



Annual Report 2020-2021

***Called by Love
Sustained by Community
Committed to Justice***

Virtual Annual Meeting:
May 23, 2021

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The following are those reports received as of the deadline date for publication purposes.

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May 23, 2021 First Parish In Brookline Annual Meeting Agenda

1. Welcoming Music
 2. Orientation to the technology and voting process
 3. Preview of process for small group and consensus seeking
 4. Chalice Lighting and Ministerial Blessing, Rev Lisa Perry-Wood
 5. Call to Order and Welcome by Acting Moderator, Jami Jordan
 6. Review of First Parish Mission and Ground Rules for Congregational Meetings, Jami Jordan
 7. Presentation of the Annual Report, Janet Britcher, Parish Board Chair
 8. Recognition of out-going Board members, Bob Williamson, Parish Board Co-chair
 9. *Recognition of Today's Agenda
 10. *Recognition of New Members, Emily Cherry and Elizabeth McIntire
 11. *Recognition of Officers and Committee Members, as required by Bylaws, Mitra Morgan, Chair, Nominating Committee
 12. *Recognition of Minutes from May 31, 2020 (Virtual) Annual Meeting
 13. Discussion and Vote on Recommendations above #9- #12: Today's Agenda, New Members, Officers and Standing Committee members, and Minutes
 14. Review Parish Board's Recommended FY 2022 Budget, Janet Britcher, out-going Board co-chair
 15. Small group facilitated discussion of Budget with Parish Board members, using these Questions:
 - As you think about FPB's mission, what works for you about the budget?
 - What concerns do you have about the budget?
 - Where are you on the consensus ladder 5-4-3-2-1?
- 5 = "unqualified yes"
- 1 = "don't agree and feel the need to stand in the way of its acceptance"

16. Review of Consensus from Small Groups and Proposed Amendments, Janet Britcher

17. Discussion of Amendments (if any) and Vote to approve the budget as proposed by the Parish Board for FY 2022 and a withdraw from endowment principal to pay a portion of operating costs (requires 2/3 vote**), Jami Jordan Moderator

18. Any other business on the agenda, as accepted, Jami Jordan

1. Closing Words and Extinguishing Chalice, Rev Lisa Perry-Wood

2. Adjourn, Jami Jordan

* To save time without sacrificing the opportunity to ask questions and discuss, we will have a single vote on the typically more routine business of Annual Meeting: accepting the agenda for the meeting, accepting new members, electing new officers and members of Standing Committees, and accepting the minutes from past congregational meetings

**Budget approval requires a 2/3 vote because it involves withdrawing principal from the endowment, not just earnings

Ground Rules for Congregational Meetings:

1. One speaker at a time
2. Listen with an open mind
3. Speak for yourself (“I”)
4. Tell your own truths and let others tell theirs

The Mission of the First Parish in Brookline

Called by Love, Sustained by Community, Committed to Justice

We strive to be a welcoming, diverse and loving congregation that nurtures spiritual growth for individuals and families, celebrates multicultural community, and works together to demand social justice, dismantle racism, and care for our living Earth.

New Members: Barbara Cone and Tai Melendy

The following persons have signed the membership book (in person or virtually) since our last Annual Meeting:

Barbara Cone	Tai Melendy
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Officers and Standing Committee Members

The Nominating Committee nominates the following members:

For the Parish Board:

- Jody Leader
- John Mignano

For Officers:

- Clerk: Karla Baehr
- Treasurer: Margaret Williams
- Moderator: Jami Jordan
- Alternate Moderator: Marilyn Tressel

For Nominating Committee:

- Lori Day
- Carol Spitzer

Respectfully submitted,

Karla Baehr

Clerk of the Parish

Annual Meeting Minutes May 31, 2020

Note: The May 31, 2020 meet was held via videoconferencing (Zoom) due to federal and state guidelines prohibiting in-person gatherings due to the Covid-19 pandemic; at the time of the Annual Meeting all Sunday services, committee meetings and other First Parish meetings and gatherings had been held virtually since mid-March.

Attendees were welcomed to the Annual Meeting by a recording of Music Director Keith Kirchoff playing Wake Now My Senses. Serving as technical director for the meeting, Ministerial Intern Jud Wolfskill oriented participants to Zoom and how the virtual meeting would be conducted.

At 1:07 pm Clerk Karla Baehr confirmed that more than 38 members had joined the meeting, the minimum number to achieve a quorum. {The number of members participating rose to 81 at the peak, or 32% of the congregation.}

Acting Moderator Kimberly Rand called the meeting to order and Rev Lisa lit a chalice and shared a reading and ministerial blessing. The Moderator reviewed the First Parish mission and ground rules for congregational meetings.

Outgoing Parish Board chair Gene Thompson-Grove explained the Board's rationale and plan for continuing to use a consensus decision-making process in deliberations, explaining that ultimately our bylaws require formal votes, consistent with Robert's Rules of Order. By using a consensus process leading up to that vote, she explained, the Board has two goals: 1) practice reaching consensus, and understand that when we finally vote yes or no on the FY21 Budget, not all of the "yes" or "no" votes are the same; and 2) recognize that we don't all have to agree to move forward together, as long as we know we were listened to and taken seriously.

Gene presented the Annual Report by reminding participants that it had been posted online earlier in the week. She focused her remarks on the "what", "why" and "how" of the Parish Board's work over the past year. She shared the Board's covenant and goals for the year: be mission-driven and policy-focused; be transparent and have clear decision making processes; be collaborative and reflective; have fun and avoid burnout. She offered examples of how both have been reflected in the Board's agendas.

Parish Board co-chair Janet Britcher recognized out-going Board members Ellen Blaney, Dave Demerjian, Charles Sandmel, and Gene Thompson-Grove, describing specific gifts and contributions each had made.

Kimberly reviewed the proposed Agenda and invited questions. She reminded members that to save time without sacrificing the opportunity to ask questions and discuss, she would be calling for a single vote on the typically more routine business of Annual Meeting: accepting the agenda for the meeting, accepting new members,

electing new officers and members of Standing Committees, and accepting the minutes from past congregational meetings.

Out-going Chair of the Welcoming/Membership Committee Eliza Blanchard presented new members:

Jenn Britt Adam Faja Susan Faja Perry Grossman Carrie James Danny Keefe	Johanna Kobran Michael Kobran Carmen MacFadden Jessica MacFadden Shensheng Miao Xiao Miao	Virga Mohsini Bridgette Nadaff Christine Rossell Peter Sakura Jim Woodman Melissa Woodman
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Out-going Chair of the Nominating Committee Ray Wellbaum presented that committee's nominees for new Officers and Standing Committees as required by our bylaws:

For the Parish Board:

Alfred Brownell
Emily Cherry
Jen Guillemin
Margaret Williams

For Officers:

Moderator
Kimberly Zimmerman Rand
Treasurer
Margaret Williams
Clerk
Karla Baehr

For Nominating Committee:

Whit Larrabee (member-at-large)

Kimberly reviewed and invited questions about the Minutes from the past year's Congregational Meetings requiring approval: May 19, 2019 Annual Meeting and November 17, 2019 Special Meeting.

Kimberly called for a consolidated vote on all of the above recommendations: accept the Agenda for this meeting, New Members, the Nominating Committees recommendations for Officers and Standing Committee members, and the Minutes for the two congregational meetings. She asked for discussion, inviting members to offer their questions or statements in the Zoom "chat box". There was no discussion. Voting was by show of hands with screenshots taken to record the vote. All actions were approved overwhelmingly.

Gene reviewed the Parish Board's Updated Recommended FY 2021 Budget, pointing out that it has been available on the website for review and downloading in advance, along with a Frequently Asked Questions document

prepared in response to questions raised at the three congregational budget hearings held in May and an updated Building Blocks document designed to give background information on each component of the budget. She described the positive impact on our budget for FY 2020 of Treasurer Charles Sandmel's successful effort to secure a \$65,000 Payroll Protection Loan (which will become a grant) from the federal Covid-19 CARES Act. She then highlighted the themes in the feedback garnered at the three congregational budget discussions and how they had influenced subsequent Board discussion:

Positive responses to the Board's initial budget proposal included:

- Strong canvass pledging
- Shows restraint without sacrificing mission in a unique year
- Continuing to pay staff at FY20 rates - no layoffs or furloughs
- Less concern about endowment draw in these unprecedented times
- Affirm Sunday service collections for partner organizations
- Reductions in program budgets are not drastic and everyone shares the lift
- Allows for flexibility as year unfolds

Concerns raised were:

- Rental income seems unrealistic
- Become an Honor Congregation in terms of Denominational Giving
- Maintaining music as much as feasible

She explained how the Board had responded to the concerns, highlighted significant recommendations for both income and expenses, and pointed out that the proportion of the proposed budget committed to fulfilling our mission would go from 52% in FY 2020 to 57% in FY 2021. The recommended budget would authorize spending \$574,954, a 10% reduction from FY 2020, and would authorize a draw from the endowment of \$150,000, a reduction of 15% from the draw authorized for FY2020. The draw from the endowment would decrease from 7.7% in FY 2020 to 6.4% (2.9% from earnings and 3.5% from principle).

In small groups in separate "breakout rooms", members addressed these questions:

- As you think about our mission, what works for you about the budget?
- What concerns do you have about the budget?
- Where are you on the consensus ladder?
 - 5: I can say an unqualified "yes" to the decision. I am satisfied that the decision is an expression of the wisdom of the group.
 - 4: I find the decision perfectly acceptable.
 - 3: I can live with the decision. I'm not especially enthusiastic about it.
 - 2: I do not fully agree with the decision. However, I do not choose to block the decision. I am willing to support the decision because I trust the wisdom of the group. - - - - - "the line"
 - 1: I do not agree with the decision and feel the need to stand in the way of this decision being accepted.

0: I feel that we have no clear sense of unity. We need to do more work before consensus can be reached.

Using the chatbox, most small group facilitators reported high levels of both support and consensus about the budget, reporting 61 5's, 19 4's, 2 3's and 1 abstention (83 consensus votes). Based on the discernment of a high level of support and agreement, Kimberly asked for a vote on the budget, noting that approval would require a 2/3 vote because it will require withdrawal from the endowment principal, not just earnings. Discussion in the chat box focused exclusively on members' appreciation for the work of the Board and Finance Committee. The show of hands voting in favor was overwhelming. No hand was observed voting against adopting the budget. One member abstained. In addition, 2 members had secured and sent in early ballots in favor of approving the budget.

Kimberly asked if there was any other business before the congregation. Seeing no responses in the chat box, she adjourned the meeting at precisely 2:00 pm, the target set by the Board at the outset of the meeting.

Respectfully submitted as a draft pending Congregational approval at the next Congregational meeting,

Karla Baehr
Clerk of the Parish

Senior Minister's Report

Dear Friends,

Last Spring, we called the Covid-19 pandemic challenges and our response to that moment: “unprecedented.” It was the right word for that time. In this program year those challenges were constant, as we moved through a full fiscal year with our building shut down and all our worship services, committee meetings, small groups and other gatherings online. A full year of virtual connection, in which “zooming” became a verb and “zoom-fatigue” was very real. We longed for a time when we’d gather in person again, while we knew it would not be “back to normal,” but a “new normal” - one that we will create together.

This year's phrase is *staying together*. Whatever we have done in this very trying year, we have done it together. There have been no pandemic experts to guide us, no roadmap to show us how it's done; we have figured it out as a community. That has offered both challenges and opportunities for First Parish, and by staying and working together we have risen to meet this moment.

From our ingathering water ceremony, through all of our innovative holiday services, rituals, and rites of passage, we created and live streamed worship experiences that were rich and connecting. We owe so much gratitude to our talented music staff - our Music Director Keith Kirchoff, and Adrian Jones, Elizabeth McIntire, Aaron Newell and Emily Wheeler, our section leaders. Their musical talents consistently sustained us when our spirits sorely needed uplifting. Laci Adams, Director of Religious Exploration, kept families and youth connected, offering her exceptional storytelling talents for all of us each week. We said goodbye in January to Alisa Halliday, wishing her well on her next steps to ministry, and, happily, Ebiere Omoregie joined us as our new Parish Administrator, a welcome addition to our team. Finally, we were lucky enough to have our ministerial intern, Jud Wolfskill, with us for a second year, offering us his gifts as a preacher, researcher, and small group leader. Our hard-working staff definitely helped us stay together.

As if a pandemic were not enough, this year brought a high-stakes presidential election, which many of us supported through calls and postcards organized by our #UUtheVote team. Next, we faced a post-election insurrection, the continuing onslaught of BIPOC murders by police, and further evidence of widespread inequality in this country, in pandemic statistics and vaccine unavailability. Our racial justice action committee and Thursday callers met these moments, as always, with commitment and determination, educating us on the injustices around us, with a focus on reimaging public safety, and researching the wealth inequalities and legacy of slavery in First Parish history. Meanwhile, Immigration Justice closely supported Boston-area immigrant communities, swiftly responding to changing Covid-related needs. Together, we did what we could, remembering to be grateful for all that we still have.

We also stayed together with over 100 phone calls to members made by our devoted Pastoral Care team; those conversations helped people feel connected and informed our programming. Our 2022 Canvass team, whose theme was: “All Together and All In,” followed up with their own calls, generating robust results in pledging. Small groups, listening circles, coffee hour conversations and informal gatherings also helped us stay close and support each other. And our outdoor gatherings - for Halloween fun, pre-Christmas candle lighting, community Valentine-making, Spring Festival, and Flower Celebration - reminded us of First Parish connections, while also raising funds for our community partners. None of this could have been done without the support of our member-volunteers, too numerous to mention. When times were toughest, you helped us stay together.

