church Treasurer), Pam Robertson (chair of Missions), Patricia Naylor, John Cottrell, Sonja Devitt (chair of Council), and Pastor Suhee Kim. The Building Committee has enlisted the services of Tom Ivers, a non-profit housing developer, to be an advisor, and Attorney John Florek for legal services. This committee has developed a PowerPoint presentation of the project, which has been presented to the congregation at several meetings called for that purpose, and to the Connecticut District Building and Locations Committee.

The Trustees and the Church Council, at a joint meeting on August 8, 2024, voted unanimously “to authorize Chair of Trustees Steven James and Chair of Council Sonja Devitt, on behalf of Stratford United Methodist Church and contingent upon legal counsel review and recommendation, to sign a Letter of Intent with Connecticut Housing Partners (CHP) to pursue a long-term ground lease and land use approval for approximately 60,000 square feet of the rear for the Stratford United Methodist Church property located at 2600 Main Street, Stratford, CT.”

At the Church Council meeting on October 10, 2023, the Council voted, with one abstention, to move ahead with the Building project and present it to the Congregation and District Committee on Buildings and Location.

This proposal will be presented to the congregation for approval at a Special Charge Conference on Sunday, February 25, 2024 @ 11:15 a.m. in the sanctuary.

Among other items of note in 2023:

- Revision of the Daycare & Preschool Bylaws

- Hosted the Moodus, CT, Teen Challenge Choir in February
- Review of the Memorials policy and process
- We were disappointed not to be selected to participate in the Yale Divinity School's internship program, "Reimagining Church."
- Pursued the incorporation of the church
- Our lay leaders attended several NYAC gatherings
- In November, we received the UMC 2022 Faithful Ministry Award for paying our apportionments in full.

Although this report is long, it is not totally comprehensive. As I said last year, I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude for the hard work and many hours that so many have invested in the above efforts. Best wishes to Burdette James, Council Chairperson for 2024!

Sonja Devitt, 2023 Chairperson
SUMC Church Council

Stratford United Methodist Church
Operating Income and Expense Statement

Dollars in Thousands

	2023 Actual			2024 Budget			
	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	\$ Chg vs Budget	% vs Budget	2024 Budget	\$ Chg vs LY	% vs LY
Income							
Pledges	\$137.4	\$143.0	(\$5.6)	-4%	\$125.0	(\$12.4)	-9%
Member Contributions(not pledged)	\$31.6	\$31.6	\$0.0	0%	\$28.0	(\$3.6)	-11%
Preschool	\$30.0	\$30.0	\$0.0	0%	\$30.0	\$0.0	0%
Thrift Shop	\$17.7	\$15.0	\$2.7	18%	\$17.7	\$0.0	0%
Trustees - Maint/Apportionment	\$60.0	\$60.0	\$0.0	0%	\$60.0	\$0.0	0%
Easter/Thanksgiving/Christmas	\$2.8	\$2.5	\$0.3	12%	\$2.8	\$0.0	0%
Plate	\$8.9	\$5.0	\$3.9	78%	\$8.9	\$0.0	0%
Devotional Materials/Adult Ed	\$0.4	\$0.3	\$0.1	33%	\$0.4	\$0.0	0%
Building Use	\$0.2	\$0.2	\$0.0	0%	\$0.2	\$0.0	0%
Fund Raising -net	\$1.7	\$2.0	(\$0.3)	-15%	\$1.7	\$0.0	0%
Other	\$1.2	\$0.7	\$0.5	71%	\$1.2	\$0.0	0%
Total Income	\$291.9	\$290.3	\$1.6	1%	\$275.9	(\$16.0)	-5%
Expense							
Pastoral Expenses:							
Payroll - Pastor	\$55.6	\$55.4	\$0.2	0%	\$57.3	\$1.7	3%
Housing Exclusion	\$5.0	\$5.0	\$0.0	0%	\$5.0	\$0.0	0%
Pastor's Health Insurance	\$19.2	\$19.2	\$0.0	0%	\$19.2	\$0.0	0%
Pastor's Pension	\$8.9	\$8.9	\$0.0	0%	\$9.1	\$0.2	2%
Pastor Disability	\$2.3	\$2.2	\$0.1	5%	\$2.4	\$0.1	3%
Pastors Professional Exp	\$6.3	\$6.0	\$0.3	5%	\$7.0	\$0.7	11%
Parsonage Maintenance	\$3.3	\$5.0	(\$1.7)	-34%	\$5.0	\$1.7	52%
Parsonage Utilities	\$7.8	\$11.5	(\$3.7)	-32%	\$7.8	\$0.0	0%
Subtotal Pastoral	\$108.4	\$113.2	(\$4.8)	-4%	\$112.7	\$4.3	4%
Staff Payroll:							
Payroll - Music Director	\$25.0	\$25.0	\$0.0	0%	\$25.8	\$0.8	3%
Payroll - Secretary	\$20.9	\$20.8	\$0.1	0%	\$21.5	\$0.6	3%
Social Security/Worker's Comp	\$6.5	\$7.6	(\$1.1)	-14%	\$6.7	\$0.2	3%
Subtotal Staff	\$52.4	\$53.4	(\$1.0)	-2%	\$54.0	\$1.6	3%

