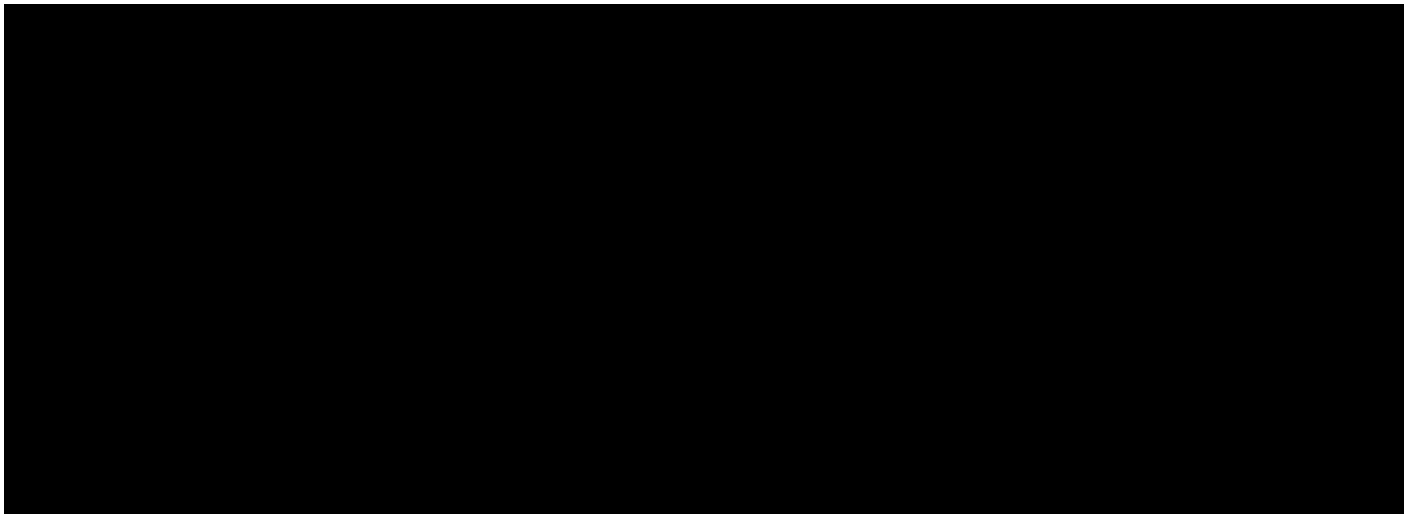


ANNUAL REPORT

2019



Union Congregational Church

Rev. Dr. Aaron Pratt Shepherd, Pastor
Dr. Linda Jiorle-Nagy, Director of Music
Beverly Sellers, Office Manager
Chris O'Brien, Sexton



55 Rhoades Avenue East Walpole, Massachusetts 02032 www.churchbythepark.org

Annual Report for 2019

Table of Contents

Warrant for the January 26, 2020 Meeting	2
Church Covenant and Mission Statement	3
Church Covenant for Working Together	4
Non-Economic Covenant between the Pastor and Congregation	5-6
Minutes of the January 27, 2019 Annual Meeting	7-8
Minutes of the Annual Meeting Continuation March 24, 2019	9
Minutes of the Special Congregational Meeting May 5, 2019	10
Statistical Report	11-15
Pastor's Annual Report	16
Annual Report of the Diaconate	17-18
Annual Report of the Prudential Committee	19-20
Annual Report of the Director of Music	21
Annual Report of the Ushers	22
Annual Report for the Christian Outreach Committee	23-4
Annual Report of the Personnel Relations Committee	25
Church Historian's Report	26
Highlights from 2019	27-8
Memorial Gifts Annual Report	29
Annual Report from Breaking Bread	29
Lay Delegate Report	30
Annual Report for the Stewardship Committee	30
Annual Report for the Nominating Committee	31-32
Report for Christian Education Committee & Sunday School Superintendent	33
Annual Report for the Summer Mission Trip	34
Annual Report for the Apple Harvest Fair	35

Warrant for the Annual Church Meeting
of
Union Congregational Church
East Walpole, Massachusetts

To the members of the Union Congregational Church, East Walpole, Massachusetts:

You are hereby requested to attend the Annual Meeting of the Church at 11:15 AM on Sunday, the 26th of January 2020 to act upon the following articles.

Article I. Devotions, Remembrances and Appreciations

Article II. To accept the minutes of the January 27, 2019 Annual Meeting and the March 24, 2019 continuation of Annual Meeting, and the May 5, 2019 special meeting to vote on the candidate call.

Article III. To receive and take appropriate action upon the reports of the Pastor, Clerk, and all other reports required by the Church by-laws.

Article IV. To hear the report of the Nominating Committee, so that the congregation can elect such individuals to positions as required by the Church by-laws; also to administer the oath of office to the elected Officers of the Church.

Article V. To receive, take appropriate action and adopt a budget for the year 2020, and act on motion submitted by Prudential previously: Prudential recommends that year-end financial reporting be split into two segments. At Annual Meeting the next year's operating budget will be presented. On the 4th Sunday of February, the final Year-End Financial Statements will be presented along with the Audit Report and Investment Report.

Article VI. To review and approve the Non-Economic Covenant between the pastor and the church.

Article VII. To transact any new business that can legitimately be done at this session

Article VIII. Adjournment

Respectfully submitted

Lynn Golden, Clerk

COVENANT

The covenant by which this Church exists as a distinct body and which every member accepts is as follows:

Acknowledging Jesus Christ to be our Savior and Lord, and accepting the Holy Scriptures (the Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments) as our rule of faith and practice, and recognizing the privilege of uniting ourselves for Christian fellowship, and the enjoyments of Christian ordinance, the public worship of God, and the advancement of God's Kingdom in the world, do now in the sight of God and invoking God's blessing solemnly covenant and agree with each other to associate ourselves to be a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, as is warranted by the word of God.

We agree to maintain the institutions of the Gospel, to submit ourselves to the orderly administration of the affairs of the Church, and to walk together in neighborly love.

And this we do depending upon the aid of our Gracious God, who "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son for our salvation" (John 3:16), and of Jesus Christ who has redeemed us with His blood, and of the Holy Spirit, our comforter and guide.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of this Church is to know, love and serve God who is revealed to us in the incarnation of Jesus the Christ, and to do all within our power to be God's Kingdom in this place. God is a vital, comforting and energizing presence in our lives. Through worship, music, study, and scriptures we are empowered to witness to our faith beyond the doors of this Church and into our world. We are individuals brought together as a family with a common purpose: We will love, support and encourage one another as we seek justice and peace for all peoples, and strive for the respect and dignity of all God's creation which we believe is precious and good. We cannot do this alone, but rely on God's grace to help us and lead us in our endeavors.

**, A Covenant for Working Together at
Union Congregational Church, U.C.C.
East Walpole, MA**

As a faithful congregation, striving to follow the Golden Rule¹ and reaching out to each other in Christian love and care, we covenant with one another to “speak the truth in love.”²

which for us means:

- Speak only for yourself
- Communicate directly – be honest and truthful
- Only say outside the meeting what you are willing to say inside the meeting
- Identify the merit in an idea before noting its weaknesses
- Avoid assumptions and abstain from demeaning statements, acknowledge that situations can be perceived and experienced in different ways
- Listen to understand, acknowledging we won’t always agree
- Be clear about expectations, share openly and keep everyone informed
- Maintain and respect confidentiality
- Accept and appreciate our differences and unique gifts
- Be inclusive
- Hold ourselves and each other accountable
- Forgive, remembering we are all human
- Once dealt with, let issues go – do not hold grudges
- Adhere to all bylaws and approved policies
- After faithful and covenantal dialogue, support congregational decisions
- Include God in the conversation using prayer and scripture

¹“Do unto others as you would have them do to you.” – Luke 6:31

²“But speaking the truth in love, we may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.” - Ephesians 4:15

**A Non- Economic Covenant
between
The Rev. Dr. Aaron Pratt Shepherd, Pastor
and
Union Congregational Church, UCC, EastWalpole, MA**

The membership of Union Congregational Church solemnly and joyfully enters into this covenant with our pastor, The Rev. Dr. Aaron Pratt Shepherd.

