

2022-2023 ANNUAL LIFE OF THE CHURCH REPORT UNION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

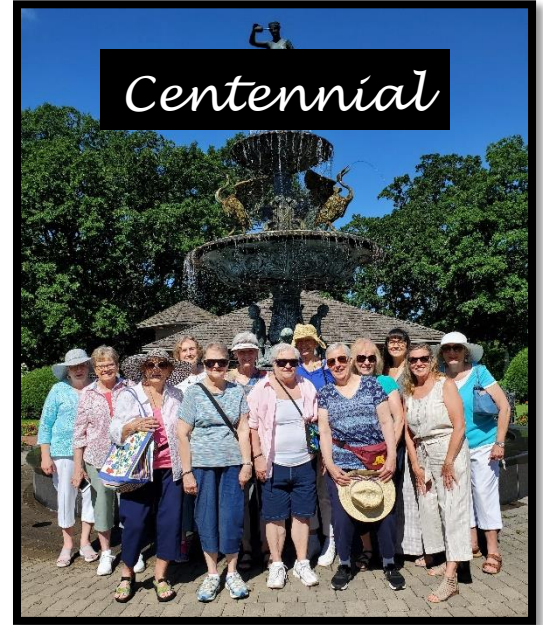


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AGENDA

Welcome - Patti Kubicka

Opening Prayer - Rev. Sheri Nelson

Commemorative Sign and Sesquicentennial - Bonnie Rule and the Sunday Schoolers

Minutes from January 2023 Annual Financial Meeting - Patti

Proposed Revisions to the Bylaws - Bylaws Task Force

Financial Update - Trustees

Parsonage - Parsonage Task Force

Ministry Team Elections - Patti

Closing Prayer - Rev. Sheri Nelson

Adjourn

MODERATOR'S REPORT

June 2023

Friends,

I begin my final report to you as Moderator with a sense of reflection on all that has transpired in the past 6 years. When accepting the position, I certainly could not have predicted the course it would take over the years. Though I thought I knew what the job entailed, I certainly had no idea what that truly looked like in practice. I thank you for your patience as I learned the ropes, your tolerance as I made missteps and for all your support along the way.

Our theme this year was **Renewal and Restoration** and how truly poignant that was for us. One of our biggest challenges was saying good-bye to Rev. Robin and embarking upon the unknown with pulpit supply, a tumultuous search for an interim pastor and eventually welcoming our Interim team of Sarah Lehman as Interim Consultant and Rev. Sheri Nelson as Bridge Pastor. What a blessing they have been to have in our midst! They have helped us truly embody this theme and as a result, we have renewed interest in serving on ministry teams and task forces and continue to strive to restore broken relationships within our congregation. The work is not done, but we continue to pursue this path as we work toward finding our unified voice in what we are looking for in our next pastor through visioning, surveys, and continued dialogue.

For the past few years, we have adopted our theme at Union to be the one presented for the Minnesota Conference's Annual Meeting theme. I don't know as of yet if that will be the case, as leadership changes, but that theme is "**Encounter. Transform.**" It is amazing to me that each year, the theme seems to reflect right where we are or what we need so profoundly. I am excited to remain among you in a new and different way and with a different focus. I know our church will be in good hands as our next moderator takes the reins and leads us through our next chapter.

As we make that transition and in light of the inevitable transitions in the year to come, I challenge you to continue to reach out to one another, listening, supporting, forgiving, uplifting, and encouraging. Freely give and take from each other what you need and then, in turn, reach out to others in our community, state, country and world and do the same. Together, and with God's grace, we can make a difference.

Patti Kubicka

PASTOR'S REPORT

June 4, 2023

I entered a contract as Bridge Pastor for Union Congregational United Church of Christ on October 1, 2023. In this role, I have continued in my call as Director of Outdoor Ministry with the MN Conference UCC, located in Minneapolis. Both positions are part-time, which has made this Bridge position possible.

The plan was to offer consistent pulpit supply and pastoral care as the church continued to search for an interim pastor. This was a 3-month call, to get the church through the Christmas season, which then was extended through Easter. Because of the difficulties to call an interim due to a very small pool of candidates in a large lake of need, the church decided to continue the Bridge Pastor roll in connection with the Interim Consultant, Sarah Lehmann, who had already been working with the church when I was called.

