



Church of the Cross

Presbyterian Church, PCUSA

2021 Annual Report

January 30, 2022



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ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

January 30, 2021

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 2022	
George Rogers 1-year term (2 nd term)	
Ann Scheerer 1-year term	
Cheryl Wilkins 1-year term	

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New Business

Adjournment

Prayer

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

Annual Congregational Meeting, Sunday, January 31, 2021

The Annual Congregational Meeting of Church of the Cross was held via Zoom at 11 a.m. Moderator Rev. Julie Peterson called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. and opened with prayer.

A brief worship service took place at the beginning of the meeting, as a continuation of the regular Facebook video worship service. Elders James Buchholz, Laura De La Cruz, Cathy Walker and Pat Groenewold were installed. Deacons Naana Grant-Acquah and Fay Michaelis were installed, and Deacon Erica De La Cruz was ordained and installed.

A quorum was declared.

Minutes of the Called Congregational Meetings held January 26, 2020; March 1, 2020 and December 6, 2020 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 presented by Judie Truelsen**
- **Nominating Team Report presented by Stu Rutter**
- **Learning Team report presented by Sue Liautaud**
- **Stewardship Team report**
- **Worship Team report presented by Dawn Amos**
- **Corporate Operations Team report presented by Jim Letterer**
- **Property Team reports presented by Jim Vakoc and Charlie Keppel**
- **Financial Reports including the Statement of Financial Position and the 2021 Ministry Budget presented by Ken Groenewold**

Motion to receive these reports was unanimously approved.

Motion passed unanimously to approve the Terms of Call of Rev. Julie Peterson for 2021 as presented.

A brief discussion on how COTC is seeking to help address the issue of racial and gender equity took place. Additional information will be shared with the congregation as the study and discussion proceeds.

There being no further business, a motion prevailed to adjourn, and the Moderator closed the meeting at 12:20 p.m. with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Groenewold
Clerk of Session

Called Congregational Meeting, Sunday, November 14, 2021

A Congregational Meeting of Church of the Cross for the purpose of electing officers was held in the sanctuary following the Sunday morning worship service. Moderator Rev. Julie Peterson called the meeting to order with prayer at 11:10 am.

A quorum was declared.

The chairperson of the nominating committee, Stu Rutter thanked the 2021 Nominating Committee members for their excellent work this year and placed in nomination the following slate of candidates proposed by the nominating committee:

For the office of elder:

Stu Truelsen	1-year term	Class of 2022
Ken Groenewold	3-year term	Class of 2024
Charlie Keppel	3-year term	Class of 2024
Sue Liautaud	3-year term (2 nd term)	Class of 2024

For the office of deacon:

Lois McPherson	1-year term	Class of 2022
Nancy Keppel	3-year term	Class of 2024
Suzanne Letterer	3-year term	Class of 2024
Jeff Peterson	3-year term	Class of 2024

At-large members of the nominating committee:

George Rogers	1-year term (2 nd term)
Ann Scheerer	1-year term
Cheryl Wilkins	1-year term

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

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

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Groenewold
Clerk of Session

Pastor's Report

The year of COVID. I know, not a fun topic, nor a fun year with all the things the pandemic did to, and in, our lives. We had hoped 2021 would ring in a year of returning to something near 'normal.' But reality had other plans. Yes, we did enjoy moments which felt nearly normal. At least until COVID once again reared its ugly head. Yet, throughout this year of our Lord 2021, not even a pandemic could stop God's work in and through our congregation.

This year, I'm going to have a bit of fun with the word 'covid' as I share my thoughts of 2021 in the form of an acrostic poem. Being a person who likes to color outside the lines, you will find more than the one sentence for each letter—a sign of a real acrostic poem. However, one word for each letter could not be to describe the depth of YOUR faithfulness to our Lord during the year, a faithfulness I am ever in awe of... and deeply grateful for!