Recognizing the governing principles as defined in the Constitution and By-Laws of the church as adopted, we adopt this covenant as evidence of our commitment to promote a harmonious working relationship between the membership and the pastor. We believe that these mutual agreements and understandings will be of benefit to the church in promoting its ministries and in fostering its continued prosperity and growth.

Each of us promises to support by our prayers and actions this Pastor-Church Covenant. We prayerfully request the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit in this endeavor.

The Pastor's Expectations of the Congregation

- TRUST in the pastor as a person of integrity, dedicated to the work of ministry, and as a competent professional person who can manage the use of time wisely.
- SUPPORT for the pastor's leadership through faithful prayer, and by each member participating in the life and ministry of the church.
- CONSULTATION with the pastor about church affairs before decisions are made so that the church can benefit from his training and expertise, and so that the work of the church can be effectively coordinated.
- CONCERN for the welfare of the pastor and his family as evidenced by prayerful support and an annual review of total compensation within the budget process, as well as a semi-annual performance review by the Diaconate and personnel committees.
- AUTHORITY for the pastor to approve or disapprove the coming of guest ministers and religious groups to the church, and to supervise all paid employees of the church.

The Church's Expectations of the Pastor

- COMPETENCY in ministry through well-prepared sermons, regular visitation where there is a need, pastoral care in crisis situations, administrative and organizational leadership, and the improvement of pastoral skills through continued study.
- AVAILABILITY by providing contact information during the week and by providing contact information while away from the church field.
- LEADERSHIP in worship services, evangelistic outreach efforts, the development of a Christian education program, and the administrative work of the church in cooperation with the church's leaders.
- FAITHFULNESS to the Word of Christ in this congregation of the United Church of Christ (UCC), as it is attested in scripture, the theological traditions of the UCC, and the life of this community.
- COOPERATION with civic and community organizations and with compatible inter-denominational endeavors.

The Pastor's Obligation to the Church

- To fulfill the duties of the office of pastor as presented in the church by-laws and written covenants.
- To seek to meet the spiritual needs of the congregation through preaching and teaching God's word and celebrating the rites and Sacraments of the church.
- To meet the reasonable expectations of the congregation as its minister while at the same time living a life that is led by the Holy Spirit.
- To manage money with integrity so as not to injure the witness of the church.
- To accept the church as an imperfect organization composed of imperfect people who must be loved and forgiven, to work with the elected leaders of the church, and to be the pastor of all the people in the church.
- To acknowledge that constructive criticism from the congregation can be helpful and to be open enough to accept it and profit by it.
- To recognize the resources of the Southern New England Conference of the UCC and use them when appropriate.

The Church's Obligation to the Pastor

- To respect the role and call of the pastor and to support the pastor's ministry.
- To guarantee the pastor freedom of the pulpit.
- To allow the pastor time and freedom to have a personal life separate from church obligations and to respect the boundaries of the Pastor and his family. Expectations of the pastor's family are the same as any other member of the church.
- To provide for the pastor's support to the best of the church's ability and to review annually the pastor's compensation as evidence of the church's care and concern.
- To recognize that the pastor is human, may make mistakes, and needs forgiveness like everyone else. Time constraints may not allow him to fulfill everyone's expectations.

Matters of Mutual Agreement

- The pastor and Congregation will abide by all existing church by-laws and covenants.
- If there is a disruptive conflict in the church, the pastor and the congregation shall mutually agree to seek competent help from The Metropolitan Boston Association of the Southern New England Conference of the UCC.

Minutes of the Annual Meeting January 27, 2019

Following the Sunday morning worship service, the meeting was called to order by Clerk Lynn Golden at 11:25 a.m. There were 29 members present at the time the meeting was called to order. Joe Maiewski was named moderator pro tempore.

The covenant was read by Lynn Golden

ARTICLE I

Devotions were lead by Rev. Wayne Earl.

A moment of remembrance was shared for the deceased members and friends of the church as noted on page 5 of the Clerk's report.

The following appreciations were noted:

- Michael Keimig thanks all the members for the support and work at the fair, especially Cathy Feely - Silent auction, Barbara Maiewski & Cheryl Cain - food, and Laurie Kerns - signs and banners.
- Linda Jiorle-Nagy for the junior choir families and the senior choir.
- Carol Sandahl – Linda for her many talents, Wayne, Sarah, Kerry Ryan and Chris.
- Barbara Maiewski - Ken Sandahl for all the outreach deliveries.
- Nancy Farris - Barbara Maiewski for her work with Breaking Bread & church kitchen duties, David Cain and all who bail her out.
- Lew Howes - Margie Shirosky for the Sunday School programs.
- Wayne Earl - Delighted to serve with you all and grow together.
- Rich Keen - All who serve on a committee.
- Joe Maiewski - Mike Keimig for all you do - fair chair, Nancy Farris for your involvement in so many areas

ARTICLE II

The minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting were accepted as written.

ARTICLE III

The reports of the Minister and Clerk and all other reports were accepted as written.

ARTICLE IV

Mike Keimig, presented for the Nominating Committee, the slate of officers and committee members as documented in the Annual Report and the following changes: Outreach - Carol Sandahl was included in error.

Nominations from the floor were opened. Memorial gifts - add Barbara Maiewski & Judy Rummell. Prudential - add Mike Keimig. Outreach - add Joe Maiewski.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Nominating Committee's slate of officers and committees as presented, plus the nominations from the floor. The motion passed unanimously. The oath of office was administered to Moderator Nancy Farris, Clerk Lynn Golden, and Asst. Treas. Mike Keimig by Lynn Golden.

-Note the oath of office was administered to Treasurer Kerry Ryan at a later date-

ARTICLE V

Mike Keimig presented the treasurer's report for Kerry Ryan. Penny Murdock donation will be moved to memorial gifts.

Specific questions were reviewed on the treasurer's report.

Prudential submitted a continuation motion: Prudential has not had an opportunity to review the financial statements, and the auditors have not had an opportunity to audit them so a continuation on these reports is requested to a date in March. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Budget discussion continued - a deficit budget is proposed. Linda Jiorle-Nagy noted that the \$950 for the junior choir instruction can be removed.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Budget, and approved.

ARTICLE VI

Pam Doty asked that everyone keep in mind that eventually we would like to get back to a full time pastor.

Laurie Kerns asked related to the request for increased pledges - is prudential looking for new pledges, or an increase in giving beyond what was pledged.

No additional new business.

ARTICLE VII

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Ellen Golden

Clerk

Minutes of the Annual Meeting continuation
March 24, 2019

Following the Sunday morning worship service, the meeting was called to order by Clerk Lynn Golden at 11:30 a.m. There were 23 members present at the time the meeting was called to order. Joe Maiewski was named moderator pro tempore.

The covenant was read by Lynn Golden

Rich Keen summarized why we are holding this meeting. There was not enough time between the end of the year and the annual meeting to close the books, have prudential review the statements, and have the auditors re-view.

ARTICLE I

Updates to the treasurer's report that was handed out in January.

The amount in question about the parsonage rent. The utilities were originally offset by the rental income, but that has been adjusted to more accurately reflect the expenses.

The payment for the junior choir has been removed

The endowment has been changed to add Penny Murdock \$50,000 donation. Motion to approve was made and seconded - approved unanimously.

