

Church of the Cross



Presbyterian Church, PCUSA

2020 Annual Report

January 31, 2021



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ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

January 26, 2020

Rev. Julie Peterson, Moderator

Declaration of a Quorum

Adoption of the Agenda

Opening Prayer

Approval of Previous Congregational Minutes

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Election of Nominating Team for 2021	
• Dawn Amos – 1 st year	
• Donna Haffron – 2 nd year	
• George Rogers – 1 st year	

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New Business

Adjournment

Prayer

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

Annual Congregational Meeting, Sunday, January 26, 2020

The Annual Congregational Meeting of Church of the Cross was held in the sanctuary following the Sunday morning worship service. Moderator Rev. Julie Peterson called the meeting to order with prayer at 11:05 a.m. and opened with prayer.

A quorum was declared.

Minutes of the Called Congregational Meetings held January 27, 2019; May 5, 2019 and November 3, 2019 were approved.

The following reports were presented as printed at this meeting:

- Pastor's report presented by the Reverend Julie Peterson
- Clerk of Session report presented by Pat Groenewold
- Deacon report
- Nominating Team report
- Learning Team report
- Stewardship Team report
- Worship Team report
- Corporate Operations Team report
- Property Team reports
- Financial Reports including the Statement of Financial Position and the 2020 Ministry Budget presented by Ken Groenewold

A motion prevailed to recognize the efforts of the Pastor and the Clerk of Session in reviewing and bringing the church rolls up to date.

Motion passed unanimously to approve the Terms of Call of Rev. Julie Peterson for 2020 as presented.

There being no further business, a motion prevailed to adjourn, and the Moderator closed the meeting at 12:00 p.m. with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Groenewold
Clerk of Session

Called Congregational Meeting, Sunday, March 1, 2020

A Congregational Meeting of Church of the Cross for the purpose of electing an officer was held in the sanctuary following the Sunday morning worship service. Moderator Rev. Julie Peterson called the meeting to order with prayer at 11:15 a.m.

A quorum was declared.

Glenna Morgan was nominated to serve as a deacon for a term ending in 2021 to fill the unexpired term of Ann Scheerer who resigned for health reasons.

The moderator invited nominations from the floor. There were no additional nominations put forward. Nominations were closed and the above candidate was unanimously approved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Groenewold
Clerk of Session

Called Congregational Meeting, Sunday, December 6, 2020

A Congregational Meeting of Church of the Cross for the purpose of electing officers was held via Zoom following the Sunday morning worship service. Moderator Rev. Julie Peterson called the meeting to order with prayer at 11:00 a.m.

A quorum was declared.

The chairperson of the nominating committee, Stu Rutter, placed in nomination the follow slate of candidates proposed by the nominating committee:

Deacons class of 2023

Erica De La Cruz (1st term)
Naana Grant-Acquah (2nd term)
Fay Michaelis (1st term)

Elders class of 2023

James Buchholz (1st term)
Laura De La Cruz (1st term)
Cathy Walker (2nd term)

Elder class of 2021

Patricia Groenewold (1st term)

The moderator invited nominations from the floor. There were no additional nominations put forward. Nominations were closed and the above candidates were approved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Groenewold
Clerk of Session

CONGREGATIONAL REPORTS

Pastor's Report

2020 is certainly one for the record books! Throughout the pages of this Annual Report, you will be reminded of (or discover for the first time) the faithful work of COTC living out God's call to serve our neighbors and community. I will leave the other reports to share their stories.

Just this last week, a COTC member called to mind one of the phrases in our ordination vows. You know, the one about using our imagination in service to our Lord and our congregation. The full question is this, "WILL YOU PRAY FOR AND SEEK TO SERVE THE PEOPLE WITH ENERGY, INTELLIGENCE, IMAGINATION, AND LOVE?" Beloved members of COTC, this question has been lived out in every aspect of mission and ministry this year—stretching all of us far more than we could have ever asked or imagined as 2020 began to unfold. This is where I linger in my report for the Year of Our Lord, 2020.

