



Annual Report 2021

Presented at the 147th Annual Meeting
Sun., Feb. 6, 2022



First Church
Berkeley UCC

First Congregational Church of Berkeley

2345 Channing Way

Berkeley, CA 94704

Phone: (510) 848-3696

info@fccb.org

www.firstchurchberkeley.org

Cover Design: Ben McKnight

Design, Editing & Layout: Louise Halsey & Jim Coates

Table of Contents

CHURCH OFFICERS	2
MEMBERSHIP.....	6
MINISTRIES	8
ADULT EDUCATION MINISTRY	8
CARE, FELLOWSHIP, & INVITATION MINISTRY	9
FAMILIES, CHILDREN, & YOUTH MINISTRY	10
JUSTICE & SERVICE MINISTRY	11
JUSTICE & SERVICE ACCOUNT SUMMARY	11
<i>Mental Health Ministry Team</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Green Ministry Team.....</i>	<i>14</i>
STEWARDSHIP, FINANCE, & ADMINISTRATION MINISTRY	15
WORSHIP & SPIRITUAL LIFE MINISTRY	17
BLUE FIRE COMMITTEE	18
COVENANT & DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE	19
LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE	20
INVESTMENT COMMITTEE	21
ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE	22
COMMITTEE OF INVOLVEMENT	24
PERSONNEL COMMITTEE	24
STAFF	27
OTHER MINISTRIES	42
AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE	42
MINISTRY PARTNERS	43
BERKELEY PILGRIMAGE FOUNDATION.....	43
EAST BAY SCHOOL FOR BOYS	44
FINANCIAL REPORTS	45
TREASURER.....	45
SIX-YEAR STEWARDSHIP REVIEW	46
ENDOWMENT REPORT.....	47
OPERATING BUDGET	48
STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES.....	50
ACTIVITY FUNDS	51
STATEMENTS	53
A SEEKER’S STATEMENT.....	53
MISSION STATEMENT.....	53
OPEN AND AFFIRMING STATEMENT	53
WISE CONGREGATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH	54
VISION STATEMENT	54

Church Officers

Moderator

SARA WOODS

Our theme for 2021 was Room to Move, a call to further spiritual formation



after a tumultuous year in 2020 that saw our everyday lives upended and great losses on various levels both as individuals and society. This year the invitation was clear: whether we like it or not being

human requires us to move and stretch, we get to decide if we do so with intention and also with what values as a foundation. This past year has been about beginning the process of integrating the revelations in the disruption. As a church who knows the disruption of crisis, be it fire or pandemic, there is revelation, which is raw and sudden and stirs the soul. Then there is a long process of integration and processing what the body and society could not possibly do in the immediate response.

As a church, this past year saw us moving back and forth between virtual services, small outdoor gatherings, large outdoor gatherings and indoors together in the sanctuary, in dances with different variant virus dance partners. We also made choices as individuals to get vaccinated, test ourselves for COVID, and contact others when we think there may have been a exposure. All new efforts to help our community take care of each other.

Amidst this layer of the end of the beginning of the pandemic, our church

continued to thrive and move forward, committed to our vision that values collective and spiritual intimacy, creative worship, and seeking equity and shelter for all. The accomplishments of our church have been:

- Developed a tool for the church to determine how to create worship and connection with a response to changing public health needs
- Released Rev. Kit Novotny from her ministry with us to her next calling & sent her off with our love, having been better for her time with us
- Supported Rev. Molly Baskette in her sabbatical by leaning into shared responsibilities through summer small groups, allowing pace to become slower and less demanding, and embracing rest
- Determined a plan for calling a third Associate Pastor of Youth, Young Adults, and Emerging Ministries, as well as a realignment of staff in a settled manner for the long term after having various staffing structures for the past 6-7 years
- Called Rev. Kelly Colwell as a settled pastor for us in the role of Associate Minister of Beloved Community
- Passed the final plan for the new Community Building and have begun the city planning and permit process so that we can begin demolition and construction in 2022
- Navigated further changes and challenges as a church community using the hard-earned skills of

healthy conflict response, spiritual tools, and faith that we have explored together as a Christian community

There are also so many ideas, projects, and visions incubating right now. I feel that this past year has been a time for asking big questions as individuals and a community,

doing some inner work to determine our particular gifts and capacities, incubating ideas, and starting to make them real. I am hopeful for the new growth in the next phase of our church life together as we make real our hard won lessons and plans.



Moderator Elect

HOPE HILTON

This past year,
as a

congregation, we
have persevered,
and we have
made room to
move, rest, and
grow. With the
leadership of our
Moderator, Sara
Woods, our



congregation has deepened our
commitment to loving community,
particularly in the form of deliberate grace
and ease toward one another.

As a voting body, one of our congregation's
highlights of this past year has been
welcoming Rev. Kelly as a settled minister,
formalizing the deepening spiritual reality
of God's work through Kelly and our
community.

On the regional UCC level, our congregation
has been vibrantly active in the work
happening in the Northern California
Nevada Conference of the United Church of
Christ (NCNC UCC). Young First Church
community members attended and
counseled at the Camp Tamarack youth
camp in summer.

In the work of the NCNC UCC as a voting
body, First Church members have shown
deep care and thoughtfulness around many

facets of stewardship and responsibility.
Some of the conversations were difficult
and needed more time than anticipated.
However I, for one, am proud and grateful
to have witnessed how our community can
bring so many perspectives and skill sets to
the table.

On our national church level, General Synod
was completely virtual, and First Church
members continued to exercise voice and
vote, in order to bear witness to the work
that can happen on a national level. This
past year, as a national voting body, some
of our work included adopting nonbinary
bylaw language, and refining and voting
“yes” on a Resolution to Ban the Practice of
Conversion Therapy.

Finally, on both the most individual and
most communal level, we've continued to
be church. We've made space for
celebration, and singing, and quiet, and
grief. We've assembled resources and
talents. We've put love and wisdom in the
forefront of our decision-making, in faith
that we'll be together again.



Clerk

LINDA SAWYER

The Clerk of the church is responsible for keeping the records of church business and taking minutes at Council and Congregational meetings. Highlights from 2021 are summarized here: In February, Council approved the clergy housing allowance,



which is provided in lieu of providing housing for the ministers. The allowance is approved annually.

In September, the Council unanimously affirmed the Personnel Committee's recommendations to:

- Change Rev. Kelly's position from an annual contract at 80% time to a settled position at 80% time. An FCCB committee used a comprehensive, nationwide search process, in consultation with the NCNC UCC and per our bylaws, to select Rev. Kelly for the annual

contract position. Following council approval, a congregational vote was scheduled to call Rev. Kelly.

- Have the Committee of Involvement establish a search committee to identify an additional pastor to be hired, preferably by the third quarter of 2022, at 80% time. We currently anticipate that this position will focus on youth and young adult ministry, and emerging ministries, recognizing that this will evolve according to church needs and candidate preferences.

In November, the Congregation voted unanimously to call Rev. Kelly Colwell to serve as our Associate Pastor, to guide the spiritual formation of the individuals, congregation, and community within and around First Church, and to lead our beloved Christian community for us.

In December, the Council unanimously voted to put the 2022 budget before the Congregation for a vote. The congregational vote will occur at Annual Meeting.



Membership

Members Received 2021

**Affirmation/
Reaffirmation**
none

Associate Member
Gene Buttrill

Confirmation
Carmen Baskette
Dorothy Block
Madeleine Canavese
Matthew Kavanaugh-
Lynch
Grace Mazzotta
Yonte Wickstrom

Friend
Marta Black
Vanessa Nguyen

Letter of Transfer
Cindy Au
Jennifer Hu
Jelle Zijlstra

Reinstatement
Debbie Alexander

Child Baptism
none

Members Lost in 2021

**Associate Member or
Friend (Moved Out of
State or Dropped)**
Sam Kanenwisher

Became Inactive
Jennifer Fisher
Karen Fisher
Margie Groeninger
Chris Hamill
Nate Mazur
Diana Press
Laura Rodriguez
Kelly Stoddart
Caroline Wang

Joined Another Church
Karen Summers
Randy Summers

Requested Inactive Status
none

Transfer of Membership
Lauren Jewett
Kit Novotny
Reuben Shank

**Withdrew at Their Own
Request**
David Armstrong
Jennifer Armstrong
Kay Schellhase
Kathryn Wheadon

In Memoriam

Bernice Brissette (9/27/2021)
Carol Copeland (6/15/2021)
Imogene Crebbin (6/11/2021)
Anna Carol Dudley (5/27/2021)
Constance Olson (10/2/2021)



Six-Year Membership Report

GAINS	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
By Baptism/Confession	4	1	2	0	0	0
By Confirmation	0	0	7	0	0	6
By Affirmation/ Reaffirmation of Faith	9	10	9	10	16	0
By Letter of Transfer	15	4	9	1	1	3
By Reinstatement	0	0	2	2	1	1
Assoc. or Friend to Full Membership	0	0	1	0	0	0
Friend	2	1	0	0	3	2
Voted in by CF&I	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	30	16	30	13	21	12
Associate Member Received	3	4	1	2	3	1
Total Gains	33	20	31	15	24	13
LOSSES	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
By Death	-12	-5	-6	-4	-10	-5
By Letter of Transfer	-3	-6	-4	-3	-7	-3
Joined Other Church/Withdrew at Own Request/Requested Inactive Status	-1	-5	-3	-6	-7	-6
Placed on Inactive	-15	-35	-9	-10	-18	-9
Membership Withdrawn	0	0	0	0	0	0
Associate Member or Friend Dropped	-1	-3	0	-5	-1	-1
Total Losses	-32	-54	-22	-28	-43	-24
Audit Correction	-60	0	0	0	0	0
Net Gain / Loss	1	-34	9	-13	-19	-11
Membership at Year End	435	401	410	397	378	367
Average Weekly Attendance by Month	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
January	216	168	205	155	166	141
February	259	176	197	181	163	136
March	302	193	228	170	154	124
April	180	227	242	338	151	145
May	265	191	191	164	155	121*
June	165	195	149	151	152	109*
July	167	178	156	157	173	114*
August	195	166	144	147	160	120*
September	205	185	174	153	161	94*
October	256	234	170	145	134	149
November	213	187	184	162	133	147
December	340	333	361	340	224	231

*Attendance statistics January through October 3, 2021 reflect Sunday morning “live” views on Facebook, YouTube & Vimeo combined. The numbers reflect **single viewers only** and don’t account for multiple viewers per screen, so we estimate these numbers to be **lower** than the actual number of viewers. October 10 through December worship numbers reflect webcast viewers as well as in-person attendance. Some months (*asterisk) include in-person “Lawn Church” worship attendance.

Ministries

Adult Education Ministry

RON ELSDON, CHAIR

The Adult Education Ministry continued to focus on the following primary interconnected areas: social justice, theological and spiritual exploration, personal exploration, and artistic expression. Facilitators for our 25 Learning Hour sessions during the year



included speakers from inside and outside the congregation drawing on a breadth of knowledge and experience, to provide variety and stimulate interest. Most sessions were held on Zoom. We were pleased with the level of participation. Social justice topics included: the civil rights movement, race in the bible, the California prison system, merit and a just society, homecoming project from incarceration, climate change and eco-choices, the National Farm Worker Ministry, and the Berkeley Mutual Aid Network. Theological and spiritual exploration included: Christianity and Buddhism, Muslim women and sacred spaces, heralds of a new gospel,

the Saint Patrick you never knew, queer theology for everyone, disability theology, and global ministries. Personal exploration included: hobbies, sleep improvement, Covid stories made into music, the secrets to successful fitness, mental health and disability micro-aggressions, mining the treasures of our life stories, and resisting the attention economy. Artistic expression included: poetry writing and photo-poems.