Except for the concern over Holy Week, the congregation has been accommodating to my needs as Director of Outdoor Ministry. This work has led me to be absent for worship a few times, and will continue, as we continue to work together. This has been a growing time between the church and me, as we try to navigate traditions, needs, and the enormous work that was needed to prepare for the Search and Call for the next Settled Pastor.

The work that so many people in the congregation have done has been so amazing to see. In this work together Sara and I have seen the church create and live into the following:

- Transition Team- tasked with discernment around the identity and needs of the church. Also, preparing work to be handed to the Search and Call team when ready.
- Parsonage Task Force- to research options to tackle the use of the parsonage and property.
- Bylaws Task Force- spent many hours addressing every piece of the current bylaws what the challenges and growing edges are, and what seems feasible at this time in the life of the church.
- Re-emphasis on Meals on Wheels, Open Doors for Youth, CAER, Art Bright, and Earthwise as part of Union's identity.

Some of the notable work that has been done:

- Advent and Christmas Season

- Lent, Holy Week, and Easter (Diaconate discerned with the pastor the ability to have the traditional Maundy Thursday Service vs a Good Friday Service with which the pastor is more familiar. Although this came with some initial grief, the Friday service was well attended. Diaconate will create an outline of the Maundy Thursday Service for the incoming Settled Pastor.
- Adopt-a-Room- members of the church cleaned and reorganized several areas of the church.
- Adopt-a-Park Sunday- Fellowship was held in the park before and during a parkwide cleanup.
- CAER Easter Food Drive- members were invited to donate food items for CAER. All items were used as “Easter eggs” for the children to find during Sunday School.
- Anti-Racism discussion and artwork, created by Paula Benfer.
- Earth Day artwork created by Paula Benfer. Eco-Justice Book Study, using “Cathedral on Fire” by Rev. Brooks Berndt.
- Members of the church participated in the first UCC Earth Day Summit held at Mayflower UCC in Minneapolis.

Because I came to the after the season began, trying to familiarize myself with the church, there was no youth program or confirmation. However, there are volunteers to assist in the fall with youth programming and Sunday School.

I have worked closely with the Administrator, Giuliana, to evaluate some practical needs of the church, such as updating bulletin boards and the church website, along with reinvesting time and energy into mission work, such as Earthwise and Open Doors for Youth. I hope the church will adopt a sense of urgency around eco-justice, mental health, and needs for an aging population.

Discussion with the current moderator, Patti Kubicka, has led to an extension of my contracted time. I will now be serving the church until the end of October. More discussion will follow about adding another extension if needed at that time.

Cheers,

Rev. Sheri Nelson

Sunday, June 5, 2022
Annual Meeting Minutes
Union Congregational Church Elk River, MN

Rev. Robin Raudabaugh opened with prayer.

January 2022 meeting minutes were considered. Josh Kannegieter moved to approve; Nancy Hassett seconded. Motion carried.

May 8, 2022 special meeting minutes: Dave Halgren moved to approve; Nancy Hassett seconded. Motion carried.

Active membership 143. Quorum requires 28.6 people to be present; this minimum was exceeded. 28.6 quorum. Prese

Personnel Committee update: Su Arnold thanked Judy Halgren and Marietta Saxon for working on committee with her these past years. Judy and Marietta are both concluding their volunteering on this committee. There are two music staff openings as of May 30; although there has been some interest, no applications have been submitted. Please pass the word to anyone we might know.

Trustees: financial update shared by Josh Kannegieter of received income and expenses compared to the approved 2022 deficit budget. Offerings are at 40% of 2022 of budget. There have been some cost savings and other places over budget where typically at this year. Kitchen loan has been paid off partly to set us up for boiler expense this fall.

Boiler contract awarded to Climatedmakers with estimated cost of \$100,000. They will install a metal filter to address the acidity changes in water that may cause leachate in pipes. Boiler replacement is anticipated to be complete by the end of August. Dave Halgren asked to hear the total cost of project. Josh Kannegieter said it is currently expected to be \$102,000. Unforeseen costs could add up to another \$23,000. Approved congregational funding at the May 8, 2022, meeting is for up to \$150,000; any change orders that would exceed that total would come to congregation for approval.

The church's annual report was circulated via email and some hard copies. No corrections or discussion ensued. Joan Stevens moved to approve the annual report. Ruth Johnson seconded that motion. Motion carried.