And, finally, we owe so much gratitude to our hard-working Parish Board, who spent countless hours meeting, planning, and thinking through the many policy-level concerns of church life. This has truly been a year of “shared ministry,” and the board has partnered admirably with committees, staff, myself and other leaders to ensure we stay true to our mission and our covenant with each other.

Once again, I have so much gratitude for our life together at First Parish. It continues to be a source of joy to serve such a devoted, collaborative and inspirational congregation. As we grow, learn, share and inspire each other, I know we will stay together, whatever the future may hold. May it ever be so.

With love and gratitude,
Rev. Lisa

Parish Board Report

Board Members: Janet Britcher (chair), Bob Williamson (co-chair), Margaret Williams (Treasurer), Karla Baehr (Clerk), Alfred Brownell, Emily Cherry, Micaela Coady, Jen Guillemmin, Steve Pratt-Otto

We have been guided in our work by our covenant, developed together at our fall retreat:

To be our best selves and do our best work we will:

- Energy: We will focus our work on policy level issues
- We will be responsible for our own limits and self-care
- We will invite fun and joy
- We commit to listen to understand and learn.
- We will practice deliberate ways to give all voices a chance, making space for minority views, and for differences in processing and reflection time.
- We will bring clarity and focus to our work.
- The board will be a small group ministry with each other, providing support and personal and spiritual growth as we accomplish our work
- Our goals will be mission driven.

The board identified the following goals at our September 2020 Retreat:

Goal 1: Resource and Expenditure Benchmarking

The board will collaborate with and support the finance committee to develop the comparative information and process needed for the congregation to begin to prioritize how it will live into our mission over the long term. (Completed/ongoing)

Goal 2: Develop and pilot a Capital Project Congregational Decision-making Process

The Board will develop and pilot a timeline and process for making congregational decisions on capital projects that is transparent as to timing and criteria to be assessed (Pilot process completed/ongoing revisions)

Goal 3: Pilot Data Dashboard for Planning and Organizational Health

For the purpose of developing trend data to help the Board in prioritizing and planning, the Board will pilot the development, collection, review and dissemination of an annual dashboard of trends in such data as membership, attendance (worship views/attendance, small groups, committees), RE (registration, attendance, # classes,

events/opportunities by age), and financial (pledges, rental income, expenditures, endowment). The Board will report pilot results and lessons learned at the 2021 annual meeting. (Completed)

Goal 4: Creating and Supporting a Digital Strategy Team

Facilitate the creation of a digital strategy team or committee that addresses the question, How can we meet the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of our community in the digital space now and into the future? (ongoing revisions)

Goal 5: Advancing Social Justice, Climate Justice and Anti-Racism Work

The Board will endorse and publicize the RJAC's efforts to research First Parish connections with slavery and the accumulation of land and wealth; the Board will invite the RJAC to Spring board meeting about their proposal for a congregation wide process for the congregation to "reckon" with what the research uncovers.

The Board will endorse and publicize the RJAC plan for engaging the congregation in a conversation about the racial wealth gap and how an anti-racist perspective can influence attitudes toward and use of personal and institutional resources to address that gap; the Board's budget deliberations for 2021 will include this perspective.

The Board will publicize the work of the Climate Justice Committee to identify a comprehensive set of steps that would Green and reduce the First Parish "climate footprint", including resource management (water, energy, papers use, candles and waste) etc. The Board will sponsor a forum at a congregational meeting in the spring for the Climate Justice Committee to offer their recommendations.

Goal 6: Senior Minister Support and Evaluation

Establish clear expectations of and evaluate our Senior Minister

Goal 7: Inclusive and transparent budget development and monitoring

Ensure the budget is developed and monitored in an inclusive and transparent way

Highlights:

- Provided a June meeting with incoming and outcoming members to meet and connect. Held an August meeting to provide orientation in a treasure-hunt format to review by-laws for new members, and to support connection among members. We held a virtual creativity event, separate yet together collage to foster creativity and build connection, in August. To encourage casual connection between meetings in this time of quarantine we held brief monthly social meetings in triads.
- To build our skills, we learned two tools as a board, Question Burst and Head Heart Hands.

- Maintained a policy level focus for board meetings. Continued the practice of preparing the Board Meeting Agenda in advance with the Executive Committee to ensure a productive focus. Maintained the fist-five decision making process to allow for differences to be revealed and explored as policies were considered.
- Introduced a standing agenda item “Let’s Talk About Money,” to prompt us to dive into this difficult topic from a different perspective every meeting. Which included fundraising options, comparative church data, canvass and budget
- Invited a different committee to most Board Meetings to maintain connection, become informed, appreciate progress, and provide support.
- Board members participated in the annual Canvass as canvassers. The Canvass Committee has developed a sustainable approach with staggered terms to facilitate passing along best practices. The Canvas team achieved its goal!
- Created a Capital expenditures and investments policy for congregational decision making, and then piloted the policy with the presentation and discussion of a Solar Panel proposal from the Climate Action Committee.(Goal #2, #5))
- Held three budget conversations with congregants to respond to the draft budget, and reflected through the lens of FPB's mission our financial decisions. An overview powerpoint was prepared as well as an updated Budget Building Blocks document and a Q & A document, and posted all budget documents on the website (Goal #7).

Parish Administration Report

Fiscal Year 2020-2021 showed our staff's continued flexibility as the fiscal year began in complete quarantine. Shortly into the fiscal year, our Custodian, Derrick Banks, left First Parish, as his family moved to South Carolina. We continued with our cleaning service for a few months, and then hired Oppong Serebour, who had worked for us in the past, as a part-time custodian who cleans the building on weekends and has been handling cleaning and setting up for rentals. The church saw an obvious decline in rentals, due to the pandemic, but had a few workshops and short-term or one day rentals, and the Lin Learning Center after school program returned successfully in September and has been meeting in the Dana Room ever since! VOICES Boston also recently returned to First Parish, using Pierce Hall for dance and movement.

We have continued sending out the Weekly Highlights and Calendar, Among Us, and the monthly Newsletter regularly throughout the year, and added additional Friday and Sunday emails, sharing important information with you all.

Our staff team remains solid, although changed. Rev. Lisa Perry-Wood led us through an entire fiscal year during a pandemic. Keith Kirchoff produced beautiful music, videos, and worship for us on a consistent basis. Jud Wolfskill remained as our Ministerial Intern, whose contract with us ends this fiscal year, and preached with deep love and authenticity. Laci Adams continued as our Director of Religious Exploration and found new and creative ways to keep our children and youth engaged remotely. Adam Berman remains as our Bookkeeper, working primarily with the Parish Administrator and Finance Committee. I, Alisa Halliday, served as your Parish Administrator for nearly 4 years, and left to pursue a ministry opportunity in January and dropped down to part-time while we searched for a new Parish Administrator. During that time, Emily Wheeler, one of our talented choir section leaders, stepped up to help produce pre-recorded worship services and took on our weekly and monthly email communications. Ebiere Omoregie was hired as your new Parish Administrator, and spent time in March training with Alisa on vital aspects of the position, and is a welcome addition to the staff team.

Our Office Volunteers continued to help this fiscal year, particularly with mailings for Religious Exploration and Canvass. We are so grateful for the ways our volunteers always step up when needed. We continued to only produce our Orders of Service online, and hold worship online only, which not only kept everyone safe, but saved us a considerable amount of money on office supplies.

While we plan to continue our relationship with Brookline High School, we did not have any interns this year, as we did not produce paper Orders of Service and we met remotely. We hope that interns from Brookline High School can return in the upcoming fiscal year.

It has been a great pleasure working with you all and serving this community of faith. I know you will keep holding each other up and look forward to seeing and hearing about the ways the spirit moves in First Parish.

Respectfully submitted,

Alisa Halliday, former Parish Administrator

Religious Exploration Annual Report

As with so many aspects of our lives, the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has shaped and changed the contours of our RE program this year! We started the church year with the RE-Imagining process, in order to focus on information gathering and opportunities for feedback in order to best assess the needs of our families and kids. The process included an all RE Town Hall, age specific focus groups, drop-in listening posts, and feedback garnered from text outreach to all K-8 families. The overwhelming feedback that we received through this process was that parents were not interested in nor had the bandwidth to participate in virtual RE programming. In response to this feedback, we decided to send our RE program to them, with UU@Home, to create opportunities for in-person connections as conditional allowed and to increase our direct outreach to parents and youth.

UU@ Home are boxes, care packages or mailings sent to all 59 RE families every 4-6 weeks. Our mailings have included home chalice creation kits, items to enrich the community's experience of the Holiday pageant, chalk kits for expressing our values and vision to the world, an augmented order of service for our Easter worship service and mazes created by our very own Fred Andree!

We have taken a multi-leveled approach to in person gatherings. On the micro-level, we have offered small families pods of no more than 10 participants (kids and parents). Interested families signed-up and were matched with families that were either geographically close or had children of a similar age. We had a total of 7 families sign up to create 3 family pods. The families were able to make decisions about what activities they were interested and comfortable doing and how frequently they wanted to meet. Activities have included everything from sledding to playing Dungeons and Dragons! With approval of the Reopening Planning Group, we began to host larger Pod+ gatherings this Spring. Each gathering was open to 25 participants (kids and adults). Pod+ Gatherings have included guided hikes at the Boston Nature Center. The most recent meeting of the Reopening Planning Group has approved the expansion of our Pod+ Gatherings (which are all outdoor activities) by lifting the participant cap. We are planning for Pod+ Gatherings through the summer and have started to invite other committees and groups to join our RE families. Additionally, we have ensured that all outdoor church gatherings have included child friendly activity and specific outreach has been done to RE families. These activities have included a costume photo booth for Halloween, tree decorating at the Winter festival and an augmented reality scavenger hunt during the Spring Festival.

Outreach to parents has also taken many forms! We know from data that our all RE emails, which go out 2-4 times a month only have an average reach of about 55%. The good news on that front is that 55% is more than double the typical open rate for a non-profit or educational institution. However, it also means that almost half of our families are not regularly reading our correspondence. To help our families and parents stay engaged, Laci has undertaken quarterly direct to parent outreach either

in the form of phone calls or texts. Despite only a quarter to a third of those direct contacts producing a response or interaction, the direct outreach serves as an additional point of contact between our RE program and our families. A few folks have even noted their appreciation for the contact even when they did not respond. We also created an RE-specific Facebook group, RE@FPB, in order to increase the possibility of parent to parent interaction and to diversify our communication platforms.

Although we have been able to connect with a substantial segment of our RE community through alternatives, there have been challenges during covid that have not been able to overcome. Our potential challenge class this year was going to be smaller than expected (only 2), so those families decided to defer participation until their youth could complete Challenge in person. Similarly, we have not been able to offer OWL virtually (as per guidance from the OWL creators and the UUA). Once we can offer in-person classes again (and possibly for a second subsequent year), Challenge and OWL will need to be offered to a wider span of young people so that all interested participants can complete Challenge and OWL. Consequently, we should anticipate that the volunteer needs and fiscal responsibilities related to teacher training will be greater over the next two years to meet the needs of our OWL and Challenge aged youth. Outreach to youth has been less programmatic and more direct outreach in the form of directed asks for worship or meeting participation and check-ins with youth.

We have already identified a few key needs for the coming year: additional opportunities for outdoor interactions and a focus on the social-emotional growth of young people in the wake of the pandemic. In terms of outdoor education, we feel like we will need to transition from outdoor social gatherings to more outdoor exploration. We are seeking ways to augment our outdoor spaces that allow for more learning. In terms of the social-emotional growth of our young-people, we believe that generative arts based education (such as storytelling or theatre or forms of writing) can successfully be done outdoors and can give our young people the opportunity to claim and describe their experiences and needs post-pandemic. In addition to creating dynamic, outdoor education that can meet the needs of a wide age span, experiential and project based exploration, such as gardening, service projects, and arts based education, also provides the entire congregation more points of contact with children and youth in our RE program. We will need the full gifts and skills of our congregation to meet this challenge. We will need our musicians, writers, artists, gardeners, builders, etc to strengthen their connections to our RE program.

In terms of RE committee leadership, we are excited to report that the committee has been enriched by both continued leadership and the infusion of new committee members. Nathan Freitas and Jennifer Goulart have continued to serve on the RE Committee. Additionally, we have welcomed Sally Ruderman and Matthew O'Rourke onto the committee. As a high school teacher, Sally provides us with much appreciated perspective to our work with our high school youth. She also participates

in peer Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work at her current institution that will enrich our integration of social and racial justice into our RE program. Having grown up at First Parish, Sally also brings with her some institutional knowledge and firsthand participant experience that we have not had on the committee in recent history. Matt has been an active parent and teacher in our RE program for many years, which provides the RE committee with a wealth of information about the needs of our young people, parents and teachers! Matt is also the asker of excellent and insightful questions, which will strengthen our strategic visioning as we face the challenges of our post-pandemic programming. We continue to recruit members of the RE committee, particularly folks that have interest or experience that relates to the arts, theatre, artists, musicians, and/or educators.

Music Director's Annual Report
Music Director: Keith Kirchoff, 2010-present

Music During Virtual/Remote Worship:

As the Covid-19 Pandemic continued, our worship services remained virtual and were live streamed via Facebook Live (more on that below). Each week, I would prepare and record three hymns and a postlude, and three of our soloists/section leaders would provide music for our introit, anthem, and offertory. On weeks that they were unable to perform, I would record the missing parts.