Energy

The Apostle Paul says, "*I have become [the gospel's] servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness—the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.*" (Colossians 1:25-29 NIV)

When Paul says, "*I strenuously contend with all the energy*", in the Greek 'contend' can also be translated as 'strive earnestly, make every effort, try very hard.' Yes, we strived earnestly and made every effort we could to stay connected, to worship together, to reach out in new ways. All possible because of an energy powerfully gifted to us by our Lord to guide and direct our lives as we struggled with the emotional and physical toll this virus has taken on our lives. Thank you for receiving the commission God gave you and striving earnestly to fulfill your call.

Intelligence

As God gives Moses the first tablets of the Ten Commandments, God also lays out a multiplicity of instructions which take several chapters in Exodus. These instructions pertain to the people, the tabernacle, and how of all it will be enabled through God's people. Concerning how to craft all of the items in the instructions, "*The LORD spoke to Moses: see, I have called by name Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah: and I have filled him with divine spirit, with ability, intelligence, and knowledge in every kind of craft, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, in every kind of craft.*" (Exodus 31:1-5 NRS)

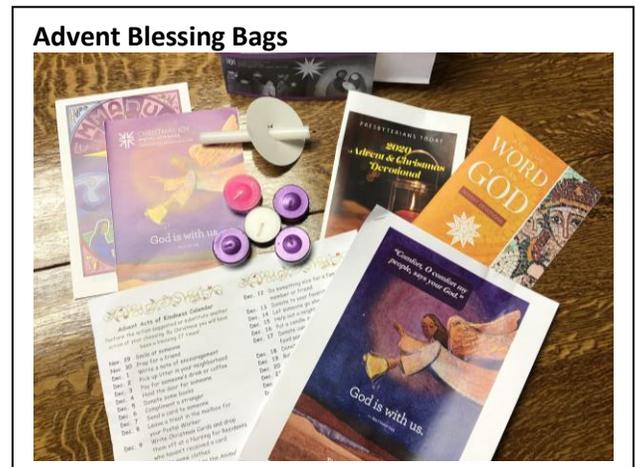
I can honestly say, it is a true blessing for God to give the people God places in certain places and times all the "*ability, intelligence, and knowledge*" to do the things they do, and need to do. Our leadership has used all of these exact same blessings to guide us into and through a time of social distancing. Did we leaders know all the details of what we know now? I cannot speak for others, but I had no clue. Yet, your leadership was willing to expand their skills... to ensure worship would

bring us together, to hear choral music and hymns, to gather on virtual platforms for study and fun, and “*every kind of craft*” needed. Thank you for using the intelligence God gave you to draw us ever closer together despite the need to remain distanced.

Imagination

*Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or **imagine**, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21 NRS)*

I am grateful for so many members and colleagues who willingly share their imaginative abilities to create something new in the midst of what feels like a dark time in our history. Not dark in the sense of less sunlight, but dark in the sense of so much loss of companionship, fellowship, passing of the peace, loss of so many lives, jobs, financial stability... you know the list. Look through these pages, experience the creative and innovative ways our missional work continued on.



Thank you for using your imaginations to envision what we could accomplish in a very difficult year through “*the power at work within us.*” Truly, “*to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.*”

Love

*As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my **love**. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my **love**, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his **love**. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. "This is my commandment, that you **love** one another as I have loved you. (John 15:9-12 NRS)*

*In this is **love**, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to **love** one another. No one has ever seen God; if we **love** one another, God lives in us, and his **love** is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. (1 John 4:10-16 NRS)*

There are so many occurrences of the word *love* in scripture, I had a hard time paring them down to these two passages. I chose the Gospel of John passage because Jesus invites us into his love as he then commands us to “*love another.*” I chose the First John passage because of the phrase, “*God is love.*”

We have all learned over the years, people do some things throughout their lives because they love to do them. We gather because we love to be together. We study scripture because we love to learn more about this God who loves us. We serve each other because the love Jesus invites us into so moves our very being, we simply cannot help but share the same love with others.

In the pages of this Annual Report, every detail, financial aspect, and picture is grounded in a deep, deep love for our Lord and for Church of the Cross. Each phrase you read and each picture you view contains dedicated ‘behind the scenes’ work of your faithful servants of our Lord here at COTC. This is what we do because we *“have known and believe the love that God has for us.* I am in awe of the presence of love and faithfulness experienced in the work and worship and mission being done here at Church of the Cross. Thank you for sharing your love with your community, your neighbors, and with me.