Ministry Team Nominations were provided for Trustees, Personnel, Diaconate, Congregational Life, Faith Formation, Outreach & Justice, Memorial, Liturgical Arts, and nominee also provided for the Treasurer position. There are still many positions on ministry teams left unfilled. Volunteers are sought.

From the floor, brand new members Amanda Hooper and Jenny Sliker each volunteered for two teams: Amanda volunteered for Outreach and Justice and Faith Formation teams; Jenny volunteered to be a part of the Liturgical Arts and Congregational Life.

The congregation was excited to hear Joan Stevens nominate herself to be church clerk over this next year. There is still no volunteer for the next person to fill the moderator position; Patti Kubicka's term ends June 4, 2023.

Frank Scouten moved to approve the nominations; Giuliana Beckwith seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

Laurie Lang shared about the "Shrimp Boil for the Boiler" Fundraiser scheduled August 27th, 5-8 pm. We have hired the Riverside Ramblers cajun band. Josh Kannegieter is supervising the shrimp boil cooking. Centennial Women are creating a dessert to sell. Tickets go on sale in June online and in the church office. Combination of food and admission tickets (in advance) and separate admission tickets (in advance and at door). Laurie shared the names of the committee members working on the shrimp boil: Paula Benfer, Frank and Darla Scouten, Giuliana Beckwith, Ruth Johnson, Laurie Lang, Karen Sherper Rohs. We need volunteers to help. We need people to bring friends as well. Parking will be at Handke lot since the event will be held in Union's parking lot. We will also need church members to help market the event.

Rev. Robin Raudabaugh was no longer present; Patti Kubicka closed the meeting with prayer.

Patti Kubicka moved to adjourn. Arabelle Rohs seconded.

Ministry Teams 2022-2023

as of 5/4/23

OFFICERS

Minister:

Rev. Sheri Nelson

Moderator:

Patti Kubicka (21-23)³

Clerk:

Joan Stevens (22-24)¹

Financial Secretary:

Joan Stevens (21-23)³

Treasurer:

Will Frater (22-24)³

Property Manager:

Laurie Lang - appointed

Historian:

Bonnie Rule (21-23)³

Denominational

Delegates(3):

Marce Ediger (21-23)²

Nancy Hassett (21-23)³

Giuliana Beckwith-
appointed

At Large Members (2):

Mike Peterson (21-23)²

Darla Scouten (21-23)¹

Stewardship:

Patti Kubicka

Joan Stevens

Giuliana Beckwith

DIACONATE (8)

Lisa Cawthra (21-23)³

Cheryl Sill (21-23)³

Joyce Hodge (21-23)¹

Marce Ediger (22-24)³

Dave Foley (22-24)²

OPEN

OPEN

OPEN

LITURGICAL ARTS (6)

Sandy Stroebel (22-24)³

Marilyn Schroeder (22-
24)³

Arabelle Rohs (22-24)¹

Jenny Sliker (22-24)¹

OPEN

OPEN

TRUSTEES (9)

Josh Kannegieter (21-23)²

Frank Scouten (22-24)²

Dave Hamlin appointed

Laurie Lang appointed

Nancy Hassett appointed

PERSONNEL (3)

Su Arnold (21-23)³

Jan Wick (22-24)¹

Jennifer Kannegieter (22-
24)¹

FAITH FORMATION (5)

Amanda Hooper (22-24)¹

OPEN

OPEN

OPEN

OPEN

OUTREACH AND

JUSTICE (8)

Don Britt (21-23)³

Frank Scouten (22-24)²

Amanda Hooper (22-24)¹

OPEN

OPEN

OPEN

OPEN

OPEN

MEMORIAL (3-6)

Janelle Johnson (21-23)

Aleta Hill-Olson (21-23)

Joan Axen (21-23)

Deb Kopperud (21-23)

OPEN

OPEN

CONGREGATIONAL

LIFE (6)

Mary Wilson (22-24)³

Shelley Petters (22-24)³

Ann Hill (21-23)³

Katie Francis (21-23)²

Jenny Sliker (22-24)¹

OPEN

PASTORAL RELATIONS

LITURGICAL ARTS

Purpose

The Liturgical Arts Ministry Team mission is to care for and display the banners, paraments and other items in the sanctuary and throughout the church facility in coordination with the liturgical seasons. Our areas of responsibility include the chancel and altar, vestry, bell tower, narthex and fellowship hall.