Our ministry appreciates Robin Kempster and the Mental Health Ministry Team for their mental health forums, and Louise Halsey and Ben McKnight for scheduling and publicizing our Zoom sessions. We are grateful for the energy and enthusiasm of ministry members and Learning Hour presenters, and the active participation of congregation members, who made the Learning Hour sessions enjoyable and informative.

Members of the Adult Education Ministry were: Jim Alnas-Benson, Linda Elsdon, Ron Elsdon, Christina Hutchins, Zhekun Luo, Willem VandeKamp with Kelly Colwell as staff liaison.



Care, Fellowship, & Invitation Ministry

SUSAN GREEF & ALAN MILLER, CO-CHAIRS

The Ministry of Care, Fellowship, and Invitation (CF&I) provides ministry to promote a welcoming and inviting presence for all who cross the threshold of our church, and to provide acts of hospitality and care for the First Church community and beyond.



Prior to the return of in-person worship in October, we continued to provide a Virtual Welcome Table Zoom session every Sunday before worship, and we coordinated Meal Trains for those in our church community who needed that assistance. We also helped in the coordination and greeting for the Lawn Church services held this year.

Starting in October, CF&I members were once again staffing the Welcome Table to provide friendly and appreciative welcome, answers to questions, and materials to enhance spiritual growth. We also once again coordinated with all ministry leaders to provide greeters who offer welcome before worship to those who enter our

sanctuary. Additional CF&I activities again include coordinating our dedicated team of



After Party Soup Makers and coordinating the festive Christmas activities.

We continued to hold our monthly meetings virtually where we supported one another and developed creative ways to continue to offer hospitality to our community.

We anticipate that need for flexibility and creativity will continue as we enter a new year of exploring fresh and exciting ways of “doing church.” The efforts, optimism, and support of our ministry members help ease the anxiety of these extraordinary times, and have reinforced our dedication to hospitality, whatever form it takes! Thanks to members Pat Pratt, Helen Walsh, Andy Young, Kate Lucchese, Kenji Oshima, and staff members, Louise Halsey and Kathy Helliesen.



Families, Children, & Youth Ministry

JULIA MADORE, CHAIR

We have been called to find new ways to connect as the pandemic has prevented us from offering many of our



usual events for families, children, and youth. We are so grateful for Carolyn Ash, our Families' and Children's

Program Director, for her brilliantly created and executed online Sunday school, Scripture plays and Children's Moments. Sara Fread, our Youth Director, inspired our youth in weekly YES and Winthrop gatherings and led our annual work camp in August. We said "goodbye" to Sara in the fall as she began a year-long field education internship as part of her third-year seminary program at the Pacific School of Religion.

A highlight was Families, Children & Youth (FamChY) Ministry members acting as "Easter Bunnies," who assembled and delivered 72 Easter baskets throughout the Bay Area to our church kids and youth. We were thrilled to be able to send these hands-on Hallelujahs!

The monthly summer Sunday "Lawn Church" services were a success. Often the chairs would be set up in circles at tables to facilitate all-ages crafts or other activities and to foster connections in person after so many months apart. By fall we were able to celebrate All Soul's Day with a rousing Lawn Church followed by "Trunk or Treat," a lively event for costumed kids to trick-or-treat from the back of our vehicles decorated for Halloween in the parking lot.

We continued our tradition of offering the Holiday Craft Fair, this year held outside. Families could also pick up pre-made craft bags, to continue Christmas crafting at home. For the outside 4 pm Family Christmas Eve service, our kiddos dressed up like angels, shepherds, and farm animals, sang carols and celebrated the Birth of Christ. Each child could take home a homemade ornament kit. We had a hearty turnout despite the pouring rain.

We continued the online monthly drop-in support group, the Parent Circle, for most of the year.

We are looking forward to 2022 and new ways to share the light of God with our families.

Many thanks go to our FamChY Ministry members: Rick Ayer, Julia Madore, Jim Marrone, Paula Poremba, Louise Specht, Andrea Trexler, Pam VandeKamp & Becky Wright.



Justice & Service Ministry

STEVE SPIELMAN, CHAIR

The Justice & Service (J&S) Ministry is blessed with the task of introducing our generous congregation members to fantastic nonprofit organizations. Each month we met to select candidate organizations to receive the weekly offering plate funds.



Because the pandemic prevented in-person worship most of the year, representatives from the funded organizations were encouraged to provide videos, which were played during the Invitation to Offering moment in worship.

With help from many in the congregation, J&S organized a Service as Worship event on August 22. Activities included assembling lunch bags for the unhoused, assembling emergency supply buckets for Church World Service, gardening, cleaning, and

letter-writing. We reached out to the congregation once more in December, when we asked for donations of goods and money for the Christmas Eve Bags, distributed to unhoused people. Signups were managed online, and Maureen Prochaska assembled the bags at her home.

Thank you, Ministry members Phil Adams, Alice Clark, Kerrie Hein, Hope Hilton, Nori Kobayashi, Maureen Prochaska, Karlene Roberts, and Drew Sperling. And we much appreciated the guidance from ministerial staff representatives, Kit Novotny, Kelly Colwell, and Molly Baskette.



Justice & Service Account Summary

Benevolences in 2021

Special Offerings 2021

10/3	Neighbors in Need	\$945
Total Special Offering 2021		\$945

Collection Plate 2021

<u>Month</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Total</u>
January	Covenant House	\$4,552
2/7, 2/14	Berkeley Food + Housing Project	\$1,770
2/21–3/28 (Lent)	Black Homeownership Reparations Fund	\$39,079
4/4 (Easter)	Alameda Co. Community Food Bank	\$5,135
4/11, 4/18, 4/25	Ethiopian Village Schools	\$4,115
5/2, 5/9	CROP Walk	\$4,191
5/16, 5/23, 5/30	SNAP Kids	\$5,543

June	Aphasia Center	\$2,639
July	A Home Within	\$2,906
August	Central American Refugee Committee	\$2,721
September	The Homecoming Project	\$2,645
October	Berkeley Mutual Aid Network	\$2,857
November	BOSS	\$3,140
December	Berkeley Food + Housing Project	\$3,545
12/24 (Christmas)	Berkeley Food Pantry	\$2,561
	East Bay Sanctuary Covenant	\$2,561
	Total Collection Plate 2021	\$89,961

Additional Offerings 2021

February	Singing Hope	\$9,500
December	Christmas Eve Totes	\$1,620
all year	Nueva Esperanza Pre-Escolar	\$250
all year	Accompaniment Team	\$789
all year	Emergency Fund	\$1,150
	Total Additional Offering 2021	\$13,309

Budgeted Benevolence 2021

	UCC: Our Church's Wider Mission	\$60,425
	Pacific School of Religion	\$3,000
	UCC: New Church Starts	\$1,000
	UCC: Strengthen the Church	\$500
	UCC: Christmas Fund	\$500
	Nor Cal Fire Relief	\$500
	Total Budgeted Benevolence 2021	\$65,925
	Grand Total 2021	\$170,140

(4% increase from 2020)



Mental Health Ministry Team

ROBIN KEMPSTER, PARISH NURSE

The Mental Health Ministry Team continues to be guided by our



commitment to First Church Berkeley being a **Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged (WISE) Congregation for Mental Health.**

The Mental Health Ministry met monthly by Zoom, following community guidelines during the continued Covid pandemic. In addition to planning activities, this was a time for mutual support and sharing, which has become so important during this time of social distancing.

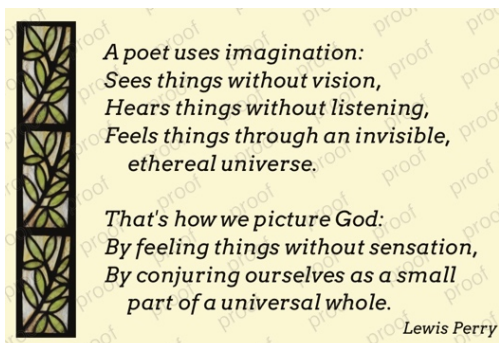
Activities have included:

- **Mental Health Forums on Zoom:**
 - The Delight of Hobbies
 - Sleep Improvement. This was followed by four different sleep improvement groups that met over Zoom for four sessions each, enabling participants to address their individual sleep issues.
 - Radical Inclusion for All: Mental Health and Disability Micro-Aggressions.
- **Points of Connection:** This listing of ongoing church activities on the church website was regularly updated.
- **Mental Health Lending Library:** A digital system was developed for

lending out the books in our Mental Health Library.

- **Postcards:** During the pandemic a total of nine different postcards were mailed to our church members. Each postcard reflected the themes of *Faith, Hope, Love, and Beauty*. The majority of the art work, photographs, and poems on the postcards were produced by church members.

The Mental Health Ministry Team will continue in 2022 under new leadership, with a Steering Committee as well as our newly designated clergy liaison, Rev. Kelly Colwell. The Mental Health Ministry Team continues to be grateful for the ongoing support and involvement of our church community and clergy.



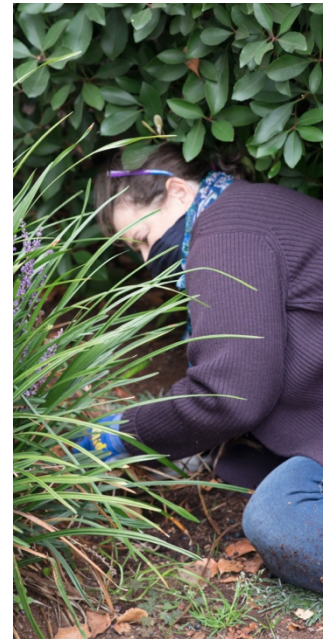
Green Ministry Team

EMMA FUJII, CHAIR

In this second year of (mostly) Church-from-Home, the Green Team continued to share Green Tips in the *Carillon* and Sunday announcements



regularly. We also hosted two film discussion Zooms ("Other Side of the Hill" and "Kiss The Ground") and a Learning Hour - Climate Change: Time to Act! We have some fun ideas sprouting up for Earth Day... stay tuned!



Stewardship, Finance, & Administration Ministry

NICK KUKULAN, CHAIR

Year Two of the “Covid Era”

was financially more stable and predictable compared to the roller coaster of 2020. Our major tenant the East



Bay School for Boys continued to operate and was permitted to use more parts of the campus. Outside groups began to use the facilities in the fall and this provided a predicted source of income. First Church sustaining contributors provided the backbone of income that remained steady. With continued remote worship and activities, personnel and ministry expenses trended below budget. As of early December Stewardship, Finance & Administration (SFA) Ministry members and church staff were expecting a full year income and expense report that would be close to balanced without having to utilize Council Contingency Funds (these funds carry any surplus from year to year).

SFA initiated a new meeting plan that included representatives of the Endowment and Investment Committees who served on the ministry. The intention was to support the activities of Endowment Committee that had been largely inactive the past years; and the Investment Committee kept SFA advised on the endowment funds invested with United Church Funds.