Care in protecting the health of all people was paramount in our **Commitment** to each other and our Lord. Our **Cherished** homebound members received home communion and the joy felt in those visits was, and continues to be, immeasurable. **Compassionate** in our work, we showed God's love to Lake View School, a community in Ghana, the people of Haiti following the natural disaster... and all the other ways this Annual Report lifts up.

*"I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took **care** of me, I was in prison and you visited me." (Matthew 25:36, NRSV)*

Overflowing with the joy of God's grace, we dug deep and provided generously to those in need. **Optimistic** we would prevail in serving our Lord; we maintained a hopeful view of the Holy Spirit's presence working within us and alongside us. **Open-hearted** in our love for God, we continued to improve our on-line presence with deeper knowledge and understanding of the technology which provided a way to worship together and reach out into the world. Continuing to put one foot in front of the other as we marched **Onward** into our future, we committed to trust God's faithfulness and grace with every required pivot.

*"For thus says the LORD: I will extend prosperity to her like a river, and the wealth of the nations like an **overflowing** stream..." (Isaiah 66:12, NRSV)*

Vision for new possibilities sprang from this time. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, the Evangelism and Micah 6:8 groups evolved from discussions and book studies which pointed us in some new directions. **Vibrantly**, our choir continued the lively email exchange of vocal recordings to continue creating the music so vital to our worship services. Believing our future was truly **Viable**, we refused to allow fear to guide our path and remained faithful disciples. Thankful for our **Valued** leadership, we once again recognized how truly blessed we are with dedicated people unafraid to speak out with new ideas or modifications when needed.

*"One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a **vision** and told him, "Do not be afraid! Speak out! Do not be silent!" (Acts 18:9, NLT)*

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we spent our time with continued learning and some needed work on the facility. **Informed** about the pandemic, we kept communication open as we

encouraged each other with grace and compassion. Embarking on an **Intense** search for a new organist/pianist, the Holy Spirit answered our prayers in a man named Dr. Robert Kania! In those moments when it seemed our strength was nearly depleted, the Holy Spirit **Infinitely** offered the gift of energy we needed just when we needed it the most.

*“And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy **inspired** by the Holy Spirit...” (1Thessalonians 1:6, NRSV)*

Divine faithfulness kept us close, grounding us in the purpose of our faith as we **Dutifully** continued our mission to Welcome All ~ Share God’s Love ~ Offer Hope ...all in Jesus’ Name. **Devoted** to serving our Triune God however we could, we developed our Zoom skills and deepened our understanding of how to be a Facebook user. We **Delighted** in joyous, sacred moments as if they were golden nuggets, knowing full well they were God’s gifts of **Divine** presence in our lives.

*“By his **divine** power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his **divine** nature and escape the world’s corruption caused by human desires.” (2 Peter 1:3-4, NLT)*

Beloved Children of God may my feeble attempt at an acrostic poem help us recall 2021 as the year our Lord showed us just how much we can do when we put our full trust in God. For even when the world throws us into the darkness of a pandemic... *“The light shines in the darkness and the darkness can never extinguish it.” (John 1:5, NLT)*

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Julie



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 2021 were:

Class of 2021

Pat Groenewold
Sue Liautaud
Stu Rutter
Cheryl Wilkins

Class of 2022

Jane Lesch
Jim Vakoc

Class of 2023

James Buchholz
Laura De La Cruz
Cathy Walker

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

The session had 12 regular stated meetings and 3 specially called meetings during the year and participated in a joint meeting with the deacons. Meetings were held virtually via Zoom except for the December Joint Meeting and Regular Session Meeting, which were held in person at the church.

In 2021 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, Stu Truelsen
Nominating Team – Stu Rutter
Stewardship Team – Bob Lovell
The Evangelism Team – Jim Letterer, Terry Maulding, Stu Truelsen
The Micah 6:8 Team – Laura De La Cruz, Ken Groenewold, Cathy Walker

The pastor celebrated the Lord's Supper in worship 14 times during the year and guest pastors celebrated the Lord's Supper in worship, when the pastor was away, twice in 2021.