Members

A very special thanks goes to Ruth Johnson and Beth Britt who have graciously stepped up to over this mission for the winter months when several of us are gone. They kept things flowing with their hard work and creativity! Ruth Johnson has consented to being an alternate member. Also, thanks go out to Paula Benfer who provided the series of presentations for Black History month with session after worship and a picture display. We are now being educated by her display of Earth Day!

Members include Arabelle Rohs, Marilyn Schroeder, Jenny Sliker, and Sandy Stroebel. We welcome anyone interested!

2022-2023 Highlights

- After the January Black History Month we moved into Lent. The theme was “The journey on the Path to the Cross!” The “path” led the way in the sanctuary and the children participated by lighting the candle and pouring sand from a pitcher to build the path.
- For Palm Sunday two vases of palms graced the chancel. The children then processed with palm branches to be laid in the aisle.
- Good Friday found the church stripped bare in somber remembrance with the banner of the cross with the names on display.
- Easter Sunday “exploded” with Resurrection! Thanks to the donation of plants by the congregation, the place was filled with beautiful color with a cross of pansies in the center.
- Family and loved ones were honored and remembered! Colorful fabric accentuated the tables for the bell choir. Again, we give credit to Paula Benfer for the butterfly Tree. The butterflies bring in the Spring even when the weather is not cooperating!
- Thank you to all who purchased the plants which really add so much to the celebration!
- Thanks to Ruth for the display in the bell tower for Earth Day!

- In the summer months we continue to welcome flowers from your garden or flower beds to grace the church. We also encourage you to purchase flowers or a plant for special occasions in your family. This is a nice way to honor someone!
- When Union Church members pass away, the Liturgical Arts Committee will try to help families in setting up the sanctuary and memorial displays for the service if they desire.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Stroebel

TRUSTEES

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (2022-23)

Purpose

The Board of Trustees shall oversee and maintain the church property and manage the financial resources of the church. The board shall study the church's financial needs and resources, consulting with other boards and committees, to draft an annual budget for presentation to the congregation. The trustees shall undertake financial reviews of all cash accrual accounts on an annual basis, the depth and date of which shall be left to the discretion of the trustees and/or church council. There will be a \$400 limit on all work done without a bid or quote. All financial records for any account of the church shall be retained for seven (7) years. The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for publicizing the endowment fund, educating membership regarding the stewardship of assets through planned giving, oversee investments in accordance with guidelines established and approved by the congregation, and approve disbursement of funds in coordination with the church council. In addition, and in coordination with the minister, the trustees shall establish a stewardship committee to plan and conduct an annual pledge campaign to encourage responsible giving. The trustees shall follow the document retention policy established for the church to maintain contracts for personnel and vendors.

Members

Financial Secretary – Joan Stevens

Treasurer – Will Frater

Property Manager – VACANT

Personnel – Su Arnold

At Large: Joshua Kannegieter (Chair), Frank Scouten, Laurie Lang, Nancy Hassett, Dave Hamlin

Ex-Officio – Sheri Nelson, Patti Kubicka

The Trustees' would like to thank Keith Rosedahl who stepped down this last year.

2022 -2023 Highlights

Financial

- The financial figures at the end of 2022 were as follows:

	2022 Budget	2022 Actual
Operating Income	\$223,451	\$240,383
Operating Expenses	\$245,365	\$234,144

- The budget was finalized for 2023 with another projected shortfall.
- Included in the 2023 budget were: No Faith Formation Director, No Interim Minister (January to May), Housing Allowance for the Minister, Bridge Minister and Interim Consultant Compensation, 2% COLA, adjusted hours of 24 hours/week for the Officer Administrator, Inflation Adjustments, and \$10,000 for Parsonage Repairs / Upgrades.

	2023 Budget
Operating Income – Budgeted	\$224,755
Operating Expenses – Budgeted	\$260,482

The budget was approved by the congregation at the January Financial Meeting.

- At the Annual Financial Meeting the Congregation voted to dissolve the Endowment Fund. That fund has been incorporated into the general fund but a footnote has been added to the monthly reports to document the contributions of the Endowment Fund.
- A loan was obtained to pay for a new boiler. The terms of the loan were \$105,000 at 4.5% over 7 years with balloon payments after year 5. The current balance of that loan is \$87,412.