Stewardship

The Fall Stewardship campaign “Long-Haul Living” kicked off in September and emphasized the importance of sustaining

giving which enables our church to continue its mission and ministries during year two of the “Covid Era” when we have not been gathering together in person. Our gratitude goes to all the members and friends of this church community who provided financial support in 2021 and all those who have committed to being sustaining contributors in 2022. SFA members took up the challenge of contacting, encouraging, and thanking fellow members to join the campaign.

Finance

Finances in Year Two of the “Covid Era” were steadier and more consistent compared to 2020. The following percentages are estimates based on 11 month financial reports.

Income Sources as % of budget:

- *Sustained giving & all contributions – 64%
- *Facilities Use – 27 %
- *Endowment Income & Draw – 9%

Expense Categories as % of budget:

- *Personnel – 69%
- *Ministry Programs – 4%
- *Administration – 6%
- *Church Plant – 14%
- *Budgeted Benevolences – 7%

Administration

SFA looks after “Buildings and Grounds” maintenance and projects. We start out the year walking the campus with Bruce McNaught our facilities manager. This year there were primarily maintenance items and some irrigation additions around Durant House. Bruce continues to take care of the garden areas in place of a hired garden service.

Members: Charles Taylor, Diana Graham,
Becky Smith, Felicia Bellows, Amy Hiestand,
Nathan Hood, Nancy Campbell, Bob
Helliesen.

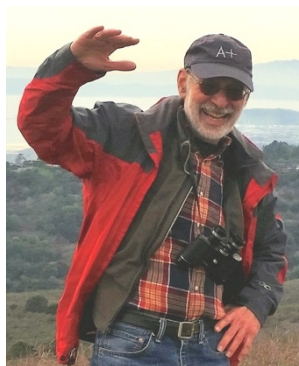
Treasurer: Moe Wright
Staff: Kit Dunbar and Molly Baskette.



Worship & Spiritual Life Ministry

STAN BOGHOSIAN, CHAIR

The Worship & Spiritual Life (W&SL) Ministry, also known as the Deacons, seeks to support the spiritual life of our church community. We've used our church Vision Statement to help us focus on our role, but we've also had assigned activities.



Facilitating communion services has been one of those activities. The after-church chancel communions started the year with a continuation of the Zoom-only format. Nancy DeNero organized communion officiants and hosted the Zoom sessions, which were well-received by a warm community of participants, including several people in distant states. In recent months, the Zoom-only format changed to a "hybrid," with online Zoom viewing of and participation with the in-person communion at church. Communion has now temporarily shifted back to a Zoom-only format.

"Operation Love Notes" (OLN) is a quarterly responsibility of the Deacons. In the past,



we provided materials at the After Party for note-writing by those in attendance. With the shift to virtual After Parties, we wrote the notes ourselves, then shifted to organizing the note-writing via online means. After a return in December to in-person writing during the After Party, we'll again adapt if needed.

One of our members, Craig Pratt, initiated the purchase of a "loaner" iPad tablet computer as a means of helping our less computer-savvy congregation members to view the online services and to connect via Realm. The iPad has now been loaned out once, and we seek to learn how best to make it work as a means of connection.

The Deacons have also assisted the ministers with various duties at memorial services.

Members of the W&SL ministry serving in the last year were Loi Almeron, Stan Boghosian (chair), Emily Carduff, Nancy DeNero, Janet Eadie, Craig Pratt, Carolyn Thiessen, Ken Tyler, and Willem VandeKamp. Revs. Kit Novotny and Kelly have both served as our staff liaison.



Committees

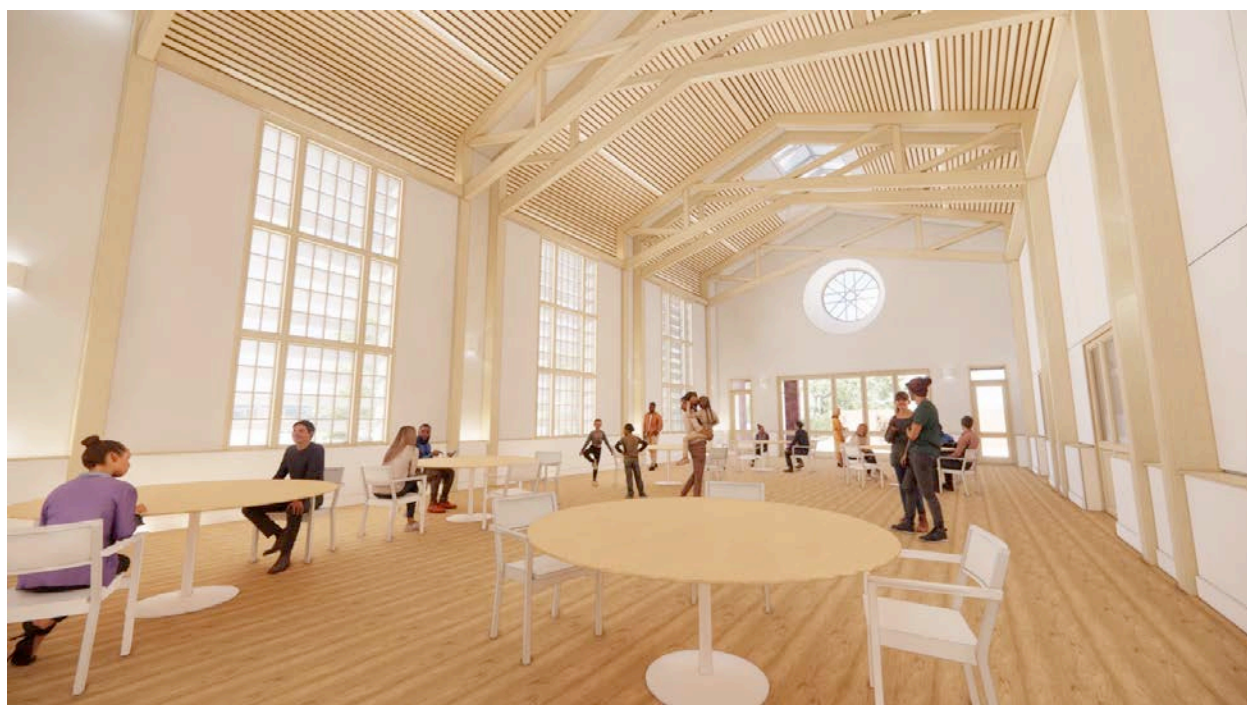
Blue Fire Committee

SCOTT SPORTE, CHAIR

Work toward recovery from the 2016 fire took major steps forward during 2021, and we are looking ahead to commencement of construction in mid-2022! We worked with architects and consultants through the summer to refine the building's exterior appearance and finalize the interior floor plan, which we successfully submitted to the city's planning department for approval late in the year. Since then, the architects have been working to finalize construction drawings that will be used to submit for a building

permit by spring 2022. We are excited to see the detailed plans taking shape and we are looking ahead to construction next year and occupancy of our new building in 2023!

The Blue Fire Committee members are: Leonard Ash, Margaret Kavanaugh-Lynch, Kara Korbel Chinula, Lorenzo Llanillo, Scott Sporte, Moe Wright & Molly Baskette. Blue Fire thanks Roger Bash, who resigned from the committee in 2021, for his hard work and substantial contribution to our work.



Covenant & Discernment Committee

CARMELLE KNUDSEN, CHAIR

The Covenant & Discernment Committee is under the umbrella of the Ministry of Worship & Spiritual Life. Our primary task is to support and oversee members who are seeking ordination in the United Church of Christ (UCC).



Our members-in-discernment participate in a wide variety of congregational experiences and are given a First Church member to be their sponsor. We support them during their process of discernment as they seek ordination and their call to ministry.

Our current member-in-discernment is Emily Carduff.

First Church also forms and maintains three and four-way covenants with church members who are currently ordained ministers in the UCC and are called to positions other than parish ministries. The partners in a three-way covenant are the ordained person, the local church, and the Bay Association of the UCC. Four-way

covenants include a calling body, usually the person's employer.

Molly Baskette and Kelly Colwell are in a three-way covenant with us. Those in a four-way covenant are: Cindy Au, Chaplain with Sutter Care; Robert Russell, Founder/Director of the Center for Theology and Natural Sciences, now a program of the Graduate Theological Union; Amy Smith, Hospice Chaplain with VITAS Innovative Hospice; Diane Weible, Conference Minister of the Northern California Nevada Conference of the UCC; Larry Titus, Chaplain at John Muir Hospital; and Ben Bigney, Spiritual Care Counselor for Hospice of the East Bay.

Our committee plans to meet with all members in covenant with First Church at least once a year and we are currently looking at ways to increase their involvement/connection with our community and ways we can be more supportive of them in their respective ministries.

Members this year were Carmelle Knudsen, Jim Alnas-Benson, Amy Smith, Mollyanne Brewer, Cindy Au, and Gene Buttrill. Kelly Colwell served as ministerial staff representative. We are currently seeking new members.

Long Range Planning Committee

KARA KORBEL CHINULA, CHAIR

The Long-Range Planning Committee has been actively engaged since April 2021, in looking for ways for FCCB to be more diverse in worship, spiritual education, and community



building. Ways for this community to acknowledge and celebrate the diversities of: age, cultural, disability, gender, racial, religious, and sexual orientation in our congregation. A question arose “what does

racial and trans justice look like in our church and how do we make that happen?” Education and conversations were some of activities implemented during this past year with a virtual **Trans Education Event** led by Rowan Peterson and **First Annual Juneteenth** outdoor service led by Kara Korbel Chinula. We had a great event planned for January 2022, which is postponed until the latest COVID surge recedes and the church leadership determines we are safe to meet in person. Until that event happens, I ask you all to think about what does “Come Be a We” look like going forward?



Investment Committee

NICK KUKULAN, CHAIR

Thanks to the generous gifts of FCCB members over the years, we have endowment funds that provide support for our annual budget, maintenance of our church plant, and support of specific ministries to which endowment funds were specified. Gifts to the endowment are greatly appreciated and welcomed.

Our endowment investments continue with the United Church Funds. Our investment policy has had these consistent goals in the past several years:

- To maintain an asset allocation of 65% in equity funds and 35% in bond funds. This provides diversification and stability through the ups and downs of markets;
- To re-balance the funds to maintain this asset allocation on a monthly basis; and
- To invest on socially responsible principles established by the United Church Funds.

The General Endowment had a total return of 10.57% for 2021, and finished the year with a market value of \$3,671,385 which was \$313,000 above its 12/31/2020 value.

The Housing Endowment had a return of 10.14% for 2021 and ended the year with a value of \$704,860, an increase of \$64,000 over its 12/31/2020 value.

To put the Combined Endowment Funds values in perspective:

12/31/2021	\$4,376,244
12/31/2020	\$3,998,077
12/31/2019	\$3,387,080
12/31/2018	\$2,915,898
12/31/2017	\$2,952,314

Members of the committee for 2021:

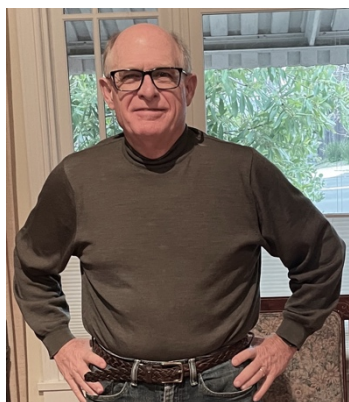
Nick Kukulán, Nathan Hood, Bob Helliesen and Moe Wright, Treasurer.