There were occasions for alternate musical offerings: Landon Rose participated frequently, either as a guitarist or as a video editor. Nathan Freitas played on bass and also edited together some videos. Elena Rippel played flute for two different services. Occasionally our soloists would meet up distanced-and-in-person with Landon and/or Nathan and record together. And periodically, we borrowed music (with permission) from videos produced outside our church congregation, either from the UUA, or friends from other churches.

All of our music was pre-recorded and then streamed on Facebook during the worship service.

The Choir:

The choir participated in worship on a handful of occasions: an anthem at Christmas, a couple of hymns at Easter, an anthem for Tenebrae, and a couple of other hymns throughout the church year. The choir also met semi-regularly on Wednesday nights via zoom. These get-togethers ranged from preparing music for virtual performance, sharing musical ideas, vocal exercises, or even just listening to and sharing poetry. Starting in February, choir members volunteered to lead these get-togethers.

In April, we sang in distanced groups of four at a Spring Event in person at First Parish.

Soloists/Section Leaders:

The year began with four section leaders: Elizabeth McIntire, Emily Wheeler, Adrian Jones, and Aaron Newell. Aaron stepped down from his position shortly after the new year. Because the choir was not meeting regularly or in person, I did not find a need to rehire the position immediately: once the choir has been cleared for singing together again, I will look to hire a new bass section leader.

The role of the section leaders naturally changed at the start of the year. They occasionally had the opportunity to continue their role as section leaders and led sectionals leading up to Christmas, teaching their section the music for our anthem. They also helped their section prepare music for Easter, offering sectionals or offering to record choir members singing via zoom.

However, far more of their time this year was spent as soloists: we would meet most weeks to discuss upcoming worship themes, and then we would choose solos that they would sing for Sunday worship. Additionally, I led some workshops at the beginning of the church year where I taught them the basics of audio and video editing, providing them with the tools to edit their own videos for worship.

My intention is that they will return to their role of “Section Leaders” in the fall when we can hopefully return to singing as a choir in some capacity.

In-Person Concerts:

I presented two live-streamed concerts from the Sanctuary. One was featuring the music of Franz Liszt, and the other was a set of improvised Christmas carols.

Live Streaming Worship:

In addition to my role as Music Director, I assumed the position of Technical Director this year as well. Each Sunday, I would host the live stream worship service from my home in Rhode Island. Rev. Lisa (our senior minister) and usually Jud (our ministerial intern) would be in the sanctuary leading worship, while Laci (our DRE) would be leading the Time For All Ages from her home in Ohio. Shortly after the new year, we had in-person help from either Nathan Freitas, Jeff Cadow, or Michael Monroe. These tech assistants would manage the sound from the sanctuary, act as a camera-operator from behind the church camcorder (placed in the balcony), and also offer their phone as a secondary close-up camera.

In hosting the livestream, my work included:

- Physically working with Boston Light and Sound (with the help of Bob Williamson) over the summer to install a sound system designed for live streaming
- Physically preparing the sanctuary for live streaming by installing the remaining necessary hardware and troubleshooting glitchy equipment as needed
- Remotely working with the tech assistant and minister each Sunday to setup the sanctuary for live streaming
- Directing rehearsals on Sunday to prepare the various elements of the service
- Producing and directing the service by choosing camera angles, changing between scenes, monitoring sound, and monitoring the live feed
- Editing video material from congregants for Sunday worship as needed

We did encounter some occasional issues with copyright disputes: the Facebook algorithm periodically would determine that one of our songs or some of our images were a “copyright violation.” Such violations were always incorrectly labeled: for example, Facebook shut down our stream for showing a black and white picture of our Sanctuary and later for showing photographs taken by David Hawkins - a member of the church who gave us specific permission to use his photos. We were also regularly shut down for using any music owned by Sony.

As we look to next year, we are optimistic that services will return to in-person. However, it is also a near-certainty that we will continue to live stream in some capacity. This will hopefully include the hiring of an assistant to handle live streaming each Sunday as I return to more of a music-focus for Sunday morning.

New Piano

As outlined in the previous two years' annual reports, I have been in search of a small grand piano for Pierce Hall. This past November, my search came to an exciting conclusion when a piano was donated!

Thanks to an introduction by Martha Leader, I was put in touch with Debra San in Brookline. Her partner had recently passed away, and she was looking for a home for his 1919 Steinway grand. I went to check it out, and this piano was very special indeed, far exceeding what I was ever hoping to find.

The "new" piano was moved into Lyon Chapel, which now provides Lyon with an instrument very suitable for concerts, high-level rehearsals, and services. The old piano from Lyon has been moved into Pierce, providing Pierce with a good instrument for rehearsals.

When we have reached the other side of the pandemic, this instrument gives us another highly rentable space for musicians and music groups. I couldn't be more excited!

We are also looking to find new homes for our two uprights: the Winter upright in the Dana Room and the Hamilton upright in Pierce Hall. They are free for the taking!

Inventory - Instruments

Pianos: First Parish owns five pianos.

Sanctuary: Our 1916 Steinway A was rebuilt three years ago and remains in wonderful condition and sounding beautiful. It needs to have its internal humidity regularly checked and maintained, and this has been a significant challenge while I have been away. However, our newly (as of this writing) hired Parish Administrator Ebiere Omoregie has offered to help with this maintenance until I return to First Parish regularly, post-pandemic.

Lyon Chapel: Our newly acquired 1919 Steinway O was moved in in November. It is a perfect instrument for small chamber concerts, rehearsals, and services.

Pierce Hall: Our Kranich & Bach grand piano was built in the 1940s and is a wonderful instrument for rehearsal purposes and small services. We also have a Hamilton upright piano that was donated to the congregation in 1960. This piano is available for free to anyone who wishes to take it home.

Dana Room: We have a Winter upright piano Dana. This small upright is in rough shape but works well for occasional rehearsals or musical sing-a-longs. It is infrequently used and is being stored in the closet.

Organ: With Covid-19 preventing us from any in-person worship, the organ has sadly gone unused for the past year. As we return to in-person worship, my hope is to resume use of the organ and again pursue some basic repairs.

Inventory - Music Library: We have a fairly extensive sheet music library, and it remains a goal of mine to have the entire library digitized. In 2019/20, Jami Jordan helped to digitize the first 6% of the library, but due to the continued nature of the Pandemic, progress was stalled. This remains a monstrous task, and a project I really hope to see finished next year. (Please reach out if you are interested in helping out!)

-Keith Kirchoff

Ministerial Intern's Report

Summary of Actions, September 2020 - May 2021

This year, I developed my skills in collaborating with the ministry team and providing online worship. I got to lead worship 5 times (6 after May 9th), as well as provide pastoral care.

This year, I:

1. Provided pastoral care to congregants via Zoom
2. Co-facilitated the Male-Identified Group
3. With subcommittee of the Racial Justice Action Committee (RJAC), researched, wrote about, and presented on First Parish's history with slavery
4. Performed elements of worship such as the Welcome, Call to Worship, and Candles of Joys and Concern both online and in the sanctuary
5. Participated in RE outing to Boston Nature Center
6. Led worship 5 (ultimately, 6) times

Respectfully Submitted,

Jud Wolfskill,

Ministerial Intern

Congregational Life Events

Memorial Service/Celebration of Life:

Doctor Immacula Cantave (July 6, 2020)

Child Dedications:

Zoe Cadence Nadaff (May 30, 2020)

Joseph Richard Alm Fitzmaurice (September 26, 2020)

Delilah Ward Terry (April 10, 2021)

Graduating Seniors:

Sammi Brady-Myerov

Mira Donahue

Matthew Erwin

Julia Guillemín

Graham Krewinghaus

Laila Polk-Thomas

Cecelia Wilson

Nicola Woods

Bylaws Committee Report

The Bylaws Committee did not meet this year, as we had no requests from the Board or from members of the congregation.

Sue Andrews has resigned as Chair of the Bylaws Committee.

Jim Womack has been appointed by the Board as the new Bylaws Committee Chair.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Andrews

Building and Grounds Committee

Report to First Parish in Brookline Annual Meeting May 2021

Buildings and Grounds supports the church with planning and capital projects. Our budget complements the Maintenance budget and volunteer improvement teams to allow our physical plant to serve our religious community. We very much appreciate the way our church administrator Alisa Joyce and now Ebiere Omoregie - masterfully supported again this year by Bob Williamson - work together with us in this goal.

The year in review

Capital projects since the last Annual Report along with the Committee Members who helped supervise them:

Ø Continued work on the structural program for the Tower (\$31,910) - Clint

Ø Repair of Sanctuary chimney mortar (\$2,500) - Clint

Ø Relamping throughout the church with energy-saving LEDs through EverSource (\$0) - Bob

Ø Two accessible seating areas in the Sanctuary (\$4,300) - Sam

Ø A/V System for Sanctuary (\$2,019) - Keith

Ø Engineering assessment of upper driveway drainage (\$2,093) - Sam

Buildings and Grounds participated in the development of the on-site solar panel proposal and is currently working on a comprehensive plan with Climate Justice to decarbonize our heating systems and hot water.

This past fiscal year, the annual B&G funding from the endowment was \$34,000. Note that Buildings and Grounds is funded by a dedicated reserve account. Our spending in any given year may be more or less than our endowment transfer. (The account may also be supplemented by grants and special donations but none apply this year.) We always maintain a minimum amount for unexpected expenditures.

For many years, we have been members of Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light, an education and advocacy group, which also provides us with advice on green projects as requested.

Upcoming projects

We are guided by a 20-year maintenance plan that allocates costs for specific items on a yearly basis. We also continue to address our deferred maintenance, new safety issues, and accessibility and green projects. Our near-term projects include:

- Parish House chimney repair (\$3000) - Clint
- Contribution to AV system for hybrid worship services (\$1-2,000) - Keith
- Old electrical infrastructure (knob & tube) in the Sanctuary (\$ thousands - TBD) - Safety issue. This could be divided into phases. - Bob
- Parish House Bell Tower North wooden window frame restoration (\$ thousands - TBD) - deteriorated condition. This could be divided into phases. - Clint

The 2021 fiscal year B&G funding remains at the reduced level of \$40 thousand.

Major capital projects

In addition to the long-term maintenance plan, the Building and Grounds Committee has identified building improvement initiatives beyond B&G's scheduled maintenance purview and budget. These were put forward as potential projects for consideration if a capital campaign were undertaken. A visioning session was held with the various Committee Chairs in October, 2013 at which the following improvement concepts were presented:

1. Improve the accessibility and safety of the sanctuary entrance. This will include additional drainage systems to prevent winter ice build up in the gravel area.
2. Make "green" sustainability improvements that lessen our carbon footprint.
3. Improve the outdoor areas to be part of the spiritual and social life of the Church.
4. Be good stewards of the building. We remain committed to maintaining and restoring the exterior masonry of the tower to address structural and envelope integrity issues. Funding for this remains an open issue but could be assisted by a capital campaign. In the meantime, we will undertake limited Tower projects on a 2-3 year schedule.
5. Create more classrooms and accessible toilet rooms on the ground floor of Parish Hall.
6. Renovate Pierce Hall to better meet the multifunctional space needs of the Church.
7. Renovate the Sanctuary to improve worship experience.

As always, we rely on our members and seek additional volunteers for initiating projects. Join us and help achieve our vision of making this place truly welcoming and environmentally sustainable.

Respectfully submitted by the Building and Grounds Committee,

Clint Richmond, Chair

Tim Dailey

Sam Dennis

Will Spears

Robert Williamson (Parish Board liaison)

Building Operations Report

Fiscal Year 2020-2021 was spent primarily out of the building. Parish Administrator, Alisa Halliday, went to the church 2-3 times per week for the majority of the fiscal year to walk through the building to check that everything was operating as it should.

We had several leaks in our heating system, and one leak in the ceiling, all of which were repaired.

We continued with the snow removal company that we used last year, which was successful and cost-effective again this year. We also switched our landscaping company, for additional savings.

We continued to have some pest issues in our basement, including the Dana Room, and switched to a new pest control company which we are happy with.

Bob Williamson and his team of Helping Hands replaced all of our light fixtures with energy efficient bulbs; sealed up a number of holes that let rodents into the building, particularly in the Dana Room; and took on several other projects around the building to make it more clean, safe, and functional. Thank you to Bob and the team for making these important changes happen.

Our building was used safely for rentals and our worship team regularly led Sunday's service from the Sanctuary and live streamed it for the congregation to watch. One of our Small Group Ministries met in person in Lyon Chapel safely and successfully.

A Reopening Planning Group was formed, to work together to determine how and when to safely reopen the building for staff, renters, and congregants, and are working hard to balance safety and community.

Respectfully submitted,

Alisa Halliday, former Parish Administrator

Fiscal Year 2022 (7/1/21 - 6/30/22) Canvass

We are grateful to everyone who volunteered in this years' canvass, to everyone who made a pledge, and to everyone that we spoke to or who provided us with feedback. It has been a year like no other. Our doors closed, yet our congregation still managed to thrive. Our community supported our mission by being **All together, and All In, for First Parish!**

We express a special thank you for your persistence and good cheer to the 18 parishioners who actively participated in the canvass including: Karla Baehr, Margie Beal, Janet Britcher, Alfred Brunell, Jeff Cadow, Emily Cherry, Deane Coady, Micaela Coady, Nathan Freitas, Jen Guillemine, Sheila Hussey, Whit Larrabee, Rev. Lisa Perry-Wood, Steve Pratt-Otto, Charles Sandmel, Laura Walters, Margaret Williams and Bob Williamson. The Canvass was led by a six member team: Karla Baer, Micaela Coady, Alisa Halliday, Whit Larrabee, Margaret Williams and Rev. Lisa Perry-Wood.