ARTICLE II

Auditors report was handed out.

Motion to approve was made and seconded - approved unanimously.

Investment account analysis was handed out.

Motion handed out by prudential:

Prudential recommends that year-end financial reporting be split into two segments. At annual meeting the next year operating budget will be present along with preliminary Year-end financial statements. On the 4th Sunday of February, the final Year-end financial statements will be presented along with the Audit Report and the investment report.

A question was raised on whether there was a need to change the by-laws. This will be looked in to.

Motion to approve was made and seconded - approved unanimously.

ARTICLE III

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Ellen Golden

Clerk

Minutes of the Special Meeting

May 5, 2019

Following the Sunday morning worship service, the meeting was called to order by Moderator Nancy Farris at 11:17 a.m. There were 35 members present at the time the meeting was called to order.

ARTICLE I To vote upon extending a call to Dr. Aaron Pratt Shepherd as the pastor of our church starting on or about July 1, 2019. A motion was made by Pam Doty from the search committee and seconded to accept the recommendation of the search committee. MOTION : that we extend a call to Dr. Aaron Pratt Shepherd as our next minister and accept the mutually agreed upon compensation package. Roger Bridgeman presented a summary of the process and Aaron's background. He will be a $\frac{3}{4}$ time pastor and reside in the parsonage. Rich Keen presented a summary of the compensation package and the contract process. Questions - - Aside from a normal schedule what happens if something comes up on day's off. Joanne responded that needs will be covered. - Andrea asked who, in diaconate, the contract went to - response - the chairs. - Nancy asked when is the contract signed - response - today. - Lauren D - if their insurance is lost what is done - response - we will pick it up. - Doug G noted that wedding and funeral compensation is separate. - The vote was unanimously passed (40 -0)

Aaron was brought back to the sanctuary and were greeted by applause. He was advised that the vote was passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Ellen Golden Clerk

Statistical Report – 2019

	<u>Active</u>
Membership 12/31/18	113
Members lost by death	-3
Members lost by transfer	-2
Members terminated	-0
Members moved to inactive	-0
New Members	1
Members moved to active	2
Members gained by transfer	2
Confirmands	<u>0</u>
Membership 12/31/19	113

Friends of the Church - 12

Deaths of Active Members:

1/9/19	Kistra Damaso
5/10/19	Janet Grant
9/2/19	Peggy C. Turnquist

Deaths - wider church

Nell Domina

Transfers out:

4/11/19	Kevin Thompson
4/11/19	Esther Rendon-Thompson

New Members:

12/8/19	Joanne Every
	Aaron Shepherd
	Whitney Shepherd

Members moved to active: Kenneth Myers
Heather (Kerns) Labenski

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP		
AICARDI	NANCY	1
AVERY	JANET	1
BARRETT JR	MARTIN AND SUSAN	2
BEMKO	CHRISTINE	1
BRIDGEMAN	ROGER	1
BROWN	RAY	1
BUFFINGTON	PETER	1
CAIN	DAVID AND CHERYL	2
CAIN	DANIEL	1
CALUSDIAN	CHARLES AND JANET	2
CARLSON	ELSA	1
CARROLL	BARBARA	1
CHALLIS	SUSAN	1
CHALLIS	MARY	1
CUTLER	PAM	1
CUTLER	PAULINE	1
DINICOLA	DANIEL	1
DINICOLA	DAVID	1
DINICOLA	JEFF AND KIM	2
DONALDSON	DIEDRE	1
DOOLAN	ANDREA	1
DOTY	MEREDITH	1
DOTY	PAM	1
DOTY	ROSS	1
DURSO	LAUREN	1
EVERY	JOANNE	1
FARRIS	NANCY	1
FEELEY	CATHY	1
GEARTY	PETER, SR.	1
GEARTY	PETER, JR.	1
GEARTY	DONNA	1
GOLDEN	ERIKA	1
GOLDEN	JACOB	1
GOLDEN	LYNN	1

GRANT	CHICK	1
GRANT	CHUCK AND JOANNE	2
GUSTAFSON	DOUG	1
HAZELDINE	JAMES AND JACKIE	2
HEBARD	CORRINE	1
HOWES	LEW	1
HUSSEY	SUSAN	1
JIORLE-NAGY	LINDA	1
KEARNEY	DONNA	1
KEEN	RICHARD	1
KEIMIG	MIKE AND BARBARA	2
KERNS	SCOTT AND LAURIE	2
KERNS	BENJAMIN	1
KERNS	NOAH	1
LABENSKI	HEATHER	1
LEWIS	SUZANNE	1
MACLEAN	DYAN	1
MAHONEY	JOSEPH AND JENNIFER WAG- NER	2
MAHONEY	JOHN AND KATHERINE	2
MAIEWSKI	JOE, SR AND BARBARA	2
MASCIARI	JOAN	1
MCMACKIN	JANE	1
MCMILLAN	BROOKE	1
MISRA	CHAYA	1
MISRA	KAREN	1
MYERS	KENNETH	1
NICOLAOU	ASTRID	1
NIXON	PHYLLIS AND PETER	2
OELSCHLAGEL	GEORGE AND PHYLLIS	2
PILLING	ALICE	1
RAMIREZ	YOMARA	1
RIEGEL	DENNIS & JUDITH HAMILTON	2
RUMMELL	JUDITH	1
RYAN	KERRY	1
SANDAHL	KEN AND CAROL	2
SANDAHL	DANIELLE	1

RIEGEL	DENNIS & JUDITH HAMILTON	2
RUMMELL	JUDITH	1
RYAN	KERRY	1
SANDAHL	KEN AND CAROL	2
SANDAHL	DANIELLE	1
SCOTT	FRAN	1
SCOTT	DEIDRE	1
SENATORE	DAVID AND MADELENE	2
SENATORE	DAVID	1
SENATORE	SOLYMAR	1
SHEPHERD	AARON AND WHITNEY	2
SHIROSKY	ANNA	1
SHIROSKY	JOHN AND MARGIE	2
STRATTON	JACQUELINE	1
STRATTON	JOANNE	1
STRATTON	KIRSTEN	1
TALBOT	KIM	1
TARBELL	JOESEPH	1
THAYER	HORACE AND MARTHA	2
TOTTEN	ANN	1
TURNQUIST	NELSON	1
WALSH	DAVID AND AVA	2
WASSEL	BILL AND LYNNE	2
WEISSENT	PODGIE	1
WEYLMAN	CHRIS	1
WESSEL	JUDY	1
WHITE	PEG	1
	TOTAL	113
FRIENDS OF THE CHURCH		
BROWN	LAURA MARTIN	1
GUSTAFSON	KATHY	1
MISRA	ASHA	1
MISRA	ESHAN	1
MISRA	NITESH	1
MISRA	TUSHAR	1

WASSEL	SCOTT	1
WASSEL	AMANDA	1
WASSEL	LINDSEY	1
WASSEL	MICHELLE	1
WASSEL	TREVOR	1
WEYLMAN	BILL	1
	TOTAL	12

2019 Pastor's Annual Report Rev. Dr. Aaron Pratt Shepherd

My report begins on February 5th, 2019, when I received a message from the search committee here at Union extending an invitation for an interview. After a number of conversations, visits to East Walpole, and much prayerful consideration, I was grateful to accept the call to be your new settled pastor on May 5th. In late June, I was ordained to this ministry at a worship service at the church I grew up in back in Oregon. As part of that service, I was given a charge by the minister there, who told me, echoing the words of Matthew 28:18-20, that in my ministry I should *go, make disciples, teach, and remember*. These are the instructions Jesus gave to his disciples—all his disciples—and they remain my/our guiding purpose in ministry here together.