Property

- A contract was signed with Climate Makers to install a new boiler. The boiler was installed in time for the winter. Several rooms are overheating and the source of the problem is still being investigated.
- In January 2023 ice dams on the roof led to water damage in the Music Room, Community Room and the ceiling of the back staircase. An insurance claim has been submitted and repairs will be forthcoming.
- The parsonage has been vacant this past year with the pulpit being empty. Significant upgrades and repairs are needed on the parsonage. A task force was

created to look into the options available. A report on options ranging from full renovation to maintaining the status quo will be made by that task force to the congregation.

- The Trustees continue to monitor the property for needed maintenance and have identified two projects that need to be addressed: the parking lot and the painting of the parsonage. These projects remain deferred at this time.
- The Trustees had previously established a subcommittee to look into security concerns at the church. Due to COVID-19, this had been placed on hold. It remains on hold at this time as the Trustees have devoted time to the boiler and the parsonage.

2022 – 2023 Goals

- Support the work of the Transition Team as well as the Search and Call Team as they work with the congregation through a time of transition. Provide needed input on compensation packages for a new settled minister.
- Finalize work on the boiler including diagnosis and repairs necessary to avoid overheating of rooms.
- Seek congregational input on the future of the parsonage and take action in accordance with the wishes of the church body.
- Continue to be good stewards of all church resources including financial assets.

Submitted by: Joshua Kannegieter

PERSONNEL

Annual Report 2023

Purpose

The Personnel Committee establishes job descriptions and evaluates the performances of church staff members, consulting with the minister and the appropriate board or ministry team.

2022-23 Members

Su Arnold – (2021-2023)

Jan Wick – (2022-24)

Jennifer Kannegieter - (2022-24)

2022-23 Highlights

–As of June, 2022, Jan Wick and Jennifer Kannegieter joined the Personnel Committee. Shortly thereafter, in August 2022, the committee began interviews for the vacant senior choir position, for which there were few applicants. Fortunately, Carson Schneider indicated an interest in both the senior choir position and the handbell choir position. After an interview, Carson was hired as interim senior choir as well as interim handbell director. In November, with the approval of the council, she was approved for both positions as permanent director.

–Yearly reviews for the custodians, Kyle and Stacy Stueve, were conducted in September. Their work was highly praised, and special note was made of the ease of communication with both Kyle and Stacy.

–Over the course of the fall and into early winter, a new hiring policy was created and submitted to the council, which was approved in December.

2022-23 Goals

In the past year, our goals were to fill the vacant music positions in the church, and to clarify Personnel Committee hiring policies. Going forward, our goals are to support and celebrate the wonderful staff of Union Church, as well as conducting annual reviews.

Submitted by,
Susan Arnold, May 4, 2023

DIACONATE

Purpose: The Diaconate team coordinates the basics for our worship services. We manage the ushers and greeters, the sound system, and the liturgist schedule. We provide the communion elements, and care for the communion silver, linens, candles, chalices, and other worship service items.

We also help coordinate special worship services for Ash Wednesday (including our annual Soup Crawl), Maundy Thursday, World Communion Sunday, and Christmas Eve.

Members: Current members are: Dave Foley, Joyce Hodge and Marce Ediger. Lisa Cawthra and Cheryl Sill are leaving the committee this year. We are pleased to welcome Keith Stevens and Kelly Lundquist as new Deacons. Dave will coordinate meetings and Marce will continue as liaison to church council meetings.

2022-2023 Highlights: We were able to reinstate in-person Ash Wednesday service and Soup Crawl for the first time since Covid restrictions were put in place. The weather didn't cooperate, so with our signature flexibility we rescheduled to the following Sunday. We celebrated a Good Friday service rather than our traditional Maundy Thursday worship. We plan to return to our "upper room" Maundy Thursday communion worship service in 2024. We replaced our assistive hearing devices with new units. We coordinated substitute pastors after Robin's retirement until Rev. Sherri came on board as our Bridge Pastor.

2022-2023 Goals: We are glad to have achieved our goals to gain new members, update elements of the sound system, and reintroduce in-person special worship services.

In the coming year we plan to add Liturgical Arts as part of our ministry team.

Submitted by,
Name: Lisa Cawthra
Date: June 6, 2023

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

Purpose

The Congregational Life team shall be responsible for membership care, shared hospitality and fellowship activities.