The canvass team found that people in our community were wonderfully generous this year, despite the enormous challenges of this past pandemic year, including when many in our community faced economic challenges. Many meaningful connections were made during the canvass outreach, and we appreciated the feedback and response we received. The total amount pledged so far for FY2022 was \$388,000, higher than the FY2021 total of \$365,000.

We expect additional pledges to come in through the end of the year. Compared to last year, for FY2022: 1. About 3/4 of the 154 households pledged, 2. The average pledge increased by 16%, from \$2,920 to \$3,373, 3. The median pledge increased by 11% from \$1,800 to \$2,000. For anyone who would like to make a pledge but has not yet done so, it's not too late to submit your pledge online here! <https://firstparishinbrookline.org/give/pledge-online/>

[Pledge Online - First Parish in Brookline](#)

Please fill out the form below to send us your Annual Financial Pledge Commitment for the fiscal year 7/1/21 through 6/30/22. First Parish in Brookline values diversity of views, backgrounds, experiences, and economic circumstances.

[Firstparishinbrookline.org](https://firstparishinbrookline.org)

Climate Justice Committee

Annual Report- Summary of Actions, Programs and Activities, July 2020 - May 2021

The Climate Justice Committee is a new First Parish Committee. Its first meeting was held on November 10, 2019 with eleven members present. The Committee initially started off meeting on the first Sunday of every month but later decided that given conflicts in scheduling with the First Parish Board and other committees to meet on the fourth Sunday of every month. There are twenty-five members in the committee's google email group but monthly meetings average about twelve members per meeting.

The Committee members are committed to honoring and taking action on our church's mission statement, which ends with "care for our living Earth" as well as the Unitarian Universalists Seventh Principle "Respect for the Interdependent Web of All Existence of Which We Are a Part". Given the global warming crisis unfolding around us, we believe it is critically important that our church community do its part to quickly reduce its carbon footprint as well as educate our community on what steps all of us can take collectively and individually to address climate change.

We believed that it was in that regard that in November of 2020 during its meeting that the First Parish Board approved Goal #4 which states **"The Board will support the work of the Climate Justice Committee to identify a comprehensive set of steps that would Green and reduce the First Parish "climate footprint", including resource management (water, energy, paper use, candles and waste) and installation of solar panels. The Board will collaborate with the Committee to present those steps to the congregation for consideration at the Annual Meeting."**

Accomplishments to date include:

- Recommendations from the 2020 Mass Save Audit were completed in September 2020. The cost (\$12,000) was covered entirely by the state (initially we were told 90% of costs would be covered but the program was enhanced to cover 100%). Estimated yearly electrical savings: \$2778. We thank Bob Williamson for his time and effort in ensuring the work was carried out in keeping with the facility's special features and historical nature.
- Consistent with and as a component of goal #4, The Committee undertook and completed a series of consultative actions with outside expertise at no cost to the church in researching solar panel installation bids carried out jointly with Building and Grounds which culminated in a Solar Panel Installation proposal for the Church. A congregation wide zoom meeting to present the findings took place on February 17, 2021. More than 60 members of the congregation attended the presentation. This was the largest gathering of church members

and our community since the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic. That presentation opens up discussions about alternative renewable energy sources comparable or even more cost effective to the solar Panel proposal.

- After consultation from the Finance Committee, its research into solar farms, and its comparative study of other church finances, as well as a poll taken of the climate justice members, the committee dropped its pursuit of a solar panel installation for the upcoming fiscal year and instead has submitted to the Board a plan for decarbonization of the church facilities. As of April 25, the committee awaits the Board's review of the proposal in anticipation of next steps.
- During the reporting period, The Climate Justice Committee became the beneficiary of fifty percent (50%) of the Five Thousand (\$5000.00) Cedar Tree support Grant to First Parish Brookline. In an effort to leverage relationship building for outside environmental justice groups working on issues of the climate crisis, racial justice, inequality, exclusion and immigration and migrants' rights, the Climate Justice Committee identified the Alternatives for Community & Environment (ACE), a Roxbury neighborhood based, environmental justice and transit-oriented development Nonprofit to receive the 2500.00. The leadership of the Climate Committee is currently consulting to engage ACE directly.
- As part of its support to national and international Climate and Environmental Justice Groups, The Climate Justice Committee on February 23rd 2020, organized a memorial service for One Hundred and twenty-eight (128) Earth Defenders, murdered in 2018 for their work in defending their peoples and lands from exploitation. Given the outbreak of COVID and decision to go virtual with worship services, it was challenging to hold similar services in 2020 and 2021. However, the co- chair of the Climate Justice Committee, Alfred Brownell joined a panel of activists and global climate and human rights leaders to launch the 2019 annual Global Witness report on Defenders murdered in 2019. See: <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/blog/climate-leadership-land-and-environmental-defenders-more-vital-ever/>



The climate leadership of land and environmental defenders is more vital than ever | Global Witness

Our annual report into the killings of land and environmental defenders in 2019 shows the highest number yet were murdered in a single year. At least 212 defenders were killed in 2019 - an average of four people a week since the Paris Climate agreement was signed, when the world supposedly came

together amid hopes of a new era of climate progress.

www.globalwitness.org

On-going work and going forward into next fiscal year

- Going forward into next fiscal year, the Committee, consistent with Goal #4 of the First Parish Board, will “identify a comprehensive set of steps that would Green and reduce the First Parish “climate footprint”, including resource management (water, energy, paper use, candles and waste) and installation of solar panels.”
- The Climate Justice Committee understands that its work around greening and decarbonizing the Church has sparked conversations around spending and fiscal responsibilities. The Committee welcomes this conversation but recommends that it be broadened to include Growing the Church (focusing on memberships for the youth and new families), living out our values and ensuring sustainability.
- In that regard, the Committee plans to strengthen its work and outreach with the Religious Exploration program because the children and the Youth are the future of our church and our world - a livable future demands extraordinary actions now, not ten years from now. Toward this end, the Committee also plans to coordinate actions with the Justice Leadership Caucus of the Church-Racial Justice, Social Actions and the Immigration Committees - the intersection of climate, race, and immigration is very apparent to us all. Enhancing and strengthening the work of these Justice committees would be critical to Growing our Church!
- The Committee will prepare weekly “calls to action” emails for the FPB climate justice google group. We hope that climate Justice weekly actions would also be posted on the First Parish Website and that the Page: Racial and Immigration Justice: Take Action would now be edited and be renamed Racial, Climate and Immigration Justice: Take Action.
- Continuing to partner with other environmental justice organizations to strengthen our influence and actions. Examples: ACE, UUA environmental justice; Mothers Out Front; Faculty/Staff Divestment Network; Sunrise Movement, Green Advocate

Prepared by Alfred Brownell and Deane Coady, co-chairs

Book Club

The First Parish Book Club offered readers yet another group of diverse books during the past year. Once again interested readers offered suggestions for monthly reads, and we voted to choose books for the year.

As you can see from the selections listed below, our list comprises a range of perspectives on the human condition presented in a variety of genres by very talented writers. We kicked off the year with a fantasy in a modified, graphic-novel format! We've read nonfiction, historical fiction, autobiography and updated Greek classics, as well. It's true that belonging to a book club opens us to new ways of seeing the world, and certainly exposes us to entertaining and thoughtful discussion!

Our reading list for the church year:

Stardust by Neil Gaiman -- June 7, 2020

Uncle Tungsten by Oliver Sachs -- July 12, 2020

The Library Book by Susan Orlean -- August 2, 2020

The Immortalists by Chloe Benjamin -- Sept 13, 2020

Circe by Madeline Miller-- October 4, 2020

The Rest of Life by Mary Gordon -- November 1, 2020

Unsheltered by Barbara Kingsolver -- December 6, 2020

Lincoln by Gore Vidal -- January 10, 2021

Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand -- February 21, 2021

Everything in its Place: First Loves and Last Tales by Oliver Sacks -- March 14, 2021

The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek by Kim Michele Richardson -- April 11, 2021

Isaac's Storm by Erik Larson -- May 2, 2021

The Book Club generally meets the first Sunday of every month at 7:30 PM in the Peterson Room, although we try to avoid holiday weekends, and attempt to give extra time for very long books. We advertise our meeting dates and book selections in weekly bulletins, orders of service announcements, and monthly newsletters.

Everyone is welcome! Join us if a book we've chosen appeals to you - there's no long-term commitment required! If you've enjoyed a book and would like to discuss it with a group, let us know the title, and we'll add it to our list of potential reads.

Contact Julie Horvath (jrhovath123@gmail.com) to be added to our mailing list.

Poetry Circle

Our Poetry Circle group continued into its 11th year, with some original members remaining and some new members joining us. We continued to choose one poet monthly for discussion at our meetings. Poets included Eavan Boland, Alicia Stallings, Naomi Shihab Nye, Natasha Trethewey, Donald Hall, Robert Haas, Marie Howe, Richard Blanco, Fady Joudah, and Claudia Rankine.

We also held 2 sessions during which we discussed our own original poems.

All meetings of course were held on Zoom, and that did not hamper our discussions at all.

We look forward to continuing appreciating poetry into the future!

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Andrews, Chair.

Vespers

Leaders: Anne Copeland and Diane Shannon, with all regular attendees sharing in leadership of services

Participation: Approximately 8-10 people attend each Vespers Service.

Description: On the second Sunday of each month (7-8pm), an opportunity for a small, contemplative lay-led vespers service has been offered to the First Parish community. Based on the age-old practice of marking the end of the day with communal reflection, this service revolves around simple music, guided meditation, and periods of silence and quiet reflection focused on a unifying theme. In a candle-lighting ritual, attendees are invited to name those who are physically absent but on their minds and in their hearts. All attendees are invited to bring a reading consistent with the church-wide monthly theme. Services this year were done via Zoom and continued through the summer months. A welcome consequence of the Zoom format has been that 4-5 former members of First Parish Brookline who have moved out of town have re-joined the group.

Anne P. Copeland

Deacons' Report

Members: Bill Dwyer, Sheila Hussey, Laura Walters, Ray Wellbaum, Midge Wilcke, Bob Williamson and Jim Womack.

Purpose: The Deacons, proposed by the minister, approved by the Parish Board, are the designated elders of the church. They act as the institutional memory of the church and support the wellbeing of the congregation by being a strong presence in institutional life.

At our first meeting with Reverend Lisa in 2021, we reflected on our personal experiences and the happenings of this pandemic year with gratitude for all the hard work done by First Parish members to keep our community strong. At a second meeting, we viewed a presentation from Finance Committee members who had contacted six churches of similar size to see how they raise and spend funds needed to support their church communities. We trust that the years of experience residing with the deacons, as they discussed their reactions to the report, were of use to the Finance Committee.

We continue to commit to serving First Parish as institutional memory and in any way that we are called to assist in furthering the mission of our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Hussey

Pastoral Care Associates 2020-2021

Our team this year: Marga Dieter, Madeline Fine, Tanya Gurian, Jami Jordan, Alfred Brownell, Anne Modena, Jud Wolfskill, Rev. Lisa, and me, Jeff Cadow (chair). Anne finished her term in March of this year. Laci began joining our meetings this year - a lovely addition that helps us keep up with RE families.

We meet monthly (via Zoom this year, of course). We continue using a shared spreadsheet to keep track of those to whom we've provided pastoral support (phone calls, visits). Jami administers a group on Lotsahelpinghands.com to coordinate "parish care" - the logistical, practical side of care such as providing rides or meals that includes volunteers from our community. We have not actually needed to use it much this year.

In January of this year, we began reaching out to members to see how people were handling life during the pandemic. Just about everyone we reached appreciated the contact. We managed to email, text, or call around 100 members before we paused prior to the start of canvassing. We plan to have a second wave now that the canvass has wrapped up. Our thanks to Konah and Alfred Jr. for pitching in!

While Small Group Ministry isn't officially ours to coordinate, I'll mention it: We had 2 traditional small groups carry over from last year and started 2 new ones this year. Another group for men and those who identify as male has met every other week. Two Seasoned Souls groups and a drop-in meditation group have also met regularly.

Rev. Lisa and I are in the process of coordinating some training for the team, such as listening skills, healthy boundaries, and helping our community break taboos of speaking openly about mental health issues and surviving childhood sexual abuse. We are also working on adding some new members and finding a new chair or co-chairs (I'm staying on the team but stepping down from being the chair).

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeff Cadow

Immigration Justice Committee Annual Report

The Immigration Justice Committee is guided by our vision of community to live into our congregational mission and UU spiritual principles together by keeping the “borders” of our hearts and church open. We take our cues from the leadership and priorities of Centro Presente, Boston Immigration Justice Accompaniment Network (Beyond), the La Colaborativa of Chelsea and other immigrant organizers and neighbors. We strive to practice cultural humility, radical hospitality and moral accountability with individuals and families enduring the direct impact of U.S. immigration policies; to respond to escalating anti-immigration tactics and outcomes; to raise consciousness, encourage solidarity actions and mobilize resources at FPB through partnering opportunities, educational events, crowdfunding efforts and outreach to legislators, elected officials and decision makers; and to collaborate with neighboring UUs and other faith groups whenever possible.