Home communion was celebrated with members not able to attend worship beginning again in June 2021, after being suspended due to the pandemic. The pastor was assisted by a currently serving deacon each month.

There was one baptism this past year. Oliver Michael Neiweem was baptized on Sunday, May 16, 2021.

There was one wedding. George Rogers and Mary Ekstrom were married in the sanctuary on Saturday, July 10, 2021.

MEMBERSHIP TABULATION FOR 2021

Membership reported at the beginning of the year		75
Membership gains during the year		+1
Received by Profession/Reaffirmation of Faith or Certificate of Transfer		1
Membership loses during the year		-7
Transfer	3	
Removal from the rolls	3	
Death	1	
Membership at the end of the year		69

Deacons Report

As the deacons closed out the year 2020 and all of its challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we looked to the year ahead to bring more “normalcy” to our lives, our work, and our worship. A phrase that comes to mind is **“Keep Calm and Carry On,”** used by British during World War II as they moved forward to live each day to the best of their ability. Following their advice, the deacons knew our work would continue, and the Spirit would lead us to do whatever we had to do to continue to serve our congregation and our community.

At the opening of 2021, Fellowship was not being served and home communion was still on hold. The deacons’ board was meeting via Zoom and most business was being conducted via email. Through it all, we remained connected with each other, with our flocks, and with our community.

In our efforts to retain as much “normalcy” as possible, we looked to see what actions we could take to provide continuity to our congregation. **“Souper Bowl” Sunday took place and \$405 was collected for the Schaumburg Food Pantry** through donations sent to the church office. Although we could not coordinate an Agape dinner in February, there was an Ash Wednesday service. Easter flowers were sold online and provided beauty to our sanctuary for the Easter service. **Proceeds from the 2020 Christmas poinsettias and 2021 Easter flowers allowed us to purchase 16 Walmart cards at \$25 each (total=\$400)** which were shared with our veterans through Joe Palmer of We Who Serve. **Black History Month occurred during February,** with Pastor Julie and Vanessa highlighting Black pioneers in American history, African American businesses, and other enlightening information in our weekly bulletins. **“Boxes of Love” were provided to ladies on Mother’s Day and to men on Father’s Day** by Ann Moorman to recognize the importance of love for each other in all its variations, and that someone is always thinking of you.



On June 6th, Pastor Julie recognized graduates for the year 2021. Birthday cards were mailed on a regular basis to recognize those special days in the lives of our congregation members.

In April, life began to appear brighter as vaccines had become available against COVID-19. We resumed “modified” Easter Fellowship on April 4th, with cookies placed in baggies along with coffee and juice. We gingerly came together in the lounge, maintaining some social distancing and removing our masks to eat and drink. Just the act of being together in that space was so meaningful to all of us. Volunteers were called for again to help serve Fellowship and there has been good response.



Spring and being together outdoors found us **planting our Community Garden during our church workday on 6/22.** Although the garden is a congregation-wide activity and has its own budget line, the deacons remained involved with it. Thanks to those who showed up to play in the dirt and prepare the soil for its bounty this year. Two women from Steeple Hill, Paola, and Sonya, worked alongside us sharing the garden space. Due to Vanessa’s ingenuity, our cucumbers grew on wooden trellises, our tomatoes were staked, flowers and lilies were planted along the church wall and the gardens were watered daily (as

needed) by “smart” sprinklers and hoses. **The bounty was plentiful, and volunteers transported freshly picked produce throughout the season to the Schaumburg Food Pantry.**

The deacons are thoughtful in being good stewards of the funds provided to us to support our work. Because we received fewer assistance requests than anticipated during the year, we were able to support organizations in our community that helped provide for those in need during this past year of the pandemic. We also chose to support the children of School District 54, as well as the children in Sisseton, SD. **The deep generosity of our congregation allowed us to support to the following:**