Stratford United Methodist Church
Operating Income and Expense Statement

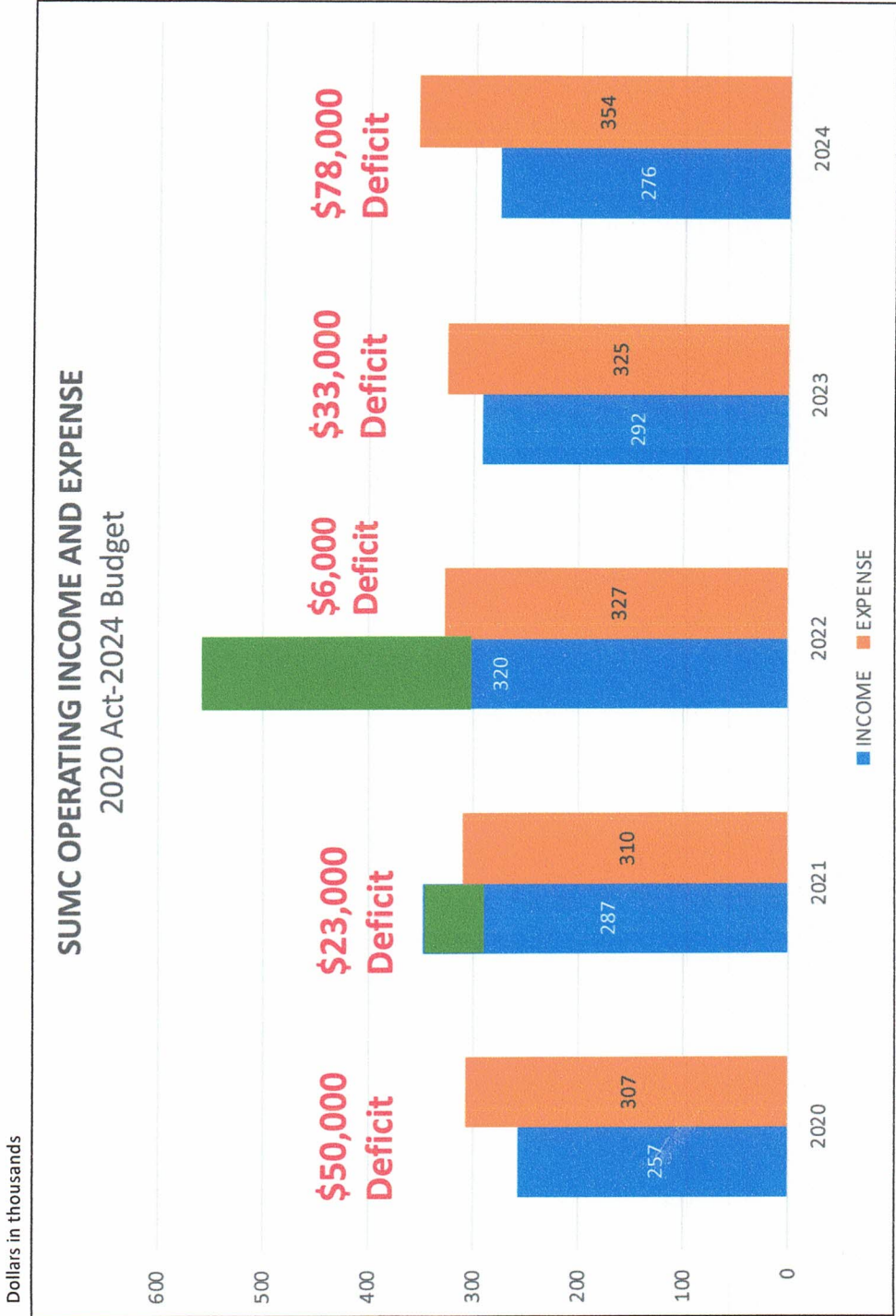
Dollars in Thousands

	2023 Actual			2024 Budget			
	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	\$ Chg vs Budget	% vs Budget	2024 Budget	\$ Chg vs LY	% vs LY
Church Facility							
Church Utilities - Elect	\$19.7	\$50.0	(\$30.3)	-61%	\$19.7	\$0.0	0%
Church Utilities - Gas	\$30.3	\$20.2	\$10.1	50%	\$30.3	\$0.0	0%
Service Contracts	\$27.5	\$32.3	(\$4.8)	-15%	\$35.0	\$7.5	27%
Insurance	\$24.5	\$23.5	\$1.0	4%	\$28.1	\$3.6	15%
Church Maintenance	\$13.8	\$15.0	(\$1.2)	-8%	\$20.0	\$6.2	45%
Church Utilities - Other	\$10.5	\$12.1	(\$1.6)	-13%	\$11.0	\$0.5	5%
Office Supplies/internet	\$4.6	\$6.4	(\$1.8)	-28%	\$4.6	\$0.0	0%
Credit Card/ADP Fees	\$2.2	\$4.6	(\$2.4)	-52%	\$2.3	\$0.1	5%
Subtotal Church	\$133.1	\$164.1	(\$31.0)	-19%	\$151.0	\$17.9	13%
Apportionment and Committees							
NYAC Apportionment	\$20.5	\$20.5	\$0.0	0%	\$19.1	(\$1.4)	-7%
Laity Conf Expense	\$0.5	\$0.0	\$0.5		\$0.5	\$0.0	0%
Music	\$5.6	\$4.3	\$1.3	30%	\$5.6	\$0.0	0%
Worship, Advertising	\$1.5	\$1.0	\$0.5	50%	\$1.5	\$0.0	0%
Historian	\$0.1	\$0.3	(\$0.2)	-67%	\$0.3	\$0.2	200%
Youth Education	\$1.8	\$2.0	(\$0.2)	-10%	\$2.5	\$0.7	39%
Membership & Evangelism	\$0.4	\$4.7	(\$4.3)	-91%	\$4.7	\$4.3	1075%
Devotional Materials	\$0.3	\$0.3	\$0.0	0%	\$0.3	\$0.0	0%
Stewardship	\$0.0	\$1.0	(\$1.0)	-100%	\$1.0	\$1.0	
Garden	\$0.4	\$0.5	(\$0.1)	-20%	\$0.5	\$0.1	25%
Subtotal Apportionment/Committees	\$31.1	\$34.6	(\$3.5)	-10%	\$36.0	\$4.9	16%
Total Expenses	\$325.0	\$365.3	(\$40.3)	-11%	\$353.7	\$28.7	9%
Income Less Expense	(\$33.1)	(\$75.0)	\$41.9	-56%	(\$77.8)	(\$44.7)	135%

Stratford United Methodist Church
Benevolence Income and Expense Statement

Dollars in Thousands

	2023	2024 Budget		
	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	\$ Chg vs LY	% vs LY
Income				
Estimate of Giving	\$19.6	\$17.7	(\$1.9)	-9%
UMCOR	\$2.3	\$0.5	(\$1.8)	-78%
World Communion Sunday	\$0.1	\$0.1	(\$0.0)	-9%
Heifer Project	<u>\$0.8</u>	<u>\$0.8</u>	\$0.0	0%
Total Income	<u>\$22.8</u>	<u>\$19.1</u>	<u>(\$3.6)</u>	<u>-16%</u>
Expense				
World Service & Ben	\$10.0	\$8.2	(\$1.8)	-18%
Black College Fund	\$0.5	\$0.4	(\$0.1)	-23%
Africa University	\$0.1	\$0.1	(\$0.0)	-14%
Greater Bridgeport Council of Churches	\$5.0	\$5.0	\$0.0	0%
Stratford Clergy Association	\$0.5	\$0.5	\$0.0	0%
Neighborhood Breakfast	\$0.4	\$0.7	\$0.4	109%
Lord's Kitchen	\$0.9	\$1.9	\$1.0	109%
Heifer Project	\$0.8	\$0.8	\$0.0	0%
Stratford Day	\$0.9	\$1.0	\$0.1	10%
UMCOR	<u>\$2.6</u>	<u>\$0.5</u>	<u>(\$2.1)</u>	<u>-81%</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$21.7</u>	<u>\$19.1</u>	<u>(\$2.6)</u>	<u>-12%</u>
Income Less Expense	<u>\$1.1</u>	<u>\$0.0</u>	<u>(\$1.1)</u>	<u>-100%</u>



5 YEAR Cumulative Operating Deficit = \$190,000
Federal Funds (PPP/ERC)Received = \$291,000

SUMC Operations Cash Balance

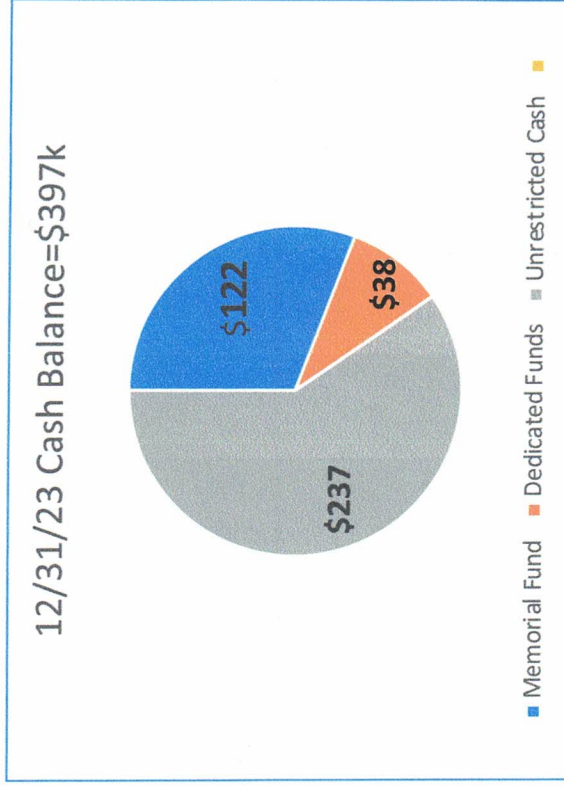
Dollars in thousands

Unrestricted Cash:

12/31/23 = \$237

2024 Budget (\$78)
\$159

2025 Proj (\$100)
2026 partial \$59



- Unrestricted Cash has provided a temporary reprieve /safety net to sustain operating deficits
- Has been available because of \$291k Federal Covid Monies received
- Will be spent by mid-year 2026 based on current deficit rate
- Any Budget deficits beyond need to be funded from Mem Funds/Trustee Endowment

End of Year Cash Comparisons Thru 2028							
	2022 Act	2023 Prj	2024 Est	2025 Est	2026 Est	2027 Est	2028 Est
Income							
With CHP Project	\$551.7	\$290.3	\$285.2	\$284.5	\$269.5	\$239.5	\$254.5
Without	\$551.7	\$290.3	\$285.2	\$284.5	\$284.5	\$284.5	\$284.5
Difference	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	(\$15.0)	(\$45.0)	(\$30.0)
Expenses							
With CHP Project	\$326.7	\$365.3	\$380.7	\$392.3	\$404.0	\$341.7	\$362.7
Without	\$326.7	\$365.3	\$380.7	\$392.3	\$404.0	\$416.2	\$428.9
Difference	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	(\$74.4)	(\$66.2)
Cash Balance							
With CHP Project	\$297.5	\$222.5	\$127.0	\$19.2	(\$115.3)	(\$217.5)	(\$325.7)
Without	\$297.5	\$222.5	\$127.0	\$19.2	(\$100.3)	(\$231.9)	(\$376.3)
Difference	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	(\$15.0)	\$14.4	\$50.6
Adj. Cash Balance*							
With CHP Project	\$297.5	\$314.5	\$219.0	\$111.2	\$91.7	(\$10.5)	(\$118.7)
Without	\$297.5	\$314.5	\$219.0	\$111.2	\$106.7	(\$24.9)	(\$169.3)