Endowment Committee

AMY HIESTAND & CHARLES TAYLOR, CO-CHAIRS

Thanks to the generous gifts of First Church members and friends over the years, the church has an established Endowment that provides support for the church's annual operating budget, maintenance



of our church plant, and specific ministries and programs to which the endowment funds are specified. **Gifts made to the Endowment at First Church Berkeley have ensured, and will continue to ensure, the sustainability of our church's ministry and mission for generations to come.**

In 2021, the church received bequests from the estates of long-time members William Clemens and Mitsie McKenna. We also received a bequest from the estate of Dolly McCall. We are so grateful for the faith and generosity that these saints in our church community entrusted in First Congregational Church of Berkeley.

The Endowment Committee has engaged in these activities during the past year:

- Solidifying the administrative infrastructure of the endowment records
- Digitizing information
- Creating a "virtual" Book of Remembrance to capture names of members who have left funds for the endowment through their wills and bequests

- Developing policies and procedures to help in the committee's work
- Writing thank you letters to the families and representatives of those who left bequests to the church in the last two years
- Writing a detailed **Endowment Program Overview** (check out this document on the church's website in the planned giving section!)
- Preparing for a Legacy Circle luncheon to be held in spring 2022
- Release of a new brochure for current and prospective donors and members of the Legacy Circle.

Legacy Circle

First Church Berkeley's Legacy Circle includes individuals in our church community who have named First Church Berkeley in their planned giving through their wills or trusts, retirement funds or life insurance beneficiary designation, and/or other

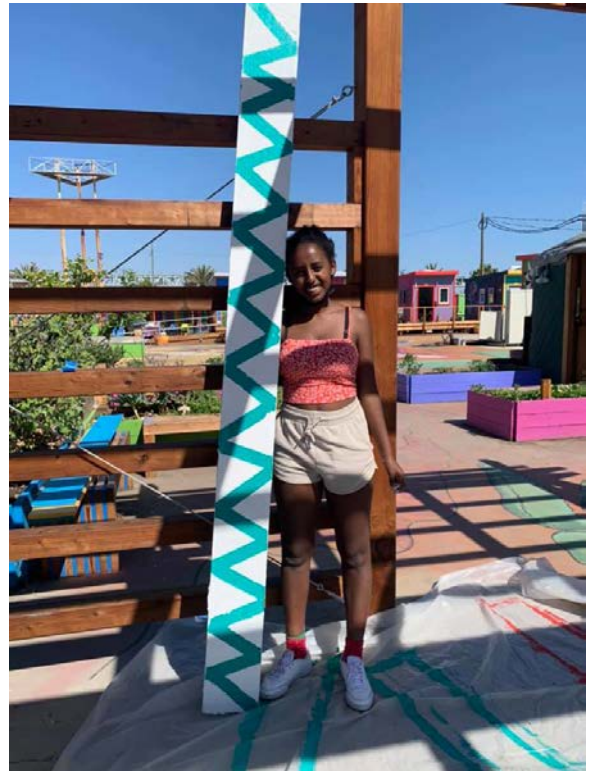


resources or assets to be distributed after their deaths. These important legacy gifts contribute to our church's long-term financial sustainability for generations to come. Planned gifts are added to First Church Berkeley's Endowment and are prudently invested by the church's Investment Committee. We are extremely grateful for the faith and generosity of the

Legacy Circle members. More information on how to become a member of the Legacy Circle may be found on the church's website.

2021 Legacy Circle Members: Molly and Peter Baskette; Richard Brabham, Mollyanne Brewer (Maremaa); Michael Casendino and Amy Hiestand; Bob and Kathy Helliesen; Robert and Bonnie Hester; Hope Hilton; Carmelle Knudsen; Nancy McKay; Lewis Perry; Phil Porter; Boyard and Ann Rowe; Rebecca Smith; Bruce and Susan Stangeland; Charles Taylor and Alice Clark; John and Helen Wadman; Morris and Rebecca Wright; Anonymous

The Endowment Committee wishes to express appreciation to Milton Fujii for his many years leading the Endowment Committee, and for the ongoing active involvement of church treasurer Moe Wright and Business Manager Kit Dunbar in supporting the Endowment Committee's efforts.



BRIAN HAUCK, CHAIR

A portrait of Dr. David J. Nisbet, a man with short brown hair and glasses, smiling. He is wearing a light blue button-down shirt under a dark suit jacket. The background is a brick wall.

As this report is being written, there are still a few positions left to fill for 2021. Committee members who participated include:

[illegible]

RON ELSDON, CHAIR

Kit Dunbar and Diana Graham's input in addressing health-related aspects of staff returning. We are grateful for Kit Dunbar's support in creating a 2022 personnel budget. We appreciate Louise Halsey's scheduling of our Zoom meetings.

Members of the Personnel Committee for some or all of the year were: Molly Baskette, Elizabeth Driver-Bucholtz, Mike Casendino, Ron Elsdon, Kara Korbel Chinula, and Emma S.

Officers, Ministry, & Committee Members for 2022

OFFICERS	(terms end Jan. 2023)	(terms end Jan. 2024)	Council Rep.
Moderator	Hope Hilton		Hope Hilton
Moderator Elect	Jeanne Strauss		Jeanne Strauss
Clerk	Linda Sawyer		Linda Sawyer
Treasurer	Moe Wright		Moe Wright
Council at Large (no specified term)	Jacki Dennis	Bob Stumpf	

MINISTRIES	(terms end Jan. 2023)	(terms end Jan. 2024)	Council Rep.
Care, Fellowship, & Invitation (CFI), <i>Susan Greef & Alan Miller, Co-Chairs</i>			
	Kenji Oshima	Carmen Baskette	Alan Miller
	Patricia Pratt	Susan Greef	
	Helen Walsh	Kate Lucchese	
	Andy Young	Alan Miller	
		Susan Webb	
Adult Education			
	Christina Hutchins	Mary Haake	
	Zhekun Luo		
	Willem VandeKamp		

Families, Children, & Youth (FamChY), <i>Julia Madore, Chair</i>			
	Julia Madore	Rick Ayer	Julia Madore
	Jim Marrone	Dorothy Block	
	Louise Specht		
	Andrea Trexler		
	Pam VandeKamp		
	Becky Wright		

Justice & Service, <i>Steve Spielman, Chair</i>			
	Phil Adams	Cindy Au	Steve Spielman
	Nori Kobayashi	Craig Pratt	
	Maureen Prochaska	Steve Spielman	

Stewardship, Finance, & Administration (SFA)			
Nick Kukulan, Chair	Nancy Campbell	Diana Graham	Nick Kukulan
	Bob Helliesen	Becky Smith	
	Nathan Hood		
	Nick Kukulan		

Officers, Ministry, & Committee Members for 2022

MINISTRIES	(terms end Jan. 2023)	(terms end Jan. 2024)	Council Rep.
Worship & Spiritual Life (Deacons), <i>Julie Greer, Chair</i>			
	Stan Boghosian	Kerrie Hein	Julie Greer
	Nancy DeNero	Carolyn Thiessen	
	Julie Greer		
COMMITTEES*			
Long Range Planning, <i>Kara Korbel Chinula, Chair</i>		Investment <i>Nick Kukulan, Chair</i>	
Megan Bates		Bob Helliesen	
Madeleine Canavese		Nathan Hood	
Hope Hilton		Nick Kukulan	
Kara Korbel Chinula		Moe Wright, Treasurer	
Rowan Peterson			
Laura Peticolas			
Jeanne Strauss			
Sara Woods			
DELEGATES (no specified terms)		COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL*	
Richard Brabham		Personnel	
Jeanne Strauss		Mike Casendino	
		Elizabeth Driver-Bucholtz	
		Kerrie Hein	
		Kara Korbel Chinula	
		Endowment	
		Amy Hiestand	
		Charles Taylor	

Staff

Senior Minister

REV. MOLLY BASKETTE

AS the year 2021 draws to a close, many of us are approaching 2022 with a miasmic mix of hope/fear&trembling/tedium/hope redux.

The ever-repeating Groundhog Day of the global pandemic wears on as we find ourselves ricketing up the roller coaster once more, the Omicron



variation sending COVID rates higher than they have yet been. There's a meme going around right now that says 2022 is actually "2020, TOO" (say it isn't so!). 2021, sandwiched between the year that first brought us the pandemic and 2022, was supposed to be the year we emerged and the emergencies stopped. Instead, it was another lost year.

Or was it? One of the reasons we write these annual reports is to mark time, and our change and growth over time. They are a little like that wall many of us had in our childhood homes—the one where our parents would make us stand heels flush to the molding, put a cereal box on our heads, and make a pencil mark to see how much we'd grown since the last measuring.

Or maybe a more apt association is that our annual report is a kind of diary, since we don't only grow up forever and ever—nothing does—but this volume says

something about our interior life, reminds us where we have been and where we are going; who and what we loved, lost and gained along the way; and also serves as a time capsule for future generations of stewards and seekers of this community. What did we care about? Where were our energies? How did we understand God, the nature of the world and its blessings and ills, our holy calling in the midst of it all?

Here's our year from my perspective. We spent most of it worshipping virtually, which gave us the added intimacy, randomness and deeper sharing that can oddly come of being physically remote from each other—not to mention unleashing all kinds of creativity!

Attendance stayed strong, and even grew if the metrics can be believed, as we gathered folks from across the country. We had All Queer leadership for Pride month, some exciting guests in worship like author/birder/digital artist Jenny Odell, and a bubbletastic Easter with Justin Bieber tributes and a beautiful sunrise video made on the beach with our worship team and artist Emily Wick. Not to mention our hallowed tradition of sunrise service in person at Lawrence Hall of Science.

As each surge subsided, we added first Porch Church (at private homes) then Lawn Church (on the Dana Street side) to our worship offerings. Lawn Church allowed our neighbors to see and hear us being church—and drew some of them in. Handing out free It's-It's to delighted passersby broke down the fourth wall as they saw how

sweet and not-that-actually-weird progressive Christians are. Some have even come to church! For sure, our community is becoming more visible and permeable.

The NCNC UCC sold beloved Camp Caz for its long-term financial sustainability, and in a fit of inspiration we relocated our All Church Retreat to the Oakland Hills, our own backyard. In September, about 60 of us gathered above Lake Chabot for a weekend of singing, hiking, campfiring, feasting and giving thanks for the gift of life, our first big gathering in 20 months. We will continue this tradition, perhaps at other East Bay parks, perhaps back at Caz one day when the new owners have finished renovations!

When in-person worship started up again in October, it took us a few weeks to warm up our social muscles—but we did, and (until the Omicron surge anyhow) every Sunday was a beautiful buzz. We confirmed our Confirmation class in person. We wept as we sang together (masked) in the sanctuary, after being denied that privilege for so long. About ⅓ of you stayed online, vulnerable or still denied the vaccine, ⅔ of you came back to in-person church, and now we have a lovely brood of brand-new newbies: I speak directly to you when I say thank you, thank you: for showing up, for showing us our future, and for becoming sustaining givers, the many of you who have done so.

The choreography of staff transitions continues. Our beloved Rev. Kit Novotny moved back to the Boston area with her husband Rev. Nate Klug and their two daughters Zoe and Gwendolyn in July. I was on sabbatical from late May through August, travelling to see my own family throughout New England and worshipping God in wondrous Californian places from

Alderpoint to Yosemite. I finished the manuscript for my next book, half cancer memoir and half “disaster theology,” called *How to Begin When Your World is Ending: A Spiritual Field Guide to Joy Despite Everything*. The past couple of years have given me a lot of new material. :)

Rev. Kelly Colwell held our community together during my sabbatical through July and August as the temporarily sole pastor with her brand of capable joyfulness, and in November we took the very sensible step of calling her to be our settled Minister for Digital Worship and Beloved Community. In that role she will continue to help us hone our skills for hybrid and digital worship, find our leading edge in the adventure of becoming an even more radically inclusive community, and partner with me and the rest of staff in doing the many adaptive tasks that are parish ministry for the 21st century.