- Direct assistance requests – 6 individual requests totaling \$877.06
- Journeys/PADS/local housing – 1 donation totaling \$257.50
- WINGS (Women In Need Growing Stronger) – 2 separate donations totaling \$500
- Pack the Bus – School supplies for District 54 totaling \$200
- Sisseton “back to school” backpacks totaling \$500

Total of this assistance: \$2,334.56

In January, we discussed our relationship with Lakeview School and its Social Worker, Aubrey Hayes. We noted that we were able to make an impact in the lives of many children and families in our community through this relationship. We also verbalized that we felt confident that our donations were being distributed fairly and used wisely with Ms. Hayes as our liaison to the school. Therefore, **we voted to continue that relationship with Lakeview School**, as well as look for ways to expand our ability to help. Needless to say, the Spirit had called, and you all responded in the following manner:

On a more somber note, **we lost one of our most long-standing congregation members, Nancy Harmon, on August 19, 2021.** In October, the deacons assisted in providing fellowship for friends and family members of Nancy Harmon following a memorial service at COTC. Her husband, John, expressed his deep gratitude for our participation in honoring the memory of Nancy.

In the content of this report, I have striven to demonstrate the good work and outreach of our deacons, a group dedicated to following where the Spirit leads us. I would be amiss if I did not mention one important activity that touches the heart of every deacon, and that is **accompanying Pastor Julie to deliver home communion to those who are confined to their homes due to the pandemic, poor health, or any combination of factors. After a hiatus of 15 months, home communion finally resumed on June 10th,** and no words can describe the joy that came forth from people who greeted us with big smiles and open arms, and often, tears flowing from their eyes. We learned once again about the deep human connection of seeing each other with our eyes, as well as our hearts, and how praying together out loud is a joyful shout to the heavens. We learned how those at home stayed connected to us through livestreaming services on Sunday mornings, as well as through phone calls and written notes. However, it was simple to conclude that in-person visits are invaluable and cherished by those who are confined to home.

The deacons concluded our last meeting of 2021 on December 21st, where we discussed our “individual gifts.” We noted it was a blessing to realize that we all have a gift to offer and however we choose to use it, it helps us all! My deepest thanks to all the deacons I have served with over the past six years. You are an amazing and blessed group of people.

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 also oversees the completion of annual Financial Review and the associated written procedures for the reviews.

The following candidates were presented to the congregation and were elected on November 7th to begin serving in 2022:

Deacons

Class of 2022 - Lois McPherson

Class of 2024 - Sue Letterer
Nancy Keppel
Jeff Peterson

NOTE: There currently remains one opening for Deacon in 2022.

Elders

Class of 2022 - Stu Truelsen

Class of 2024 – Ken Groenewold
Charlie Keppel
Sue Liautaud

The following At-Large members to the Nominating Team will serve one-year terms in 2022:

George Rogers – 2nd year
Ann Scheerer – 1st year
Cheryl Wilkins – 1st year

The 2021 Financial Review Team for the church's 2020 financial results was led by Hank Morgan and John Baker and assisted by Stu Rutter. The review was completed and accepted by Session in May. There were no significant findings.

Financial Review procedures were finalized, approved and placed in the church's Manual of Operations in August.

The job of the Nominating Team depended heavily on the team members; Deacon Karen Franz, and the At-Large members, Dawn Amos, Donna Haffron and George Rogers. Their work was greatly appreciated!

