

Memorial United Church of Christ 2021 Annual Report



Pastor's Report 2021

Often in life, it is difficult not to experience God as Holy Mystery. Sitting down to write, I looked back at what I shared with you last year. My 2020 Pastor's Report ended with:

"Beloved, the year ahead will undoubtedly bring new challenges, and unanticipated joys. May we continue following that Spirit which leads us in God's love to reach out in ever-widening circles..."

There you have it—2021 summed up succinctly! We could not have imagined the many twists and turns which lay ahead. We have needed to be resilient, adaptive, flexible, creative, and offer one another grace. Change is hard, especially rapid change. The realities around us cause feelings such as anxiety and frustration to emerge. And Beloved, we have experienced **a lot** of change the past year!



This is why I love the Great Hope which encircles us each time we enter the church building. Etched in the cornerstone out front is a reminder we are a congregation who continually sees God's New Thing. Out back is the maple tree which was planted in the spring in celebration of what we imagined would be our return to the physical sanctuary at the end of the 2020 pandemic. The children of Memorial UCC voted to call the memorial tree New Beginnings. What an appropriate name!



I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? Isaiah 43:19, NRSV

The trouble is, God's idea of a New Thing often catches us by surprise. Susan Beaumont writes, "Abraham, Sarah, Jacob, and Job each have a liminal tale to tell. Each biblical journey is a venturing forth: an ending, followed by a disorienting season of transitions, and finally a reorientation to something new that is substantially different from what was left behind. Clearly, God works with liminality. Through liminal experiences human beings are transformed and brought into deeper relationship with God."¹

We have been gifted with the rare opportunity to live in a liminal time, an in-between space. A moment to build a deeper relationship with God and with each other. Every ending carries a sense of loss, but also a turning towards that New Thing God intends for us. Indeed, 2021 was filled with turning points. The first 6 months we worshiped virtually. Then on Sunday, June 13, we celebrated as we moved back into the church building. This provided us with the opportunity for blended in-person

¹ Susan Beaumont, *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going: Leading in a Liminal Season* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019), 4.

and online services. Since then, our sanctuary has expanded and shifted as local health and safety needs changed. Through it all we have reimagined what worshiping God can look like:

- **Over the summer, we embraced the idea of an expanded sanctuary.** One which simultaneously happened inside the building, out in the Bible Garden, and online. Some of you joined us on your smart phones from a bike trail, horse barn, or a parked car. During those months, attendance reflected a fairly even split between each sacred space for worship.
- **In the fall, change came in the form of cooler weather, and a vaccine** which became available for youth over the age of 12. Each Sunday approximately 1/3 of our faith community gathered to worship in-person. The other 2/3 of continued worshiping online. We welcomed Pastoral Intern Christina Schoenwetter to learn and grow with us as we explored what being a hybrid congregation means for us as followers of Jesus.
- **December brought SINGING and the return of treasured activities!** We joyfully began to sing one hymn at the end of each service while continuing to wear masks. The Craft and Cookie Sale returned. The choir got together on a Thursday night to sing in-person for the first time in nearly 2 years. The youth group met for a movie night, and families got crafty making gifts in the Fellowship Hall during Nifty Gifty. Arbor Covenant Church joined us for 2 special worship services, the Longest Night and Christmas Eve. So much was springing forth and then...
- **The end of the year brought the next unexpected move.** We joined other UCC congregations in the Madison area in shifting to virtual worship on December 26. The United Church of Christ's *3 Great Loves* includes the love of creation, love of children, and love of neighbor. The decision to flow back to online services, Bible study, and other congregational activities was for the health and wellness of each and every one of you—and our community. Currently, there is an all too real parallel between the birth of Jesus and no room at the inn... and no room in our local hospitals. It is with these Great Loves in mind that our lay leaders continue to demonstrate the commitment to making difficult decisions. I give thanks for the Church Council, committee members, and staff who have committed so much of their time creatively adapting EVERYTHING we do as Church the past 2 years.

Friends, we are resilient, and we KNOW how to be flexible, show grace to one another, and continue Being the Church! Our 104-year history as a congregation have provided us with fertile ground upon which to root our covenant with one another in God's all-inclusive love. Take a moment to reread our Mission Statement. In what ways do you think is God planting a New Thing in our midst for in 2022? The words healing, reconciling, and nurturing jump out for me. This is what the world needs now. It is what **we** need now.

With Ongoing Gratitude and Great Hope,

Pastor Kris

Council President's Report 2021

2021 was a year of frustration, resilience, and achievement.

Covid continued to frustrate us. We worked to bring things back to “normal”. Then the Delta strain set us back. We worked again to restore normalcy and as 2021 came to a close the Omicron strain set us back again. Of the twelve Council meetings in 2021, only one didn't have Covid-19 as the top agenda item.

But the congregation and staff of Memorial showed resilience in dealing with the pandemic. The Tech Team improved our ability to get the message of Christ out, not just to our Congregation, but to the world. New members found us through our internet presence. Jordan Baumgart guided the installation of new equipment and the use of new techniques. Pastor Kris handled all of the tech changes that we threw at her without losing her steadfast optimism. Her guidance fueled all of our souls throughout the year.

The music for our services got better and better, thanks to Jonathan Schroerlucke, Jeff Darwin, Michael Bryant, Betsy Robbins, Mark Sieger and all the members of the Vocal Choir, Bell Choir, and Orchestra.

Rebecca Malke kept our Faith Development going despite the restrictions needed to keep our kids safe. We found ways to have Vacation Bible School and grow a Bible Garden.