Co-Chairs: Ellen Blaney and Tania Erlij

Members: Wendy Estrada, Ann Gilmore, Julie Horvath, Sue Kalt, Gerry Leader, Jody Leader, Martha Leader, James Shillaber, and Laura Walters

Over the past year, members of our committee continued collaboration and accompaniment efforts with our immigrant neighbors through the Boston Immigration Justice Accompaniment Network, Centro Presente, and La Colaborativa, and with our Ecuadorian indigenous neighbors of Iglesia Bautista Nueva Jerusalen in Milford in the following ways:

- Accompanied neighbors in Immigration Court
- Wrote letters of solidarity and support, signed petitions, and showed in-person at actions to urge the release of family members being held in ICE detention during COVID
- Crowdfunded for monthly family rent support after a neighbor’s release
- Formed a mutual circle/cooking exchange with a Centro Presente member family
- Participated in La Colaborativa’s family RAFT application assistance initiative
- Crowdfunded for La Colaborativa’s family Thanksgiving meal initiative
- In solidarity with Beyond organizers contributed clothing, supplies and essentials for containers being sent directly to churches in Honduras for families after devastating hurricanes Eta and Iota
- Coordinated with FPB Valentine’s and Spring Holiday event organizers for congregational solidarity contributions to La Colaborativa’s community support efforts
- Facilitated Pastor to Pastor liaison between FPB and Iglesia Bautista Nueva Jerusalen

in Milford

- Liaison between NAICOB and Milford church to gift hundreds of face masks
- Offered direct assistance with Milford neighbors experiencing food insecurity
- Continued Lengua Swap English and Spanish language exchange pairing FP congregants with Milford neighbors

and identified free high quality online ESOL college prep courses for Milford neighbors

- Took action in solidarity with autonomous indigenous community Ayllu Puka Puka in Bolivia:

- o Support with establishing GoFundMe fundraiser to address their water crisis and build cisterns, which helped them to partner with their Bahai brethren in Chile

- o Participation in international Bahai fundraiser by FPB music video clip to support Ayllu Puka Puka's water efforts - \$11,346 USD raised and cisterns built to capture water for 37% of their families

- Engaged in efforts underway to ensure access of Covid19 vaccine for immigrant communities including our Ecuadorian indigenous neighbors in Milford

Our legislative advocacy efforts continued, as well:

- Ongoing weekly calling to MA legislators and participation in UU Mass Action's annual Advocacy Day on Zoom with MA legislators urging their support of bills for Safe Communities, Work and Families Mobility, Protection of Injured Workers, Prevention of Wage Theft, and Decarceration bills for No Cost Calls, an End to Solitary Confinement and Protection of the Constitutional Rights and Dignity of all those on Mental Health Watch

- Outreach to FPB congregants in Rep. Copplinger's district to ask him to co-sponsor Safe Communities Act

Internship Committee

Our working committee consisted of Michele David, Madeline Fine, Scott Ullrich, Midge Wilcke and Jud Wolfskill. Priscilla Brown and Dan O'Keefe were members of the committee for part of the year.

We began meeting monthly in September and will meet through May with a possible June meeting. Each month our agenda included discussions of Jud's newsletter articles and services. We shared what worked for each of us, which in some instances was different for each person and made for lively discussions. Services like Tenebrae stirred a lot of meaningful conversation. In some instances we talked about his services and sermons in advance reflecting on his ideas and providing other perspectives for his consideration.

We strongly supported Jud's personal commitment to Christianity and to Universalism and encouraged him to share that part of himself with the congregation. The committee felt that Jud shared his beliefs in ways that were not threatening and encouraged our congregation to consider his perspective.

We talked about the work Jud was doing with the group that is reviewing the history of slavery at First Parish. That also raised heartfelt conversations.

Our committee will need to report to the UUA on Jud's work this year. The UUA has a series of seven competencies with detailed bullet points that require our responses. At our committee meetings each month we worked on one competency.

Jud shared his ongoing experiences with us and we responded with our knowledge of First Parish, our history, how things have worked before the pandemic and our thoughts on the difference the pandemic brought to his work. Clearly like so many things over the past 14 months the shape of Jud's internship was unprecedented. The committee regrets that we did not have the opportunity to work with him face-to-face this year and have him be a part of the more traditional life of our congregation. Despite the distances it was a privilege to be a part of this committee. We are excited to see where his ministry journey takes him.

Report written by: Midge Wilcke

Ministerial Formation Committee 2020-2021 Annual Report

Team Members: Kristen McIntire (Chair), Martha Leader, Susan Larrabee, Paul McLean, Nathan Freitas

Our committee meets monthly with Rev. Lisa Perry-Wood to review her professional development goals and offer feedback for her growth as she approaches final fellowship with the UUA. Each year we submit a standard evaluation to the UUA in November summarizing the past year and our recommendations for her growth as a minister within our congregation. This year, we submitted our report on October 31 and the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC) approved Rev. Lisa to continue into her final year of observation with us. We intend to submit her final evaluation this upcoming fall so that she can enter full fellowship, now that she will have had three preliminary fellowship evaluations. The primary goal of our committee is to support Rev. Lisa while helping provide her with constructive feedback to become the best possible minister she can be.

Nominating Committee

First Parish in Brookline, MA This year the Nominating Committee has been comprised of Parish Board member Janet Britcher; members at large Sarah Griffen, Whit Larabee and Mitra Morgan; and Rev. Lisa PerryWood serving as a non-voting ex officio member. The committee met virtually starting in February to compile a list of candidates for open positions on the Parish Board, as Officers, and on the Nominating Committee. All members of First Parish were invited to self-nominate and to suggest other members for nomination.

Upon careful consideration, the Nominating Committee puts forth the following slate of candidates to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting on 23 May 2021.

Parish Board

- Jody Leader
- John Mignano

Officers

- Clerk: Karla Baehr
- Treasurer: Margaret Williams
- Moderator: Jami Jordan
- Alternate Moderator: Marilyn Tressel

Nominating Committee

- Lori Day
- Carol Spitzer

Respectfully submitted,

A. Mitra Morgan, Chair

Racial Justice Action Committee

Members: Laci Adams, Karla Baehr, Almas Dossa, Ann Gilmore, Jami Jordan, Kathryn Kirshner, Martha Leader, Michael Luke, Ann Eldridge Malone, Ron Wilkinson, Jud Wolfskill

The church year began with our nation in turmoil and the dawning realization that the COVID-19 pandemic was going to lock our community into a virtual existence for some time. Members of the Racial Justice Action Committee felt called to create and continue as many outlets as possible for engagement in the ongoing journey to be a Multicultural, Anti-Racist Beloved Community.

Throughout the year, the RJAC sponsored, co-sponsored and participated in a variety of programs, adapting each to ensure a meaningful virtual experience. These events included:

1. Hosting a virtual forum on August 5th, 2020 with Dr. Raul Fernandez called Re-Imagining Public Safety. Dr. Fernandez is a Brookline Select Board Member and leader in Brookline's work on Re-Imagining Public Safety. If you missed it, you can find it here under Past Programs and Workshops: [Forum with Dr. Raul Fernandez](#)
2. On October 25, 2020, we were honored to have Rev. Karlene Griffiths Sekou preach to our congregation. Rev. Sekou is an international public speaker, preacher and scholar with over 25 years of experience working in grassroots community organizing and development, human rights advocacy, health equity and cultural regeneration. If you missed her sermon, you can find it here under Sermons and Services: [Service with Rev Karlene Griffiths Sekou](#)
3. UU the Vote - once the pandemic caused us to be virtual in our work, the group who had gathered in early 2020 to create a work plan continued to rely on existing groups that had already started "get out the vote" work. Many of us wrote postcards and participated in phone banking throughout the months leading up to the election.
4. UUA Indigenous Justice -a week long convergence in late November organized by the UU Ministry for Earth including events co-organized and attended by RJAC members and other congregants such as:

UUA Worship Service-Thanksgiving Reframed

This worship service included musical and spoken word from Hartman Deetz, Wampanoag artist and activist, and a sermon from UUA President and Mayflower descendant Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray.

Film Screening and Panel Discussion of "We Still Live Here" with Jessie Little Doe, Mashpee Wampanoag, founder of the Wampanoag Language Reclamation Project and filmmaker Anne Makepeace.

Teach-In for congregations on Addressing 400 Years of White Supremacist Colonialism

National Day of Mourning livestream on Thanksgiving Day

5. Brookline Interfaith Meeting - On January 17, 2021, several members of the RJAC participated in the first joint meeting of its kind. During the meeting, small groups shared the anti-racist work that is underway in their congregation. It was generally agreed that the experience should be repeated in order to further build the interfaith community in Brookline.

6. Reducing the Racial Wealth Gap (see Board goal below) - Given the fact that in Boston, the median net worth for African-American households, excluding immigrants, is \$8.00 and the median net worth for white households is \$247,500 (based on The Boston Globe Spotlight report in December 2017), the RJAC decided to explore reducing the wealth gap locally. In collaboration with UU Mass Action, five UU congregations and The Boston Ujima Project, members of the RJAC helped plan and organize two workshops held in February. The first workshop focused on learning about the context of wealth inequity and the The Boston Ujima Project. The second workshop centered on learning about the opportunities to volunteer as part of The Boston Ujima Project and invest in Ujima's funds.

The workshops attracted 65-70 people for each workshop (all congregations). First Parish had 29 people in attendance. Since the workshops, four people from FPB have contributed \$2,150 via investments, donations and memberships. In total, (all congregations) 16 people have invested \$36,200. Our relationship building with Ujima is ongoing. You can learn more about the organization by visiting their website: [Ujima Boston](https://www.ujimaboston.org/).

7. Co-sponsored four films with nine other organizations in the Dismantling White Supremacy (DWS) film series, including "The Condor and the Eagle", "Fruitvale Station", "Healing from Hate", and "Notes from the Field".

8. On April 29, 2021, RJAC sponsored a pilot workshop called "Understanding the Landscape of White Supremacy in New England". Former FPB member and current Standing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) member, Liz Martin, presented a workshop to a small group. Her goal was to test her content and to inform the audience of White Supremacy groups, people and actions in New England. Participants left with a much fuller understanding of this threat and list of actions that can be taken. Liz plans to offer this workshop to other UU congregations.

By December, the First Parish Board developed two goals that would continue to focus the team's work.

FPB connections to Slavery: "The Board will endorse and publicize the RJAC's efforts to research First Parish connections with slavery and the accumulation of land and wealth; the Board will invite the RJAC to a Spring board meeting about their proposal for a congregation wide process for the congregation to "reckon" with what the research uncovers."

A small research team - Michael Luke, Kathryn Kirshner and Jud Wolfskill - was formed to address the first goal. This effort is an ongoing project, made more challenging due to library resources being restricted due to the pandemic. Preliminary conclusions confirm direct links between First Parish in Brookline and enslavement. An update to the Parish Board will be given on May 5th.

Racial Wealth Gap: “The Board will endorse and publicize the RJAC plan for engaging the congregation in a conversation about the racial wealth gap and how an anti-racist perspective can influence attitudes toward and use of personal and institutional resources to address that gap; the Board’s budget deliberations for 2021 will include this perspective.”

See above reference to the The Boston Ujima Project (#6 on the list) regarding progress on the second goal. An update to the Parish Board will be given on May 5th, which includes seven recommendations. At this time, the recommendations do not include investment in Ujima from First Parish’s endowment.

Ongoing Work

1. Brookline Police Reform - Almas Dossa and Ron Wilkinson were each appointed by the Brookline Select Board to two vital committees: Reimagining Policing Task Force and Policing Reforms Task Force respectively. Below is a summary of their work.

The Reimagining Policing Task Force's charge was to explore and recommend new approaches to public safety and policing in Brookline. The Task Force utilized a data-informed approach to interrogate our current model and provide a distinctly alternative approach to public safety.

The charge of the Policing Reforms committee was to review and identify the policies and procedures, aspects of training and education, and the practices and methods of supervision of the Brookline Police Department that, where necessary and appropriate, can be improved and updated.

The two groups started meeting in August, 2020 and submitted their final recommendations to the Brookline Select Board in February, 2021. Although the two groups did not agree on all of their final recommendations, the Select Board voted on some of the “common ground” proposals in April, 2021. The two groups continue to meet to discuss the other recommendations as they come up for voting.

Highlights of what the Select Board voted on and items that warrant further discussion:

- The Select Board voted unanimously to engage in a consultancy with CAHOOTS ; a key recommendation. CAHOOTS is based in Oregon, and involves non-policing crisis intervention services

- The Board voted unanimously to direct the Police Department to prepare and present a plan to improve **data collection and analysis** - identified as a major issue through the work of the committee.
- The Board voted unanimously to form a new **Police Commissioners Advisory Committee (PCAC)** to provide enhanced and continuous oversight of the Police Department.
- The Board also began a discussion of **enhancing social services**
- Finally, the Board voted unanimously to take up the **School Resource Officer Program and Walk & Talk** issue on Tuesday, June 15. While it presents a significant delay in addressing these issues it allows space for the School Committee and Brookline Housing Authority to engage the community in their own processes, which is important.

2. Take Action Page - We continued to feature “Racial and Immigration Justice - Take Action This Week” on the church’s website. The actions center on helping FPB members virtually increase our collective impact in critical work of racial and immigration justice and, at the same time, build a supportive community. The link to the website is promoted via the Order of Service on Sundays and in the weekly announcement email. It can be found here: [Take Action](#)

3. Justice Seeking Thursdays - this idea started in early 2020 and more than a year later, a group of about 8-12 people gather via Zoom each Thursday. We do so to collectively respond to requests made by BIPOC-led organizations or groups who are taking leadership in posting actions. The issues range from local and state to nationwide calls for action e.g., phone calls, emails, petitions. Issue examples are: Policing and Prison Reform, Immigration Justice, Climate Justice, and Indigenous Justice. A guide is created weekly to aid participants in their effort. All are welcome to join.