2022-2023 Members

Katie Francis

Ann Hill

Shelley Petters

Mary Wilson

Rev. Sheri Nelson

2022-2023 Highlights

- **Welcoming Hospitality**-Congregational Life took over the scheduling for hospitality, thank you to Mary Wilson for doing this.
- **Prayer Shawl Ministry** – Prayers shawls are made by anyone in the congregation and, when needed, a shawl is taken to someone in need of comforting. The Fiber Arts team has helped with making prayer shawls, but anyone may knit, crochet or sew prayers shawls for this ministry.
- **Prayers for Joys and Concerns** – Giuliana constructs a list from Sunday's prayers for joys and concerns as well as announcements voiced during the church service. Copies are emailed to several who have requested this. There are 10 copies mailed or hand carried to those who may be homebound or live remotely from the church. This occurs weekly.
- **Visitation** – No home visits have been resumed since Covid.
- **Cards** – As follow-up to the prayers for joys and concerns list, cards of comfort, support, thanks or joy are sent. The group who sends cards is rotated among Beth Britt, Sandy Stroebel and Mary Wilson.

- **Social Activities:**

Adopt a park/Fellowship and Clean Up Orono Park (October)

Christmas Bingo and Crafts (December)

Coats for CAER- October-December

7-8-9 Dinners begin (January)

Chili Cook-off Fundraiser for Boiler (January)

Cathedral on Fire Book Club (March)

Movie-The Lorax (April)

Adopt a Park/Fellowship- Orono Park (May)

Submitted by, Shelley Petters

MEMORIAL

Memorial Committee, May / June 2023

The Memorial Committee receives, acknowledges, and disburses donations made to Union Church as memorials or honorariums. The use of the funds may be specified by the donor for a specific purpose or use, or undesignated. Requests for funds are submitted to the committee by church members for consideration and approval prior to the event of purchase of an item or service, before funds will be dispersed. Request may be made for tangible items or for direct services that support and / or enhance the physical church as well as the congregation. Current categories of funds available are Undesignated, Faith Formation, Liturgical Arts, Congregational Life, Pastoral Counseling, Befrienders, Music (with further category breakdown), Youth Trip, Kitchen, Little Free Library, Media, Boiler Fund.

Members

Aleta Hill-Olson (2021-2023)

Janelle Johnson (2021-2023)

Joan Axen (2021-2023)

Deb Kopperud (2021-2023)

Memorials received in Memory

of:

Shelly Sherper

Tony Rohs

Ella Rivers

Ellen Heck

Karen Ryding

Doug Potter

Memorial Committee Annual Report	As Of May 3, 2023
Checking	\$ 2,359.61
Savings	\$ 9,194.93
TOTAL	\$ 11,554.54
Beginning balance - prior year report	\$ 13,597.39
Memorials received	\$ 2,110.00
Interest on Savings	\$ 20.24
TOTAL DEPOSITS	\$ 2,130.24
Undesignated - Band Shrimp Boil	\$ 500.00
Undesignated - Shrimp Boil	\$ 2,045.09
Trustees, Boiler Fund	\$ 320.00
Checks printed	\$ 33.00
Stain Glass Window Ornaments	\$ 1,275.00
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$ 4,173.09
Ending balance - current report	\$ 11,554.54
Undesignated	\$ 3,738.87
Faith Formation	\$ -
Liturgical Arts	\$ -
Congregational Life	\$ 1,540.43
Pastoral Counseling	\$ 75.00
Music**	\$ 5,330.24
Befrienders	\$ 445.00
Kitchen	\$ 150.00
Youth Trip	\$ 10.00
Boiler Fund	\$ 20.00
Media	\$ 100.00
Little Free Library	\$ 145.00
TOTAL	\$ 11,554.54
Concerts	\$ 50.00
Choristers	\$ 876.01
Handbells	\$ 10.00
Senior Choir	\$ 2,053.98
Music (general)	\$ 2,340.25
Total Music **	\$ 5,330.24

CENTENNIAL

Purpose

This organization of ladies started in this church in January 1876 with the purpose of fellowship with each other and support of the church.

Centennial Society Report 2022-2023

The Centennial Ladies, though few in numbers, have put forth a mighty effort! The general meetings as well as small group meetings are held monthly at the church. We were saddened to lose our long-time member, Ella Rivers, who passed away at age 105.

We honored three confirmands, Libby Kubicka, Arabelle Rohs, and Kate Peterson, with Target gift cards, as well as two graduates, Madi Beckwith and Brian Kubicka.