In closing, I return to the first part of that Ordination/Installation question, ‘WILL YOU PRAY FOR AND SEEK TO SERVE THE PEOPLE...’ We can easily see how our leadership has chosen to ‘serve the people.’ What we can never see but are absolutely certain is happening... is the ‘pray for... the people’. In a time of isolation and distancing, the one constant phrase I have heard throughout this year is ‘at least I can pray.’

Thank you all for the prayers which surrounded our members, our community, our country... and our beloved Church of the Cross! Your prayers are vital in supporting all the ‘energy, intelligence, imagination, and love’ God gifts to each and every one of us.

In God’s love,
Pastor Julie

2020 Glimpses



Report of Clerk of Session

The Church of the Cross Session is the governing body of the congregation and functions in compliance with the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church, USA and COTC's bylaws in all its actions. The bylaws provide for nine elders to be elected by the congregation. Elders are normally elected to three-year terms and may not serve more than two consecutive terms (6 years) but may be re-elected after at least one year has passed.

The nine elders serving in 2020 were:

<u>Class of 2020</u>	<u>Class of 2021</u>	<u>Class of 2022</u>
Ken Groenewold	Sue Liautaud	Jane Lesch
Mike Lorentz	Stu Rutter	Fritz Michaelis
Cathy Walker	Cheryl Wilkins	Jim Vakoc

Pastor Julie Peterson served as the moderator of session and Pat Groenewold was the clerk.

The session had 12 regular stated meetings and 2 specially called meetings during the year and participated in a joint meeting with the deacons. Beginning with the March regular stated meeting, all meetings were held virtually via Zoom.

In 2020 the following teams supported the work of the session:

- Corporate Operations Team - Jim Letterer
- Learning Team – Sue Liautaud
- Property Team Inside – Jim Vakoc
- Property Team Outside – Charlie Keppel
- Worship Team – Dawn Amos
- Nominating Team – Stu Rutter
- Stewardship Team – Bob Lovell

The pastor celebrated the Lord's Supper in worship 15 times during the year and home communion was celebrated with members not able to attend worship in January and February, assisted by a currently serving deacon each month. Beginning in March, home communion was suspended because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There were no baptisms this past year.

MEMBERSHIP TABULATION FOR 2020

Membership reported at the beginning of the year	73
Membership gains during the year	+2
Received by Profession/Reaffirmation of Faith or Certificate of Transfer	0
Returned to active status	2
Membership loses during the year	0
Transfer	0
Removal from the rolls	0
Death	0
Membership at the end of the year	75

Deacons Report

How does anyone begin to talk about this past year? The year 2020 started out on a positive note with lots of plans made by the deacons, including our anticipation in assisting with the celebration of our Church of the Cross's 60th Anniversary. Dates were marked on our calendars for monthly activities, point people were put in charge of events and we hit the ground running!

On January 26, **the potluck brunch following our Annual Meeting** fed 45 people a tasty array of delicious foods. We gathered in the Lounge, seated close together laughing and enjoying the fellowship that has long been a hallmark of our church family.