Go – In the six months since becoming pastor of Union Congregational, I have travelled throughout the area, meeting the members of this church and making connections within the local community and the wider United Church of Christ. I have made visits and provided pastoral care in emergencies. I've also spent time with members who aren't physically able to be in worship. Beginning in my very first week, I accepted an invitation to collaborate with three other clergy in town to start a Multi-Church Youth Group, which has been up and running since October 2019. I have also gone to meetings, to prayer vigils, to denominational trainings and meetings, and I have explored (along with my son Brady) nearly every last inch of Bird Park.

Make Disciples – I have led worship and administered the sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism. I was privileged and honored to be a part of the baptisms of Hayden Urban and Arlee Connor in 2019, and to bring new liturgies and sensibilities to the service of Holy Communion. In addition, I was blessed to provide pastoral care to the Turnquist family, and lead the worship service at Union in celebration of the life of Peggy Turnquist. From week to week, I have endeavored to craft faithful liturgy for lay leaders on Sunday morning that helps to create a prayerful and inspiring experience in worship. I've also introduced new ways to include children in worship services and in the broader life of the congregation. I am also continuing to meet and build relationships with members and friends of the church, to seek out new opportunities for engagement in ministry together.

Teach – In the six months I have had the privilege of the pulpit here at Union, I have grown as a preacher in my capacity to interpret the Word of God to the people of this congregation. During the summer months, I began my preaching ministry at Union with the text of Paul's Letter to the Colossians. During the Stewardship season, I preached on the topic *Be the Church*. I also continue to work with the leadership of the church in meetings to guide and inspire them with fresh ideas and observations. I have benefited from the feedback I've received, and will continue to find ways to inspire and uplift through my sermons and teaching.

Remember – Since before accepting the call to minister here, I came to know how significant the traditions of this church are in its life. I began familiarizing myself with its history (both good times and bad), as well as the practices and events that are central to life together here (the Apple Harvest Fair, the Love Table, the Hanging of the Greens, the Christmas Season, etc.). I have worked to implement the mission and vision of this church to be a caring community that loves and serves all. I continue to learn more each day, but also draw upon all that I have learned in my own faith journey, my training in seminary, and my professional experience prior to coming to Union.

Jesus said, "Remember: I am with you always." I am grateful that Christ has been with me, guiding me to this place, to serve alongside such wonderful people in the life and ministry of Union Congregational Church.

In Grace and Peace,

Pastor Shepherd

Annual Report of the Diaconate for 2019

The year began during All Church Retreat, with Joe Maiewski being elected Head Deacon on February 2nd. The Deacons would like to compliment Christine Bemko for organizing the collection of hygiene kits for the Church World Service during our All Church Retreat. She elicited the help of adult and youth volunteers to organize the kits.

The deacons discussed a concern about our church needing more publicity about what we do. Roger Bridgeman placed announcements in the Home Town Weekly about our up-coming Easter celebration. Also, a banner was placed near the entrance where most school business goes through.

Joe presented an Easter service task list which will be useful for future deacons. An Ash Wednesday service and Maundy Thursday service were conducted in the chapel. The Maundy Thursday involved a series of readings by volunteers, followed by the serving of communion. Rev. Wayne Earle led us in the above services, as well as the sunrise service in Bird Park and the Easter service in the sanctuary.

We are grateful to the Search Committee of Pam Doty (chair person), Roger Bridgeman, Joanne Grant, Judy Rummell and Suzanne Lewis for their hard work in searching and selecting a candidate. They presented to us Rev. Dr. Aaron Shepherd on May 5th. He received an unanimous vote of approval. His first day was July 8th and celebrated worship with us on July 14th. We celebrated our last worship and communion service with Pastor Wayne Earle on July 7th. We are very pleased with the job he did in leading us through our interim process. Pastor Wayne participated in an exit interview in June and presented us with many suggestions. He submitted his suggestions in a written report.

We are grateful to Deacon Alan Doty and Rev. John Lily for conducting worship for us while we were between pastors.

We celebrated worship with the South Walpole Methodist Church on two occasions. The first occasion was at Union on July 21st when the mission trip participants were commissioned. The second time was at South Walpole where the mission was celebrated with speeches and slides.

We had two baptisms, Hayden Airlie Urban and Arlee Josephine Connor.

In September, Rev. Aaron lead us in worship by commemorating 400 years of slavery.

The Sunday after Taste of Thanksgiving was the first Sunday in Advent. Rev. Aaron has instituted two new ideas. The youth of Walpole were invited to come to Union Church to listen to Christmas readings, do a craft and then tour the church. This occurred on Saturday morning, December 14th.

The second new idea was a worship service on December 18th in the sanctuary. It is called Blue Christmas and was meant for those who are having trouble with the Christmas blues for various reasons. The Rev. Aaron promoted these new ideas to Walpole area churches.

We celebrated four memorial services this year of members we lost. They are Kirsta Damaso, Peggy Hunter, Janet Grant and Peggy Turnquist.

The Deacons would like to thank Lynn Golden for taking care of recruiting and organizing the acolytes. The Rev. Aaron started a new tradition of having the acolytes ring the church bell to signal the beginning of worship, and then precede his entrance from the back of the church in a procession.

Roger Bridgeman presented a report on the handling of storm related decisions for future consideration by the board.

The Deacons would like to thank Joe Maiewski for his vital and skillful leadership as Chair of the Diaconate.

The Deacons would like to thank the congregation for their generous support to the Good Neighbor Fund.

The 2019 Board of Deacons was served by Joe Maiewski, Andrea Doolan, Roger Bridgeman, Carol Sandahl, Pam Doty, Cheryl Cain and Lewis Howes.

Respectfully submitted,

Lewis Howes, Secretary

Annual Report of the Prudential Committee for 2019

Prudential would like to thank the congregation for sharing their talent, time and financial support to our church mission. A special thanks to the Search Committee for bringing the Shepherd Family to us and to all who made our Apple Harvest Fair a success. And finally as Chairperson of Prudential, I would like to thank the members of this committee for their devotion to our full and active agenda.

Our 2019 focus was to address open and/or delayed financial and maintenance actions. The four items in this category were: (1) the budget deficit of \$6,409 approved at Annual Meeting, (2) advancing our understanding of the church's income potential, 3) addressing the three-year lapse in the Pre-School rental lease, and (4) major church and parsonage maintenance issues.

Significant Prudential actions this year, not covered in the above areas, were supporting the Search Committee, Diaconate and the Personnel Committee in bringing two important resources to our church community. Our combined efforts made possible the hiring of Rev. Dr. Aaron Shepherd who, with his family Whitney, Brady and Jett, has brought new enthusiasm, youth, and leadership to our congregation. This was followed shortly after by the hiring of Beverly Sellers, our new office manager, whose focused attention and commitment to carrying out the responsibilities thereof is lifting the performance level of our administrative functions. Both are a fresh addition to advancing our church going forward.

The budget deficit was addressed with a two-prong approach. Prudential analyzed the make-up of the budget expense components and the income sources. Four presentations and several verbal updates were given to the congregation over the year outlining the possible expense reductions and increased income options that were available.

On the expense side, we have extensive knowledge of our costs which makes them more predictable. Prudential was able to remove and replace two old copy machines with a HP desktop laser business printer, change the church and parsonage electric supplier to a lower cost provider and keep its attention on the other controllable expense items. These actions had the net effect of reducing expenses by approximately \$3,000.

The opposite side of the deficit issue is income which is more difficult to comprehend. The income options centered on a new Pre-School Lease, a successful Church Fair and an appeal to the congregation for increased tithing. As year-end approached, all three income opportunities provided upsides with Pre-School +\$1,500, member contribution +\$5,000 and Church Fair +\$7,500. As we look at all our year-end costs and income sources in the last two weeks of December, it looks as though even with all the income plus-ups, we will still come up short in balancing the budget. A mid-December financial presentation apprised the congregation that we would most likely experience the projected budget deficit in spite of all our efforts.