Jamie Gaffke kept the office running smoothly, no matter what changes she had to deal with.

You, as members of the Memorial U.C.C. Congregation did more than just support the staff in all of the changes needed to keep going. Together you achieved new things. You undertook to support Black Women's Wellness for five years and you exceeded your first-year objectives. You conducted a major capital campaign to replace the crumbling driveway. Not exactly a glamorous project, but you surpassed your fundraising goal, and the driveway will be replaced in 2022. You began a major initiative to support Planet Earth through the new Green Team and you changed your personal lifestyles by using better products in your everyday lives.

You did all this while still supporting Luke House, the Personal Essentials Pantry, Bright Stars of Bethlehem, Music Makers, and all the other ways you show God's love in a difficult world.

Together, we have moved on from trying to restore the old “normal”. In keeping with the spirit of Memorial we are creating a new and better normal out of our experience.

Throughout this difficult year, the members of the Church Council accepted the frustrations, responded with resilience to continual challenges, and provided leadership to go on to achieve great new things. It has been a great honor to serve with them in supporting Memorial United Church of Christ.

John Rosch

2021 Council President

Faith Development Report 2021



Children's Faith Development

At the start of the year, I used the children's message as a time to teach a Sunday school lesson. Additional materials were emailed to families each week, as well. A YouTube channel was created for people to watch the lesson if they missed it during the worship service. In the fall, with in-person Sunday school being delayed until January 2022, families were given a bag filled with age-appropriate activities. The goal was not to give

parents additional work but to give them ways to add a Bible lesson into their daily routine. For example, movie suggestions and discussion guides were given to encourage a home movie night that had a Christian message. Bags also included indoor and outdoor games with a Biblical theme and recipes with lessons to encourage everyone to join in dinner preparations and conversation.

Vacation Bible School

It was very exciting to see the VBS program return this summer. Our VBS director, Jann Veloff, along with the VBS music leader, Lynn Hilgers provided a weeklong of fun for 14 children and youth. Under a big tent there were plenty of outdoor games, activities, and storytelling.



Youth Group

We now have a youth group for those grades 7th-9th. We hope that as we connect, we can expand to include older youth. Seven youth gathered in September to talk about what they wanted their group to look like and what kinds of activities they wanted to do together. In October we gathered to do a corn maze then talked about navigating the “maze of life”. In November we gathered for lunch then raked a church members yard for two hours. Our group will have a mix of fun activities, learning and service work.



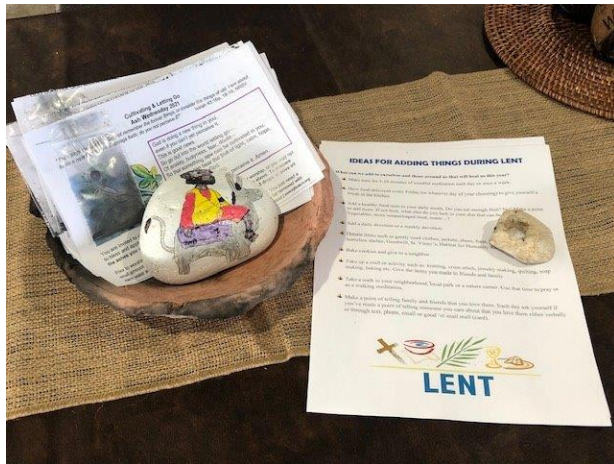
Adult Faith Development

Covid-19 made it difficult for some of our adult groups to continue. First Friday Fellowship (FFF) and our senior spiritual learning group will begin again once it's safer. The Doctor Who and Theology group, however, continues to thrive and now meets biweekly instead of monthly.

Goals for 2022

We've been away from each other for so long that our main focus for both children and adults is community building. In Sunday school we'll revisit basic information for our younger students, explore parts of the Bible we don't normally talk about, and learn in a more hands-on way through science experiments, cooking and games.

A positive outcome of the pandemic is that we're now well-versed in Zoom. Being able to offer classes both in-person and online allows us to attend classes when we might otherwise be hesitant because of bad weather, too dark to drive at night or we're simply tired because of a busy day and driving to one more place feels overwhelming. Our YouTube channel, Memorial UCC Faith Development, also contains videos from our spiritual health series and videos from the FFF group. Be sure to check them out and click SUBSCRIBE. As always, you can stay updated by checking our Facebook page, website, enews or emailing me at rebecca@memorialucc.org.



Memorial United Church of Christ



Virtual Choir



Committee Reports

Membership Committee 2021

May God make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you.” (1 Thess. 3:12, NRSV)

2021 offered us blessings and challenges as we continue to reimagine what our support of a vibrant congregational life can look like. We recognize the importance of supporting the physical, mental health, and spiritual needs of the members and friends of Memorial during these unprecedented days. To that end, we offered a variety of opportunities to build relationships through both in-person and tech ministries. In-person opportunities happened both inside the building and out on the beautiful grounds of the church. Tech ministries include sending cards, emails, and texts; Memorial’s Ever-Widening Circles FaceBook page; and picking up the phone to call one another!