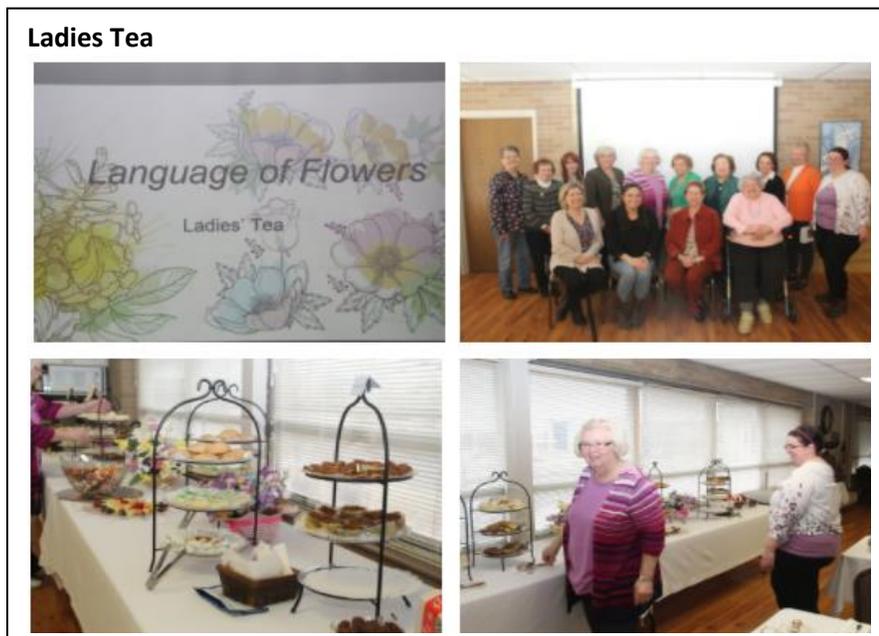
Black History Month in February again found us eating while learning about our black brothers and sisters. We ate delicious food prepared by Adelaide Grant-Acquah along with desserts prepared by deacons, namely banana pudding, sweet almond tea cookies and peach cobbler. On that same day, **Souper Bowl Sunday**, we collected \$202 which was donated to

the Schaumburg Food Pantry in the form of food ordered on Amazon and delivered to the pantry.

On February 26th, as we prepared for the season of Lent, 40 people gathered for **an Agape meal prior to our Ash Wednesday service**. It was now the beginning of March, and there were

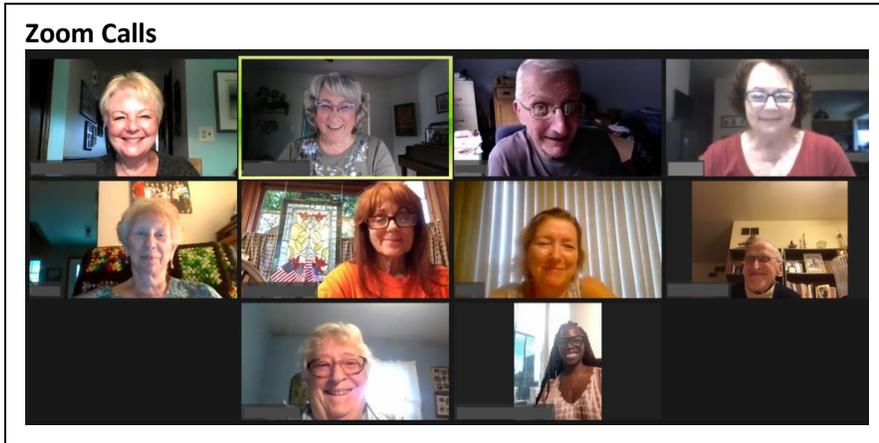


murmurings of a virus in China, but that was so very far away, and it would not impact our lives, would it? So, we happily continued planning for **the Ladies' Tea on March 14th**. Ann Moorman was the coordinator of this most wonderful, memorable day as 20+ ladies learned about "The Language of Flowers." We shared finger sandwiches and desserts served on fine china and enjoyed each other's company. Little did we know that following our worship service the next day, March 15th, we would all be entering into a time of isolation, self-distancing, mask-wearing,



and separation from each other. One might think that with these radical changes in our lives, the work of the deacons would grind to a halt. However, I am happy to report that **the deacons not only met the challenges of the pandemic, but our work continued on a grand scale and in some ways became more important than ever.**

No, we could not have coffee hour after services, but many in our congregation became avid Zoomers to stay connected to each other. No, we could not bring home communion to those at home, but the deacons stayed connected to our “flocks” through phone calls and cards.



No, we could not distribute Easter and Christmas food baskets in person to families in need, but we could provide gift cards to Aldi’s to put food on their tables for these special days. And No, after providing one last meal to PADS on March 27, we could not do that again in the fall, but we did donate to Journeys, an organization that helps to care for the local homeless population.