The church is currently maximizing most of its income opportunities. Given that we may face deficit budgets for some period forward, Prudential is studying member pledging as one of our last income sources that might be further developed. The observations of our tithing were shared with the congregation in the weeks leading up to the Annual Meeting in January 2020.

The Prudential members invested a significant effort in developing a comprehensive understanding and plan for addressing the major capital repair and replacement projects that lay ahead. The church started 2019 with \$78,000 of available capital reserve funds to address our facility issues. Prudential pursued a full court press with bid requests across all identified issues. The projects put to bid were a parsonage update (\$22K), new parsonage furnace with air conditioning (\$9K), new parsonage bathrooms (2@\$20K), sanctuary soffits and arched window refurbishment (\$33K), and HHH chapel & classroom roof replacement (\$13.2K). In the process of fielding these bids we learned that we have a sanctuary window glazing issue (\$TDB) and in the last week of this year our handi-cap elevator failed and is non-repairable (\$TDB). Our known bidding activity yielded a total cost of \$97K with more to come from the new discoveries. One last note in the capital area, the organ is in need of repair at approximately \$8,500 and we are pursuing a foundation grant as a means to address.

As spring approached, Prudential was weighing the priority and scope of projects to be addressed in 2019. There was a desire to conserve our capital reserve funds but yet make some in-road into what needed to be done. The Search Committee, identifying the Rev. Dr. Aaron Shepherd as a “real” new minister, set the order of priority. Prudential chose the renovation of the parsonage as its first priority in order to provide our new minister’s family with a nice residence. The HHH chapel & classroom became the second priority due to its recurring roof leak in the parlor and the chapel interior painting being on a short list of renovation projects. These two projects were completed in 2019 for a total cost of \$35,200. This represented about 45% of our reserve funds and still leaves us with approximately \$43,000 for upcoming 2020 projects.

It has been a busy and productive year for the Prudential committee and those who continue forward on the committee in 2020 will be looking to build on the successes of this past year.

Respectfully submitted,

The 2019 Prudential Committee

David Cain

Cathy Feeley

Rich Keen, Chairperson

David Senatore

Ken Sandahl

Annual Report of the Director of Music for 2019

2019–2020 marks the 30th year of my service as Union Congregational Church’s Organist and Choir Director. It also marks the 70th year of my journey upon this earth. I cannot express in words how grateful I am to all of you for the many kindnesses you have shown to me during my years here! 30 years ago, I was newly widowed with two children – 4 and 6 years old. I was wounded in so many ways – and very alone. Carol Sandahl took charge of my babies during the service without being asked, and allowed me to concentrate on my work here. The first October after my husband’s death, my dear choir had a cake for me, and they helped to celebrate my birthday when my children were too young to do so. My choir has continued this tradition every year since then, thanks to Carol’s thoughtful cake baking. I cannot possibly express my gratitude to them for this kindness! Every Christmas, Nancy Farris has invited me and my extended family [very extended at times] to their Christmas Party after the Christmas Eve Service. What a joy it has been to enter their home and be greeted with a glass of scotch after a stressful service. Thank you Nancy! Jeanne Marechal and the Prudential Committee allowed me 8 weeks off during the summer as part of my contract. She, Rick, and her children befriended us, and we spent many days together during that year. The salary I received from Union helped me and my family in so many ways. It made the difference between solvency and insolvency for many months during the first years after Béla’s death.

My dear choir is faithful and hard–working. They come to rehearsal every Wednesday and put up with my many strange selections for their Anthems. They have learned to sing in Swahili, Norwegian, Latin, Middle English, and other strange languages – all with good humor and much patience. The congregation is warm and welcoming of our efforts, and countless times they have expressed this by a kind word or a smile – even with applause at times. I am honored to call you my dear friends and hope to do so for the rest of my life.

During my 30 years here, I have worked with a total of 9 ministers including our newest settled pastor, Dr. Aaron Pratt Shepherd. I have tried to serve all of them faithfully and to assist them in making the Sunday Service a spiritually rewarding one. We are in the process of applying for a grant from the Organ Historical Society to refurbish our Skinner Organ. It is my hope that if we receive the grant, the organ will be in top condition soon. Potter–Rathbun Organ Company will continue to maintain our organ on a yearly basis and we are looking into a total organ restoration if the money is available. The pianos are maintained each year so that they will remain in good condition. There is a new spinet in the chapel, thanks to the generosity of the estate of Peggy Hunter.

Christmas Eve Service this year included three anthems by the senior choir, and Kristina Nagy was soloist for “O Holy Night”. Ms. Ellen Hinkle provided a beautiful flute Prelude and Postlude as well as joining the sopranos for the Anthems. Our substitute organist this summer was Alexandra Costin. She covered for organist vacation days, and Jimmy Nguyen and the organist at St. Mary’s Church substituted for funerals. Thank you, my church community, for allowing me the artistic freedom that was so essential to me and to my work here. Thank you my dear choir, for the many hours of your time that you have given – and for your love. I am truly blessed!

It is with the knowledge that I have done my best to serve you that I announce my retirement from my position here. I will not become a caricature of myself as an aging musician. I remember an anecdote of an old church organist who couldn’t hear well any more, so she/he just played the hymns she/he wanted and the congregation followed along. I will leave with my faculties intact. Now that Aaron is settled and accustomed to Union’s traditions, he deserves to select a younger colleague with whom to work. I am sure that the appointed search committee will pick a wonderful musician to help him and to lead our choir in singing to the glory of God.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Linda A. Jiorle–Nagy

Annual Report of the Ushers for 2019

During 2019, a total of **2028** people attended the **51** regularly scheduled Sunday morning worship services. Other special (non-Sunday) services were attended by an additional **209** people, for a grand total of **2237**.

Christmas Eve had the highest attendance (**111**). The other special services included:

Ash Wednesday (**25**), Maundy Thursday (**24**), Easter Sunrise (**25**), and Blue Christmas (**24**).

One joint summer service was held at the United Methodist Church of South Walpole this year. The attendance for that service was not recorded.

The 2019 average total attendance for Sunday morning worship service was **40**.

The number of church members attending Annual Meeting was **29**.

Listed below is a comparison of the average Sunday attendance figures for the four year period from 2016 through 2019, and some of the other services for the same time period.

<u>Sunday (Avg.)</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>
Adults	39	38	35	35
Children	8	5	4	4
Clergy	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	48	44	40	40
Christmas Eve	115	88	87	111
Easter	101	105	107	83
Easter Sunrise	18	36	30	25

I wish to thank all those who have served as ushers during the past year at Sunday worship, holiday services, and memorial services.

Respectfully Submitted,

Douglas Gustafson, Head Usher

Annual Report for Christian Outreach Committee for 2019

Outreach took many favorite activities from years past and added in a few new ones in 2019 starting with hosting the church's Annual Retreat. We brought in guest speaker, Paola Miranda, of City Mission Society. Paola is a Case Manager that works directly with the participants of their "A Lift Up" program which is an intensive, voluntary two-year homelessness prevention program for low-income single mothers and their families who are at risk of losing their housing. Paola spoke about her work and the program itself. Afterward our congregation put together care packages to support the mothers working in this program – and from the generous donations of the congregation we were able to pull together 18 care packages filled to the brim with household, first aid and hygiene items. Christine and Charlotte Bemko delivered these packages directly to City Mission and was met with an enormous amount of gratitude.

In February we hosted a "Valentines for Vets" card making table during fellowship. Valentines were made and sent off to share some love to our nation's veterans.