Respectfully Submitted,

Stu Rutter
Moderator, Nominating Team

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS

Stewardship Team Report

Theme:

GOD'S COVENANT WITH GOD'S PEOPLE



“For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

General Fund	2020 *(note)	2021 *(note)	Change
Number of pledges	38	34	-10.5 %
Total money pledged	\$152,500	\$153,730	+0.8 %
Average pledge	\$4,013	\$4,521	+12.7 %

Major Maintenance Fund	2020	2021	Change
Number of pledges	21	21	0 %
Total money pledged	\$32,520	\$29,180	-10.3 %
Average pledge	\$1,548	\$1,389	-10.3 %

Total Funds	2020	2021	Change
Total money pledged	\$185,020	\$182,910	-1.1%

*Note: 2020 comparison to 2021: 1 new pledge; 10 pledges same as 2020; 1 pledge decreased from 2020; 22 pledges increased from 2020; 5 pledged in 2020 and not in 2021

Your Stewardship Team,

Bob Lovell-Chair, Terry Maulding, and James Buchholz

Learning Team Report

Due to the continuing Covid 19 Pandemic during 2021, the primary focus of the learning team continued to be, trying new ways to provide opportunities for the children of COTC to continue learning and growing in their faith in a mostly virtual way and also to try to provide ways for the children to stay connected to each other and their COTC church family.

Unfortunately, we were unable to meet in person for Sunday School through the 2020-2021 school year and we continued supplying the children with the “Sunday School in a Box” kits. We delivered all of the weekly lessons, stories and craft materials to work on the Sunday School lessons at home. We also had a few more informal Sunday morning Zoom gatherings in order to help the children to stay connected to their Sunday School teachers and each other. During each gathering there was time for some fellowship, sharing of their completed craft projects, and also a short activity led by one of the Sunday School teachers. These gatherings were enjoyed by the teachers and children alike.

At the end of the 2020-2021 school year the team met with Pastor Julie to look back and reflect on the children’s Sunday School program. One of the observations the team made was that by the end of the school year the children’s interest in completing the Sunday school in a box activities and craft projects had greatly decreased. The team concluded that one reason for this loss of interest was that the children and parents were very busy and most likely a little overwhelmed by the demands of virtual schooling at home. It also was difficult on the children and the Sunday School teachers alike to be unable to meet in person. We decided to brainstorm ideas for possible alternative ways to structure Sunday school for the Fall. Our hope at that time was that we would be able to go back to in person Sunday School in September. Our desire was to better meet the needs of the children of COTC and their parents.

A letter was sent to the parents at the beginning of June explaining the ideas we came up with through our brainstorming. Another dilemma that we faced when considering in person Sunday School in the Fall, was the very small number of Sunday School age children, only 4 potential Sunday School age children in our congregation. In pre-Covid times there were many Sundays when the Sunday School teachers prepared lessons, went to church, and no children or just one would attend. The ideas we brainstormed attempted to address this area as well. In the letter we asked parents if before church was the best time for Sunday School or if after church might be better. We also asked if Sunday School every Sunday was too often. Should it be every other Sunday or maybe even a once-a-month Sunday School class after church with a potluck might be more appealing. We also asked if there was interest in having Sunday School at all. We asked the parents to think outside of the box and get back to us with any ideas or suggestions for Sunday school.

We received responses from two sets of parents of the potential Sunday School students. One responded that they would not be having their child participate in Sunday School due to continued Pandemic concerns. One responded that their children would not be able to participate in Sunday School in the fall due to a scheduling conflict. Due to the parental responses and the continuing uncertainty of the Pandemic, the Learning Team made the very difficult decision in late August to not offer Sunday School for children in the Fall. The team decided to come up with a special activity for the children at Christmas time.

On Sunday, December 19th the Learning Team hosted an intergenerational Christmas Party at church immediately following the service. The Learning Team provided a light lunch for everyone. Everyone who attended participated in making Christmas cards for shut-ins.



Card making materials were at each of the tables so everyone could help decorate them and all the people sitting at the tables signed the cards. This event was very well attended and well received. It was a great way to have fellowship with the children, their families, and the whole COTC family as well. Thank you to Chris Lorentz for providing yummy treats for the party and to Ann Moorman for sharing some of her tasty chicken salad as well. Thanks also to Pastor Julie for coming up with the great card making idea.