Sara Fread, our director of youth ministries, stepped away from the position to focus on field education and seminary studies. Ben McKnight, our communications director who had moved to WI during the pandemic, sunsetted his role after helping us complete a migration to state of the art digital communication. Carolyn Ash, who has worked so hard as our Family Ministry director for the past 8 years, increased to FT hours at her day job and is working to pivot our family ministry (again!) toward a model of spiritual formation that is more responsive and sustainable for the long haul, with shared leadership of FamChY and parents/caregivers, who are their children’s first and best spiritual teachers. It will include some combination of welcoming children and youth into worship more robustly, giving them safe/sweet space in the Pillar Room if they don’t want to be in

worship, many intergenerational learning and worship events, and periodic retreats for going deeper spiritually and building community bonds. This ministry, as all of church life does, will continue to evolve!

We kept up many beloved traditions and groups in a pandemic-safe way: Monday meditation and Thursday yoga, our Mental Health Ministry (which will shift to a more broad-based leadership as founder Robin Kempster passes the mantle of authority), and our compassionate communication learning group. We had 26 youth at our Halloween Lock-In, and no COVID transmission! Our outdoor Advent craft workshop likewise saw a lot of our younger children return, especially as many of them became eligible for the vaccine.

...and we started some new beloved enterprises: the Halloween Trunk or Treat, Cookies and Caroling for Cal students during final exams, and a continuation of the Listening Circles for our African-American members as safe space during the ongoing Racial Reckoning. We've also been working with faith leaders throughout Berkeley on multi-church youth ministry and what we're calling the Berkeley All Faith Coalition, for mutual support and to be a moral voice on the justice issues afoot in our city. We had multiple spiritual retreats throughout the year, including a new Men's Retreat, and text prayers at Lent and Advent / Christmastide.

Our accompaniment team, including our marvelous home hosts, spent a lot of time helping asylum seeker Melissa continue to stabilize here in the East Bay with her three children, brought her sister Any and daughter Britney to the US, and found them temporary free housing at a parsonage in Alameda. Melissa is well established in the

asylum process now, which should soon grant her a permit to work legally in the US. We continue to be involved in the mothers' and children's lives while stepping back from logistics to encourage them toward self-sufficiency.

We wrestled to a good degree with our church budget this fall. Giving has held strong despite losses of generous givers to death or departure, but the cost of living and doing anything in the Bay Area has increased significantly. And yet, we continue to dream. We have budgeted for and will hire a third pastor in 2022, whom we are calling our Minister for Youth, Young Adults and Emerging Ministries. All three of our pastors will work at 80% FTE, fully benefited—which makes the third position more affordable, gives all three pastors time to pursue other professional goals (Kelly: seminary teaching, me: writing, and Pastor 3: ?) and also recognizes that full-time parish ministry is often a “greedy job” that demands upwards of 50 or 60 hours/week at 100% FTE. This shift is an attempt to set better boundaries and move all three pastors into parity. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it's that people crave living more and working less—including me.

We are making real progress toward getting our new community building put up, passing a few significant hurdles with the City of Berkeley permitting process and refining the design. By this time next year construction should be well underway: a smaller but more flexible, light-filled, welcoming, sustainable program building that has everything we need, and includes a lovely outdoor gathering space with a labyrinth that will connect directly to the Large Assembly and bustling kitchen. We are exploring the idea of a community

building campaign, which will invite the congregation to contribute in a meaningful way to enhancements to the building so we can all feel like stakeholders making the magic happen.

We are likewise making progress toward putting affordable housing at the other end of our campus, having received a LISC grant from the county (along with several other East Bay churches including City of Refuge UCC, who are also building affordable housing!), which we are putting to work by hiring a consultant to help us refine our project ideas and pitch developers.

2021 began with an insurrection. Thousands of pro-Trump supporters broke into the US Capitol as electoral votes were being formally counted. Two weeks later Joe Biden, the incoming Democratic President was inaugurated, along with the first woman/woman of color to ever serve in the office of Vice President: Kamala Harris, our own senator from here in CA and a child of Berkeley. Here at the end of the year, we have begun using the Year W (Women) lectionary to guide Sunday worship. It's written by another woman of color, Dr. Wil Gafney, as an attempt to introduce new perspectives and stories to the revised common lectionary, which since its inception has reinforced the patriarchy baked into so much of Christianity and minimized the role of half the human race in its flourishing.

The Big-C Church itself is undergoing a radical transformation throughout the world, an evolution mirrored in our own community. New theologies are evolving

rapidly and the locus of dialogue is Twitter more frequently than a divinity school classroom or a pulpit. A promising new longitudinal study suggests that the mainline church has stopped its epic decline and its numbers are bouncing up a little. Lots of clergy are leaving their churches as part of the Great Resignation, tired of the long hours, the petty conflict, and the unwillingness to grow or change—freeing them to serve in churches and other settings that are truly open to evolving (say a prayer that we get a most amazing third pastor as part of this shift!).

And one of my favorite bits: data shows when girls have female pastors, they have better mental health and self-esteem (more important than ever as we learned the psychic toll pandemic life has wreaked on our young people). In our church we have children who have never had a male pastor. Our incoming Moderator Hope Hilton is, if I'm not mistaken, the first person under 30 to serve in this role, as well as being a queer woman of color. We continue to evolve, to shape-shift, to stay open to the next holy adventure, to receive the call to be Church Universal and Becoming, and to make the faith our own, anew, in each generation.

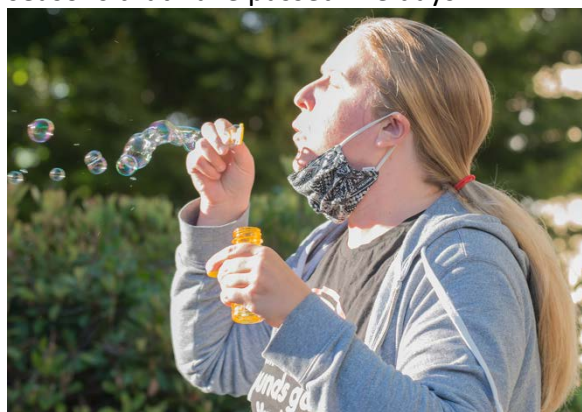
Like many of you, I am weary, and hopeful. I want a nap, and am ready to work. I am frustrated with what's broken, and see so clearly how close we are to the world we want to live in. I reach for your hand. We have everything we need for what comes next.

Christlove,
Molly

Minister for Digital, Hybrid & Beloved Community

REV. KELLY COLWELL

Time is really strange in the pandemic. The first few weeks of it felt like they lasted for years, but there have been whole seasons that have passed like days.



The last year has brought some transitions and some stability to church and to my role in it. I began the year with the pleasure of working with Rev. Molly and Rev. Kit at the same time—a blessed few months of creativity and abundance, despite the pandemic. It brought the joy and gratitude of vaccination as well, and the hope of celebrating as more and more congregation members were vaccinated. Things began to be possible—outdoor services, in person pastoral care visits. I also had the privilege of co-facilitating a study series on disability theology with my friend Rev. Miriam Spies, which brought together a diverse group of participants from our church and beyond to talk about bodies, abilities, illness, and God's plan. I brought the "text prayers" back for Lent, twice-daily moments of calm and reflection.

In July, we sent Rev. Kit off with a big outdoor celebration—songs written in her honor, prayers prayed over her and her family, and a beautiful cake. I invited

several former moderators of the congregation to be in conversation with me for a series on who we are becoming as a church. Rev. Molly returned in late August and we began to turn our attention towards the time when it would be safe and appropriate to return to worship indoors in our sanctuary. In collaboration with our Council, we developed a set of numerical guidelines that would guide our activities. I also helped plan the camping weekend we held in Chabot Regional Park in September.

In October, COVID cases finally fell low enough in our area to return to the sanctuary! With gusto, we celebrated our return. Our confirmands were finally confirmed in a moving and personal ceremony in person. Behind the scenes, we put in lots of hours trying to solve technical problems!

In November, you all voted to call me as a settled pastor! After sixteen months as your Acting Associate Minister, it is a joy to have been called to a longer ministry among you. My new title is Minister for Digital, Hybrid, and Beloved Community—I'm looking after the online aspects of things, convening online groups, supporting our hybrid services, and generally gathering and supporting community-building at church, which is right at the nexus of my sense of call.

COVID may have forced us back online for a little while—I suspect this won't be the only time that we sojourn back online due to a surge. But our congregation is still growing, guided by God's hand, and I can't wait to see what God will call us to next.

Director of Music

DEREK TAM

In another difficult year, I felt so blessed to share with so many of you the gift of



bringing music to the First Church community. From virtual to in-person and everything in between, we never missed a

beat (pun intended)!

First and foremost, I want to thank my friends and colleagues Elizabeth Forsyth and Amar Khalsa for their perseverance, generosity, and musicianship. Virtual church would not have been the same without Liz's flying feet, or up to nine Amars gracing our screen at any given time.

Our Sanctuary and Gospel Choirs were no less hardworking. Looking back, I am flabbergasted that we recorded nearly 20 anthems for our virtual services. I know of no other peer choral ministry that was as hardworking, and God's presence was with us at each Zoom rehearsal (attended by folks from three different states)—a feeling that has carried over as we returned to in-

person rehearsals in September. A particular highlight for me working with the choirs this year was our Christmas anthem, "I Sing to Use the Waiting," where almost a dozen past participants in the Sanctuary Choir joined virtually with our current, in-person choir to memorably bridge the past and present.

I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge other lay leaders in our music ministry, including Kate Lucchese with Uke-atastrophe and Linda Crebbin-Coates with Songs of the Soul.

While we mostly remained sequestered in our homes for much of last year, our music ministry nonetheless continued to carry out our church's mission to minister to our wider community, particularly the "least of these." Through our annual collaboration with City of Refuge UCC, and through our summer concerts, we were able to raise almost \$13,000 for various local charities. Our efforts were noticed far and wide, even garnering praise from San Francisco Chronicle music critic Joshua Kosman.

May 2022 continue to allow our music—and God through it—to flourish!



Families' & Children's Program Director

CAROLYN ASH

As I write on the last Sunday before Christmas 2021, I've just finished teaching our 90th virtual Sunday School



lesson over Zoom to a group of hilarious, energetic kids. "With all the other changes of this year, virtual Sunday school has been a constant for them that they've leaned on," one parent reflected during our Parent Focus group this fall. Sunday school provided a consistent opportunity to be around other kids, grow in friendships, and have a routine of sharing news, singing songs, praying in new ways, and learning God's story. This year we focused on the stories about God's playful people in Genesis and Exodus, the life and teachings of Jesus from the 4 Gospels, and some of Paul's exciting and miraculous adventures in the Letters books of the Bible. My favorite moment weekly was hearing the prayers of our kids, especially when they offered to lead our closing prayer. *Their* favorite moment was show-and-tell where they shared new pets, toys, books, and stuffed animal special guests.