We added a twist to our Rummage Sale this year in which we donated 10% of the proceeds to Rosie's Place as well as a "jeep-load" of specifically needed in-kind donations that had been set aside for this "sanctuary for poor and homeless women" of the Boston Area. Donations came in from all over Walpole to help support this cause. An additional 50% of the proceeds went to support our Mission Trip.

On Saturday April 27, Union participated in "Keep Walpole Beautiful Day". Walpole joined over 100 Massachusetts communities by partnering with Keep Massachusetts Beautiful and participated in the Great Massachusetts Cleanup. The 2nd Annual Keep Walpole Beautiful Day brought Walpole residents and businesses together to transform our streets and public spaces through a volunteer-led town-wide litter cleanup and beautification day. Chris Wylman and the Bemko family cleaned up litter found in our church parking lot and along Rhoades Ave but made the biggest impact along Chestnut Street on the corner of Washington Street where several bags of trash were collected.

On Mother's Day, May 12th, we held a Blanket Sunday offering which collected funds to provide blankets to Church World Services. The CWS Blankets+ children's message was well received and a great way to include Dr. Aaron Shepard during his candidating day with the "Blessing of the Blankies". On Father's Day, June 16th, another collection was held to support Tools for Hope.

Union also participated in Walpole Day on May 25 where we interacted with about 300 kids and their families with the lollipop board. Through these interactions we were able to get our name out and share our message with the community.

Service in Action awards were awarded to two recipients this year. Ray Brown was recognized for his volunteerism at our church fundraisers as well as his time serving others at Breaking Bread. Jacob Golden was recognized for his leadership at Apple Harvest Fairs as well as sharing his time and talent with us all by singing in the choir. "Love cannot remain by itself. It has to be put into action". Thank you both for your action!

The word "Hero" was discussed during Children's Message as we kicked off the UNICEF drive. How do you define a hero? A person wearing a cape fighting bad guys? Or is it someone who simply helps those in need. We asked all members of our congregation to be heroes by setting aside spare change in those little orange boxes for UNICEF, an organization aimed at providing food, water, education, vaccines and medicine to children across the globe.

We finished up 2019 with the Christmas Tree of Giving to benefit the City Mission Society and sent a team of volunteers to help with this cause. Ornaments were made by our youth – each ornament representing a request for clothing, toys or gift certificates. The support from the congregation was overwhelming as we were able to donate 345 individual items including: 73 Toys, Sports Equipment & other gifts, 26 hats, 23 scarves, 38 gloves and mittens, 65 pairs of socks, 4 warm winter coats, 104 other articles of clothing, 12 rolls of wrapping paper and an additional \$600 in gift cards! A mighty team of 8 (Margie Shirosky, Nancy Farris, Lauren, Amelia and Ana Durso, Maura Keimig and Christine and Charlotte Bemko) volunteered 2 hours at the collection point for City Mission Society's Christmas Shop at the host church in Winchester, MA and spent the time tallying, sorting and helping others bring in their donations.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Bemko, on behalf of Christian Outreach

Annual Report of the Personnel Relations Committee for 2019

Members of the Personnel Relations Committee this year were Doug Gustafson, Lew Howes, Barbara Carroll, and Jane McMackin.

There have been a lot of changes to our staff in the year 2019, including our Interim Pastor, Rev. Dr. Wayne Earl, who served us very well as minister, teacher, and counselor from September 2017 through early July 2019. At that time, the Search Committee, led by Pam Doty and including, Roger Bridgeman, Joanne Grant, Suzanne Lewis, and Judy Rummell, after almost two years of hard work, found us our wonderful new PT settled pastor, Rev. Dr. Aaron Shepherd, who started on July 8th this year. Prudential played an important role in negotiating the contract, as well as many other details concerning that move into the parsonage. Other changes included, our Nursery Caregiver, Emily Massarelli, who, after two years of taking good care of our children, was replaced very briefly by Emma Lochhead, and now by Pat Howes, as reported below. Also, Beverly Sellers was hired to become our new Office Manager, replacing Sarah Eberly, who did a fine job for four years, also covered below.

In May, the committee and Dave Cain from Prudential met with church Sexton, Chris O'Brien for an annual evaluation. Chris works 10 hours per week, keeping the church clean, mowing the lawn in season, and shoveling in the winter. It is important that the sanctuary, Herbert Harrison Hall, the kitchen and back stairway be ready for Sunday morning services. Chris was reminded and assured Personnel that he would call any time he is unable to clean for Sunday.

Also in May, the committee learned that Office Manager, Sarah Eberly, would be leaving for a new position. We thank her for her four years of service to Union Congregational Church. On May 30, the committee, and Ken Sandahl representing the Prudential Committee, met to interview Beverly Sellers as a possible replacement for Sarah. It was decided to hire her through September 30th, on a temporary basis, starting immediately to allow her a couple of days to meet with Sarah and learn the specifics of the job. Sarah's last day was June 7. Personnel met again on September 18th, along with Pastor Shepherd, and decided to offer Beverly the job with a follow-up evaluation in six months. Prudential approved this decision.

Then in October and November, Personnel scheduled two meetings with candidates from Care.com to hire a new Nursery Caregiver. One candidate did not appear and the other cancelled. Pat Howes expressed an interest in interviewing for the position. She met with Rev. Aaron on November 8 and, with the agreement of the committee, she was hired as the Nursery Caregiver, beginning November 10, 2019. Her schedule is Sunday mornings from 10:00 to 11:30, and she is working out very well.

Thanks to the members of the committee and all our staff for their work and dedication this year. We would like to extend our gratitude to the Prudential Committee, especially Rich Keen, for all their involvement, as well as to Dave Cain for continuing to supervise our Sexton, Chris O'Brien.

Submitted by,

Jane McMackin and Barbara Carroll

Church Historian's Report for 2019

I would like to take this opportunity to present some biographical informational about our pastor so that it is part of our historical files.

REVEREND DOCTOR AARON PRATT SHEPHERD

Aaron Shepherd was born in St. Paul Minnesota on June 3, 1988 to parents Mary Breiter (of Mankato, Minnesota) and Scott Pratt (of Rock Falls, Illinois). Aaron attended Capitol Hill Magnet School for one year and later moved with his parents and older brother Alex to Oregon in the year 1995. He started there in the second grade. He later attended Roosevelt Middle School for grades six through eight. He later attended the South Eugene High School, and participated in their International Baccalaureate Program. Aaron played baseball at South Eugene High as a first baseman and as a catcher. He graduated High School in 2006.

Aaron entered Pacific University in 2006 and majored in English Literature. When Aaron entered college, he did not continue his baseball, in order to focus on academics. During his high school years he was ordained as a ruling elder to the Session at Central Presbyterian Church (Eugene, Oregon), where he was confirmed. At that time, he helped make decisions about the ministries the church would support.

In later years, while attending the University of Oregon for his Masters Degree in Philosophy beginning in 2009, he was ordained as a Deacon at Central Presbyterian and served for two years, also serving at that time on the Worship Committee. He also coached baseball at his alma mater, South Eugene High School. These experiences gave him insight into the nature of ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). and also deepened his commitment to serving Christ through the church.

While in college at Pacific University (which is affiliated with the United Church of Christ), he first began to discern a call to ordained ministry. He adopted the School's motto "Pro Christo et Regno Ejus" (For Christ and Christ's Kingdom) - as his own, and dedicated himself to understanding its meaning in his life and in the world. He found himself gravitating towards philosophy and theology as a means of realizing his intention.

When attending the University of Oregon he enrolled as an inquirer into ministry under care of the Presbytery of the Cascades and applied for admission to a number of Presbyterian seminaries and also one PhD program in philosophy to further his education. He finally decided to take a dual track course of study at Emory University at the urging of Rev. Thomas G. Long. Aaron completed the program of religion and philosophy at Emory as well as a full course of study at the Candler School of Theology and Columbia Theological Seminary.