+ \$92K ERC Payment

+ \$115K Undesignated Memorial Funds

2024 - 2028 Assumptions		
	With CHP Project	Without Project
Income		
Edges/Member Contributions	No increase thru 2028	No increase thru 2028
Pre School	Income thru 2nd Qtr 2026	Continue at same levels thru 2028
Thrift Shop	No income in 2027	Continue at same levels thru 2028
Trustees Maintenance Transfer	Continue at same levels thru 2028	Continue at same levels thru 2028
Expense		
Staff Salary	Projected +2.5% per year	Projected +2.5% per year
Electricity	+5%. Total reduced after demo.	+5% per year
Gas	+5%. Total reduced after demo.	+5% per year
Insurance	+5%. Total reduced after demo.	+5% per year
Service Contracts	+5%. Total reduced after demo.	+5% per year
Maintenance and Supplies	Continue at current levels	Continue at current levels
Conference Apportionment	Continue at current levels	Continue at current levels
Rent for New Space	Begins in 2028	No Rent



Report of the Trustees

The trustees are amenable to the Charge Conference and as such are required to make an annual report

(¶ 2550). Additional reports should be made as requested by the Charge Conference or Church Council or equivalent. Numbers in parentheses refer to paragraphs in the 2016 Book of Discipline.

Copies of this report should be filed with the recording secretary, pastor, district superintendent and the board of trustees.

Stratford United Methodist Church Charge
Connecticut District New York Annual Conference

For the period beginning October 16, 2022 , and ending October 29, 2023
DATE OF PRIOR CHARGE CONFERENCE DATE OF CURRENT CHARGE CONFERENCE

1. Organization for the present conference year was effective (date) _____, by electing the following officers (no less than three, and up to nine persons):

	Name	Term Expires
President	Steven James	2024
Vice President	Joan Gomez Vinluan	2024
Secretary	Barbara DeBiase	2025
Treasurer	Robyn Oliver	2026
Member	Calvin Robertson	2024
Member	Cindy Booth	2025
Member	Jack Boynton	2025
Member		
Member		

2. Is the local church incorporated (¶2529.1a)? Yes No

3. a. Name or names in which title to each piece of property is recorded, as shown by civil land records (¶¶2536, 2538):

	Name(s)	Office	Book	Page
Church Buildings	Stratford UMC	Stratford Tax Assessor	0917/0109	
Church Buildings				
Parsonages	First Methodist Church	Stratford Tax Assessor	0370/0430	
Parsonages				
Other				
Other				

b. Who is the custodian of deeds and other legal papers? Historical committee of SUMC

c. Where are they kept? Historical committee archive filing cabinet

4. Does each deed contain trust clause (¶2503)? Yes No

5. Do you have a long-term plan for the replacement of facilities and equipment as they deteriorate? Yes No

6. a. Insurance (¶2533.2, 2550.7)

Item Insured/ Insurance	Replacement Value	Amount of Coverage	Type of Coverage	Company	Restricted By Coinsurance (Yes or No and amount)		Expires When
					Y N	Amount::	
Church Buildings	\$ 6,285,383	\$ 6,285,383	Blanket all risk	Church Mutual	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amount::	10/31/24
Parsonages	\$ included in above	\$ included	"	Church Mutual	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amount:	"
Church Furnishings and Equipment	\$ "	\$ "	"	Church Mutual	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amount::	"
Parsonage Furnishings and Equipment	\$ "	\$ "	"	Church Mutual	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amount::	"
Vehicle(s)	\$ N/A	\$ N/A	"	Church Mutual	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amount::	"
General Liability		\$ 1 Million	comprehensive	Church Mutual	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amount::	"
Worker's Compensation				Church Mutual	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amount::	"
Directors and Officers/Errors and Omissions/Crime		\$ 1 Million		Church Mutal	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amount::	"
Professional Liability Coverage (Including Sexual Misconduct)		\$ 1 Million		Church Mutual	<input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amount::	"

b. Have the buildings been inspected for fire and other safety hazards within the past year? Yes No

c. Have you assessed the of replacement value within the last 5 years? Yes No

d. Who performed the assessment? Church Mutual

e. Does the church have a Safe Sanctuary Policy? Yes No

f. Is the amount of insurance adequate? Yes No

(to determine adequacy of coverage, please use the GCFA Insurance Worksheet found at <http://www.gcfa.org/gcfa/united-methodist-church-minimum-insurance-requirements>)

7. a. Has an annual accessibility audit for church properties been conducted (§ 2533.6)? Yes No

(attach as a report; an example accessibility audit form may be found at <http://www.gcfa.org/forms-and-resources>)

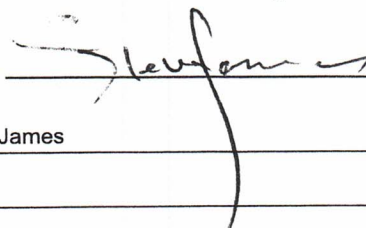
b. If needed, have you developed an accessibility plan? Yes No (Attach plan)

8. Provide a detailed list of income-producing and permanent funds:

Item	Date Received	Amount	Where Invested	Income	How Income is Used for Ministry
Operation Endowment Fund		\$ 1,124,358.11	Fisher Investment	\$60,000	Maintenance & repairs
Restricted Endowment		\$283,828.09	UM Frontier Foundation	\$6978	restricted purposes
					Mission, Choir, & PreK Scholarship

(Attach as a supplement a statement "clarifying the manner in which these investments made a positive contribution toward the realization of the goals outlined in the Social Principles of the church and showing the investments are socially responsible..." § 2533.5 and § 2550.9)

President of Trustees



Printed Name: Steven James

Date: 10/15/2023

Annual Report of the Board of Trustees, 2017-2020

Prepared and edited by the General Council on Finance and Administration and authorized as the official form for this purpose.

Annual Trustee Report 2023

This has been another busy year for the Trustees.

Updates:

The solar project involving installation of solar panels on the east roof of the sanctuary and both pitched roofs of the chapel relies on funding in large part from state funds. These are distributed in a lottery. Each year that we don't "win" the lottery, our chances increase in the following year. We are hopeful for this year.

The leaking Boiler turned out not to be the overflow valve. The problem originated from a failing water input valve. Kevin from Ralph Mann quickly diagnosed and replaced the valve. (Note - Kevin installed the existing boiler) The boiler ballast was re-plumbed with copper, as steel pipe can also cause problems with overflow. The backed-up drain in the furnace room was also cleared.

The parsonage deck, railings, and stairs to the backyard have been replaced, and the whole of it has been treated with preservative/stain. Reinforcement of the decks 2x8x14 deck joists will be completed this spring/early summer.

It has been determined by Luis Borerro that the AC units above the offices and chapel hallway do not need to be re-supported by work on the steel structure of the flat roof itself. However, the "sleepers" (pressure-treated framing lumber) that the units sit on and on which the weight is evenly distributed over the flat roof **do need to be replaced**.

We expect a bid for that job in the near future.

New Business:

Both upper and lower large gutters on the east roof of the sanctuary were found to be failing. Luis Borrero was contracted to fix them and has done so.

The roof above the narthex and entry way into the narthex, need a new piece of rubber stretched over all and new flashing where the roof meets the brick wall of the church.

The trustees participated in and oversaw a general clean up and clean out of areas of the education wing and narthex attic. This was coordinated by Robyn Oliver who hired a group of workers who provided a dumpster and sold items of value that we no longer need/use. The church got a percentage of those sales in the bargain.

Robyn has also been elected as the new Treasurer of the Trustees. As such she provided oversight in moving endowment funds from First County Investments to Fisher Investments and the United Methodist Frontier Foundation.

The Trustees are participating in and overseeing the Building Committee in discussions around re-purposing the education wing. There have been ongoing discussions with CT Housing Partners (a nonprofit affordable housing enterprise) concerning this re-purposing. John Florek, a town attorney, has been hired. We also had the church property appraised. Beyond that, we are currently in discussion with NYAC.