Membership Committee’s Mission: *The Membership Committee coordinates efforts to attract and retain members and friends of Memorial UCC. The work of the Committee is performed in the spirit of evangelism to create a warm, caring, and welcoming environment for people of all ages, races, sexual orientations, gender identities and church backgrounds to participate in the life and ministry of our church. (Memorial UCC’s constitution, July 2019)*

Congregational Life:

- Fellowship each Sunday morning—January through mid-June, following online worship services, virtual fellowship time was hosted on Zoom. Around 20 people regularly stayed to participate. The summer offered us the opportunity to begin offering blended worship. At the time, the Membership Committee coordinated prepackaged snacks and coffee on the patio outside Fellowship Hall. We are continuing to be responsive to the needs of the congregation. We hope to host fellowship inside the building whenever it is safe to do so.
- All Church Activities—Reconnecting with one another will be important as we come back together in the months ahead. In 2021, we offered several fun activities such as painting small pumpkins in October and Christmas ornaments in December. Pastor Kris has set up office hours in the front yard of the church, and at a local dog park. In all the changes, we want to affirm that having FUN and embracing JOY are part of who we are!
- Health Resource Nurse—Frances Mozer, LPN, has volunteered to help with medical questions, provide blood pressure checks, and offer other resources to Memorial. She surveyed the congregation to learn more about our needs and interests. This is a wonderful gift for the health and wellness of our community!

- Chariot Ministry—In June, we were able to relaunch the Chariot Ministry. Coordinated by Jeanne Prueher, this ministry supports people who need a ride to church on Sundays. In addition, the Membership Committee is available to help coordinate rides to medical appointments on a case-by-case basis.
- Online Directory—The Membership Committee collaborated with Jamie Gaffke, Church Administrator, to launch an online directory. Keeping up a database is always a work in progress. The online directory will help us to keep contact information current.
- Card Ministry—Donna Mullaly continues to do an amazing ministry sending cards to members and friends of Memorial. The Membership Committee also sends out cards on a regular basis. In the fall, Pastor Kris and Rebecca sent nearly 50 cards to the children and teenagers of the church as they returned to school. Pastor Kris sent sunflower seeds and cards out to the entire congregation as 2021 began, and Christmas cards as the year came to a close.
- Food Ministry—We have paused the Food Ministry during the pandemic.
- Prayer Chain—The prayer chain is hosted on Memorial’s Ever-Widening Circles FaceBook page. There are 96 people in the group. Prayers are also included in the weekly eNews.
- Over-80 Brunch—While the brunch has not been hosted since 2019, we have found other ways to connect to those in the congregation who are 80 years of age or older. This year, for those who are homebound, we took Valentine’s and Easter flowers to their homes.
- Care packages for college students—In December, during final exams, the Membership Committee arranged to have popcorn tins sent to students.
- First Friday Fellowship—February through May, Donna Mullaly and Rebecca Malke coordinated gatherings on Zoom. The group took a break during the summer and fall. We hope to be able to offer opportunities once again when we are able meet in-person.
- Birthdays—As we continued worshipping online, we were looking for new ways to celebrate YOU! One opportunity has been by recognizing birthdays on the 2nd Sunday of each month during worship.

Visitors, Transitions, and New Member Ministry:

- Two blended (in-person and on Zoom) New Member+ gatherings were hosted in the fall. Pastor Kris is coordinating with those who would like to join the church to find a date in 2022 to welcome new members during worship.

- Visitors have told us they have checked out our worship services on YouTube before attending in-person services. Others have stopped by the church to let us know they have been watching online throughout the pandemic and to say “thank you” for what we are doing.
- We want to acknowledge that the past 2 years has contributed to a lot of change in the life of our beloved church community. Several people have moved into skilled care and/or memory facilities. We have grieved as members have moved away to live closer to family. We have heard from others who been stretched by pandemic stressors and have subsequently decided to step back from church at this time.

Membership Committee Members: Jacy Boldebuck—chair, Rita Elver, Jeff Falkner, Becky Kuhl, Laura Mengar, Wendy Proctor, and Jim Veloff

Personnel Committee 2021

Dean Baumgardner, Terry Hoffman and Cathy Halpin (Chair) continued in their roles throughout 2021.

We held business meetings six times throughout the year to handle behind the scenes background checks, advise on vacation and pastoral coverage and clarify staff roles when needed. Additionally, we met several times to plan, amend and complete Pastor Kris's job review in preparation for setting 2022 goals.

Christina Schoenwetter joined staff as a pastoral intern. Additionally, Frances Mozer added a new role—health resource nurse—to her nursery lead position.

2021 was the first year of implementing longevity pay for staff. Pastor Kris, Rebecca Malke, Jonathan Schroelucke and Jeff Darwin each received a longevity pay increase. Along with Jamie Gaffke, we are so lucky to have them all at Memorial!

Outreach Committee 2021

The Outreach Committee is grateful to Ann Moffat for her many years of dedicated service as chair of Outreach and welcomed Kaitlin Young as the new chair.

The Outreach Committee is responsible for providing focus to the mission of MUCC by identifying needs in the local, national and world community to further MUCC's mission of reaching out in ever-widening circles as witnesses to God's all-inclusive love for the lonely, the hungry, and those hurting in body or in spirit. The committee identifies mission opportunities and helps coordinate the many volunteers from our congregation who reach out in service to our community and beyond through such programs as:

- Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry (GNPEP)
- Luke House
- Open Doors for Refugees
- Clothing drives
- CROP Walk
- Prison ministry
- Badger Prairie Needs Network (BPNN)
- Bright Stars of Bethlehem (Christmas Lutheran Church of Bethlehem Partnership)

Outreach is also responsible for coordinating special offerings, including:

- UCC mission programs: One Great Hour of Sharing, Neighbors in Need, Strengthen the Church and Christmas Fund
- Disaster relief
- Foundation for Black Women's Wellness

During 2021, the Outreach Committee distributed financial support through the 2nd Mile and Endowment Funds to support social service organizations. It also coordinated with Pastor Kris to provide direct financial support to people in need through the Ahrnsbrak Family Fund and Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

Giving Locally - Going the Second Mile - Four times a year, members of the congregation use special envelopes to make an extra "second-mile" donation to help fund many of the projects listed below. This year MUCC provided \$2,625 in support to the following organizations.