Because of the deep generosity of you, the congregation, we were able to help people and organizations in the following ways:

- **\$1,686 to individuals** who needed bills paid, work clothes and shoes, assistance to help raise grandchildren, furniture, tires for a car in order to get to work, auto repair bills and gas cards
- **\$1,250 for veterans’ assistance** to We Who Serve in the form of Walmart cards which were distributed to veterans in need by Joe Palmer
- **\$1,934 in total donations for warm coats, gloves, scarves, and hats** to the children at Lakeview School (more about that later)
- **\$2,520 in Aldi’s gift cards** at Easter and Christmas to provide dinners to those in need
- **\$850 to the Schaumburg Food Pantry** for food donations and to “Pack the Bus” with school supplies in August to help children obtain the supplies they needed
- **\$201 in food donations** from Souper Bowl Sunday to the Schaumburg Food Pantry
- **\$670 to PADS/Journeys** to help the homeless
- **\$250 to WINGS** to support Domestic Violence Awareness
- **\$146 for College Care Packages**

If you add this all up, \$9,506 was provided BY YOU and distributed through your deacons to the community to assist so many people who were in need during this past year. God was good, the Spirit called, and you all answered.

Yes, indeed, money played a vital role during this past year by providing for others, but we all realize there is other important work that was done by the deacons that required their time, talents and dedication.

- **Our Community Garden was planted on May 30** with the expertise and assistance of our “outdoor guy,” Charlie Keppel. Tomatoes, zucchini, peppers, green beans, and cucumbers flourished throughout the summer, with produce being harvested and taken to the Schaumburg Food Pantry by deacons and other volunteers. It was our initial hope to work with families from the Lakeview School community in the garden, but it was not possible due to the pandemic. We did have a resident named Paola from Steeple Hill contact our church and ask for permission to move some her plants to our garden, and we shared space with her through the growing season. It was an unexpected blessing of connection!



- **A transformation of our church kitchen on the lower level** took place with a lot of hard work and volunteer hours by some deacons and other members of the congregation. Pastor Julie and Vanessa cleaned out the clutter; Larry and Dawn Amos and Judie Truelsen gave the walls a fresh coat of paint; Jim Vakoc changed wall plates, kickboards, lighting fixtures and who knows what else; Karen Franz, Laura DeLaCruz and Chris Lorentz washed the freezer and the cabinets. We found a way to get things done in an unconventional time and the kitchen was renewed.
- **CARE packages for seven college students** affiliated with COTC were assembled by Laura De La Cruz, Ann Moorman, Karen Franz and Chris Lorentz.
- **Birthday cards were mailed on a monthly basis** by Susan Buchholz to recognize the special days of congregation members.
- Throughout the pandemic, **deacons made, and are continuing to make, calls to members of their flocks to check** on their health, their overall well-being and to note any special needs that can be communicated to Pastor Julie. This communication has been a two-way blessing as it offers a connection between our congregation and our deacons.
- **A stronger partnership was formed during this past year with Lakeview School** through their social worker, Aubrey Hayes. Through her hard work and effective communication skills, the deacons were able to find many ways to provide for the children and families at



Lakeview School. This school serves roughly 500 students from grades kindergarten through sixth grade. The students are approximately 22% Asian, 45% Hispanic, 3% black, 27% white and 3% two or more races. Their low-income rate is about 36%; special education rate is about 11%; minority enrollment is 77% and homeless population is about 3%. Their free and reduced lunch rate is around 50%, the highest rate among all schools in District 54. These statistics

were received early in 2020 and may have changed due to the pandemic. However, at that time, the statistics showed us that we had an opportunity to help the students of this school by working with Ms. Hayes to recognize their needs and make a positive impact. For instance, when children were required to participate in E-learning at home due to the pandemic in September, it was noted that many were not able to receive their free meals at school. Ms. Hayes reached out to COTC, and volunteers from our congregation, (some deacons, some not), came to COTC to help distribute boxed lunches to families from Steeple Hill. The students at Lakeview School were recipients of warm coats this Fall, and their families received Aldi's gift cards at Easter and Christmas. Each step of the way, Ms. Hayes has shared pictures and expressions of gratitude from the children and their families.

An effort was made during this past year to let others know about the generosity and good works being done by our church. Through the writing skills of Stu Truelsen, two articles with pictures were published in the Daily Herald regarding the donation of gift cards to Joe Palmer of We Who Serve, a veterans' organization, and the distribution of warm coats to Lakeview School in collaboration with Aubrey Hayes. We did not do this brag about ourselves and our giving, but rather in hopes that others will recognize the generosity and goodness of our congregation and consider becoming a part of our faith community.