We are also currently pursuing an elusive certificate of incorporation from the state as "The United Methodist Church of Stratford."

**Stratford United Methodist Church
2022 Trustees Treasurer's Annual Report**

<u>Endowment Funds:</u>	<u>Balance as of 12/31/2022</u>
A. Operating Account (unrestricted)	<u>\$880,022.25</u>
B. Ministry Account (restricted)	<u>\$301,760.92</u>
a. Missions Funds (78.08%)	\$ 235,614.93
b. Preschool Scholarship Funds(10.88%)	\$ 32,831.59
c. Choir Funds (11.04%)	\$ 33,314.40
Total Endowment Funds	\$ 1,181,783.17 (as of 12/31/2022) \$ 1,002,918.08 (beginning balance of 1/1/2022)

Disbursements:

A. Operating account disbursements:	<u>\$60,000</u> in total (\$5,000 per month) \$16,500 (11/16/2022) for the breeze way roof repair
B. Ministry account disbursement:	\$3,485.19 (11/17/2022)

Bequests:

- The Board of Trustees accepted an unrestricted bequest from Shirley M. Ekwall estate in the amount of **\$ 29,737.79** on January 18, 2022 trustees meeting. This bequest was deposited in the Operating Account (A) above.
- The Board of Trustees accepted an unrestricted bequest of **\$300,000** from the estate of Anthony Pipitone on October 4, 2022 trustees meeting. This bequest was deposited in the Operating Account (A) above.

**Stratford United Methodist Church
2023 Trustees Treasurer's Annual Report**

<u>Endowment Funds:</u>	<u>Balance</u> <u>as of 12/31/2022</u>	<u>Balance</u> <u>as of 12/31/23</u>
A. Operating Account (unrestricted)	\$880,022.25	\$1,280,375.42
B. Ministry Account (restricted)	\$301,760.92	\$311,390.28
a. Missions Funds (78.08%)	\$ 235,614.93	\$242,944.42
b. Preschool Scholarship Funds(10.88%)	\$ 32,831.59	\$33,972.61
c. Choir Funds (11.04%)	\$ 33,314.40	\$34,473.25
Total Endowment Funds	\$ 1,181,783.17 (as of 12/31/2022) \$ 1,002,918.08 (beginning balance of 1/1/2022)	\$1,591,765.60

Disbursements:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A. Operating account disbursements: | <u>\$60,000</u> in total (\$5,000 per month)
\$16,500 (11/16/2022) for the breeze way roof repair |
| B. Ministry account disbursement: | \$3,485.19 (11/17/2022) |

Bequests:

- The Board of Trustees accepted an unrestricted bequest of **\$359,241.51** from the estate of Anthony Pipitone on March 7, 2023 trustees meeting. This bequest was deposited in the Operating Account (A) above.

Stratford United Methodist Church

Building Committee

2023 Annual Report

Committee Members: Jack Boynton, John Cottrell, Frank Damiano, Peggy Damiano, Sonja Devitt, Steve James, Pat Naylor and Pam Robertson

The Building Committee has been busy as it continues to explore the long-term viability of our church property. In January 2023, church representatives reached out to Connecticut Housing Partners (CHP), a non-profit developer of affordable housing. This endeavor was in direct response to the 2022 Strategy Round Tables where a decision was made to maintain a church at the 2600 Main Street property. Diminishing size and aging congregation, an operating deficit and aging facilities were also important demographic and financial considerations.

The Committee met at least once a month, and sometimes as many as 2-3 times a month, to discuss the implications of leasing a portion of the SUMC property for the use of Affordable Housing. Key committee activities included:

- Contacting key town officials to get input on a proposed project with CHP.
- Engaging Tom Ivers as a consultant with over 40 years of experience with affordable housing projects.
- Contracting with Attorney John Florek to assist in the development of the Letter of Intent and Ground Lease.
- Conducting a site visit on August 31st with representatives from the District Commission on Building and Location, including the chairperson, Jim Strubs, and Pastor David Mantz.
- Conducting a site visit with a local architect, Jaime Milward, to explore design options.
- Meeting with the District Superintendent to seek approval for our proposal to demolish the educational wing and partner with CHP to build 57 units of affordable housing.
- Developing a communications strategy to communicate the details of the project to the congregation.

Once District approval is received, the Committee will seek a congregation-wide charge conference will be held to seek approval from our members.

Jack Boynton, Chairperson

Pat Naylor, Secretary

ANNUAL PARSONAGE REVIEW

A report to the Charge Conference of the Stratford United Methodist Charge.

1. Has there been an annual review of the parsonage by the pastor and the chairpersons of the Committee on Staff/Pastor Parish Relations and the Board Of Trustees since the last Charge Conference? (2012 Book of Discipline, ¶ 2533.4) Yes [X] No []

2. Have the S/PPR Committee and Trustees studied the New York Annual Conference Parsonage Guidelines? Yes [X] No []

3. What improvements have been made to the parsonage this year?

Gas furnace was replaced in November, 2023. All kitchen appliance suite were replaced including a dishwasher, a refridgerator, a gas stove and a microwave. Back deck was replaced and coated. Garage doors remotes were replaced.

4. What plans are there for improvements next year?

New Smoke detectors, replace closet doors

5. What are the plans for financing these improvements?

We have a realistic, healthy budget for the parsonage maintenance and repair.

6. Has there been a radon test on the parsonage? Yes [X] No [] (If not, when do you plan to do so?)

7. Has a carbon monoxide detector been installed in the parsonage? Yes [X] No [] (If not, this needs to be done)

If yes, has the battery been changed in the last 12 months? Yes [X] No [] When? []

8. Have reasonable steps been taken to ensure that there is no mold infestation?

There's no mold.

9. If this is a multiple charge, how are the costs of utilities and maintenance divided among the churches?

N/A

PERSONS SIGNING THIS REPORT:

Handwritten signatures for Chair S/PPRC, Trustee Chair, and Pastor.

Chair S/PPRC

Date: 10/20/23

Trustee Chair

Date: 10/20/23

Pastor

Date: 10/20/23

Stratford United Methodist Church

Staff Parish Relations Committee

2023 Annual Report

Committee Members: Pastor Suhee Kim; Frank Damiano (Lay Leader); From Nominations Committee: Peggy Damiano, Barbara Debiase, Rebecca Debiase, Catherine Ford, Deborah Lockwood, Bonnie Peloso, Deborah Salsman, Meade Love Thomas

Committee's Purpose: Summary (See also Book of Discipline: 258.2)

- 1) The primary task is to be the Human Resources arm of the Church and provide support for the pastor and other staff as they carry out their leadership responsibilities within the Church.
- 2) Provide annual evaluations to communicate to staff members their accomplishments, areas of improvement, and goals and objectives for the coming year.
- 3) Interview, hire, and develop and approve written job descriptions and titles in cooperation with the Senior Pastor.
- 4) Additional items as suggested in UMC Pastor-Parish Relations Guidelines

Executive Summary:

SPR focused on implementing staff benefits (unemployment and MyCTSAvings retirement savings program), conducting evaluations of staff, and the completion of several documents required by the General Conference.

Full Report:

1. Authorized initial implementation of unemployment insurance and Ct "MyCTSAvings" retirement plan.
2. Completed various SPR documents that are due by the October Charge Conference: Annual Parsonage Review, New York Annual Conference SPR Evaluation & Church Profile, Annual Conference Clergy Compensation Report, and SPR Appointment Review Form.
3. Completed evaluations on church staff.
4. Reviewed SUMC Personnel Manual.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meade Love Thomas, Chair

NEW YORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE PASTOR/STAFF-PARISH COMMITTEE
EVALUATION & CHURCH PROFILE

2023

(Document 1 of your consultation with the District Superintendent)

Adapted from Who Cares for the Pastor? by the Rev. Dennis R. Winkleblack, D. Min.

Note to SPPR Committees: This document ("Document 1") replaces and consolidates two forms that have been requested in prior years and it has a two-fold function. First, it should serve as one of the sources of information as your committee gives feedback and evaluation to your pastor, and as you communicate to your District Superintendent your hopes with regard to continuance or change of your pastor's appointment. That request should be noted on Document 2. Secondly, this document helps the Bishop and Superintendents to have a clearer picture of your congregation with regard to your church's pastoral appointment needs in the coming year. Please send both Document 1 and Document 2 to your DS by email a week prior to your church's charge conference this Fall or Winter, (or by December 1, 2022 for churches with a charge conference in December or January).