During 2021 the Learning Team was comprised of Jane Lesch, Dawn Amos, and Sue Liautaud. Thanks so much for being a part of the Learning Team.

Sue Liautaud

Learning Team Chair

Worship Team Report

Worship in the sanctuary resumed on Sunday, January 24, 2021, after being interrupted in 2020 by the spread of coronavirus. Some pews were taped off to promote social distancing. The choir resumed singing in church later in the year, albeit wearing masks. Masks were required in church during worship, except for the pastor and worship leader when they were distanced from each other and the congregation. Communion elements were in prepackaged containers.

Worshippers signed in at a table in the narthex in case contact tracing became necessary. They also could indicate whether they had been vaccinated. All these measures and more helped keep our congregation safe. Fellowship returned with the Easter service on April 4. However, as we closed out a formidable, challenging 2021, worship was again headed to virtual only because of a Covid 19 surge with the Omicron variant. We pray it will be short-lived.

On a positive note, all worship services were livestreamed on Facebook during the year, and a “choir cam” was added to show the choir and soloists during the livestream.



In addition, worshippers in the sanctuary see a projection of the choir without turning around in the pew to see the choir loft. But that’s not all...as they say in those late-night TV commercials. Dr. Robert Kania, department chair and professor of music at Judson University became our keyboardist. Dr. Kania has been a piano recital soloist and accompanist on three continents. He also enjoys playing the church organ as much as we like listening to him play it. What a godsend he has been! And we could say the same about our music director Marie Rutter and the inimitable choir.



While we are giving out kudos we must include the A-V team, John Baker, Jim Moorman, Mike Lorentz, and myself. I hasten to add Pastor Julie and Vanessa Brand as honorary members of the A-V Team. Pastor Julie, Vanessa, and John put in an enormous amount of time and effort each week to make sure the worship presentation is prepared, loaded and ready to go. What started out as a terrible handicap became a joy as it brought the worship service to our shut-ins and reached people beyond our faith community.

We worshipped in the sanctuary during Advent which included a Blue Christmas service for those who don't feel "holly jolly" during the Christmas season. The Christmas Eve service was well-attended in person and online. Many thanks to the Worship Team and others who decorated the sanctuary for Advent. John Baker continued his tradition of personally hanging the wreath on the cross. Thank you, too, to our worship readers who assist Pastor Julie in making all our services so meaningful. Ushering and greeting were somewhat sporadic during the year but will be needed when we can put Covid safely behind us and more people attend in person.



The Worship Team during 2021 was led by Dawn Amos and included Donna Haffron, Marie Rutter, Jim Moorman, Mike Lorentz, Laura De La Cruz and Jane Lesch. I took over for Dawn later in the year and Judie Truelsen joined me on the team. We are grateful to Dawn for her years of service and to Pastor Julie for her guidance and leadership of worship.

Stu Truelsen

Worship Team Chair

Micah 6:8 Team Report

The Micah team seeks to support the congregation as COTC does God's work as we best understand God's will; by doing justice, loving kindness and walking humbly with God.

We see social justice as love applied to systems, policies, cultures and individuals. Our primary desire is to focus on racial justice, open and affirming LGBTQ+ persons, and support for immigrants and refugees.

The Micah team has been working with and networking with the village of Hoffman Estates and with POC (Partners for our Community) to identify ways we can partner with others in the community.

Evangelism Team Report

Our church's first ever Evangelism team met in August and again in December. Evangelism is vital to the future of Church of the Cross. Following is a summary of major activities during 2021:

Welcome to Community Packets

Jim and Stu Rutter distributed 86 packets which were tailored to Hoffman Estates and Schaumburg. Two church inserts with a gift of a small cross with short note on meaning of cross plus Schaumburg Township Flyer to Schaumburg residents and Chamber of Commerce flyer to Hoffman Estates residents. Only one positive feedback from Judy, who received her packet from Jim before one worship service. Judy really liked the description about the cross in the packet and had one of her own that she treasures.