While at Emory he served as a ministry intern, a chaplain intern at the Atlanta VA hospital, and a pastoral associate at Emory at Emory Presbyterian Church. It was during this period of time he became married to Whitney (July 5, 2014). They have two sons: Brady born in 2015 and Jett born in 2018.

In 2017, Rev. Dr. Aaron took a full time position at the University of Massachusetts in Lowell, Massachusetts. During this time he was able to take a part time job at Eliot Presbyterian Church. In the spring of 2019 the call came to him to become the pastor of Union Congregational Church of East Walpole.

I'm reminded of some of the stories that came to me from grandparents etc. when I was growing up. They talked about the missionaries among the Armenian people in the area of eastern Turkey, with the last name of Shepherd. The Turks were the rulers and of the Muslim faith. The Armenians suffered a genocide in 1895 and 1915 period. The Shepherd family became famous for their efforts during this period.

Sincerely Submitted,
Charles Calusdian , Historian, Union Congregational Church

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR 2019

January

26,27 Chowdah to Go- summer mission fundraiser
27 Annual Meeting
Pastor Search Committee active

February

2 All Church Retreat- City Mission speaker Paola Miranda from “A Lift Up” program -18 care packages created for families
3 Souper Bowl-201 items for Walpole Food Pantry
10 Pre-church Breakfast
11 Breaking Bread hosting
Flowers and More- new altar flower source
Gift to SWUMC in celebration of 200th Anniversary

March

6 Ash Wednesday Chapel service
10 Pancake Breakfast at SWUMC-summer mission fundraiser
Lenten Book Group-Have a Little Faith by Albom and Night by Wiesel
23,24 Chowdah to Go -summer mission fundraiser

April

6 Rummage and “Yard” Sale-\$1,800 -benefits Outreach/mission
14 Palm Sunday
18 Maundy Thursday Chapel service
21 Sunrise, Breakfast, Family service, Egg hunt
27 Keep Walpole Beautiful Day

May

5 Candidate preaching – Rev. Dr. Aaron Shepherd-Special Church Meeting to act on the recommendation of Search and Call Committee
Horace Thayer’s 36th Walk for Hunger in memory of Kay and Paul Williams- \$5,500
12 Mothers’ Day-Blanket Sunday-Church World Service

June

3 Breaking Bread hosting
9 Children’s Day-Senior choir and Children’s choir combination
16 Fathers’ Day – Tools Sunday-Church World Service-\$350
30 This Star Won’t Go Out Gala
New contract signed with School Age Connection - \$43,500 yearly rental

July

- 3 Parsonage renovation completed in 10+ weeks-800+ volunteer hours, \$1500 donated materials, \$22,000 expenses and capital expenditures
- 5 The Shepherds moved into parsonage
- 7 Interim Rev. Dr. Wayne Earl's last service with us
- 14 Rev. Dr. Aaron Shepherd's first service with us
- 21-27 mission trip to Maine-combined worship with SWUMC commissioning
- 28 Worship at SWUMC

August

- 4 Baptism of Hayden Urban

September

- 8 Rally Day, Blessing the Backpacks
- 14 Apple Harvest Fair – most successful ever
- New acolyte opportunities introduced
- 30 Breaking Bread hosting

October

- 5 Super Saturday attended by five members, large collection of toiletry items donated
- 6 Walpole Multi-church Youth Initiative launched
- 13 Baptism of Arlee Josephine Connor

November

- Thursdays -Advent series "Deeper Connections" DVD group discussion, [The Life of Jesus](#)
- 3 UNICEF Collection, All Saints Day candle lighting remembrances
- 17 Beautiful day for fall cleanup of church and parsonage with help of Scouts
- 24 Stewardship Sunday, Taste of Thanksgiving
- 25 Photo Directory pictures scheduled
- Meals on Wheels Thanksgiving dinners with SWUMC

December

- 1 Hanging of the greens
- 8 New Members greeted, Joanne Every, Pastor Aaron and Whitney Shepherd
- Delivery of City Mission gifts – 345 items donated, team of 8 spent two volunteer hours at the collection site in Winchester
- 14 The First Christmas Story event for families with small children
- 15 Caroling followed by Cookie Swap at parsonage
- 16 Breaking Bread hosting
- 18 Blue Christmas service in sanctuary
- 24 Christmas Eve candlelight service
- 29 Service of carols and scripture

Memorial Gifts Annual Report 2019

We had three beloved members of our church remembered in everlasting gifts to Union Congregational Church.

Nellie Domina ~ January 6, 2019

A memorial service was held on January 26, 2019 at Union Church

Janet Grant ~ May 10, 2019

A memorial service was held on May 16, 2019 at Union Church

Peggy Turnquist ~ September 2, 2019

A memorial service was held on September 11, 2019 at Union Church

All gifts were acknowledge by the committee.

Funds were spent on the following items: Two high-top tables were purchased from memorial money to allow people to place their coffee down and chat.. A Silver Flagon (pitcher for communion) ~ In memory of the past saints of the church.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Rummell and Barbara Maiewski

Annual Report from Breaking Bread (Walpole Families of Faith) 2019

This year we hosted Breaking Bread in February, March, September, and December. Barb Maiewski and Margie Shiroski are our chefs and ServSafe personnel, and they covered another six meals as well. Their contributions enable the program to have continued as long as it has. We had about twelve volunteers from our church each time and almost all of the food used for the meal was donated. A huge thank you to all of you who sign up for food donations and a shift at the meal. A sign-up sheet appears outside the office a couple of weeks before we are scheduled to host. This report wouldn't be complete without mentioning the time which Laura Martin has volunteered for the program on our days to host as well as many others. She knows all of the jobs and is an invaluable support for the workers. Altogether, approximately 1147 meals were served and 338 take out meals were provided. The community meal seems to feed souls with fellowship as well as bodies with nourishment.

The Board of Walpole Families of Faith which oversees Breaking Bread includes at least one representative from the six churches involved, and we meet about twice a year just to go over financials, policy issues, and to decide if we have enough help to carry on. At the moment, Nancy Farris, Barb Maiewski, and Chris Weylman serve on the Board. We are always looking for folks who can cook, get a ServSafe certificate, or coordinate. Anyone interested in getting involved in any way should speak to one of these people.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Maiewski and Nancy Farris

2019 Lay Delegate Annual Report

Over the last several years the Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island Conferences have been working to combine to form a single conference for southern New England. In 2018 the conference agreed to a proposed structure for said conference and each voted to submit a joint request to the General Synod for them to create a Southern New England Conference. In July at the General Synod meeting it was approved.

On the first two days of November delegates from the 3 conferences met in Worcester to hold the final meetings of the historic conferences and the initial meeting of the Southern New England Conference.

The new conference began official operation on January 1, 2020.