Please fill out this form on your computer, using as much or as little space as you wish for each question.

CHURCH: Stratford United Methodist Church

PASTOR: Rev Suhee Kim

- 1) a- How would you describe the present **spiritual** health of your congregation (worship, Christian education, care and nurture, mission and outreach)?

The Spiritual health of SUMC remains healthy, despite these challenging times of post-pandemic and ongoing consideration of significant capital expenses. Worship/preaching is relevant, biblically based and tied to our present situation. We have continued our missions and outreach, for example shifting our methodologies to bring back in-person meals. Our faith remains strong.

- b- How would you describe the present **financial** health of your congregation?

SUMC has benefitted in 2023 from federal Employee Retention Credit funds, for which we are eligible through our preschool/day care; this offset the lower enrollment in day care (largely due to difficulties replacing departing staff). Outside of this, our congregational pledges decreased from 2022 in the number of pledging units, though the pledge amount remained relatively steady.

- c- How would you describe the **physical** health of your buildings (sanctuary, education building, parsonage, etc.)?

In addition to routine minor repairs, short-term fix to our flat roof has us in a holding pattern, while Council and Trustees actively work on a sustainability plan. Following a church-wide visioning process, we have explored options to repurpose the church building and space.

Our parsonage is in good shape and requires minor routine maintenance.

- 2) What are the most significant current ministries of your church (mission and outreach, education, evangelism, worship, youth/seniors ministry, pastoral care, interfaith, justice, etc.)?

EVALUATION & CHURCH PROFILE

(Document 1 of your consultation with the District Superintendent)

SUMC has a healthy Missions committee with positive engagement from the congregation; SUMC has continued to support The Lord's Kitchen and Golden Hill's weekly meals, and a monthly neighborhood breakfast we host ourselves. SUMC again this year participated in Appalachian Service Project group with 20 years of service, with another summer youth mission trip. Our Heaven Sent Thrift Shop continues to serve the local community. Pastor sends a weekly email bulletin. SUMC has maintained a strong, active state-licensed day care/preschool for decades.

- 3) What are the most significant challenges facing your church now and in the next 5 – 10 years?

Refortifying our worship experience and recruitment of new members remain a significant challenge. We are working to reinvigorate our Day Care/nursery school enrollment which has fallen off due to employment of new staff which has suffered due to pandemic economics, and we must examine how we can close the monthly gap between income and expenses without relying on our endowment and navigate an expensive roof repair.

- 4) What are the most important skills and experience that the pastor of your church will need to best lead you now and in the next 5 – 10 years?

Our Pastor will need to continue to provide leadership and organizational skills, and administrative knowledge as we navigate through financial fortification and rebuilding our membership.

- 5) With an eye to the future, prioritize the following pastoral ministries in order of importance for your church: *preaching, teaching, administration, visitation, evangelism, justice ministries, ecumenism, community involvement.*

In order of importance, the following pastoral ministries for our church include: preaching, administration, visitation, community involvement, teaching, justice ministries, evangelism, and ecumenism.

- 6) What are the most appreciated talents and skills of your present pastor?

The most appreciated talents and skills of Rev Suhee Kim are: preaching (Rev Suhee preaches with personal connection to our times often leveraging her own path's experiences), worship experience (Rev Suhee leverages music to enhance her messages and also has begun projecting each Sunday's bulletin on screen to draw in in-person and online congregation members), administrative skills (Rev Suhee has set parameters for office staff, familiarized herself with SUMC's accounting practices and helped clarify SUMC financial policies), approachability (Rev Suhee has rebranded the established pastor's office - a space tucked away behind locked doors - to a meeting room, and relocated the pastor's office to the main office suite), and interpersonal skills and empathy (Rev Suhee has teamed with a church member and called on all members on the visitation roles).

- 7) a- What are the areas of growth/improvement that your pastor should focus on?

EVALUATION & CHURCH PROFILE

(Document 1 of your consultation with the District Superintendent)

On ways to keep our church community together and developing strategies on how to be involved and relevant to church members and the community as we promote healing, serving, and rebuilding the membership and community during and after the pandemic and through our financial challenges.

b- What will these areas require from the pastor/congregation (*time, money, special training*)?

The opportunity for the pastor to recharge and refresh, the need to take time off and pray and reenergize through the challenges ahead. Also, the time, talents and prayers from the congregation to assist the pastor in these challenging times; fundraising will depend on financial commitment from the congregation.

8) What do you want the pastor to make a priority in your ministry together during the remainder of his/her appointment?

Leading the congregation through our financial and building crises, reinvigorating our ranks, guiding us and engagement with the cooperative parish approach.

9) How does your pastor keep herself/himself emotionally, physically, spiritually refreshed (days off, vacation, recreational activities, spiritual renewal opportunities, continuing education)?

More days off, spiritual retreat, more time spent with family.

10) Are there any special factors about your congregation, or the area served by your congregation, that should be considered by the cabinet in the appointment-making process?

Our church needs the passion and energy that our current pastor brings to the congregation. As our congregation gets older, we need a young and energetic pastor to recruit young families to sustain the congregation.

2023 Pastoral Compensation

Cash Compensation: The full amount before any exclusions or reductions are taken.	\$ 55,432
Reimbursement line item in church budget	\$6,000
Housing Allowance (if provided in place of parsonage and utilities).	0
Additional forms of compensation, if any: Housing Exclusion	\$5,000

**NEW YORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE PASTOR/STAFF-PARISH COMMITTEE
EVALUATION & CHURCH PROFILE**

2023

(Document 1 of your consultation with the District Superintendent)

Additional Staff: (Pastors, program, music, clerical, custodial)

Position, with brief description of duties	Hours per week	Compensation
Organist	12	24,960
Secretary	20	20,800

(The information for the following two tables can be found in the Local Church Expenditure and Statistical Reports filed each year with the Annual Conference by your Pastor and Treasurer).

Membership & Participation

	2022-2023	2021	2020	2019	2018
Official Church Membership	737	746	777	765	797
Average Worship Attendance	107	95	120	91	137
Church School Membership	10	15	12	25	40
Church School Average Attendance					

Assets

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Unrestricted Funds	412,500	341,334	152,930	233,009	132,190
Restricted Funds	30,200	\$70,000	36,900	11,572	55,738

Housing *(Description of parsonage or nature of housing allowance. Location and condition of parsonage. Are there any unique factors about the housing – e.g., handicapped access).*

Based on the Trustees report and communication with SPR, the parsonage is in relatively good condition. Ongoing improvements are being made to reduce wear and tear. The parsonage is located at 51 LeGrand Place, Stratford, Ct.

NEW YORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE CLERGY COMPENSATION REPORT 2023*

To be completed by each charge for each clergyperson appointed by the Bishop.

This form clarifies the total compensation package for each appointed pastor as well as instructs the Conference on how to bill health and pension benefits.

This form documents that action taken by the charge conference as it sets the compensation package (salary and benefits) of appointed clergypersons.

Pastor: Rev. Suhee Kim District: CT Effective Date: 1/1/2024

Pastor's mailing address
51 Le Grand Pl Stratford CT 06614
 Street City State Zipcode

Pastor's Billing address for benefits (if different)

 Street City State Zipcode

Name of Charge Stratford United Methodist Church

Percent appointment 100% 75% 50% 25%

Billing address for benefits
2600 Main Street Stratford CT 06615
 Street City State Zipcode

Salary and Benefits Package

2023 Salary	\$ 62,100
Reimbursable Expenses	\$ 7,000
Health Insurance	\$ 19,200
Pension	\$ 9,159.75
CPP	\$ 2,329.75

Is a parsonage provided? Yes No

If no, is there an amount paid for housing allowance? _____

In addition to the parsonage or housing allowance, is there an amount the pastor would like to designate as excluded from taxes to cover non-reimbursed housing expenses? \$ 5,000

Other: _____

Compensation was approved at a Charge Conference held on October 29th and is effective January 1 2024

Signatures:

Pastor _____ Staff/Parish Relations Chair _____
Margaret Davison _____
 Treasurer District Superintendent or Assisting Elder

2023 Missions, Church and Society Committee
Submitted by Pam Robertson

Committee's Purpose

1. Offer the congregation opportunities to be involved in mission.
2. Provide education and places where the United Methodist Church and SUMC are in mission, issues faced by those missions and the people they serve, and how our funding and actions can support those missions.
3. Encourage giving time and resources to support the mission and, as needed, make decisions concerning the distribution of benevolence funds.