DECISION: Due to poor response, we will NOT distribute more packets but wait and see if any COTC interest during Advent season

Friendship Village Letter

- 535 letters were mailed in October, 124 returned (apt vacant), 411 delivered
No immediate feedback from residents about the letter. Judy McCormick told Jim that a few of her neighbors liked Julie's psalms discussion and would consider riding Friendship bus to COTC. However, a bus is not available so we will see if a couple of our church members can pick up Friendship residents for Sunday worship in New Year.

DECISION: Target 2nd Friendship mailing for Easter.

Other Business

Daily Herald advert ad occurred in December. Pursuing seminary intern on hold until 2022. Premature for Evangelism and Micah team to work together until both groups have more traction. Session will figure out next evangelism steps with Sailboat Church Book, possibly a Lent program. Possibly target an Alpha series AFTER decisions about Sailboat Church follow-up.

A big thank you to Terry, Stu, and Pastor Julie for all their hard work on Evangelism in 2021!

Jim Letterer

CORPORATION REPORTS

Corporation Team Report

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

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 2021 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 the annual 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
- Re-sealed and re-lined the entire parking lot after 12 hot patches were completed
- Mulch was spread throughout church property, including all flower beds

Parking Lot Upgrade



Pray Ground in back of Sanctuary



- “Pray Ground” was installed in back of sanctuary for kids
- AED unit was serviced, and new batteries installed
- New ceiling tiles and light covers were installed in lounge. This completes the entire renovation of lounge with new cabinets, all new kitchenette, new tables & chairs, and new floor in prior two years.

Other Administrative Responsibilities

- Review and execute contracts including heating / air-conditioning, insurance, lawn maintenance, snow plowing, and fire safety

Personnel

- Pastor Julie has a number of action items for Corp Ops each month, including a discussion on COTC staff
- Dr. Robert Kania was hired as organist / pianist
- By State of Illinois law, Sexual Harassment Prevention Training is now required of all staff.

A big thank you to Ken, Pat, Terry, Hank, Jim V, Stu T, Pastor Julie, and Larry for all their hard work on Corp Ops in 2021!

Jim Letterer

COTC President

Lounge Kitchenette



Property Team Report

2021 Workday



2021 Inside Work and Updates – Jim Vakoc

- Adjusted building light timers
- Install summer/winter furnace filters
- Installed a high visible handicap sign in the parking lot
- Met with contractors for work bids
- Relocated "Blessing Box" for better security
- Relocated the trash dumpster away from worn pavement
- Removed outside graffiti on the gym
- Removed the recycling dumpster
- Removed/replaced Paster's office furniture for refinishing
- Replace lounge ceiling tiles
- Replaced exit light bulbs
- Replaced florescent light bulbs
- Replaced broken Primary (Blue) room window
- Replaced 2 broken Elementary (Peach) room windows
- Replaced 1 broken Library window
- Reset thermostats for seasonal temperatures and facility use
- Setup sanctuary children's "pray ground"
- Stored sanctuary fans
- Submitted and edited site maps for the Village
- Toured the building with possible facility users
- Worked with contractor and Village for parking lot permits

2021 Outside Work and Updates – Charlie Keppel

- Patch, seal parking lot and stripe parking spaces
- Prepare, plant, harvest, and put the vegetable garden to bed
- Repair concrete on patio by the front entrance
- Plant annuals in front gardens
- Change out flood lights and repair broken one
- Installed mulch in landscape beds
- Repaired retaining wall by lower door in courtyard removed silt and made swale
- Pulled and cut vines on chimney
- Installed a linear garden on the East wall of the gym
- Painted the rims and repaired the Eve lights by the upper and lower entrances
- Cleaned out debris in the wetland by the dumpster and mowed down the invasive plants
- Applied a bead of chalk to the area where the front handicapped ramp was separated from the wall to keep water from seeping into the basement