Yes, much was accomplished during this past year, but many planned activities were missed due to the pandemic. Our mission trip to Sisseton was cancelled, as was National Night Out in August. Our long awaited 60th Anniversary Celebration was anticipated for May 31st and then September, only to be cancelled twice. We missed out on fellowship in the lounge and passing of the peace in the sanctuary. I am sure there are more instances that could be named, but it is much better to dwell on what we have done and give thanks for being well and being together but apart. We are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord!

I would like to offer my deep gratitude to the deacons of this past year who have been good and faithful servants and stewards to our congregation and our community:

Naana Grant-Acquah, Chris Lorentz, Laura De La Cruz, Karen Franz, Glenna Morgan, Bob Groenewold, Ann Scheerer, Ann Moorman, and Susan Buchholz.

This year has demonstrated that in God, all things are possible. The deacons are grateful for your generosity and for the support that you have given us this year to do God's work.

Respectfully submitted,

Judie Truelsen
Moderator

Nominating Team Report

The purpose of the Nominating Team is to present candidates for the offices of Ruling Elders, Deacons and the three At-Large members of the Nominating Team to the congregation for their election to offices.

The Nominating Team is also responsible for overseeing the completion of annual Financial Reviews and the associated written procedures for the reviews.

Glenna Morgan joined the Deacon Board filling a vacancy in March 2020. She served the remainder of 2020 and her term ends at the end of 2023.

The following candidates were presented to the congregation and were elected on December 6th to begin serving in 2021:

Deacons class of 2023

Erica De La Cruz (1st term)
Naana Grant-Acquah (2nd term)
Fay Michaelis (1st term)

Elders class of 2023

James Buchholz (1st term)
Laura De La Cruz (1st term)
Cathy Walker (2nd term)

Elder class of 2021

Patricia Groenewold (1st term)

The following At-Large members to the Nominating Team will serve one-year terms in 2021:

Donna Haffron – 2nd year
Dawn Amos – 1st year
George Rogers – 1st year

The 2020 Financial Review was conducted by a team consisting of Cathy Clemmer and John Baker assisted by Stu Rutter. The review was completed October and accepted by Session in October. There were no significant findings.

The job of the Nominating Team depended heavily on the team members; Deacon Karen Franz, and the At-Large members, Nancy Keppel, Sara Murray, and Donna Haffron. Their efforts deserve your thanks!

Respectfully Submitted,
Stu Rutter, Nominating Team Moderator

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS

Stewardship Team Report

Theme:



Ministry Funds	2019	2020 *(note)	Change
Number of pledges	40	38	-5 %
Total money pledged	\$129,970	\$152,500	+ 17.3 %
Average pledge	\$3,249	\$4,013	+ 23.5 %

Facility Improvement Funds—Major Maintenance Fund	2019	2020	Change
Number of pledges	26	21	-19.2 %
Total money pledged	\$32,380	\$32,520	+ 0.4 %
Average pledge	\$1,245	\$1,548	+ 24.3 %

Total Funds	2019	2020	Change
Total money pledged	\$162,350	\$185,020	+ 14 %

*Note: 2019 comparison to 2020: 4 new pledges; 16 pledges same as 2019; 5 pledges decreased from 2019; 13 pledges increased from 2019; 5 pledged in 2019 and not in 2020

Your Stewardship Team,

Bob Lovell-Chair, Terry Maulding, and Erica De La Cruz

Learning Team Report

The Learning Team's main objective of 2020 was to bring Bible stories to life for the children of COTC while teaching them about God's love and encouraging them in the growth of their faith in a warm and loving environment. After the onset of the Pandemic in March, the primary focus became figuring out new ways provide opportunities for children to continue this learning and growth virtually and also to provide ways for the children to stay connected to each other and their COTC church family.

Prior to the Pandemic there was one group of Sunday School children typically comprised of 4 children who attended regularly. We were also blessed by the presence of the grandchildren of many of the church members on an occasional basis. In March after the onset of the Pandemic, we provided stories and materials electronically to the parents of the children for them to use at home with their children.