Report for 2023

The projects listed below make up SUMC's Missions and Church and Society program. Each activity has a core group of volunteers that participate as needed and is led by those listed.

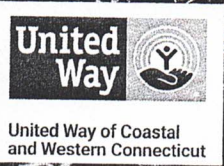
- United Methodist apportionments include The World Service Fund, The Ministerial Education Fund, The Black College Fund, and the African University Fund.
- National and conference-sponsored Special Sunday Offerings: UMCOR, World Communion, Human Relations.
- Emergency Fuel Aid to Long Hill UMC
- Neighborhood Breakfast
- Lord's Kitchen
- Stratford Clergy Association
- Bethlehem House
- Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport (CCGB)
- Heifer Project

On-going Services

- Neighborhood Breakfast (monthly): Pam Robertson
- Lord's Kitchen (4x per year): Frank Damiano
- Golden Hill UMC Community Supper (every other month): Pat Knebel, Frank Damiano, Marianne Card
- Sterling House Food Pantry
- Covenant to Care: Marianne Card
- Appalachian Service Project (ASP): Judy and Ed Scofield
- Thrift Shop: Dave and MaryEllen Riley
- CROP WALK: Tammy Merry
- Council of Churches Greater Bridgeport (CCGB): Barbara DeBiase
- Boy Scouts: Marianne Card
- Girl Scouts: Sue Yang

New Initiatives

- Take a Coat / Leave a Coat: Burdette James
- Stuffed animals Blessing: Pam Robertson, Stefanie Knight



UNITED in PURPOSE

TO SUPPORT HARD-WORKING NEIGHBORS

A View of Hardship in Coastal and Western Connecticut

HOUSEHOLDS WITH INCOMES BELOW THE COST OF LIVING
(BELOW THE ALICE THRESHOLD)

Location	% ALICE & Poverty
Bethel	40%
Bridgeport	68%
Bridgewater	17%
Brookfield	30%
Danbury	50%
Darien	17%
Easton	17%
Fairfield	27%
Kent	33%
Monroe	27%
New Canaan	20%
New Fairfield	31%
New Milford	30%
Newtown	27%
Norwalk	42%
Redding	28%
Ridgefield	27%
Roxbury	22%
Sherman	31%
Stamford	40%
Stratford	45%
Trumbull	24%
Warren	23%
Washington	29%
Weston	18%
Westport	19%
Wilton	19%
United Way of Coastal and Western CT	40%
Connecticut	39%



40% of Households in Our Community Live Paycheck to Paycheck and Can't Afford the Basic Cost of Living

We call these neighbors **ALICE**, an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed.

MEET ALICE:

- cares for our children or our aging parents.
- repairs our cars or works in local retailers, restaurants and stores.
- one emergency away from financial crisis.
- our friend, our co-worker, our neighbor, living in every one of our 27 towns.

How United Way Supports Hard-Working Neighbors



Access to fresh fruits and vegetables



Back to School supplies and access to academic enrichment programs



Financial coaching, savings, and asset-building programs

Visitation Ministry

Our church has struggled with many changes in the past few years. Some of this can be attributed to Covid which affected members of our church and many aspects of living and gathering.

Through it all, we have worked to continue visiting and caring for our members. Visitation was done outdoors, visitation was done at windows, and with masking, temperatures, and distancing. We continue to follow such protocols which are ever changing but the ministry has never come to a STOP.

Altar flowers and holiday plants have been delivered and cards, phone calls, and visits have continued. Thanks to all who have participated and all who greet and welcome each Sunday. Joyce and Chris Fuller continue to send their semi-monthly card with “news” of the church. This keeps people connected when not able to attend or unable to use the internet. The Good News and Sunday Bulletins are taken on visits. Those watching our Services on-line can remain a part of worship. Community prayer time at Sunday Worship also keeps us connected and in prayer for one another. Our goal continues to be outreach to all members – One in the Spirit.

We Are The Church

Joyce Lewis – Report of 2023

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE 2023

The Historical Committee was on the move this year. The filing cabinets and most of the contents of the Historical bookshelves and cabinets were moved from North 3 to provide more room for the Thrift Shop. The new location is on the west hallway of the educational wing in an unused classroom. The committee is grateful to Steve James, Robin Oliver, and their crew for cleaning out old furniture from the room, moving the file cabinets in, locating additional shelves for the book collection, and placing a new lock on the door. We were able to integrate recently donated file cabinets into the old row to allow for expanding the overcrowded drawers. New labels for the drawers have been added. The Boy Scout cabinet was moved to the All Purpose Room with the other Scouting items.

As part of the cleanout of the Church several boxes of materials were found and given to the committee. Most interesting was a box of newspaper clippings from the 1960s which had clippings about services, sermons, and activities of the church that had been written about or advertised in the *Stratford Star* and the *Connecticut Post*.

In November the Committee was given a quilt which had been donated by Brian Tedcastle, grandson of Rev. Arthur Tedcastle. The quilt was given to the Tedcastles during their ministry here in 1972. First thought to be retirement gift, we now believe it was a Friendship Quilt made by a committee of quilters led by Edith Cornelius. Congregational members were invited to purchase a square for \$1, and sign their or their family name(s). Then the square signatures were embroidered before joining them into a quilt. The center features an embroidered picture of the newly built church. We are in the process of listing and indexing all the names on the quilt in preparation for a display.

Historical articles were published monthly in the Good News: Biblical Archeology, Wine and Grape Juice, Easter People, The Great Bell, On the Move, Attic Treasures, Rev. Nathan Bangs, 4 Buildings and Change, Soloman Plant, Charlie Brown's Christmas.

Committee members continue to compile and file minutes of meetings, bulletins for Sunday services and funerals, obituaries for deceased members, and other relevant materials.

Committee Members:
Phebe Kirkham, Church Historian
Chris Fuller, Mike Kranyak

WORSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT 2023

Worship is a major focus of our faith community. This committee strives to facilitate meaningful church services that ground us in faith and open our hearts to have a closer relationship with God. To that end there are many volunteers that greet people at the door, provide music, host coffee hour, coordinate altar flowers, prepare for Holy Communion and serve as ushers. Pastor Suhee Kim brings us messages that are meaningful and apply to daily living in this chaotic world. I thank God for all these wonderful people and their dedication to this ministry.

We enjoyed several special events in 2023. The first was to welcome a group from Adult/Teen Challenge in March. This group shared their music and stirring testimonies about how God's presence in their lives helped them overcome addictions. We were happy to host a luncheon after the service to get to know them better. The second special event was a guitar concert presented by Christian Aja that was a fundraiser for aid to Ukraine. Nadia Moiseyara opened the concert with a moving rendition of the Ukrainian national anthem. Christian's musical talents were on display and the event raised \$2,000 that was sent to UMCOR for Ukrainian relief efforts.

We are so grateful to have Chris Muller as our Director of Music. He provides a variety of music in our worship service, directing both the vocal choir and the Grace Notes Handbell Choir. His patience and encouragement to all is a blessing. His weekly organ recitals, open to the public, during Lent and Advent are always beautiful. The congregation is uplifted by the special musical events he creates. There was a beautiful cantata on Palm Sunday and a Christmas cantata that incorporated the Church School's pageant. He has arranged for special musicians, such as a trumpeter on Easter and several professional vocalists to boost the choir. The Christmas concert presented during Advent is a highlight for many. And Chris's dedication is not limited to the music program as he chairs the annual Pumpkin Patch event, provides media publicity for church events, and is the webmaster for the SUMC website. Indeed he has many gifts and is a valued part of our church life.

Money from the Memorial Fund was allocated to upgrade our video equipment this fall. Again it was Chris who researched options and created a new system. It consists of flexible cameras so the whole sanctuary can be viewed, new TV screens that eliminated the large screen that was on the altar, and a new computer; all of which has improved the quality for people attending church and for those who enjoy our livestream of services at home. And I must acknowledge the faithfulness of Jayden Zeleznec who manages the live stream process every week. Thank you Jayden!

Respectfully submitted,
Burdette James, Worship Chairperson

**LAY SPEAKER
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CHARGE CONFERENCE**
Initial Application or Request for Renewal



Report for year ending 2022

SECTION I: DATA ON THE LAY SPEAKER

Name (Mrs. Ms. Mr.