- \$ 1,250 - Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry
- \$ 500 - Allied Drive Eviction Prevention Fund
- \$ 475 - MOSES (Prison reform)
- \$. 500 - Just Dane
- \$. 150 - Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice
- \$. 250 - Worker Justice

Endowment Fund – Outreach directed \$2,830 from the MUCC Endowment fund to the following

programs.

\$380 - Bright Stars of Bethlehem (this support, plus \$4,120 raised by the Cookie and Craft Sale provided a full-year scholarship for a Palestinian student at Dar Al Kalima University in Bethlehem)

\$ 600 - MOSES Prison ministry

\$ 750 - Just Dane

\$ 130 - Arbor Covenant Church Community Garden

\$ 250 - Badger Prairie Needs Network

\$ 720 - Open Doors for Refugees

Ahrnsbrak Family and Pastor's Discretionary Funds - Direct support to individuals and families in need is coordinated with local social services agencies, such as Porchlight, RISE, the YWCA and Just Dane.

\$ 8,136 - Housing assistance

\$ 1,825 – Utilities

\$ 450 - Transportation

\$ 439 - Medical assistance

\$ 250 - Other support

Other Outreach Efforts

- ◆ In addition to direct financial support, volunteers from MUCC help operate the GNPEP at Arbor Covenant. Further, our congregation donated more than \$1,000 worth of pantry items through the *Product of the Month* program.
- ◆ A new initiative arising out of the *Black Lives Matter* movement raised \$19,425 for the Foundation for Black Women's Wellness in partnership with Arbor Covenant church. This special fund-raising campaign will continue in 2022.
- ◆ Each month more than 30 volunteers from MUCC provide a meal at Luke House for people in need. The group is excited to once again be serving in-person hot meals, since for much of the year 100 sack lunches were provided each month for distribution at the door due to Covid.
- ◆ Jim and Jan Hornik are active in refugee resettlement through Open Doors for Refugees and have inspired others from MUCC to get involved. MUCC's support provided bunkbeds for the children of Afghan families and other refugees coming to make new homes in Dane County. Open Doors is gearing up to assist more than 100 refugee families in 2022.
- ◆ ...and let's not forget the Crop Walk. Memorial's team of walkers with the help of the congregation raised \$2,475 to support the Dane County food pantries, as well as address hunger throughout the world.

Memorial UCC is truly blessed by the generosity of our congregation.

Committee Members: Kaitlin Young (Chair), Ann Moffat, Jan Klawitter, Lisa Schoenwetter, Ruth Schoenwetter, Shirley Robbins, Tiffani Roltgen, Kelly Jetzer, Dean Baumgardner (Council Liaison), Pastor Kris Gorton

The Outreach Committee always welcomes new members!

Special Events Committee 2021

For 2020 there were no in-person events due to COVID-19. When things get back to normal, we hope to resume Easter Breakfast, the Grill Out, Evenings of Music and other events as they develop.

The Special Events Committee is really an ad-hoc group led by Al Krug. Bill Jetzter and Jackie Neidhardt are the other core members. We have a regular group of volunteers.

Trustee Committee 2021

The Trustees are responsible for the care and custody of church property, including both the financial and physical assets. Significant changes were experienced this year, first we said goodbye to John VanOverbeke, as he and Bonnie moved closer to their daughter in Atlanta. John faithfully served as our Financial Secretary and Accountant for many years. As that door closed, however, a window opened, and we gratefully welcomed Cathy Halpin as the new Financial Secretary and Barb Stransky to fulfil the Accountant duties. Second, after many years of service, Jon Boldebuck stepped down as chair of the Trustees replaced by Dean Baumgardner.

The year was financially challenging, as well, with the church starting out with a deficit budget of more than \$25,000 in large part caused by the Covid pandemic. Generous contributions from the congregation and diligent work by the committees and staff helped cut the deficit in half with the remaining shortfall covered by the 'rainy day' reserves that the Trustees had set aside during better financial times.

Despite the challenges, much was accomplished to prepare for reopening of the building, including new carpeting and other improvements (see the Buildings and Grounds report) and the *Pave the Way Capital Campaign* raised the funds needed to repave the parking lot in 2022. On an ongoing basis, the Trustees perform the following duties:

- Record and deposit weekly contributions,
- Prepare giving statements to members,
- Prepare payroll for staff,
- Pay vendors for services,
- Prepare and review financial reports for Council and the Congregation,
- Prepare and present the operating budget for approval by the Congregation, and
- Manage and invest available funds, including the Endowment Fund, Arhnsbrak Fund, Memorial Funds, 2nd Mile funds and cash reserves.

The Trustees also updated the Endowment Fund Policy and determined that the church no longer needs a safety deposit box and instead secured documents on site in a fire resistant safe, as well as placing electronic copies in cloud storage. The Trustees further updated account access authorizations at all financial institutions used by Memorial UCC.

Trustees

Dean Baumgardner, Chair

Jon Boldebuck

John Dipko, Council Liaison

Cathy Halpin, Financial Secretary

Gary Johnson

Jay Schad, Treasurer

Barbara Stransky, Church Accountant

Building & Grounds Committee & Tech Team 2021

The Building and Grounds Committee is responsible for the physical real estate assets of the church, including the building and surrounding grounds. It is the mission of the committee to plan for the present and future needs of the facilities and to arrange for and oversee the day-to-day maintenance and long-term improvements.