With our worship services being online for most of 2021, my second focus this year was contributing Children's Moment and Scripture lessons to these services for our younger audience. Working with families and other teachers to produce these pre-recorded videos resulted in a huge range of Biblical interpretations and production mediums (stop motion Lego movies! Chicken and cat casting for iMovies! Puppets! An original Epiphany play filmed over Zoom!) that I believe better reflected the expansiveness of God's words and love.



My little family created a miniseries for Gospel scripture stories as the "Ash Family Players" where my daughter relished the theatrical opportunity to play Jesus. And her mother/acting coach relished the spiritual growth opportunity to help her get into character and watch her child, and hopefully all children who saw these videos, come to know Jesus with more familiarity and appreciation.

When gathering in person became safe again, we experimented with new ways to create meaningful church experiences for our kids. During "Lawn Church" services last

summer, we tried offering outdoor Sunday school as well as leading intergenerationally engaging activities during the service, like acting out the scripture together, making prayer bracelets, making a parade of percussion instruments to accompany the hymns, and blessing our animals. “I didn’t realize how much we missed church until the first Lawn Church and my kids were so excited to be there, they wanted to go back the next day,” a parent shared with me in June. To support our youth and continue to strengthen their relationships, the youth leaders and I took them out for ice cream after every Lawn Church service.

Our youth program evolved this year as well. Under Sara Fread’s leadership last spring, we held weekly virtual youth group and special events, such as paint parties and a virtual Escape Room. This summer included two chalking parties to decorate the front patio of our church, a week of service events at Work Camp, and a boating goodbye party for Sara. This fall, we have begun monthly virtual game nights and youth group and have offered monthly in-person events, such as a Trunk-or-Treat, Advent Craft Workshop, lock-in overnight combining the youth groups of three churches, and an outdoor camping retreat.



When we began worshipping in person in October, many of our youth returned with

their families, including our confirmands for their belated Confirmation! Our children, mostly still unvaccinated, continued to worship at home. As vaccines became available to children, our children’s attendance grew and we offered a “Prayground” in the front of the sanctuary – a special place just for them to engage with worship while reuniting with each other, playing, reading books, and coloring. As more children returned, we outgrew our Prayground and experimented with moving the Prayground to the Hall of Entrance where the children could still hear the service but their joyful noises wouldn’t distract their parents or others. We created a “toy lending library” of quiet activities for those children who wanted to sit with their families in the pews.



When our current pandemic surge subsides, we will continue to experiment with different offerings for kids during worship. If we outgrow the Hall of Entrance, we will next try moving the Prayground to the Pillar Room where children will have more room for games, messy art projects, learning Bible stories, making music together, and

growing in community and faith. The Families, Children & Youth (FamChY) Ministry and Sunday School teachers will support this program, and knowing us and



God, try many new ones in 2022. Perhaps we'll discover that we have a large group of kids in a certain age range, and can design a developmentally appropriate class for them, perhaps integrating our Godly Play materials again.

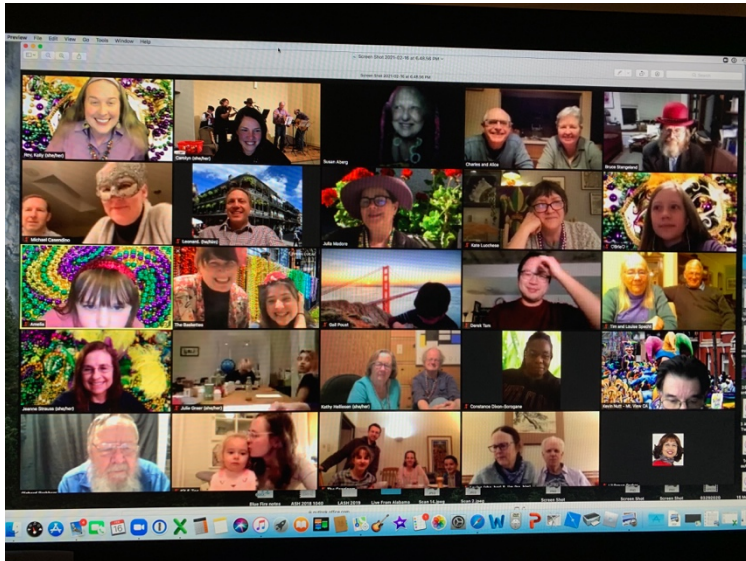
I, however, will be transitioning out of this part-time role in the next few months in order to simplify my schedule with just one job, weekends off, and more time for family and outdoor adventures. I have *savored* the past eight blessings-filled years as your Children's and Families' Program Director,

one of the greatest honors of my life! I look forward to watching, as a church member and parent, the future unfold with new volunteer leaders coordinating small groups, intergenerational events, children and youth participation in worship, family outreach and new iterations of our traditions, such as shifting our virtual Mardi Gras dance party and pancake feast back to an in-person event! Our children and youth are loved by dozens of amazingly talented, dedicated and faithful volunteers in our church family. And their ideas, and God's plan, will be exactly what we need to continue thriving as a family friendly congregation.






Youth Paddle Boating Event
Final In-person Event with Sara Fread
Next Saturday, Sept. 11, 10 am - 12 pm
Meet in Berkeley at 9:15 am
RSVP to Carolyn Ash by Wed., 9/8
Stow Lake, Golden Gate Park



Business Manager

KIT DUNBAR

Is it just me or is a pandemic year kind of a blur when you look back?

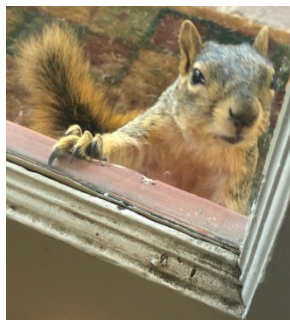
It was a year of keeping up with the ever-changing COVID prevention protocols and documentation requirements. Many thanks to Diana Graham for working on that.

We came back to worshipping in the sanctuary in October with the assistance of many folks from the Stewardship, Finance and Administration ministry and other church volunteers as our beloved Amare was away with family. I don't have enough words to express my gratitude!



October also saw the return of the arts as music and performance groups began having live events in the sanctuary again. What a joyous noise to be heard!!

Through it all, your generosity and support made it possible. Thank you and here's to being together for the long haul.



Congregational Care Program Manager

LOUISE HALSEY

As I recall 2021, I, like many, experienced the passing of time in a different way.

There was a different rhythm to Covid time – time passed quickly either in hyperspeed or super slowly like the incessant drip, drip, drip of a kitchen faucet.

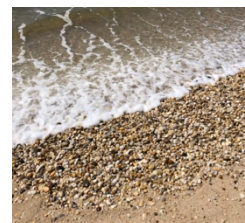


In our church life, we continued to gather together virtually to do all the things that nurture our community – worship, take part & offer communion, participate in retreats, engage in various church programs from learning hours, summer small groups, bible study, yoga, ministry meetings, etc. Many of us experienced screen/Zoom fatigue as we became more intentional about lessening our time in front of screens. We adapted, learned how to mute or unmute ourselves (or not), how to share screens, how to feel a sense of connection with those beloved beings in those tiny squares on our screens.

As the glimmer of vaccinations became a reality, I was able to travel back to my childhood home in New York to be closer to my daughter as she had her first child (5/31) and to my 98-year old mother as she entered hospice and later died (6/10). I was able to do my church work even more remotely during these many weeks, and I'm so grateful for the ways in which we'd already pivoted to working remotely so that this possibility of being with my family and staying connected to my church community was all possible. Alleluia!

There were many miracles that manifested during this time in NY from the mundane to the profound. I got to notice and remember the greening of a weeping beech tree (the tree I loved most to climb as a child) with its tender new leaves

bursting forth. There were many walks on a nearby beach with the finding of a multitude of heart-shaped rocks that were smoothly polished by the motion of the waves. There was the swelling of my daughter's belly as she anticipated giving birth, the gratitude and love in my mother's face as she delighted in having all her children with her in her last days.



The most profound miracle was witnessing my mother hold her 1-week old great granddaughter in her arms just four days before she died. The tears flowed and time almost stood still as four generations gathered in an upstairs bedroom of an old farm house to witness this magical and sacred meeting.



In our church life, there was a growing yearning to be together as the spring and vaccinations arrived. On Pentecost, May 23, many gathered on the Dana St. front lawn to worship together at long last – safely, masked and socially distanced. In the

summer months, we said goodbye to Rev. Kit with hearts full of love and gratitude. We rejoiced in Rev. Kelly's presence and ministry among us and wished Rev. Molly well as she departed for several months of a restorative sabbatical. Fast forward as Covid time will do and it was already the fall. Rev. Molly had returned to us refreshed and we gathered in-person for an All-Church Retreat in the East Bay Hills. We returned to in-person church in our sanctuary on Oct.



10 and called Rev. Kelly to be our settled minister of digital, hybrid, and beloved community.

As we imagine what 2022 holds for us – the transitions, the challenges, the blessings, the heartaches, the “feeling everything at once” moments, I’m so grateful for being part of this First Church Berkeley community, this body of Christ made flesh, and for each of you who manifest God’s love in our community and beyond.



Communications Specialist

BEN McKNIGHT

The year 2021 was a time of transition as life in the pandemic continued and we settled into newfound values, habits, and comfort zones. We began experimenting with in-person events and new technology.



Rev. Kelly Colwell became increasingly involved in communications as Rev. Molly Baskette went on sabbatical while we said goodbye to Rev. Kit Novotny. Rev. Kelly guided the communications and tech team as we dusted off the soundboard and projectors to return to in-person worship services.

Louise Halsey boldly took on the task of learning new technology in order to take charge of our weekly emails and website. For months, she worked closely with me, Ben McKnight, as I searched for in-person work where I live—Madison, WI. It was a wonderful experience to spend so much time working with Louise and getting to know her.

I eventually found a job at a nearby Presbyterian church, and am still meeting occasionally with Kelly and Louise to answer questions and tie up loose ends. It feels good to be working in-person as I slowly transition out of my work at First Church Berkeley. I will always remember First

Church as my home and family during the pandemic while I was working remotely in a new city and slowly losing connection with longtime friends and family due to the stresses of recent history. *Thank you* for being with me during that time.

As of this writing (early Feb. 2022), Rev. Kelly is now working with the tech team to continue improving the quality of our livestream as we hope to, once again, return to in-person worship services soon. They have added new Pan-Tilt-Zoom cameras and have upgraded our presentation software. Look for new angles of the sanctuary and an ever-improving hybrid worship experience in the months ahead.



New Member Coordinator

KATHY HELLIESEN (VOLUNTEER)

We joyfully welcomed

12 New Members into the life of First Congregational Church of Berkeley in 2021.

Six High School confirmands became members on October 17, 2021.

Our winter Discover First Church class was held virtually in February with four new members joining. The class was not able to meet in person for our usual crepe



gathering, but were invited to meet in person with the newbies who joined in 2020 for a lovely gathering that deepened friendships by sharing their faith journeys.

We were pleased to welcome two new members who joined in person on October 10, 2021.

We're keeping flexible, and looking forward to welcoming our 2022 New Members in person or virtually.

Many thanks to Revs. Molly and Kelly for leading the classes, and to Louise Halsey for her support.



Other Ministries

Affordable Housing Committee

SCOTT SPORTE & DAN LEAVERTON, CO-CHAIRS

The Affordable Housing Committee was approved for participation in the Alameda County Housing Development Capacity Building Program, a program designed to support churches and other religious organizations as they explore the feasibility of affordable housing development. We join 7 other churches around the East Bay through a yearlong process of discernment and shared learning. The program is funded by Alameda County and the San Francisco Foundation and administered by Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Bay Area.