SECTION II: STATUS OF THE LAY SPEAKER

For initial application as a Lay Speaker

- Are you currently a Certified Lay Servant? Yes No
- What year did you complete your Basic Course? _____
- What year did you complete your Advanced Course for certification as a lay servant? _____
- What was the title of your Advanced Course? _____
- Which of the following required Lay Speaking courses have been completed?

<input type="checkbox"/> Leading Worship	<input type="checkbox"/> Leading Prayer	<input type="checkbox"/> Discovering Spiritual Gifts
<input type="checkbox"/> Preaching	<input type="checkbox"/> United Methodist Heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> United Methodist Polity

(Upon completion of the required course work, the Lay Speaker candidate will be examined by the district committee on Lay Servant Ministries and recommended to the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries to be considered for certification.)

For renewal as a Lay Speaker

- What year did you first become certified as a Lay Speaker? 1981
- Date of last review of Lay Speaker status: 2022 Approved: Yes No
- What year did you complete your last Advanced Course? 2017
- What was the title of your last Advanced Course? Conference Laity Convocation

SECTION III: REQUEST OF THE LAY SPEAKER

I request recommendation of my pastor and my charge conference to begin/renew as a Lay Speaker for the ensuing year.
 Date October - 2023 Lay Servant Joyce Lewis

SECTION IV: RECOMMENDATION OF THE PASTOR

I recommend concurrence with the request of this person to begin/renew as a Lay Speaker for the ensuing year.
 Date _____ Pastor _____

SECTION V: RECOMMENDATION OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL/CHARGE CONFERENCE

The church council/charge conference of _____ (church/charge)
 recommends the above person begin/renew as a Lay Speaker for the ensuing year.
 Date _____ Church Council Chair or District Superintendent _____

(To be completed by those requesting renewal as a Lay Speaker)

SECTION VI: MINISTRIES BY THE LAY SPEAKER

During the past year, I have participated in **caring ministries** as follows:

- served as a volunteer in a care-giving institution
- at a hospital, nursing home, or to a shut-in
- served in caring/outreach projects (food pantry, prison ministry, etc)
- other caring activities (Please list) Phone calls, cards, E-MAIL "out reach"
- provided one-on-one caring
- in membership/evangelism visitation

During the past year, I have participated in **leading ministries** as follows:

- served as member of committee, board, commission, council, task force, etc.
- as a volunteer at a community agency
- at my local church
- beyond my local church
- on my District Conference Jurisdiction General Church level
- other leading activities (Please list) _____

During the past year, I have participated in **communicating ministries** as follows:

- brought message in 2 worship services
- served as worship leader in 8 services
- delivered _____ devotional messages
- taught _____ classes
- shared my faith story - Bible Study

other ~~speaking~~ activities (Please list) - thrift shop, Neighborhood Breakfast, Pumpkin Patch fund raiser, trunk & Treat - for children, Lord's Kitchen food program

During the past year I have participated in additional opportunities for ministry as follows (Additional writing space below):
Greeting, Welcome cards/visitors, Coffee Hour, Visitation "care" facilities and "Home Bound" members, delivery Altar flowers, Holiday Plant ministry

SECTION VII: PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH BY THE LAY SPEAKER

In what activities have you engaged and/or what books have you read or used during the past year to help you develop your devotional life; improve your understanding of the Bible; improve your understanding of The United Methodist Church; and to improve your skills in caring, leading, communicating and speaking?
church newsletter contributed Benefit concert: Ukraine
Bible Study, "Women of the Bible", "Revival (Wesley)", "Witness at the Cross"
Devotional Guides, "Holy Moments", "Revelations"

SECTION VIII: FEEDBACK BY THE LAY SPEAKER

1. Do you feel called to be in service in any area of ministry, either in the church or outside the church, in which you are not currently involved? Yes No (If yes, please list those areas below.)

2. What additional training or support do you need or would suggest to further your ministry?

3. Give any recommendations you have for improving Lay Servant Ministries in your District or Conference:

(Note: District Directors are encouraged to respond to any comments within this section.)

NOTICE: After this form is completed and signed by those listed above, the Recording Secretary of the Charge Conference is requested to reproduce THREE copies: (1)Lay Speaker, (2)District Director of Lay Servant Ministries, (3)District Superintendent. The Recording Secretary of the Charge Conference keeps the ORIGINAL. (Revised September 2016)

**LAY SPEAKER
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CHARGE CONFERENCE**

Initial Application or Request for Renewal

Report for year ending 2023



SECTION I: DATA ON THE LAY SPEAKER

Name (Mrs. Ms. Mr.

SECTION II: STATUS OF THE LAY SPEAKER

For initial application as a Lay Speaker

1. Are you currently a Certified Lay Servant? Yes No
2. What year did you complete your Basic Course? _____
3. What year did you complete your Advanced Course for certification as a lay servant? _____
4. What was the title of your Advanced Course? _____
5. Which of the following required Lay Speaking courses have been completed?
 Leading Worship Leading Prayer Discovering Spiritual Gifts
 Preaching United Methodist Heritage United Methodist Polity

(Upon completion of the required course work, the Lay Speaker candidate will be examined by the district committee on Lay Servant Ministries and recommended to the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries to be considered for certification.)

For renewal as a Lay Speaker

1. What year did you first become certified as a Lay Speaker? 2002
2. Date of last review of Lay Speaker status: 2022 Approved: Yes No
3. What year did you complete your last Advanced Course? 2011
4. What was the title of your last Advanced Course? Happiness + Holiness

SECTION III: REQUEST OF THE LAY SPEAKER

I request recommendation of my pastor and my charge conference to begin/renew as a Lay Speaker for the ensuing year.
Date 10/20/23 Lay Servant Burdette James

SECTION IV: RECOMMENDATION OF THE PASTOR

I recommend concurrence with the request of this person to begin/renew as a Lay Speaker for the ensuing year.
Date _____ Pastor _____

SECTION V: RECOMMENDATION OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL/CHARGE CONFERENCE

The church council/charge conference of _____ (church/charge)
recommends the above person begin/renew as a Lay Speaker for the ensuing year.
Date _____ Church Council Chair or District Superintendent _____

(To be completed by those requesting renewal as a Lay Speaker)

SECTION VI: MINISTRIES BY THE LAY SPEAKER

During the past year, I have participated in *caring ministries* as follows:

- served as a volunteer in a care-giving institution
 at a hospital, nursing home, or to a shut-in
 served in caring/outreach projects (food pantry, prison ministry, etc)
 other caring activities (Please list) _____
- provided one-on-one caring
 in membership/evangelism visitation

During the past year, I have participated in *leading ministries* as follows:

- served as member of committee, board, commission, council, task force, etc.
 as a volunteer at a community agency
 at my local church
 beyond my local church
 on my District Conference Jurisdiction General Church level
 other leading activities (Please list) _____

During the past year, I have participated in *communicating ministries* as follows:

- brought message in 1 worship services
 served as worship leader in 9 services
 delivered _____ devotional messages
 taught _____ classes
 shared my faith story _____
 other speaking activities (Please list) _____

During the past year I have participated in additional opportunities for ministry as follows (Additional writing space below):

SECTION VII: PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH BY THE LAY SPEAKER

In what activities have you engaged and/or what books have you read or used during the past year to help you develop your devotional life; improve your understanding of the Bible; improve your understanding of The United Methodist Church; and to improve your skills in caring, leading, communicating and speaking?

"Women of the Bible Speak" + "Revival" bible studies

SECTION VIII: FEEDBACK BY THE LAY SPEAKER

1. Do you feel called to be in service in any area of ministry, either in the church or outside the church, in which you are not currently involved? Yes No (If yes, please list those areas below.)

2. What additional training or support do you need or would suggest to further your ministry:

3. Give any recommendations you have for improving Lay Servant Ministries in your District or Conference:

(Note: District Directors are encouraged to respond to any comments within this section.)

NOTICE: After this form is completed and signed by those listed above, the Recording Secretary of the Charge Conference is requested to reproduce THREE copies: (1)Lay Speaker, (2)District Director of Lay Servant Ministries, (3)District Superintendent. The Recording Secretary of the Charge Conference keeps the ORIGINAL. (Revised September 2016)

**LAY SPEAKER
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CHARGE CONFERENCE**

Initial Application or Request for Renewal



Report for year ending 2022

SECTION I: DATA ON THE LAY SPEAKER

Name (Mrs. Ms. Mr.