The major project undertaken by the building and Grounds committee this year was the capital appeal to raise \$50,000 to go towards replacement of the parking lot. Thanks to generous donations from the congregation, we were able to raise \$63,315. The Trustees have earmarked an additional \$60,000 from the Major Maintenance Fund and Endowment Fund. The next step is for the congregation to vote on the project at the next annual meeting in January 2022.

Highlights of projects completed by the Tech Team:

- New 70" TV in the sanctuary
- Direct wired the sanctuary TV to the internet to reduce drop offs
- Misc. tweaking/improvements of streaming process in Media room
- New choir microphone
- Window shades approved/ordered to reduce glare in sanctuary
- Increased the internet speed.
- Additional people trained to run Media room - currently Jordan, Bill, and John Dipko

Highlights of projects completed by the Build and Grounds Committee:

- Ran a Capital appeal campaign to raise money for replacing the parking lot
- Working with a local civil engineer, secured updated bids for the parking lot replacement
- Held a spring cleanup day for the church grounds
- Replaced the furnace that serves the Sunday school rooms and nursery
- Improved the air filtration in the sanctuary, music, and youth rooms by installing Aprilaire air purifiers on the furnaces that serve those areas
- The new cork flooring in fellowship hall had to be replaced because it was installed incorrectly. The contractor did the replacement at no cost to the church
- The flagpole and flag on the front sign were replaced
- A motion sensor light was installed to light the area between the parking lot and car port
- The Sundell's dropped our custodial contract. Rebecca Malke was hired to fill the position
- LED bulbs were installed in the parking lot lights
- New fans were installed in the sanctuary
- The deck was power washed and re-stained
- A locking mailbox was installed
- A leak in the fire sprinkler system was repaired

Future large expenditures we want to bring to your attention:

- Replace furnace #3, which serves the music room
- Parking lot replacement (using funds from the capital appeal campaign and Major Maintenance Fund and Endowment Fund)

Building & Grounds Committee Members:

Jay Johnson - Chair
Dave Mengar
David Ast
Dean Baumgardner
Jon Boldebuck
Steve Gorton

Tech Team Committee Members:
Steve Gorton - Chair through 2021
Jordan Baumgart – Chair starting in 2022
Bill Jetzer
John Dipko
Joshua Gorton
Peter Young
Scott Oebser

Stewardship Committee 2021

For 2021, the Stewardship Committee focused on how our deep roots here at Memorial help us to reach out our branches to help the greater community. Keeping these roots strong helps us grow our church and our service to our community. We appreciate John and Cindy Rosch, Rebecca Malke, Tiffany Roltgen, and many others gathered by Pastor Kris, who shared their stories of what being part of Memorial UCC means to them. A special thanks to Peter Young for editing the videos. Despite all of the challenges facing our world, we kept our pledging steady. Thank you for your generosity!

A much-deserved shout out to Cathy Halpin must be mentioned as well. As our new financial secretary, she got to start her tenure off with the Stewardship Campaign and did a fantastic job. Thank you, Cathy!

We also awarded the annual Faith and Service awards, albeit later than usual! Michael Bryant and Cindy Rosch were honored in-person during the service in late December. It is one of the great joys of the Stewardship Committee to offer this award each year and it is a celebration to bring it back to in-person church.

Thank you for being the church and keeping our roots strong and our branches reaching out.

Kaitlin Young, Stewardship Committee Chair and Susan Webb, with assistance from Dick Runge, Pastor Kris, Jamie Gaffke, and Cathy Halpin

Worship Committee 2021

Worship Committee Mission: To provide support for the pastor and the music director as they design Worship experiences that teach, comfort, uplift, challenge and empower worshippers to live as God's ambassadors.

Worship Committee members: Cindy Rosch, Steve Gorton, Lynn Kepper, Sonjia Short and Mark Sieger, committee Chair. John Rosch, Council representative.

Worship Arts

2021 was a step in the right direction for the Worship Committee! The year started with no in-person services; Pastor Kris leading Sunday worship from the church sanctuary. This allowed our committee to design and install some creative decorations, although they were necessarily limited in scope.

On June 13th, we switched to our hybrid services, with some congregants participating in-person and others via digital platforms. Having in-person services provided our committee the opportunity to develop, in collaboration with Pastor Kris, Covid communion protocol, as well as decorate the church for World Communion Sunday, Fall seasonal decorations, Transition Sunday, Advent and Christmas.

We look forward to more in-person worship activities, while acknowledging the unpredictable nature of the pandemic. We will continue to adjust to the Covid influences and offer our creative arts as allowed.

Many thanks are in order for all those who made our worship experiences successful and meaningful this past year. This includes everyone involved in the technical aspects (website, sound, visual, other technical areas), ushers, and readers. Special thanks to Pastor Kris, whose dedication and digital expertise has continued to help our congregation navigate the Covid roller coaster.

Music

Music is included under the Worship Committee umbrella and there are many kudos to offer up to those who led and participated in the various music groups.

The pandemic has made the worship service music component much more difficult, and many churches have struggled in this area. MUCC, on the other hand, has really stepped up in this regard. It is truly amazing how many MUCC congregants have participated in the vocal, handbell and wind & string groups; directed by Jonathan Schroerlucke (choir), Betsy Robbins (handbells) and Mark Sieger (wind and string instruments). Massive THANKS to Jeff for the great piano playing, Jonathan for coordinating the many vocal offerings and Michael Bryant for his role as master digital music/visual magician.