4. Cedar Tree Foundation Grant - this grant is for \$5,000 and administered by Rev. Lisa. After input from RJAC, Immigration Justice and Climate Justice, a decision was made to contribute \$2,500 to The Boston Ujima Project and \$2,500 to Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE).

5. Updated the Black Live Matters page on FPB website highlighting: the 2020 Summer planting work undertaken by Alfred Lahai Gbabai Brownell Jr., Konah Brownell, Rachel Coleman Marks and Madeline Fine; the forum on Reimagining Public Safety with Dr. Raul Fernandez and our service with Rev. Karlene Griffiths Sekou.

Social Action

Our Mission: To provide inspiration, leadership and support for social action at First Parish in Brookline.

Our Vision: Our vision is for our congregation to live into the Spiritual Principles of our faith both inside the church and beyond our walls. And, in following our vision, that First Parish in Brookline be seen in the wider community as a place of active engagement in social justice, where people learn about and respond to critical issues and situations as a sustained and spiritual commitment. We look forward to continuing to tap the energy, interest, passion and compassion of our ever-evolving congregation and to join together at First Parish in Brookline in helping to make a better world.

Our Actions: We are guided by our congregational mission: Called by Love, Sustained by Community, Committed to Justice. Under this mission, Social Action is woven into the fabric of First Parish, and lived out by all of its members through various organizational structures. Our Social Action program focuses on three thematic initiatives: **Siding with Love**, **Economic Justice**, and the **Environment**. We use various media to communicate news and events on a wide array of issues and events.

We also build upon and integrate our efforts with the initiatives of the Unitarian Universalist Association, UU Mass Action Network, Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and the Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry (UUUM).

Typically, over half of our congregation's adults and youth participated in some kind of Social Action activity. And while there were no live events this year due to COVID, we collectively raised thousands of dollars this year to support the work of other justice-seeking organizations.

Siding with Love:

Our special monthly plate collections included Black Lives Matter Boston, La Colaborativa (formerly the Chelsea Collaborative), UU Urban Ministry, UU Service Committee, BIJAN - Boston Immigration Justice Action Network, City Mission Boston, The Boston Ujima Project, and Louis D. Brown Institute.

We walked in solidarity with survivors of homicide. In May, Clint Richmond and Ellen Blaney again organized our congregational engagement at the Mother's Day Walk for Peace and against gun violence with our virtual presence this year. We have already raised almost \$1200 to support the [Louis D. Brown Peace Institute](#) and its programs for healing, teaching and advocacy.

UU the Vote. Led by Jami Jordan and Karla Baehr, we supported the UUA's initiative, which successfully partnered with organizations to both get out the vote and ensure safe voting in the 2020 national election. For more details see the RJAC report.

We supported immigration justice. Please see the report of this committee.

Environment Initiative:

The new Climate Justice Committee has been very busy. Please read their separate report.

We financially support UU Ministry for the Earth with an annual contribution.

Economic Justice:

We are a long-term partner with the UU Urban Ministry. We thank Karla Baehr for continuing to serve as the Chair of the Board and leading our participation at its Annual Meeting.

We are building on our commitments through Common Hope, which provides social service and educational support to low-income families in Guatemala. Since 2009, our congregation has been directly financing the education of students through high school; and many families sponsor individual children as well. We are currently sponsoring another child through graduation, Jose Martinez Aguilar, age 15. The Common Hope team is looking to transform this from a fundraising model to a budgetary model. We generally make a Vision Team trip to Guatemala every couple years. Look for information about a proposed trip in Feb. 2022 being facilitated by Steve Davis.

Overarching:

We value our ties to UU Social Action. We are congregational members of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee and UU Mass Action. We participated in this year's UU Mass Action Advocacy Day in April to support bills relating to all of our Social Action initiatives.

While Social Action programming has shifted during COVID, if you have ideas for events please contact Clint. We have a small budget for guest speakers, film rentals, and food for example.

Chair: Clint Richmond

Worship Committee Report

This year, there were six active members of the Worship Committee: Emily Cherry and Elizabeth McIntire, co-chairs; Nancy Clark; Ann Gilmore; Susan Larrabee; and Martha Leader. Nancy joined us from the Welcoming Committee and greeted folks on Facebook each week in addition to designing our altar many Sundays. Carol Spitzer, who rotated off the committee officially last year, also played a significant role in creating a visually appealing worship space in our sanctuary for live streams. The committee is grateful for Nancy's and Carol's efforts!

All committee members recorded themselves or showed up to the sanctuary in person to serve as Worship Associates throughout the year, supporting Rev. Lisa and other First Parish staff to bring meaningful worship to the congregation. The committee also periodically asked other members of the congregation to record themselves as Worship Associates so that folks could see some different faces in worship during this socially distanced year.

The committee met monthly and had longer, "retreat" style meetings thrice; once in the fall, once in the deep winter, and once in the spring, to generate ideas with Rev. Lisa and Laci about upcoming services and rituals. Rev. Lisa and Emily hosted two drop-in pastoral Zoom sessions in the winter and spring, one focused on anger after the insurrection at the Capitol and one focused on feelings around the anniversary of the pandemic. The committee also brainstormed rituals for folks to participate inside the sanctuary during the largely outside Easter gathering; rituals centered around acknowledging loss in this past year and envisioning hope for the future.

As of this writing at the end of April, the committee continues to recruit congregation members and outside guest preachers for summer services. Technical guidelines for being a summer worship leader, including recording and submitting videos, have been created and shared with worship leaders who have signed up so far.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Cherry

Finance Committee Report

Mission

1. Review and monitor financial condition of First Parish Brookline
2. Submit recommendation of annual budget to the Parish Board and review quarterly
3. Advise the Parish Board on matters of financial interest to the Congregation as appropriate
4. Communicate financial information to the church community regularly and transparently

Organization and Membership

1. Finance Committee is a standing committee charged with fulfilling the mission laid out above. Members include the Treasurer, past Treasurer, Canvass representative, 1-2 Parish Board members, 1-2 other parishioners, the Minister and Church Administrator.
2. For FY 2021, members include: Margaret Williams (Treasurer) Charles Sandmel (Outgoing Treasurer), Steve Pratt-Otto (Parish Board and Canvass), Margie Beal (congregant), and Michael Kobran (congregant).
3. Meetings occur monthly and are open to all congregants. Meetings dates are publicized through Congregational channels

Fiscal 2021 Achievements

The Finance Committee undertook a major project this past year consisting of a comparative analysis of Parish's fiscal health with those of selected congregations. The effort included: identifying several area churches with similar membership and demographics; gathering financial data for each church; conducting interviews with the people responsible for money management; putting all financial information in an "apples to apples" format; identifying similarities and differences in fiscal health and management; and producing a report with the findings which included possible "paths" to financial sustainability. A high-level summary report was presented to other committees. The summary report is included. The big "takeaways" from the analysis include: 1. First Parish is drawing down its Endowment Principal at an unsustainable rate. 2. The cost of maintaining our building is much higher than other churches. A detailed report is being compiled and will be published on the website when complete. Based on responses from church members, the Finance Committee recommends that the process of determining what actions we want to take to become financially sustainable take place in FY22 with the help of a professional facilitator.

The Finance Committee also worked closely with the Climate Justice Committee to

conduct a cost/benefit analysis of installing solar panels using proceeds from a \$106,000 drawdown of Endowment Principal. It was jointly determined that there are alternate green energy choices, equally effective, with no draw on the Endowment.

Endowment

Over the nine months ending March 31, the balance in the FP Brookline endowment grew by \$440,000 to \$2,794,179 after all fees and draws. This growth is attributable to a strong stock market and a smaller-than-usual draw on the endowment (\$50,000 to date) .in the current fiscal year, due to receipt of a Payroll Protection Program Loan. By comparison, for all of fiscal 2020, net investment income of \$78,434 was lower than the \$100,000 drawn down during the year. First Parish was approved for a second PPP loan this year, which should continue to limit the need to draw from endowment for the immediate future. Still, over the past eight years, FP Brookline has withdrawn seven times more from the Endowment for operations than has been contributed by congregants. The Finance Committee continues to support investing our endowment in the UU Common Endowment Fund because of strong returns, relatively low costs, ease of use for the Congregation, and the Fund's embrace of sound Socially Responsible Investment principles which reflect the values to which we aspire.

FY21 and FY22 Budget

It is estimated that year-end financials will be on target with the FY21 Budget. Financials through March are on the FY22 Budget sheet.

Finally, the FY22 budget will be presented at the Annual Meeting. A summary of highlights is attached as are budget "building blocks" and a detailed line-item budget.

Fiscal Year 2022 Budget

An Overview

Income Highlights

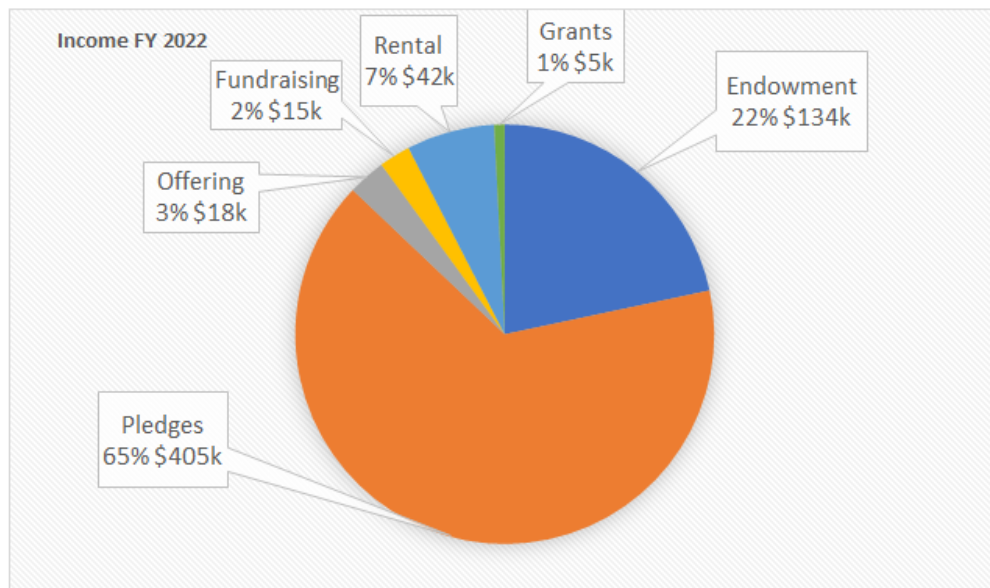
- Canvass is on its way to beating Pre-COVID Levels - \$405,000
 - Hold New Fundraising Event (Online Auction) - \$15,000
 - Bring Rentals Back up to Pre-COVID Level - \$42,000

Income Comparison

	<u>FY19</u>	<u>FY20</u>	<u>FY22</u>
Congregational Support:	\$407k	\$419k	\$424k
Other Income:	\$53k	\$66k	\$62k
TOTAL INCOME:	\$460k	\$485k	\$486k

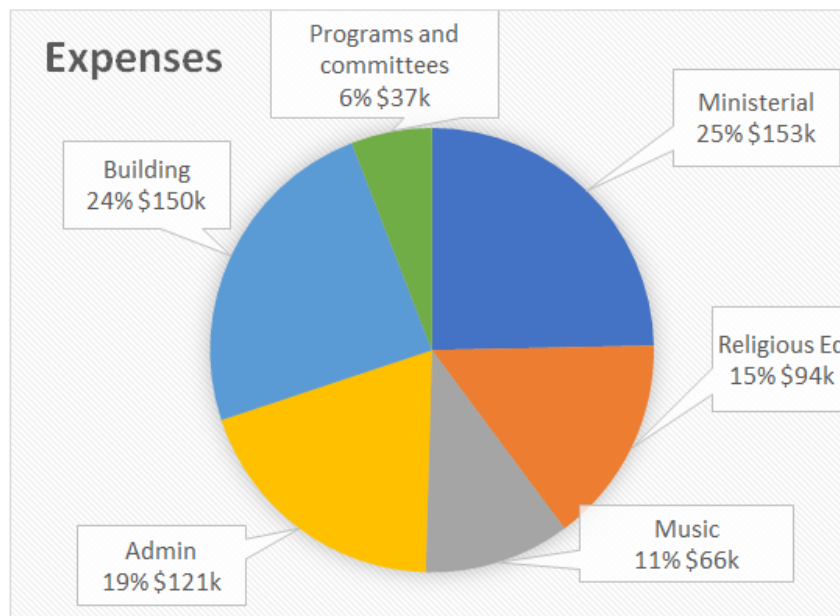
We are not using FY 2021 because it is an outlier with the impact of Covid. Net, the impacts were actually positive for the church: Pledges were collected as planned and expenses were down. In addition, we received cash from the Payroll Protection Program. Therefore, the bottom line was better than budgeted so that the endowment withdrawal was lower than budgeted.