Beginning in September we began putting together "Sunday School in a Box" kits for all of the children. These included all of their weekly lessons, stories, and craft materials they would need to work on Sunday School lessons at home with the help of their families. We delivered these kits to their front porches every 5 weeks. We also started providing new lesson materials geared toward our older elementary children. The curriculum we provided for them is published by PCUSA and is titled Faith Questions, Faith and Science. They were also provided with all of the weekly Bible Stories as well.

As a way to help keep the children connected to each other as well as to their Sunday School teachers and their COTC family, we started having informal Zoom gatherings with the children one Sunday a month. During these gatherings there was time for some much needed fellowship and also time for the children to share any of the craft projects they had completed. During each gathering there was also a short activity of some sort led by one of the Sunday School teachers. The children and teachers enjoyed these gatherings. It was truly a blessing for us to all be able to be connected this way.

In February, we were blessed to be able to hire a new Nursery attendant, Delores Catalano, who also would be assisting with our in person Sunday School classes. We appreciated having Delores with us for our classes until after the onset of the Pandemic when we were no longer able to meet in person.

Thank you to our wonderful volunteer Sunday School Teachers. Thank you to Dawn Amos, Jane Lesch, Sue Liautaud, Pat & Ken Groenewold, and Christine Lorentz. Thanks for sharing your time and talents with our children. Thank you also to everyone who has prayed for our Sunday School children and teachers during 2020.

A special thank you to Jim Vakoc for painting and installing our Blessing Box. It is located by the path leading to the apartments. Some of the

Blessing Box



blessings placed in the box thus far have been face masks for adults and children, craft kits, and books. Anyone wishing to place blessings in the box is welcome to do so or contact me, Sue Liautaud.

The Learning Team is comprised of Dawn Amos, Jane Lesch, and Sue Liautaud. I appreciate your dedication and enthusiasm of this group. Thanks so much for being a part of the Learning Team this year.

Sue Liautaud
Learning Team Chair

Worship Team Report

The purpose of the Worship Team is to work with the pastor to provide meaningful worship services.

For the first two and a half months of 2020, we operated as usual. After that, as a result of the pandemic, our congregation worshipped in person for only seven weeks in the fall. So, some of the responsibilities of the team were not necessary for much of the year, such as the scheduling of ushers, communion set up people, and communion servers. Due to safety concerns, we purchased communion elements in individual pre-packaged containers.

Even though we did not worship in person for many months, we were able to worship via an online service every Sunday without fail. This was, and continues to be, possible only because of the dedication and talents of some very hard working people.

First, Pastor Julie has gone above and beyond in her efforts to make the online services as much like our traditional worship services as possible. We are deeply grateful for her innovation and determination to make these services available. We are blessed to have her as our pastor, especially during this challenging year.

In addition, we are incredibly fortunate to have Jim Moorman and John Baker as the tech wizards who make the services happen. They have spent countless volunteer hours at the church figuring out the technical complexities in order to make the live-streaming happen. In addition, Mike Lorentz and Stu Truelsen are operators who volunteer to do the sound and power point for services. The new camera that was recently purchased has improved the A-V quality, but also requires three operators in the

Audio/video Tech Wizards



balcony instead of the previous two. Many thanks to each of these men.

John Baker is not officially a member of the Worship Team, but he is definitely an honorary member! Our thanks to John not only for his work on the tech team, but for the many ways he has helped prepare the sanctuary for worship, especially when climbing a ladder is involved! John hangs the Christmas wreath on the cross every year, and this year he placed hooks high on the backdrop so that the banners can hang in a place that is more visually pleasing for the online services. We appreciate his help!



Other people who have helped with services include:

- Mike Lorentz for finding recordings of the choir and congregational singing from previous years that were then used for the live-streams.
- Worship leaders who continued to volunteer, sometimes recording readings at home, sometimes coming to the church to assist the pastor in person.
- Choir members who recorded music at home and also Pastor Julie for editing the recordings so that the voices blended.
- Marie Rutter for recording piano accompaniment.

The Worship Team met via Zoom on an as-needed basis during the year. Accomplishments included:

- With leadership from Pastor Julie, we developed a plan for a safe return to the sanctuary, whenever that would be permitted.
- In September we met at the church and prepared for a return to worship in the sanctuary. This included marking pews for seating and taping Xs on the floor for social distancing purposes.
- At the request of Session, we composed and submitted a Critical Functions document detailing the responsibilities and procedures of the Worship Team.
- We decorated the sanctuary for Christmas.