One last time – THANK YOU to all those who participated in the direction, music making and/or production aspects of the music program.

The MUCC Worship Committee and music programs will continue their work to enhance the worship services, making them more meaningful and enjoyable.

Green Team 2021

The year 2021 saw the formation of a Green Team at Memorial UCC. This group will focus on the Kairos Challenge of caring for the earth for the next ten years. Members include:

Bill and Kelly Jetzer	Jacque Caravello	Cathy Halpin
Izzy Oebser	Cindy Rosch	Michael Bryant
Susan Webb	Rebecca Malke	Jill Carlson

Through the course of the year the Green Team discussed and filled out a lengthy application to become a Creation Justice Church. This has been sent to the Wisconsin Conference UCC. Members of our church will vote at the annual meeting on a motion to become a Creation Justice Church.

We also wrote this covenant for MUCC:

Because we are committed to eco-faith and eco-justice, Memorial UCC has welcomed planet Earth as a member of our congregation. We celebrate, restore and nurture the Earth so that future generations will be able to thrive on a clean, pollution-free planet. We affirm our responsibility to environmental stewardship and Earth justice to care for and nurture God's creation. We are dedicated to continue the sustainable efforts currently in place and to implement our Kairos sustainability goals for the beauty of the Earth.

In 2021 the Green Team organized and lead MUCC in several activities. First, was a congregation wide sampling of eco-friendly household and personal care products. Second, was a Nature Night held in August that included speakers, music, and healthy snacks. Third, was an all church reading of Braiding Sweetgrass. Thirty books were given to members. Finally, in Advent the Green Team hosted a shopping event which allowed church members to buy earth-friendly gifts for a reduced price.

The Green Team thanks you all for your enthusiastic support of our work this year. In 2022 we will be exploring our carbon footprints.

We will also discover ways to make our homes more energy efficient.





**Memorial
United Church of Christ**



2021 Financial Reports

*Prepared by:
Trustee Committee*

AHRNSBRAK ENDOWMENT FUND

Ahrnsbrak Endowment Fund Balance 12/31/2020	\$	240,377
2021 Vanguard Investment Net Asset Value Change	\$	15,257
2021 Vanguard Investment Dividends & Interest	\$	973
2021 Vanguard Spending Distribution	\$	(9,600)
Ahrnsbrak Endowment Fund Balance 12/31/2021	\$	247,006
Ahrnsbrak 2022 Distribution (4% of funds rounded to nearest \$100)	\$	9,900

The Ahrnsbrak Family Fund

		<u>Account Balance</u>
Balance in the fund as of 12/31/2020		\$ 259
2021 Income (40% of spending distribution)	\$ 3,840	
2021 Expense**	\$ 3,700	
Balance in the fund as of 12/31/2021		\$ 399
Ahrnsbrak 2022 Distribution		\$ 3,960
Total available for 2022		<u>\$ 4,359</u>

The Henry C. Ahrnsbrak Innovative Fund

Balance in the fund as of 12/31/2020		\$ 9,238
2021 Income (40% of spending distribution)	\$ 3,840	
2021 Expense	\$ 195	
Balance in the fund as of 12/31/2021		\$ 12,883
Ahrnsbrak 2022 Distribution		\$ 3,960
Total available for 2022		<u>\$ 16,843</u>

The Henry C. Ahrnsbrak Campership Fund

Balance in the fund as of 12/31/2020		\$ 1,838
2021 Income (20% of spending distribution)	\$ 1,920	
2021 Expense	\$ 660	
Balance in the fund as of 12/31/2021		\$ 3,098
Ahrnsbrak 2022 Distribution		\$ 1,980
Total available for 2022		<u>\$ 5,078</u>

TOTAL BALANCE IN AHRNSBRAK ACCOUNTS 12/31/21	\$	16,380
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MEMORIAL UCC ENDOWMENT FUND

Balance as of 12/31/2020	\$	81,427
<u>Income</u>		
Interest/Market Gain	\$	2,008
Total Income		\$ 2,008
<u>Expense</u>		
Outreach Expenses	\$	2,955
Major Maintenance Expenses	\$	5,000
Total Expense		\$ 7,955
Balance as of 12/31/2021	\$	75,480
Funds available for spending in 2022	\$	9,166

GIVING LOCALLY FUND

	2021			
	BEGIN. BAL.	INCOME	* EXPENSE	END. BAL.
Winter		\$ 1,703		
Spring		430		
Summer		650		
Fall		230		
Giving Locally	\$ 4,604	\$ 3,013	\$ 2,625	\$ 4,992

Note: 2021 Income = amount available to spend in 2022

BENEVOLENT FUNDS

2021

	<u>BEGIN. BAL.</u>		<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENSE</u>		<u>END. BAL.</u>
WI UCC Collections:							
Christmas Fund	\$ 755	\$	1,525	\$	1,955	\$	325
OGHS	\$ 50	\$	410	\$	460	\$	-
Neighbors In Need	\$ -	\$	150	\$	150	\$	-
Strengthen the Church	\$ -	\$	150	\$	150	\$	-
Other Benevolent Funds:							
GNP Essentials Pantry	\$ 200	\$	1,219	\$	1,109	\$	310
Crop Walk	\$ -	\$	110	\$	50	\$	60
Black Women's Wellness	\$ 8,322	\$	12,657	\$	19,425	\$	1,554
Luke House	\$ 88	\$	75	\$	161	\$	2
Pastor Discretionary	\$ 2,958	\$	5,153	\$	7,330	\$	781
Prison Ministry	\$ 1,294	\$	-	\$	-	\$	1,294
Environment Project	\$ 1,500	\$	475	\$	1,705	\$	270
Total Benevolent	\$ 15,167	\$	21,924	\$	32,494	\$	4,597