SECTION II: STATUS OF THE LAY SPEAKER

For initial application as a Lay Speaker

1. Are you currently a Certified Lay Servant? Yes No
2. What year did you complete your Basic Course? 2002
3. What year did you complete your Advanced Course for certification as a lay servant? 2009?
4. What was the title of your Advanced Course? The Sacrament
5. Which of the following required Lay Speaking courses have been completed?
 Leading Worship Leading Prayer Discovering Spiritual Gifts
 Preaching United Methodist Heritage United Methodist Polity

(Upon completion of the required course work, the Lay Speaker candidate will be examined by the district committee on Lay Servant Ministries and recommended to the conference committee on Lay Servant Ministries to be considered for certification.)

For renewal as a Lay Speaker

1. What year did you first become certified as a Lay Speaker? 2002
2. Date of last review of Lay Speaker status: 20 Approved: Yes No
3. What year did you complete your last Advanced Course? 2009
4. What was the title of your last Advanced Course? The Sacrament

SECTION III: REQUEST OF THE LAY SPEAKER

I request recommendation of my pastor and my charge conference to begin/renew as a Lay Speaker for the ensuing year.
Date 2024 Lay Servant Deborah Salsman

SECTION IV: RECOMMENDATION OF THE PASTOR

I recommend concurrence with the request of this person to begin/renew as a Lay Speaker for the ensuing year.
Date _____ Pastor _____

SECTION V: RECOMMENDATION OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL/CHARGE CONFERENCE

The church council/charge conference of _____ (church/charge)
recommends the above person begin/renew as a Lay Speaker for the ensuing year.
Date _____ Church Council Chair or District Superintendent _____

(To be completed by those requesting renewal as a Lay Speaker)

SECTION VI: MINISTRIES BY THE LAY SPEAKER

During the past year, I have participated in *caring ministries* as follows:

- served as a volunteer in a care-giving institution provided one-on-one caring
- at a hospital, nursing home, or to a shut-in in membership/evangelism visitation
- served in caring/outreach projects (food pantry, prison ministry, etc)
- other caring activities (Please list) cared for friend who was having mental issues and health issue with herself

During the past year, I have participated in *leading ministries* as follows:

- served as member of committee, board, commission, council, task force, etc.
- as a volunteer at a community agency
- at my local church
- beyond my local church
- on my District Conference Jurisdiction General Church level
- other leading activities (Please list) I have hosted 2 fundraisers and reviewed 3 grants for the FSP Foundation

During the past year, I have participated in *communicating ministries* as follows:

- brought message in 3 worship services
- served as worship leader in 5/6 services
- delivered _____ devotional messages
- taught _____ classes
- shared my faith story _____
- other speaking activities (Please list) _____

During the past year I have participated in additional opportunities for ministry as follows (*Additional writing space below*):
I have spoken and written letters to people in the Teen Challenge Ct program

SECTION VII: PERSONAL AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH BY THE LAY SPEAKER

In what activities have you engaged and/or what books have you read or used during the past year to help you develop your devotional life; improve your understanding of the Bible; improve your understanding of The United Methodist Church; and to improve your skills in caring, leading, communicating and speaking?

I read daily devotions of Our Daily Bread, Charles Stanley, along with online church services from other churches .

SECTION VIII: FEEDBACK BY THE LAY SPEAKER

1. Do you feel called to be in service in any area of ministry, either in the church or outside the church, in which you are not currently involved? Yes No (If yes, please list those areas below.)

2. What additional training or support do you need or would suggest to further your ministry:

3. Give any recommendations you have for improving Lay Servant Ministries in your District or Conference:

(Note: District Directors are encouraged to respond to any comments within this section.)

NOTICE: After this form is completed and signed by those listed above, the Recording Secretary of the Charge Conference is requested to reproduce THREE copies: (1)Lay Speaker, (2)District Director of Lay Servant Ministries, (3)District Superintendent. The Recording Secretary of the Charge Conference keeps the ORIGINAL. (Revised September 2016)

Assessing Anti-racism Resourcing Needs in our Local Churches

The New York Annual Conference is committed to preparing and equipping our congregations in becoming anti-racist. This assessment will help the Conference know how to best resource the churches of the New York Annual Conference. **Directions:** Complete this assessment at a Church Council meeting and submit with your Charge Conference documents to the District Superintendent.

1. What percentage of your congregation knows that becoming anti-racist is a priority for your local congregation, the Cooperative Parish, the District and the Annual Conference?

- 0%
- Less than 25%
- Between 25% and 50%
- Between 50% and 75%
- Between 75-100%
- 100%

It is impossible to know this. Of the 11 Council members present, a majority speculate between 25 + 50%

2. How important is participating in intentional anti-racism training or formation for your local congregation? Rate: 5- Extremely important, 1 - Not important at all

- 5 - Extremely important
- 4 - Somewhat important
- 3 - Neutral
- 2 - Not very important
- 1 - Not important at all

Because we cannot know this either, we select neutral.

3. What resources has your local congregation used related to anti-racism (book/program/curriculum) in its discipleship formation? What actions came as a result of the implementation of these resources?

4. Who from your congregation has participated in a Conference-sponsored anti-racism training in the last 4 years? Share their names, leadership positions, and the trainings they completed.

*Patricia Knebel, President, WLF, attended one presented by G.C.O.R. & one by NYAC
Meade Love Thomas, SPR Chair, attended NYAC District Training*

5. What are your upcoming plans for congregational discipleship formation related to anti-racism?

See Attachment

6. What resources does your local congregation need related to our commitment to anti-racism?

See Attachment

7. What else would you like to share about your congregation related to their anti-racist commitment and actions?

See Attachment

We, the Church Council members of STRATFORD UMC completed this assessment at a church council meeting held on (date) 10/10/23.

Church Council member signatures: (add more on the back if needed)

Name and Signature SONJA M. DEVITT / Sonja M. Devitt Burdette James
 Name and Signature Margaret Damiano / Margaret Damiano BARBARA BEBIASE
 Name and Signature Pam Robertson / Pamela Robertson Barbara Bebiase
Meade Love Thomas Suhui Kim
Steve Robertson STEVE ROBERTSON

STEVEN JAMES / Steve James
DIANE TROUTMAN / Diane Troutman

ATTACHMENT
Assessing Anti-racism Resourcing Needs in our Local Churches
From Stratford United Methodist Church, October, 2023

Reply to Question 7, et al.

Stratford United Methodist Church has a long history of living our commitment to anti-racism and intercultural understanding.

52 years ago, when the First Baptist Church in Stratford burned to the ground, we invited them to share our building for worship and activities, which they did until their building was rebuilt – a time span of about a year. Since then, every year on the first Sunday in Advent, we worship together (with pulpit and music exchanges) and share a meal, alternating between the two locations.

A number of our members regularly attend the annual Martin Luther King service run by the Stratford Clergy Association. As a member church of Stratford Clergy Association, we donate to the Martin Luther King Scholarship that has benefitted high school students in our community. For many years, until the local synagogue closed, we participated in the annual commemoration of the Holocaust. Several years ago, we invited a local Imam to lead a discussion with our members. During COVID, several of our members participated by Zoom in a series on anti-racism run by the Greater Bridgeport Council of Churches.

We have a diverse congregation. On any given Sunday, approximately 10-15% of our congregants are BIPOC. During the Viet Nam War, we supported a Cambodian refugee family, and about 10 years ago, we supported a Haitian refugee family.

Among our active members, we benefit from the leadership, resources, and experience of persons who have served as Executive Director of the Greater Bridgeport Council of Churches; Director of Stratford Community Services; Director of Human Relations and Fair Rent (the anti-discrimination office) of the City of Norwalk; worked with CARES (Citizens Addressing Racial Equality); taken the course on allyship offered by the Council of Churches; worked with Save the Children; worked with CT Agency on Aging; served as Commissioner of the Stratford Housing Authority; and served as executive directors of several other non-profit agencies.

Of particular note, we have warmly welcomed and continue to benefit from the Cross-Cultural, Cross-Racial appointment of our three most recent pastors and one former associate pastor.

Sonja Devitt, Chairperson
SUMC Church Council