So, what does this mean for us? Somethings change, some stay the same. We are still part of the Metropolitan Boston Association and Wendy Vander Hart is still our area minister. Church UCC membership moves from the Massachusetts Conference to the Southern New England Conference. While the Historic Massachusetts Conference still exists, it does so only to manage its properties and endowments. Also new is the new conference web-site sneucc.org. Please visit the site for more information.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Maiewski, Alt. Lay Delegate

Annual Report of the Stewardship Committee

The 2019 Stewardship campaign was themed “Be the Church.” Guided by the words of the “Be the Church” banner, the four-week stewardship season (November 3rd-24th) highlighted themes like “Forgive Often,” “Share Earthly and Spiritual Resources,” and “Love God and Enjoy this Life.” In addition to sermons on these topics, stewardship messages were given by Pam Doty, Nancy Farris, and Margie Shirosky during worship. Four separate mailings were sent to approximately 85 members and friends of the church that included the stewardship messages. There was also a tri-fold color brochure sent that included pictures, an introduction to Pastor Shepherd, and information about pledging and the operating budget for 2020. The stewardship campaign concluded on November 24th, Stewardship Sunday. That day, the stewardship committee also organized the “Taste of Thanksgiving” Brunch, which was well-attended and well-enjoyed by all.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margie Shirosky, Christine Bemko, and Michael Keimig

2019 Stewardship Committee

Annual Report of the Nominating Committee for 2019

Officers

Moderator — Nancy Farris (2020)

Clerk — Lynn Golden (2020)

Treasurer — Kerry Ryan (2020)

Assistant Treasurer — Michael Keimig (2020)

Administration & Delegates

Financial Administrator — Beverly Sellers (2020)

Sunday School Superintendent — Margie Shirosky (2020)

Head Usher — Doug Gustafson (2020)

Church Historian — Charlie Calusdian (2020)

Assistant Church Historian — Nancy Farris (2020)

Lay Representative to the Conference — Joe Maiewski (2021)

Alternate Lay Representative — Barb Maiewski (2021)

Auditor — Joanne Stratton (2020)

Auditor — Bill Weylman (2020)

Diaconate

Lewis Howes (Class of 2020)

Pam Doty (Class of 2020)

Margie Shirosky (Class of 2021)

Sue Hussey (Class of 2021)

Prudential Committee

Ken Sandahl (Class of 2020)

Michael Keimig (Class of 2020)

Rich Keen (Class of 2021)

Christian Education Committee

Madelene Senatore (Class of 2020)

Whitney Shepherd (Class of 2020)

Laurie Kerns (Class of 2020)

Christian Outreach Committee

Joe Maiewski (Class of 2020)

Christine Bemko (Class of 2020)

Janet Calusdian (Class of 2020)

Personnel Committee

Barbara Carroll (Class of 2020)

Doug Gustafson (Class of 2020)

Jane McMackin (Class of 2021)

Stewardship Committee

Roger Bridgeman (Class of 2020)

Memorial Gifts Committee

Barb Maiewski (Class of 2020)

Judy Rummell (Class of 2020)

Fellowship Committee

Vacant

Youth Advisory Committee

Vacant

Annual Report of Christian Education Committee And the Sunday School Superintendent 2019

It is somewhat difficult to write a report that spans 2019 when CE tends to work based on the school year, 2019-2020!

Spring 2019 found our Sunday School with one class, ages PK-6. This was not ideal but attendance has been down over the last several years and this seemed a reasonable solution for '18-'19. We used the one-room school house curriculum provided by DeepBlue Kids. Fall '19 found us with a natural age-split and we began the school year with a younger group (PK-5gr) using the same DeepBlue Kids and an older group (7gr+) using it's 'tween curriculum, Submerge. We again faced an attendance and consistency problem and felt we should rejoin the classes for Spring '20. But I am getting ahead of myself!

Pastor Aaron would like the children in the Sanctuary, participating in worship more, so we have been looking at a few different ways to do that. Currently we are trying a routine which has the children return "upstairs" during the Doxology.

Children's Day was celebrated June 9, 2019 with Sunday School students participating in the various elements of the service. Travis Felice received his Bible from Pastor Wayne and Ray Brown was recognized as a graduating Senior and given a small monetary gift as is our tradition. He is now studying at Providence College. We did not have the traditional picnic this year but a more elaborate coffee hour to celebrate our children.

During Lent, a small group met weekly to discuss have a little faith by Mitch Albom. They enjoyed this enough to then read and discuss Night by Elie Wiesel. In the time before the rush of Advent, CE provided a 6 wk DVD based study called The Life of Jesus, part of a series of 6 studies in the Deeper Connections series. Both were well received and we hop to do it again. All are welcome and the DVD series, particularly, was suited to those who may not be able to attend every session.

We again are sponsoring a new child through Children's International. She is a 13 year old, 7th grader from Little Rock named Latonza. We hope she will participate longer than our last 2 sponsor children and we can begin to develop a relationship with her.

Many thanks to our dedicated teachers and those willing to step in at a moment's notice! We appreciate you parents and guardians for getting your kids to Sunday School despite their myriad other commitments! Thank you to those who read/watched/talked with us, we hope to do it again.

Thanks also to our congregation for allowing us to serve in the way we can, on Christian Education and as Sunday School Superintendent.

Margie Shirosky, Laurie Kerns, Charlie Calusdian

Annual Report of the Summer Mission Trip 2019

It was a great week. We had a snag or two but that always happens. The first was before we left. The Maine Ministry had double-booked groups coming in for the week. There was another church from upstate NY and us. They received the housing at the Ministry, and we received the parsonage in the Town of Kingfield, which turned out to be a good thing, as the two sites we were to work at were just a few houses away.

We had a small group this year (12); five from Union and seven from South Walpole

One job was to scrape and paint the lower half of a house and repair the screens in all the windows. This was not an easy task as the screens could not be taken out of the windows, but we got it done. The crew coming in the following week was to paint the top half. The house's crawl space also had exposed styrofoam which needed to be covered with plywood, including a drip edge. In addition, wood trim needed to be replaced around an access door to another crawl space where bees lived. All this carpentry work then needed to be painted.

The other house was a bit of everything: repairing, scraping and painting a ramp, re-glazing two windows, blocking up two other windows and replacing a kitchen faucet.

One nice thing about having the work sites very close is we all came back to the parsonage for lunch. The weather was good, we had one early day of rain on Tuesday. We couldn't paint or do other work, so we all headed back to the Ministry to work there. We met up with the other group from NY and did some sorting of school supplies and other small jobs. In the meantime, Ken and Joe went off to get supplies so they could get back to work on our sites in the afternoon.

We had vespers after supper each night. One time we hiked down to the river, after which one of the boys decided he was going to enjoy the water and took a dip. Another night we drove up to Ira Mountain, which we have gone to in the past, to watch the sun set, and this time we had an Agape meal. Two other enjoyable times were one day for lunch we went to the Wire Bridge, which is a local swimming hole. Unfortunately, the water in the river has receded some since we were there two years ago. I am not sure if Maine hasn't had much rain or the water is being held back further upstream. The other time was Wednesday evening when the Ministry holds a cookout for the workers, staff and clients of the week. We had an enjoyable evening meeting others, including the group from New York. They were quite impressed we had matching T-shirts.

This is the first time we finished the week early. We were done by lunchtime Friday. We cleaned the parsonage and most of us left by two. In the past, we stayed through Friday night and left sometime mid-morning on Saturday.

We want to thank you for the prayers and treats you gave us.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Maiewski

Annual Report of the Apple Harvest Fair 2019

This year's Fair will be remembered for the large crowds that came out for the Fair. Cars were parked along all of the side streets of East Walpole. The large crowds led to record ticket sales of close to \$12,000. Based on those sales we likely had 3000 - 4000 people at the Fair (likely a record as well). Having this number of people put additional stress on the amount of volunteers we had and resulted in longer lines. Based on preliminary estimates, the Fair resulted into over \$25,000 for the church.

A large part of the Fair's success is the Silent Auction and the work that Cathy Feeley and others do to solicit donations, make baskets and prepare for the Fair all year. Outside of the Silent Auction, we would like to thank Nancy Farris, Sue Hussey, Judy Rummell, Barb Maiewski, Cheryl Cain, and many others for their work all summer to make the Fair a success.

We had 80 volunteers (many from outside of the church) the day of the Fair who put on midway games, painted faces, served food, sold goods, and conducted pony and train rides.

Fair personnel extended special thanks to The Trustees of Reservation and to Friends of Francis William Bird Park for their co-operation and help that contributed greatly to the fair's success.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Keimig