YOUTH AND MISC. FUNDS

2021

	<u>BEGIN. BAL.</u>		<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENSE</u>		<u>END. BAL.</u>
Confirmation	\$ 1,362	\$	62			\$	1,424
Youth Fund	\$ 50	\$	299			\$	349
Bethlehem Partnership	\$ (3)	\$	4,465	\$	4,462	\$	-
Tech Team*	\$ 10,000			\$	8,329	\$	1,671
Total Youth and Misc.	\$ 11,408	\$	4,826	\$	12,790	\$	3,444

* Beginning Balance = \$5,000 WI Conference grant + \$5,000 match from MUCC

MEMORIAL/GIFT FUND

Balance as of 12/31/2020		\$ 32,466
<u>Income</u>		
Memorials and Gifts	\$ -	
Total Income		\$ -
<u>Expense</u>		
Memorial Garden	\$ 2,091	
Orchard		
Total Expense		<u>\$ 2,091</u>
Balance as of 12/31/2021		\$ 30,375

BUILDING FUND

Balance as of 12/31/2020		\$ 60,793
<u>Income</u>		
Pave the Way Capital Campaign for Parking Lot replacement	\$ 63,315	
Major Maintenance Contributions	\$ 5,250	
Total Income		<u>\$ 68,565</u>
<u>Expense</u>		
Major Maintenance Project Costs	\$ 1,600	
Total Expense		<u>\$ 1,600</u>
Building Fund Balance as of 12/31/2021		\$ 127,758

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET FOR 2022

<u>INCOME:</u>	<u>YR 2021 ACTUAL</u>	<u>YR 2022 BUDGET</u>
Pledges	\$ 235,097	\$ 237,619
Non-Pledge Contributions	15,605	9,500
Loose Plate	551	500
Sunday School Collections	-	25
Interest Income	64	60
Other Income	2,588	4,100
Special Programs	-	-
In/Out Accounts	24	-
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$ 253,929</u>	<u>\$ 251,804</u>
<u>EXPENSE:</u>		
Administration:		
Office Expense	9,023	8,829
Administration Expense	6,026	3,809
Pastor Salary & Housing Allowance	64,214	67,617
Pastor Benefits	28,021	29,551
Pastor Mileage/Edu/Dues	1,859	2,250
Church Administrator Salary	28,000	28,840
Church Administrator Benefits	13,912	14,368
Church Administrator Mileage/Edu	9	600
Dir. Faith Dvlpmt Salary	24,513	25,574
Dir. Faith Dvlpmt Benefits	13,062	14,020
Dir. Faith Dvlpmt Mileage/Edu	326	875
Lay Staff Salaries & Benefits	25,758	27,652
Other Leadership Expenses	235	1,350
 Committees:		
Building and Grounds	25,817	29,493
Music	1,597	550
Worship	1,034	800
Faith Development	3,988	8,278
Special Events	-	200
Membership	943	2,168
OCWM	9,152	9,152
TOTAL EXPENSE	<u>\$ 257,489</u>	<u>\$ 275,976</u>
 OPERATING BUDGET SURPLUS/(LOSS)	 \$ (3,560)	 \$ (24,172)

Vital Statistics 2021

Active Members	161 (173 in 2020)
New members	0
Deaths	1
Status change	11
Friends of MUCC	58 (56 in 2020)
Children (0-17)	29 (49 in 2020)

Baptisms:

Aiden Frawley September 26, 2021

Confirmands:

No confirmands to report in 2021

New Members:

No new members to report in 2021

Deaths:

Larry Freng August 12, 2021

Worship data—an Old Metric with a New Understanding

How many people are in worship each Sunday? For decades, the number of people in worship was the defining metric of the health of a congregation. However, we know the number of people in the United States who identify as Christian has been steadily decreasing² and Madison, Wisconsin ranks as the 11th most “post-Christian” city³ in the country. For years the United Church of Christ has been encouraging churches to change metrics and instead focus on our **ministries**, what we do to care for one another, as well as how we reach out to our community in response to God’s love as the primary measures of church vitality. They have asked us to consider new questions: 1). How many people have we connected with this year *inside* the church building? 2). How many people have we touched... *outside the building?*

² “In U.S., Decline of Christianity Continues at Rapid Pace,” Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project, June 9, 2020, <https://www.pewforum.org/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace/>.

³ “The Most Post-Christian Cities in America: 2019,” Barna Group, accessed January 12, 2022, <https://www.barna.com/research/post-christian-cities-2019/>.

Worship attendance for 2021 is best understood through 2 lenses: January-June and July-December. Yet old habits are hard to change, and we still like to know how many people are in worship each Sunday! The first 6 months Memorial UCC worshiped online via Zoom and FaceBook. This shifted on June 13, when we moved to in-person and live-streaming onto YouTube and Zoom. While we are not able to collect an exact number of people in worship each Sunday, the tables below reflect the various data we are able to collect from the platform indicated.

January-June 6 2021 as tracked by Zoom* and FaceBook* while Memorial was fully online.

Jan 1 – June 6, 2021	# Devices logged into Zoom during worship *	Worshiping on FaceBook	
		Views	Peak Live Viewers
Total Number	1376	2720	235
Average per service	66	129	11

*Each device may represent an individual or an entire family.