Through its participation in this program, First Church is receiving a small grant to

cover the cost of a third party consultant to help guide us through the process of setting goals, determining feasibility and ultimately soliciting proposals from affordable housing developers to begin the multi-year process of constructing housing on the northwest corner of our parking lot. The committee will be checking in with the congregation as the process unfolds during the spring and summer months.

Committee members are Molly Baskette, Alice Clark, Sophia DeWitt, Brian Hauck, Lorenzo Llanillo, Dan Leaverton (co-chair) and Scott Sporte (co-chair).



Ministry Partners

Berkeley Pilgrimage Foundation

ROD MACKENZIE, BOARD PRESIDENT

The Berkeley Pilgrimage Foundation (BPF) is a private foundation affiliated with First Church that supports housing, healthcare, and related services for seniors and people with disabilities in and around Berkeley.

This year we continued to focus our grantmaking on COVID relief, helping grantees cover increases in costs and reductions in revenue due to the pandemic. We made 8 grants totaling \$170,000; one, the Black Homeownership Fund, was a matching grant during the Lenten offering where we agreed to match up to \$10,000 in offering donations. We also voted this year to give two-year grants to organizations doing work in the core mission of BPF. Our grants for 2021 were as follows:

1. Black Homeownership Fund: \$10,000
2. St. Mary's Center: \$25,000
3. Alameda County Care Alliance: \$25,000
4. Richmond Neighborhood Housing Services: \$20,000
5. Lifelong Medical Care, Independent Seniors Fund: \$25,000 (2 year)

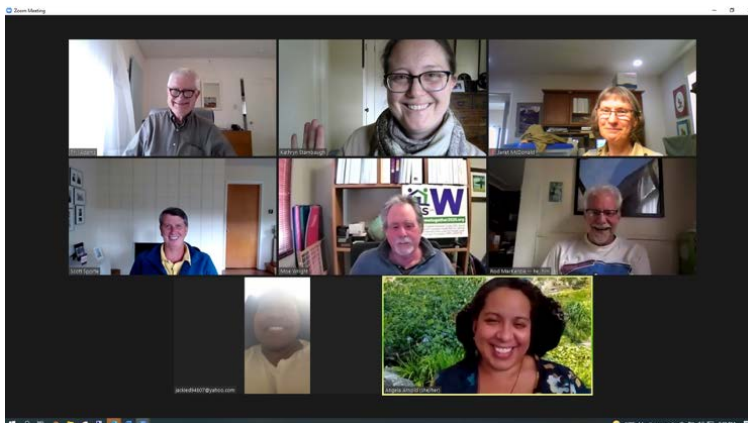
6. East Oakland Collective: \$25,000 (2 year)
7. EveryOne Home: \$20,000
8. African American Wellness Project: \$20,000

We said farewell to longtime members, Kathryn Stambaugh (President), Scott Spote (Treasurer), who will continue as a non-voting member, Moe Wright (Secretary), and Angela Arnold. We welcomed new members, Jacki Dennis and Constance Dixon-Sorogane. Other board members are Phil Adams, Sophia DeWitt, Amy Hiestand, Janet McDonald, and Rod MacKenzie.

How to Get Involved

We are always looking for new board and committee members! If you think you might want to volunteer with the Foundation, please reach out to Rod MacKenzie (rod.mackenzie@gmail.com) or any of the board members listed above. We'd love to hear from you!

Screenshot on right shows June 2021 Board Meeting. *Top row:* Phil Adams, Kathryn Stambaugh, Janet McDonald. *Middle row:* Scott Spote, Moe Wright, Rod MacKenzie. *Bottom row:* Jacki Dennis, Angela Arnold.



East Bay School for Boys

CHRISTOPHER CANSECO, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS & STORYTELLING

2021 has been a year of gratitude and remembrances. We have been particularly thankful to return to in-person learning after so many months of being remote. This year we have been busy building desks, relationships, and good habits for being back in the community after so long.

We are extremely grateful to FCCB for your flexibility and willingness to share spaces during this unprecedented time. We are also extremely grateful for the assistance with the upkeep of our facilities.

We are grateful to continue our partnership with FCCB as we head into a new year of self- growth and healing.



Financial Reports

Treasurer

MOE WRIGHT

This year was another unusual year in the financial life of the church. We spent the



whole year in one form or another of pandemic-related controls and limited activity at the church. This affected our operations and expenses. Fortunately, the income that we

predicted at the beginning of the year remained steady as expenses went down.

The report of the 2021 operating budget and all other annual activity is available in this annual report.

For those of you who read last year's report, early in the year the PPP loan of \$113,080 that was received in 2020 was forgiven and the remaining unspent portion was carried forward as a council contingency reserve. The total reserve at the end of 2021 is \$126,111.

The Congregation had authorized the use of the council contingency fund to balance the 2021 budget, however, income from all sources came in higher than expected and expenses were lower than expected so the use of the contingency funds was not necessary. Even without the contingency funds, the operating budget produced a small surplus of \$13,139.

The 2022 operating budget anticipates using some of the contingency funds to balance the budget. The collective wisdom is that we will have some relief from the pandemic and many activities will once

again take place on our campus in 2022.

This will generate additional expense as well as income from space rental. In addition, the plan is to have a full ministerial staff with three 80% positions by the end of the summer. This will mark the third year that the operating budget has needed reserve funding of about \$100,000 to cover a projected shortfall.

During 2022, a small committee will review the long-term trend of increasing costs and flat or decreasing sustaining gifts and will make recommendations to the Council and Congregation.

In other areas of the finances of our church life, the endowments continue to grow with some bequests as well as investment growth. The final concept for the Community Building was reviewed and approved by the Congregation in April and plans were submitted to the City of Berkeley for planning and zoning review. The approval was granted in November and final construction drawings are underway. The current schedule calls for demolition of the old Pilgrim Hall in April of 2022 and construction starting in June.

The finances of the church remain strong and much of that is due to the dedication of our members and the support that they give to our church. Thank you to the members of the Stewardship, Finance & Administration (SF&A) ministry and to our great staff who have worked very hard during this unusual year.

Six-Year Stewardship Review

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
A. Pledge Goal	\$738,829	\$833,000	\$830,000	\$711,414	\$677,206	\$620,000
B. Pledge Sunday						
Amount pledged	\$490,969	\$615,623				
# of pledges	122	126				
Average	\$4,024	\$4,886				
C. Mid January						
Amount pledged	\$698,829	\$812,457	\$772,000	\$682,039	\$664,071	\$620,000
# of pledges	198	203	186	162	166	161
Average	\$3,529	\$4,002	\$4,151	\$4,210	\$4,000	\$3,851
D. Pledge Actual	\$714,419	\$768,154	\$743,837	\$685,732	\$656,913	\$604,212



Endowment Report

	1/1/2021 Value	Gifts & Bequests	Historic Value	12/31/2021 Value	Income Designation
General Endowment					
Church Designated Endowments					
Plymouth 1	268,524		N/A	281,747	University Ministry 45% capital projects; 45% special ministries; 10% endowment admin.
General	<u>1,319,941</u>	15,393	N/A	<u>1,400,462</u>	
Total Church Designated	1,588,465			1,682,209	
Donor Designated Endowments					
McCall Lecture	62,832	45,000	13,000	110,926	Special Lectures
Music Endow.: Leitch, Johnson, Moore	82,474		55,526	86,535	Music Program
Nelson General	115,849		51,955	121,553	Operating Budget
Wagner	23,521		10,000	24,679	Ministry to Seniors Classical Music Event
Baldo	49,754		31,322	52,205	Seminary intern
Browne Barr Seminary Intern	193,234		120,710	202,749	Evangelism
Drobish-Sanchez-Palmerlee-Apra	116,730		62,861	122,478	University Ministry
Plymouth 2	977,565		687,259	1,025,703	Buildings & Grounds
Buildings/Grounds Maintenance	26,352		20,000	27,650	
Total Donor Designated	1,648,311			1,774,478	
Subtotal General Endowment	3,236,776			3,456,687	
Ministerial Housing Endowment	639,965			704,135	
Total FCCB Endowments	3,876,741			4,160,822	

Operating Budget

(This report is on two pages)

This is the fund which we budget every year. The everyday income and outgo associated with the operation of the church. This sheet shows actual income and expenses in various categories for the past several years, and shows for the past year, actual amounts against budgeted amounts. Also, it shows the budget for the coming year. This fund is zeroed out each year.

	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	Over (Under)	2022 Budget
RECEIPTS								
Contributions								
Commitments	768,154	743,837	685,732	656,913	620,000	604,212	(15,788)	617,000
Other Contributions	40,927	41,989	19,311	16,581	9,000	17,590	8,590	9,000
Additional Gifts	14,823	5,202	32,482	28,186	9,000	16,599	7,599	9,000
Offering plate	10,490							
Carillon								
Total contributions	834,394	791,028	737,525	701,680	638,000	638,401	401	635,000
Facility Use*	280,100	359,452	361,366	267,887	267,688	284,868	17,180	332,250
Transfers from FCCB funds								
Distrib-Thrift Shop net profits	3,600							
Nelson Gen Endow	4,804	4,794	4,880	5,048	4,787	4,787	0	5,142
Endowments to Univ. Min.	51,678	51,560	52,634	54,306	51,492	51,492	0	55,311
Emerging Leaders	7,500	10,000	8,162	8,421	7,985	0	(7,985)	8,577
Browne Barr Intern								
Gifts to Univ. Min.								
Music Fund	3,420	3,413	3,483	3,594	3,408	3,408	0	5,870
Special Endowment	20,270	20,223	20,645	0	24,545	24,545	0	26,661
Total transfers	91,272	89,990	89,804	71,369	92,217	84,232	(7,985)	101,561
Other Income								
Utilities Reimbursement	7,443							
Ins. Proceeds Reimbursement	136,397	167,459						
Interest and Fees								
Misc. income/Invest. Interest	2,865							
Council Contingency	57,838	(1,273)	250		112,972	0	(112,972)	104,671
Transitional Tasks					15,935	0	(15,935)	
PPP Loan				90,464			0	
Total other income	204,543	166,186	250	90,464	128,907	0	(128,907)	104,671
Total receipts	1,410,309	1,406,656	1,188,945	1,131,400	1,126,812	1,007,501	(119,311)	1,173,482

DISBURSEMENTS									
		2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	Over (Under)	2022 Budget
Operating Expenses									
	Personnel*	913,465	906,731	751,302	712,043	772,552	678,343	(94,209)	780,692
	Program*	74,489	76,930	70,301	45,637	64,860	42,967	(21,893)	72,870
	Administration*	64,127	52,692	63,147	48,941	58,500	55,707	(2,793)	58,500
	Church Plant*	266,928	287,919	230,622	160,862	162,400	151,420	(10,980)	193,220
	Total operating expenses	1,319,009	1,324,272	1,115,372	967,483	1,058,312	928,437	(129,875)	1,105,282
Denomination and Other Support									
	Our Church's Wider Mission	83,300	74,384	68,573	65,695	62,000	60,425	(1,575)	61,700
	Pacific School of Religion	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	0	3,000
	BOCA/ Justice & Service 2021	3,000	3,000			1,500	500	(1,000)	1,500
	UCC Strengthen the Church	500	500	500	500	500	500	0	500
	UCC Christmas Fund	500	500	500	500	500	500	0	500
	UCC New Church Starts	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	1,000
	Total denom/conference support	91,300	82,384	73,573	70,695	68,500	65,925	(2,575)	68,200
	Total operating exp. & benevolences	1,410,309	1,406,656	1,188,945	1,038,178	1,126,812	994,362	(132,450)	1,173,482
Excess (deficit)		0	0	0	93,222	0	13,139	13,139	0



Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Fund Balances

December 31, 2021

This sheet shows our liquid assets, and the various funds in which they are held as balanced against any outstanding liabilities, including the fund balances. The value of the church plant is only shown for the improvements after the fire. Across the top of the page are the broad categories of the funds, and the finer detail shows up on later sheets.