Our 2022 monthly calendar of events:

June – Outing to Munsinger Gardens and lunch in St. Cloud

July – Summer picnic at the home of Diane Weiss

Aug – Prepared and served strawberry shortcake dessert for the Shrimp Boil

Oct – Made annual pledge of \$2,200 to the general fund and \$300 to OCWM

Nov – Donated \$100 to each of the following organizations for “Give To The Max Day”:
CAER, Open Doors For Youth, and Gifts Anonymous

Dec – Lefse making for baked goods and craft sale. All profits, a total of \$1,600, went to the boiler payment reduction.

- Special holiday bonuses were given as follows: Kyle & Stacy Stueve \$200, Giuliana Beckwith \$150, Carson Schneider \$150, Pastor Sheri \$100.

- Christmas luncheon at Perkins on Dec. 7th

Looking ahead in 2023:

June – Arboretum and lunch outing

July – Picnic at the home of Diane Weiss

Aug - Prepare and serve dessert at 2nd Annual Shrimp Boil

Sept – Resume regular Centennial General meetings

When Union Church members pass away, or during times of celebration, the Centennial Society will try to help families with food and fellowship hall details. Centennial often makes baked goods to serve during these times. It is the intention of this ministry to ease the burden of planning on the families.

We continue to explore possibilities for fundraisers. We are so grateful for the support we receive, so we can continue to contribute financially to the work of this church. Blessings!

Centennial Financial Report for Jan. 1-June 5, 2023

Balance on Jan. 1, 2023 = \$3798.59

<u>Deposits</u>	<u>Checks</u>
Jan. \$300	\$1,100
	\$ 150

Feb.

Mar.

Apr. \$400	\$150
\$126	
\$49	

May \$49	\$20
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June	\$1,100 (pledge paid in full)
	\$150 (OCWM paid)

Balance on June 5, 2023 = \$2052.59

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Stroebel
Centennial Treasurer

FUNDRAISING

2022 - 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Purpose

The goals of the Fundraising Task Force are to plan and execute events that contribute to the church's General Fund and/or market our church to the wider the community.

2022-2023 Members

The 2022-2023 Fundraising Task Force members were Jen Kannegieter, Josh Kannegieter, Ruth Johnson, Paula Benfer, Darla Scouten, Karen Sherper Rohs, Giuliana Beckwith, Arabelle Rohs, and Laurie Lang.

2022-2023 Highlights

Kicking off the Fundraising Task Force events last year was the *United We Shiver* event in February 2023. Encouraged by the donations of generous supporters, our fellow congregant, Kevin Dillworth, bravely jumped into the frigid waters of Big Lake. Thank you, Kevin!

We held the *Shrimp Boil for the Boiler* in the church parking lot Saturday, August 27th, 2022. *The New Riverside Ramblers*, a live Cajun band, brought many to their feet dancing to the catchy New Orleans music. The event included food, beverages, a 50/50 raffle, and fun for the whole family. Drawing about 200 attendees, many feasted on baskets of Cajun shrimp, andouille sausage, corn-on-the-cob, potatoes, and onions prepared by Chef "Gator" (Josh Kannegieter) and his awesome crew. Others opted for hot dog platters. The wonderful Centennial Society dished up delicious desserts of strawberry shortcake for all. Yard games, popcorn, cotton candy, and face painting by Paula Benfer combined to make the event a big success.

The 2nd Annual Shrimp Boil will be August 5th, 2023, with the Cajun Crawfish Hotdish band playing their New Orleans-style music. Thanks to the many volunteers who assisted with the event! Our custodians, Kyle and Stacy Stueve, were integral to the set-up, tear-down, maintenance, and assistance before, during, and after the event. Thanks, Kyle, Stacy, and kids!

Giuliana Beckwith and Arabelle Rohs designed, developed, marketed, and sold church T-shirts. Paula Benfer designed, developed, marketed, and sold the angel window Christmas ornaments. Tee shirts and ornaments are still on sale, so please see Giuliana or Paula to get yours!

Giuliana worked with Elk River's *Adopt-a-Park Program* and in 2022 our church adopted Orono Park – just two miles from our church. A sign clearly and proudly displays the church's name at the park entrance and twice a year a park clean-up and picnic are organized.

Thanks to all Fundraising Task Force members for their ideas, contributions, and hard work!