Income 2022 Budget



FY2022 Expense Highlights

- Level Funding for Non-Personnel Expenses
 - Cost of Living increase for staff: 1.8%
- Continue Trend of lowering operating budget “gap”








Budget Summary

	<u>FY19</u>	<u>FY20</u>	<u>FY22</u>
Total Income:	\$460k	\$485k	\$486k
Total Expenses:	\$611k	\$621k	\$615k
Net Ordinary Income:	(\$151k)	(\$136k)	(\$129k)
Federal Employee Retention Credit (not in hand)			\$20k

Endowment Draw Request For FY22: \$109k (4.6% of three-year average endowment balance of \$2,500,000)

First Parish in Brookline
Spring 2021
Budget Building Blocks for FY2022

INCOME			SPENDING		
(\$614,827 total proposed for FY 22) % of budget			(\$614,827 total proposed for FY 22) % of budget		
Pledges \$405,000 65%  <p>Members and friends make pledge commitments each year Pledges to-date total \$384,000 for FY 2022 year, compared to \$365,000 for FY 2021 We expect to reach the FY 22 goal of \$405,000</p> 			 Payroll \$407,000 66% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The cost of paying staff salaries and wages <input type="checkbox"/> The cost of fringe benefits for staff, including payroll taxes, health insurance, professional expenses, and contributions to pension programs <input type="checkbox"/> Custodial service supplemented by cleaning service <input type="checkbox"/> For FY 22, cost-of-living increase of 1.8% 		
Building Rentals \$42,000 7% <p>This is income we receive for renting parts of our building to outside groups and, periodically, to individuals and members for weddings, private parties or meetings; major renters. we expect rentals to return to close to FY 20 levels as we anticipate our major renters returning for all or most of the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ VOICES (after-school performing arts) ○ Sai Center (Sunday afternoon services) ○ Lin Center (after-school program) ○ NEW: Empow Studios (summer STEM enrichment program) 			Current Staff Roles & Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Minister (full time) - Spiritual Leader and Advisor at Large; oversees all Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Parish Administrator (full time) - Oversees communications, building operations and financial record keeping; supervises office and building staff <input type="checkbox"/> Bookkeeper: (hourly) - Maintains books and records; assists Parish Administrator and Treasurer; payment recorded under admin and office expenses <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Office Help (hourly) - Occasional office support as needed during peak times <input type="checkbox"/> Custodial (part-time) - Cleans and oversees general daily maintenance, meeting setups and supports Sunday hospitality; supplemented by deep cleaning service <input type="checkbox"/> DRE (full time) - Oversees the Religious 		
Grants \$ 5,000 1% <p>Grants or restricted donations received for specific activities; Cedar Tree Grant for social justice</p>					

<p>work</p> <p>Fundraising \$15,000 2%</p> <p>In the past we have used excess proceeds from auctions, feasts, and/or special celebratory events as income for the operating budget. FY22 budget assumes \$15,000 raised thru an on-line auction for which leaders have been identified. Parish board has pledged their time and support for this activity.</p>  <p>Sunday Offering \$28,000 collected, \$10,000 passed along to partner organizations. 3%</p> <p>Cash, checks and online giving from Sunday plate collection that is used to support operating budget</p> <p>Special Collections to our partners will be an additional \$10,000 for a total collected of \$28,000.</p>	<p>Exploration program, coordinates with all staff on program-related schedules and activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Nursery Caregivers (hourly) - Provides Sunday morning nursery coverage and for extended Sunday meetings and special events if requested in advance. □ Music Director (half time) - Oversees choir and rehearsals, directs section leaders, assists worship planning and oversees technology; when worship is virtual, coordinates all music and technology support and performs □ Guest Preachers (stipend) for Reverend Lisa's times off □ Section Leaders (stipend) – lead the 4 choir sections (soprano, alto, tenor and bass), anchor chamber choir, assist/lead at choir rehearsals and services; in absence of choir, provide all music other than hymns for Sunday service □ Live Stream Technician (hourly) – when worship is in sanctuary, produces our streamed worship services (replaces the current AV Technician)
<p>Also includes one-time donations from visitors or ongoing or one-time donations from parishioners who do not make annual pledge commitments</p> <p>Activity Fees \$1,000</p> <p><1%</p> <p>We collect modest fees for two of our RE programs: OWL and Challenge</p> <p>We collect fees for some other activities and include net proceeds after expenses in the budget</p> <p>Federal retention Grant \$20,000</p> <p>3%</p> <p>We seem to qualify, but this is not in hand</p>	<p>Program-Related \$45,000 7%</p>  <p>Denominational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Annual contribution to UUA, our national organization, for professional and lay resources □ For equity in FY20, UUA changed from head count to percent of annual spending, raising our expected contribution by \$4,000 to \$23,000 □ FY22 budget is \$17,500 which is 76% of our “fair share” and up from \$15,000 in fy2021 □ Until FY 20 FPB had been an “honor

Endowment Draw

\$109,000

18%



Our endowment is invested in the UUA Common Endowment Fund and is professionally managed according to responsible investing principles, furthering our social justice mission

The draw supports Operating expenses, including Building & Grounds work, a set aside for capital expenses (\$40,000 recommended for FY22)

As of 3/31 our endowment was valued at about \$2,700,000

The Endowment peak was \$3,550,000 in 2007 (\$4,535,000)

Financial experts generally conclude that a “sustainable draw” that will preserve the capital over time is 3.5%

We will apply for a federal grant for “employee retention” in the amount of \$20,000.

If we are successful in the grant application, the FY 22 draw from the endowment is budgeted at \$109,000, which is 4.6% of the average balance over the last three years.

congregation”

Sunday Services - Music - sheet music, guest musicians, music and AV equipment replacement

Religious Exploration - program supplies, teacher training and curriculum

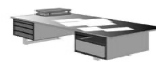
Committee Funding

- Includes in one line all membership fees for organizations such as UU Service Committee, UU Urban Ministry, Interfaith Power & Light

Functional

\$166,000

27%



Administration and Office - costs to supply the office, staff and the congregation at large: ZOOM subscription, paper, telephone, outside printing, hospitality, tech and software upkeep, postage

Insurance

Building Operations – fuel oil and utilities, required periodic system inspection and maintenance, snow removal and landscape maintenance, general maintenance and repairs, finishes and furniture maintenance; Returned to FY 2020 levels

Buildings and Grounds Reserve

- Planned capital replacement and maintenance projects overseen by the B&G Committee
- Ending FY22 reserve balance is expected to be \$50,600
- Proposed B&G work for FY22 is based on a 5-year capital plan and includes Sanctuary electrical work (safety), Upper drive regrading (safety), Ventilation improvements (safety), and Parish hall window repair (asset preservation),

Budget-Building Guiding Principles

1. Support all elements of our mission through our spending, fundraising and saving practices.
2. Be a UU Fair Compensation congregation for our staff by ensuring compensation is within guidelines.
3. Renew our path to financial sustainability and responsible stewardship.

Accrual Basis

**First Parish in Brookline
Profit Loss
FY 22 Budget**

	Jul - Mar 21	FY21 Budget	FY19 Actual	FY20 Actual	FY22 Budget	
Ordinary Income/Expense						
Income						
4000 · CONGREGATIONALSUPPORT						
4001 · Pledges	311,731	365,000	386,210	399,239	405,000	Pledge Goal is almost there
4002 · Sunday Offering Income	8,987	18,000	19,693	25,758	28,000	
Less offering gifted to partners				(7,600)	(10,000)	
4003 · Program Activity Fees	-	2,500	1,250	1,200	1,000	Fees for youth programs are unceratin
4004 · Other Donations	-	-	15		-	
Total 4000 · CONGREGATIONALSUPPORT	320,718	385,500	407,168	418,597	424,000	
4100 · OTHER INCOME						
4101 · Funding Raising Event Income	-	7,500	-		15,000	Online Auction Coming soon!
4102 · Building Use/Rental Income	10,100	15,000	44,413	51,755	42,000	Most rentals confirmed
4103 · Designated Income	1,549		3,370	4,623		
4104 · Grants	2,633	7,133	5,000	9,766	5,000	
4109 · Interest Income	24	50	105	50	50	
Total 4100 · OTHER INCOME	14,306	29,683	52,888	66,195	62,050	
Total Income	335,024	415,183	460,056	484,792	486,050	
Expense						
6000 · PAYROLL EXPENSES						
6001 · Salary Expense						
6002 · Salaries & Wages						
60030 · Intern	5,119	4,266		8,119	-	
60029 · AV Specialist	-	-	2,975	2,627	3,500	For Hybrid Services
60028 · RE Attendant	-	-	3,157	1,939	3,000	
60027 · Section Leaders (choir)	9,716	16,000	16,600	21,179	16,288	
60031 · Guest Preachers		-	-	-	3,750	
60026 · Music Director	23,385	32,000	31,450	32,000	32,576	
60025 · Parish Administrator	38,293	55,250	54,756	55,269	55,269	
60024 · Sr. Minister	76,744	105,200	101,064	105,037	107,094	
60023 · Custodian	2,880	26,000	27,566	24,084	20,000	Part-time custodian/cleaning service is in Building Maintenance
60022 · Office Help	3,921	2,250	1,601	2,380	2,250	
60021 · DRE	42,165	57,500	50,095	56,434	58,535	

Accrual Basis

**First Parish in Brookline
Profit Loss
FY 22 Budget**

	Jul - Mar 21	FY21 Budget	FY19 Actual	FY20 Actual	FY22 Budget	
Total 6002 · Salaries & Wages	202,223	298,466	289,265	309,067	302,262	
Total 6001 · Salary Expense	202,223	298,466	289,265	309,067	302,262	
6100 · Fringe Expenses						
6110 · Fica - Er	6,642		14,491	11,638	12,400	
6111 · Medicare - Er	1,594		3,389	2,441	2,900	
6120 · Health Insurance	32,079		20,356	36,353	36,300	
6121 · Dental Insurance	3,492		2,851	3,822	5,122	
6122 · LTD Insurance	2,273		2,772	2,914	3,030	
6123 · Life Insurance	1,074		1,637	1,430	1,360	
6130 · Workers Compensation	2,088		2,918	2,134	3,644	
6140 · 403B Contributions -Er	17,705		24,273	26,036	25,500	
6150 · Professional Expenses			11,911			
Music						Professional Development, Conferences
RE	100			2,089	4,500	Ditto
Sr. Minister	3,545			10,467	10,000	Ditto
Total 6100 · Fringe Expenses	70,592	86,800	84,598	99,325	105,256	
Total 6000 · PAYROLL EXPENSES	272,815	385,266	373,862	408,391	407,517	
6200 · PROGRAM EXPENSE						
6210 · Denominational Expenses	11,250	15,000	20,856	15,000	17,500	Contribution to UUA
6211 · Music Expense	1,760	5,200	5,252	4,083	6,500	Music, instrument tuning
6212 · Religious Exploration	5,206	6,800	9,784	5,088	6,100	RE Supplies/Still has supplies from previous years
6213 · Committee/Project Expenses	3,142	14,310	9,381	15,648		
Memberships					1,410	
Welcome					500	
Pastoral Care					500	
Worship					300	
Parish Board					1,500	
Racial Justice					500	In addition to budgeted funding, 2 plate offerings for committee allocation to justice organizations
Common Hope					500	ditto
Immigration Justice					500	ditto

Accrual Basis

**First Parish in Brookline
Profit Loss
FY 22 Budget**

	Jul - Mar 21	FY21 Budget	FY19 Actual	FY20 Actual	FY22 Budget	
Climate Justice					500	ditto
Social Justice	-	-			5,000	designated grant funding
Total 6200 · PROGRAM EXPENSE	21,358	41,310	45,273	39,819	41,310	
6300 · FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES						
6301 · ADMIN & OFFICE EXPENSE						
6321 · Bookkeeping	2,952	-	4,238	4,826	4,800	Professional Bookkeeper
6302 · Office Supplies	727	-	3,128	2,264	3,200	
6303 · Telephone	6,802	-	4,427	5,659	6,600	
6304 · Postage	277	-	290	485	300	
6305 · Printing & Copying	-	-				
6306 · Equipment Lease	3,093	-	4,466	4,436	4,500	
						includes funds for hybrid services equipment
6307 · Computer/Software	3,117	-	4,840	3,122	4,800	
6308 · Hospitality	46	-	4,635	2,014	2,000	
6311 · Advertising	1,496	-	691	85	700	
6319 · Flowers	189	-	70	-		
6320 · Miscellaneous	250	-	13	(61)		
6330 · Bank Services Fees	196		491	42	500	
6331 · Credit Card Fees	2,907	-	2,357	2,118	3,500	More online giving
6332 · Payroll Processing Expenses	4,369		4,868	5,399	5,000	
6301 · ADMIN & OFFICE - Other	-	28,858				
Total 6301 · ADMIN & OFFICE EXPENSE	26,421	28,858	34,513	30,390	35,900	
6400 · BUILDING OPERATIONS		-				
6401 · Commercial Insurance	13,600	16,620	32,563	30,646	18,000	Switched Providers
6402 · Fuel - Oil	11,122	-	29,542	19,748	25,000	
6403 · Utilities	4,028	-	9,415	8,574	9,500	
6404 · Municipal Fees	508	-	624	624	600	
6405 · Snow Removal	4,060	-	4,240	2,425	4,000	
6406 · Repairs & Small Projects	1,020	-	21,879	17,108	17,000	
6407 · Cleaning Supplies	164		811	73	500	
6408 · General Maintenance (incl cleaning	16,037		17,325	22,364	15,000	Back to FY19 Actuals
6410 · Parish Furnishings	142		842	509	500	
5700 · Building Reserve Expense	17,000	34,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	
6400 · BUILDING OPERATIONS - Other	-	58,900			-	

Accrual Basis

**First Parish in Brookline
Profit Loss
FY 22 Budget**

	Jul - Mar 21	FY21 Budget	FY19 Actual	FY20 Actual	FY22 Budget	
Total 6400 · BUILDING OPERATIONS	67,681	109,520	157,240	142,070	130,100	
Total 6300 · FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES	94,102	138,378	191,754	172,460	166,000	
Total Expense	388,275	564,954	610,889	620,670	614,827	
Net Ordinary Income	(53,251)	(149,771)	(150,833)	(135,878)	(128,777)	Budget Gap
5000 · Endowment Transfer - to operating budget	\$ 50,000	150,000	75,000	100,000	108,777	Draw From Endowment
Employee Retention Credit (Federal)					20,000	
Net Income	\$ (3,251)	\$ 229	\$ (75,833)	\$ (35,878)	\$ (0)	

PPP Forgivable Loans of \$70K in FY20 and \$75K in FY21 allowed for lower endowment draw.