	Budgeted Operations	Activity Funds	Justice & Service Funds	Desig- nated Gift Funds	Plant Funds	Thrift Shop	Fire Insurance	Rebuild- ing	Univ Funds	Endow Projects	Endow Funds	Minister Housing	Capital Funds	<i>Total All Funds</i>
ASSETS														
Cash, bank and money market accounts at Mechanics Bank & Morgan Stanley/Vanguard	150,882	214,275	16,347	81,274	77,717	21,373	8,487,135	129,247	15,180	156,758	(168,531)	682	36,000	9,218,339
Accounts receivable														
Community Building							803,724							803,724
Equity investments														
Shared appreciation notes														
United Church Funds										3,671,386		704,860		4,376,246
Real Estate Improvements														
Sanctuary Repairs							3,139,443							3,139,443
Pilgrim Hall Stabilization							1,234,297							1,234,297
Total assets	150,882	214,275	16,347	81,274	77,717	21,373	13,664,599	129,247	15,180	156,758	3,502,855	705,542	36,000	18,772,049
LIABILITIES														
Suspense/Special Projects CTS						20,145							36,000	56,145
Construction Loan / Payables														
Deferred income	150,882													150,882
Total liabilities	150,882					20,145							36,000	207,027
FUND BALANCES														
Surplus (deficit) from operations														
Real Property Fund							13,664,599							13,664,599
Restricted gifts & funds allocated		214,275	16,347	81,274	77,717	1,228		129,247	15,180	156,758				692,026
Undistributed endowment income											46,168	1,407		47,575
Endowment principal funds											3,456,687	704,135		4,160,822
Total fund balances¹	0	214,275	16,347	81,274	77,717	1,228	13,664,599	129,247	15,180	156,758	3,502,855	705,542	0	18,565,022
Total liabilities and fund balances	150,882	214,275	16,347	81,274	77,717	21,373	13,664,599	129,247	15,180	156,758	3,502,855	705,542	36,000	18,772,049

Activity Funds

These funds cover activities not included in the operating budget. Balances are carried year to year.

	<u>Starting Balance</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
Worship & Spiritual Life				
Cazadero All Church Camp	(131)	131		0
Camp Scholarships	0			0
Advent / Lent Group & Retreat	3,092		258	2,834
Parish Nurse	1,141		146	995
Advertising	6,033			6,033
Memorial Guild Fund	1,446		216	1,230
Spiritual Training/Direction	1,955			1,955
Social Action	0	2,400	900	1,500
Education				
Winthrop/Youth Fund	328	50		378
FamChY Events	1,956			1,956
BeFrienders	58			58
Song of the Soul	1,305			1,305
Sunday School	1,704			1,704
Winthrop Work Camp	8,980	12	3,869	5,123
Adult Ed Group	2,797	200	500	2,497
God Swag	81			81
Visiting Scholar Fund	149	51	200	0
Care & Fellowship				
Women's Voices & Retreat	(429)	100		(329)
Women's Retreat Scholarship	100		100	0
Healing Services	500			500
Men's Group & Retreat	1,441		270	1,171
Senior Ministries	2,216			2,216
Stewardship, Finance & Administration				
Transitional Tasks	46,256			46,256
Church Council				
Council Contingency Fund	112,972	13,139		126,111
Emergency Preparedness	2,558			2,558
Staff Retreat & Review	2,769			2,769
Background Checks	706		36	670
Young Adults	5,204		500	4,704
Total Activity Funds	205,187	16,083	6,995	214,275

Note: Some interfund transfers are reflected in receipts on all charts.

DONOR-DESIGNATED FUNDS When money is received for specific purposes, specific funds are established to accomplish those purposes. The names of those funds indicate the purpose.

	<u>Start Balance</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>End Balance</u>
Worship & Spiritual Life				
Flower-Sanctuary Décor	5,030	1,595		6,625
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	15,120	1,150	5,777	10,493
Senior Minister's Fund	1,000		1,000	0
Seminarian Support	592			592
Music Fund	18,104	11,858	4,412	25,550
Church Council				
Celebration Fund	31,762	6,652	400	38,014
Total Donor Designated Funds	71,608	21,255	11,589	81,274

NON-BUDGETED BENEVOLENCE FUNDS These funds represent our outreach activities and benevolences.

	<u>Start Balance</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>End Balance</u>
Justice & Service				
One Great Hour of Sharing	0			0
Neighbors in Need	0	945	945	0
Easter Offering	0	5,135	5,135	0
Christmas Offering	0	5,121	5,121	0
Justice & Service*	921	1,002	202	1,721
Collection Plate	0	75,513	75,513	0
Christmas Eve Stockings	177	1,620	1,521	276
Mental Health Ministry	3,202	25		3,227
2nd Sunday Sandwiches	115			115
CROP Walk	0	4,191	4,191	0
Singing Hope!	0	9,500	9,500	0
Kitchen Table Community Ministry	1,346			1,346
Homeless Encampment Assistance	340			340
Green Ministry Team	1,496			1,496
Nueva Esperanza Pre-Escolar / Puente	534	250	40	744
Sanctuary Ministry Team	11,610	789	5,317	7,082
Total Non-Budgeted Benevolences	19,741	104,091	107,485	16,347

* See Justice & Service Report for distribution of funds.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS These funds for the needs of our buildings and ground are funded primarily by congregation approved disbursements from endowment income.

	<u>Start Balance</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>End Balance</u>
Buildings & Grounds Fund	44,373	24,545	1,201	67,717
Building Reserve Fund	10,000			10,000
Total Building & Grounds Funds	54,373	24,545	1,201	77,717

Note: Some interfund transfers are reflected in receipts on all charts.

Statements

A Seeker's Statement

Finding a home in God's wilderness, we seek to savor God
and magnify the longings of Jesus. We dare to be uncertain.
Practicing compassion and awakening conscience,
we bear hope for a suffering world.
In this Spirit, we honor one another in beloved community.

Long Range Planning Committee, Fall 2003

Mission Statement

To bring ourselves and others to God,
and to develop within us spiritual maturity so that we may be equipped for ministry
in our lives and for mission in the world.

To celebrate the Good News
of God's inclusive love for all people.

We are called to be a community of faith that invites spiritual transformation through
the power of love, affirmation and inclusion;
to come to know ourselves as whole and healed;
to embrace our unique gifts;
and to act out of gratitude to help create a world of love, justice and harmony.

With God's love, following the teachings of Jesus, we recognize and celebrate the diversity of
paths that will fulfill a vision of love and justice for all the world.

We are called to be a growing and inspired community, a beacon in the East Bay,
renewing, reaching out, rejoicing. *January 2002*

Open and Affirming Statement

We, as a diverse body of believers seeking to live in the light and image of God in Christ, do
affirm:

- that every person has worth as a special and unique creation made in God's image;
- that in the Spirit of love, openness, and inclusiveness we welcome persons of every sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, nationality, ability and age to participate fully in all aspects of the Church's life and ministry;
- that as agents of reconciliation and wholeness we embrace justice and seek to support all who suffer discrimination or who are disenfranchised from the religious community;
- that in light of the gospel we will continue to comprehend and appreciate more fully our differences and gifts;
- that through grace our love for God and neighbor may flourish.

This ONA statement was originally passed by vote of the Congregation on April 2, 1995. It was amended (April 19, 2015) to include the phrases "gender identity" (referring to one's innermost core concept of self which can include male, female, a blend of both or neither, and many

more) and “gender expression” (referring to the ways in which one expresses gender identity to others).

WISE Congregation for Mental Health

Affirming our faith in a God who loves and is embodied among all persons, and affirming our tradition as a welcoming congregation, First Congregational Church of Berkeley is a Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged (WISE) Congregation for Mental Health.

- We *welcome* people with mental health challenges and those who love them.
- We *include* those with mental health challenges in the life, work, and leadership of the congregation.
- We *support* people with mental health challenges and those who love them.
- We *engage* with other organizations at the intersection of mental health and spirituality.

We care about the whole person: body, heart, mind, and soul, and we claim the deep and constant movement of God’s Holy Spirit seeking to bring us fullness of life. All are beloved by God, and when one has a mental health challenge, one has a right to be known in one’s fullness. Likewise, those among us with mental health challenges have gifts to offer our faith community, and the community is called to receive them.

(passed by vote of the Congregation on February 3, 2019)

Vision Statement

We are a community that values radical inclusion and artful worship, where belonging is more important than belief, and joy is a guiding principle. We are a restorative sanctuary for the suffering and weary, a space for creative and contemplative ritual, and a hub for transformative moral action on the justice issues of our day.

Guided by these values, God calls us to:

- Grow in intimacy as the weird and wonderful Body of Christ
- Provide a diversity of open but distinctly Christian, creative and liberating worship forms to nourish the spiritual lives of the current community and reach new seekers
- Follow Jesus’s urging to minister to the “least of these” [Matthew 25] by addressing our region’s most visible and urgent human needs: ending homelessness in the East Bay, and its intersecting justice issues

Vision Elaboration

- **Grow in intimacy as the weird and wonderful Body of Christ**
First Church fosters extravagant welcome, connection/community and compassion. We are called to grow in love with one another, a foundation for living out the teachings of Jesus in the wider world. To do so, we will facilitate small groups, intergenerational engagement, and community spiritual practices that will bond and bind us together.

- Provide a diversity of open but distinctly Christian, creative and liberating worship forms to nourish the spiritual lives of the current community and reach new seekers**
 Less than 3% of Berkeley identifies as main-line Protestant. That leaves many folks unaware of or uninitiated into the richness of our progressive Christian faith. The UCC Constitution affirms “the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own in reality of worship.” We will experiment with new forms of worship to go deeper on our own spiritual journeys, attract new-comers who may have been hurt or excluded by other Christian churches, and pique the interest of those who have never considered Christianity a viable option. The worship experiments may include, but not be limited to:
 - Worship days and times outside of Sunday morning
 - Virtual/digital worship and spiritual formation
 - Lay-led and participatory worship experiences
 - Outdoor worship
 - Services geared toward multiple generations/learning styles
 - Contemplative worship
 - Cross-cultural worship, and
 - Spiritual formation on retreat
- Follow Jesus’s urging to minister to the “least of these” [Matthew 25] by addressing our region’s most visible and urgent human needs: ending homelessness in the East Bay, and its intersecting justice issues**

The suffering of homeless people is evident on our streets every day. Countless more suffer housing insecurity in less visible ways. We are moved by the teachings of Jesus to respond with love, compassion and generosity. We will join with the wider community (faith communities, non-profit organizations, and government agencies) to educate, advocate, and take action to prevent homelessness, to reduce the suffering it causes, and to restore individuals and families to safe, permanent, dignified shelter.

September 2019