Submitted by Laurie Lang

HISTORIAN REPORT

The 150th Anniversary of The Union Church Organization will be in 2025. The official anniversary will be on the first Sunday of February 2025. In the past, other big celebrations have been held when the weather is more favorable. The time has come to assemble a 150th Anniversary Idea Task Force. Ideally, eight individuals will volunteer to be part of the task force.

The 145th Anniversary Celebration was a wonderful event that, perhaps, awakened some to the dedication of this church to the community way over one hundred years. The 145th. was led by a small and dedicated committee who were promised that this would be a one-time deal. It was also a wonderful event with Dave Foley, Frank & Darla Scouten, Kevin Dillworth, Jane Houlton, and Marilyn Schroeder, Centennial members, Youth group members, and others all on board.

Every year deserves the recognition of one more year in celebration of another milestone. With that in mind, I believe that it is time for someone or a small committee to step up, to learn the history of The Union Church and continue to perpetuate the value of this congregation within the Elk River community that has always been so since as early as 1866.

While I do not expect anyone to take on my now 30+ years as some kind of “career” decision, I am hopeful that there are those within our congregation who will learn and teach new members of this church’s valued history and mission within and beyond the Elk River community.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Rule
Historian

Union Congregational Church, Elk River

Interim Update – June 2023

I am so appreciative of all the work church members and leadership have done in the past 4-5 months. The interim period is a dedicated time for reflection about who the church has been, who the church is now and where you are feeling called forward as a congregation. It is also a time to reflect on practices and habits, individually, communally, and institutionally, that are serving the congregation well and ones that are not.

During this time of reflection, changes and adjustments can be made to the way you are functioning as a church to be ready and better able to welcome a new settled minister. The time and energy you are putting in now to build shared understanding and clarity as a community will be a gift to your next minister.

Interim Accomplishments and Milestones (January-June 2023)

The Transition Team that has been meeting bi-weekly since late February to engage the congregation in vision session, surveys, and other activities to reflect together and build shared understanding that will help create a Local Church Profile that will be used of the Search and Call process. The Transition Team met with UCC Conference minister Cindy Mueller to discuss the Local Church Profile. Cindy also presented about the Search and Call process at the May Council meeting. A poster showing the different steps in the interim work and where we currently are in the process is now hanging up in Fellowship Hall.

Visioning/Discernment Process: Since mid-January, the congregation has engaged in (6) vision sessions after worship. These sessions provide participants with the opportunity to talk with one another about important questions about Vision Session Topics: Who are we now?, Healthy Communication, Vision Boards – Who is God calling us to be?, Who is our neighbor?, Who is God calling us to be? and Who is God calling to minister with us?.

Communication and Interim Activities Survey: The Transition Team created a survey to gather feedback about the congregations' interest in participating in interim activities over the summer and in four ideas generated at the April 16th vision session to develop healthier communication habits. The survey results will be used to help plan the interim work in the summer and fall.

Hartford Institute's Pastoral Search Inventory Survey. The survey opened on Monday, June 5th and will close on Sunday, June 25th. The survey link has gone out in a separate email and will be in the E-News each week. Paper copies are available by request and need to be returned to the church office by Monday, June 19th, to input answers into the computer.

The Bylaws Taskforce members spent many hours reflecting on the current bylaws, how the church is actually functioning, and then making suggestions for bylaws changes that will help the church function more smoothly. The proposed bylaw changes were approved at the annual meeting. The sections regarding membership and homebound voting were not addressed at this time.

The Parsonage Taskforce members have gathered information about a wide range of options for the Parsonage for congregation to consider and eventually vote on later this year. The taskforce will be offering an open house and discussion hour on July 9th.

Adopt-A-Room – Many members worked closely with Rev. Sheri to clean and re-organize several areas of the church to make the physical spaces in the church be more inviting and welcoming.

The Trustees have begun to have conversations about the various factors that feed into the **compensation package** for the next settled minister. They have been looking at UCC guidelines for benefits, salary, and housing allowance. Decisions the congregation makes regarding the Parsonage will also impact the package.

Practicing healthy communication – At each vision session we practice healthy communication habits, helping develop and strengthen our capacity to listen to one another and be in relationship across difference.

When I do a quick count, I feel confident saying that over 55 people have participated in at least one or more of the visioning sessions. 53 people completed either a paper or online survey of the spring Communication and Interim Activities survey. As of June 16th, 55 online surveys have been submitted for the Hartford Institute's Pastoral Search Inventory survey.

Well done, Union!