June 13-December 2021 as tracked after Memorial moved to blended worship: in-person, Zoom*, and YouTube*.

June 13 – Dec 19	In-person	# Devices logged into Zoom during worship *	YouTube
Total Number	1041	765	1081
Average per service	40	27	39
Dec 26 (virtual service)	11	27	79

*Each device may represent an individual or an entire family.

Average Sunday attendance in 2020:

Worship attendance for 2020 is best understood through 2 different lenses: January-March and March-December. In-person worship attendance averaged 111 people January through early March.

Memorial transitioned fully online at the end of March. The data below was collected from Zoom* & FaceBook*

March-Dec 2020	# Devices logged into Zoom during worship *	Worshiping on FaceBook	
		Views	Peak Live Viewers
Total Number	2,972	6,054	547
Average per service	69	137	14

*Each device may represent an individual or an entire family.

Memorial United Church of Christ

Annual Meeting Minutes

January 31, 2021

(Note: Due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the meeting was held over the internet using the Zoom conferencing program. Steve Gorton, Chair of the Technology Committee and Jamie Gaffke, Church Administrator, served as 'virtual ushers' and documented that a quorum of the membership was participating on Zoom. Members voted electronically by way of a survey poll administered by Jamie Gaffke.)

Pastor Kris opened the meeting with a prayer.

Words from the President: Dean Baumgardner, Council President, welcomed everyone and provided instruction and guidance on how to vote on Zoom. Dean thanked members and friends for their continued good works, despite Covid-19, at Luke House, the crop walk, the Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry, the Foundation for Black Women's Wellness and on many other social justice issues. We continue to "be the church" despite being physically distanced from each other.

Approval of the 2020 Annual Minutes: Jim Velloff moved, seconded by Jan Klawitter, to approve the January 26, 2020 annual meeting minutes. Motion approved.

Life of the Church: Pastor Kris provided a video look at "How it Started vs How It's Going Now" noting pre-COVID processes and current activities within the congregation's life with staff messages from Jeff Darwin, Jamie Gaffke, Rebecca Malke and Jonathan Schroerlucke on their ministries. Many thanks in Izzy Oebser and Pastor Kris for their work on producing this video!

Election of Council Members: Sonjia Short moved, seconded by Jan Klawitter, to elect John Rosch, Dean Baumgardner and Cathy Halpin to a second two-year Council term and Sue Webb to a third two-year term. Motion approved.

2021 Budget: Jon Boldebuck, Chair of Trustees, first thanked past Chairman Gary Johnson along with all of the Trustees for their hard work and extensive guidance throughout the past year. Jon introduced the 2021 budget proposal as a 'worst case' scenario. It projects 12 full months of expenses as if there were no Covid closures and also projects reduced income due to Covid closures. This results in a \$26,700 projected deficit in 2021. Trustees will keep the congregation updated at least quarterly on the budget during the year. John VanOverbeke responded to questions from the floor on administrative and secretarial salary and clarified some roll-ups of combined category totals. It was noted that funds raised for the Foundation for Black Women's Wellness initiative are 'pass-thru' funds separate from the operational budget. Also, the proposed budget does not include funding for

parking lot resurfacing this year. There are sufficient cash reserves to cover the deficit if necessary. Sonjia Short moved, seconded by Jan Klawitter, to approve the 2021 budget. Motion approved.

MUCC Covid-19 Response and Reopening Plan: John Rosch, Council Vice President, reminded us of Jesus's command "to love one another" as we continue to react to Covid. During 2020 Council with support from staff developed a detailed plan for reopening the building. While we are still in Stage 1 of the plan - no in-person, indoor groups - there is hope for improvement as we continue to monitor the situation, adhere to medical science and look forward to once again worshipping together in person. In the meantime...keep being the Church!

Foundation for Black Women's Wellness Initiative: Kaitlin Young thanked everyone for their generous financial support during the Advent/Epiphany campaign. Over \$15,000 was collected for this group, exceeding the goal of \$10,000. This is the first year of a five-year fund raising initiative that will be run each year during Advent and Epiphany.

Creation Justice Environmentally Friendly Products Initiative: Cindy Rosch invited anyone interested in joining a group on the subject to contact her. In addition, she updated the congregation on the UCC grant and matching Memorial funds used to purchase environmentally friendly products, such as laundry detergent, doggy poo bags and bar shampoo, to test and share with each other and the Personal Essential Pantry clients.

Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Halpin

Annual Congregational Meeting

Agenda

January 30, 2022

Following the 9:30 am virtual Service via Zoom

Opening Prayer – Pastor Kris Gorton

- I. Approval of the January 31, 2021 Minutes - Cathy Halpin
- II. Words from the Council President – John Rosch
- III. Life of the Congregation – Pastor Kris Gorton
- IV. Election of Council Members
 - a. Jeanne Prueher (1st Term)
 - b. Jacquie Caravello (2nd Term)
 - c. John Diplo (2nd Term)
 - d. Dick Runge (2nd Term)
- V. 2021 Financial Report – Barb Stransky
- VI. Other business
 - a. Approval of the Updated Endowment Fund Policy - Dean Baumgardner
 - b. Approval of recommendation to proceed with repaving the parking lot - Jay Johnson
 - c. Creation Justice Church Declaration – Cindy Rosch
 - d. Approval of recommendation to adopt the 2022 Operating budget – Dean Baumgardner
 - e. Other business
- VII. Adjourn