Thank you to team members Donna Haffron, Marie Rutter, Jim Moorman, Mike Lorentz, Laura De La Cruz, and Jane Lesch for their contributions, and to Pastor Julie for her guidance and leadership.

Dawn Amos
Worship Team Leader

CORPORATION REPORTS

Corporation Team Report

Members: Jim Letterer, President; Larry Amos, Vice-President; Ken Groenewold, Treasurer; Pat Groenewold, Secretary; Terry Maulding, congregation member; Hank Morgan, congregational member; Jim Vakoc, congregational member; Stu Truelsen, congregational member; and Pastor Julie Peterson

Corporate Operations (Corp Ops) meets monthly and as needed for emergencies. This team is responsible for the church's budget and finances; building and grounds; other administrative matters; and personnel matters. Following is a summary of major activities and accomplishments during 2020 in each of these areas:

Budget and Finance

- Monthly review financial reports, statement of funds, general fund income & expenses, investment balances and making recommendations to session on financial decisions required
- Annual update of signing authority on bank and investment accounts
- Summary financial information presented to the congregation periodically
- Transfer cash from investments to general fund with session approval as needed for operations
- Recommendations to session for 2021 budget, including salary increases for staff
- Additional financial details provided in the treasurer's annual report elsewhere in this document

Building and Grounds

- Oversight of regular maintenance and repairs to the building with outstanding support from Jim Vakoc for indoor items and Charlie Keppel for outdoor work
- Management of use of COTC facilities by other organizations, including fee rates, agreements, compliance with insurance and child protections policies, and reviewing new usage requests
- installation of new countertop on the main kitchen island & painting main kitchen & resurfacing of main kitchen cabinets
- Buttitta Construction completed cement work by the front door in mid-June.
- Purchased new video equipment to improve LiveStreaming Worship Services
- Professionally cleaned all air ducts throughout our facility (not been done for over 50 years)
- All old thermostats replaced throughout church & replaced bad lights in gym ceiling
- Improved handicap parking access for all parking spaces immediately adjacent to the upstairs entrance & for lower parking lot
- Pruned one tree and removed dead tree in front of main entrance
- “Cold patch” repair for parking lot holes
- Deep cleaning for floors and carpets during shutdown

New countertop



Other Administrative Responsibilities

- Review and execute contracts including insurance, lawn maintenance, snow plowing, and fire safety
- Based on safety expert advice, Ring doorbells were installed at the main entrance and the downstairs parking lot entrance to enable identification of visitors from the offices

Personnel

- Pastor Julie has a number of action items for Corp Ops each month, including a discussion on COTC staff
- Set up a pre-tax healthcare flexible spending plan for Pastor Julie beginning in 2020
- A new nursery attendant/Sunday School assistant, Dolores Catalano was hired in January
- By State of Illinois law, Sexual Harassment Prevention Training was provided to all staff

A big thank you to Larry, Ken, Pat, Terry, Hank, Jim V, Stu T, and Pastor Julie for all their hard work on Corp Ops in 2020!

Jim Letterer
COTC President

Property Team Report

2020 Inside Work and Updates – Jim Vakoc

- Added new kitchen coving
- Added new lounge clock
- Adjusted outdoor lighting timers
- Congregation purchased new video streaming camera
- Contractor installed new kitchen counter
- Installed new thermostats
- Installed new kitchen faucet
- Moved cabinets into kitchen
- Painted and installed "Blessing Box"
- Painted Lounge west wall trim (Julie & Susan B)
- Prepared & painted Lounge west wall
- Removed and Replaced pew
- Repaired downstairs men's plumbing valve
- Repaired kitchen lighting
- Repaired lounge counter
- Repaired sanctuary carpet
- Replaced exit light bulbs
- Replaced florescent light bulbs
- Replaced lounge fixtures

2020 Outside Work and Updates – Charlie Keppel

- Bought salt for parking lot and entrances
- Had more people plant vegetables at home to be planted in the garden
- Composted the vegetable garden