First Parish By the Numbers

A Comparative Financial Analysis Brought to
you by the Finance Committee

Spring, 2021

*Margie Beal, Michael Kobran, Steve Pratt-Otto,
Charles Sandmel, Margaret Williams*

**Goal: To compare First Parish's Financial
Condition to Similar Churches**

Research

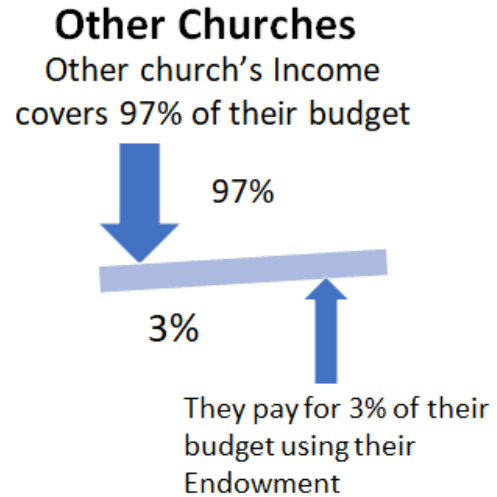
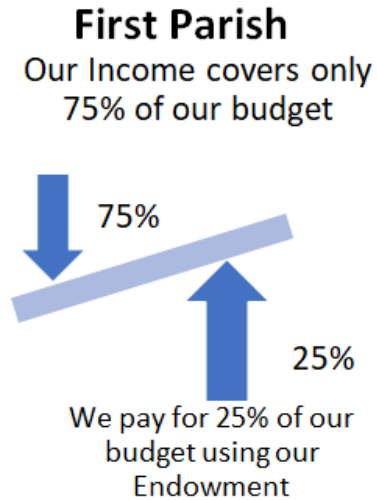
- Located 5 other comparable churches willing to participate
- Got financials
- Conducted interviews

Analysis

- Generated "apples to apples" financial statements
- Looked for similarities and differences
- Developed recommendations for financial sustainability

*Churches: First Church Belmont, First Parish Cambridge, Follen Church
(Lexington), First Parish Lexington, First Parish Needham*

What We Already Know: We spend 25% more than we make



Income Comparison: Rentals and Fundraising - and a Surprise

	Brookline	Others
	Income per member	Income per member
	Total	Total
Income		
Pledge revenue	\$1,545	\$1,423
Rental	\$178	\$208
Plate revenue	\$79	\$50
Fundraising and misc. income	\$39	\$187
TOTAL RAISED PER MEMBER	\$1,840	\$1,868

If we raise the same per member, how come we have to use the Endowment for budget balancing?

IT'S IN OUR EXPENSES

The Immovable Object: our building costs are 2x per member more than other churches

	Brookline	Others	The Gap
	Per Member	Per Member	Per Member
	Total	Total	
EXPENSES			
Building expense including sexton	\$618	\$287	\$331
Administration and office	\$430	\$354	
Dir religious education and other RE	\$316	\$338	
Ministerial	\$545	\$457	
Music Director and other expenses	\$253	\$280	
Denominational	\$83	\$49	
Programs/Committees	\$38	\$80	
Transfer to capital reserve	\$160	\$40	
Debt Service	\$0	\$59	
TOTAL EXPENSE PER MEMBER	\$2,444	\$1,946	\$498

66%

Our Strong Points

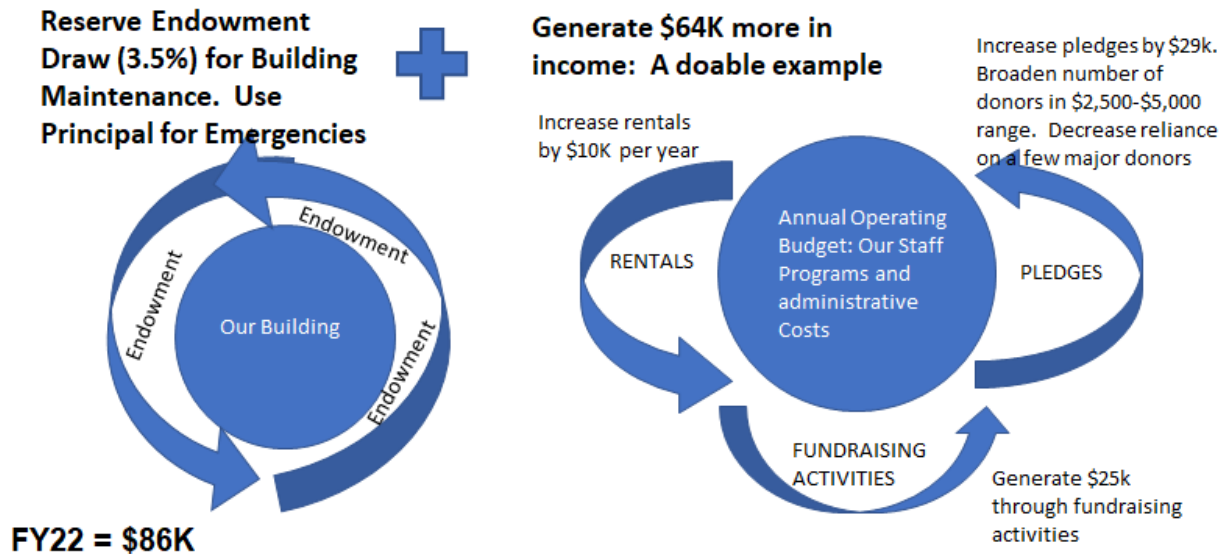
- We don't borrow money
- Our endowment has more money than most

We Have Work to Do!

Four possible pathways
That are mutually exclusive

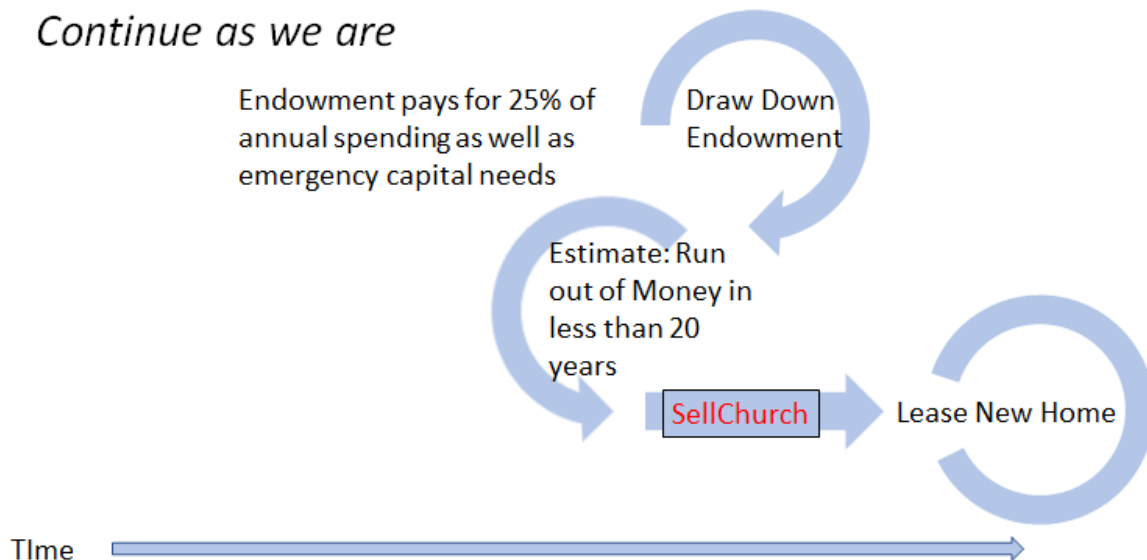
1. The Sustainability Path
2. The Do Nothing Path
3. The Go Radical Path
4. The Blue Sky Path

The Sustainability Path

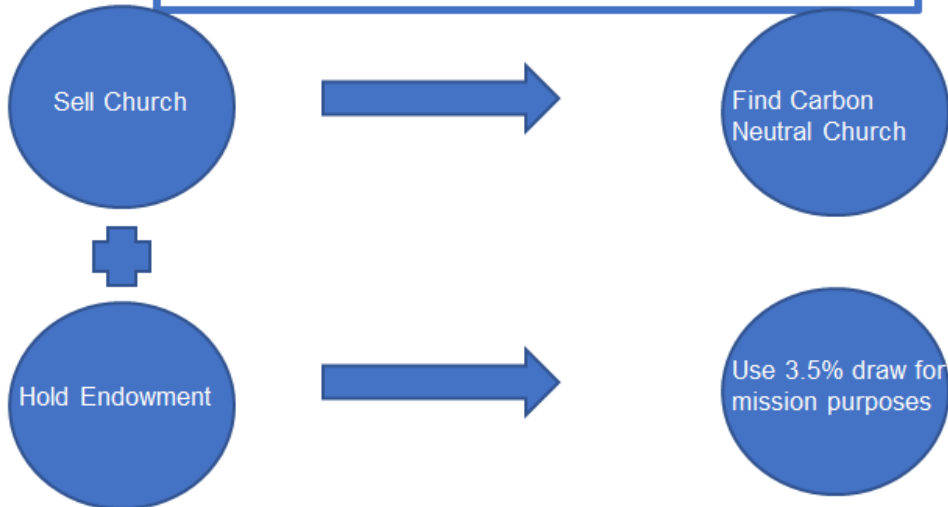


The Do Nothing Path

Continue as we are

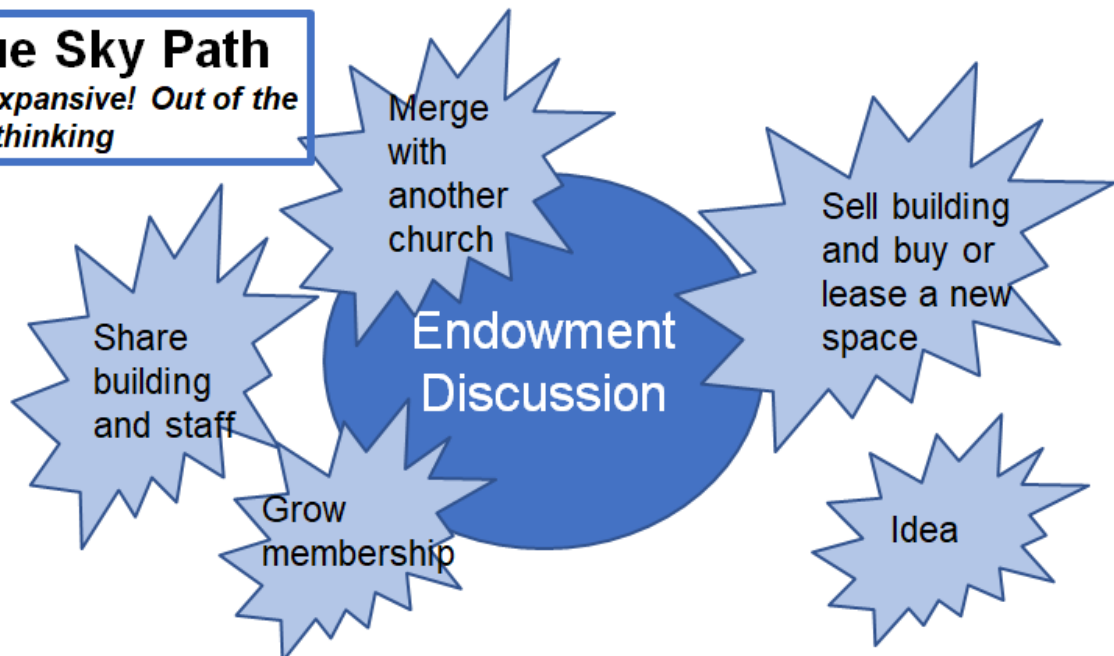


Radical Path: Leave Our Church Home
within 5-7 Years



Blue Sky Path

Be Expansive! Out of the box thinking



A Consequence of Using our Endowment For Annual Expenses

- Endowment Value in 2013 \$2,500,000
- Endowment Value in 2021 \$2,700,000

What would be our Endowment value today if we had not drawn more 2x the recommended amount from the Endowment over the past 8 years?

- S&P Market Growth 2013-2021: 13% average growth (a record)
- Including a 3.5% annual draw: Endowment today = \$5,167,000
- A 3.5% draw today would be \$165,000 - Plenty to cover operating expenses.

What Next?: Default Decision = Do Nothing Plan

Or, Begin a Process to Answer the Big Question:
How do we fully live into our Mission and sustain our Church Home?

Questions to Ponder for Today

1. What kinds of feelings does this report invoke for you?
2. What information from the report stood out the most to you?