



Macalester
Plymouth
UNITED CHURCH

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA) AND UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Our mission as a church is to grow in love of God and neighbor.

**ANNUAL REPORT
2021**

January 30, 2022

**First edition ~ January 28, 2022 for email
Second edition - February 9, 2022**

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Statement of Faith

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit,
God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God,
and to your deeds we testify:

You call the worlds into being,
create persons in your own image,
and set before each one the ways of life and death.

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

You judge people and nations by your righteous will
declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior,
you have come to us
and shared our common lot,
conquering sin and death
and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit,
creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages,
tongues, and races.

You call us into your church
to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
to be your servants in the service of others,
to proclaim the gospel to all the world
and resist the powers of evil,
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,
to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust you
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
your presence in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life in your realm which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you.

Macalester Plymouth United Church

Mission of the Church:

To grow in love of God and neighbor

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10:27

This is Jesus's core teaching and the heart of what it means to be a Christian.

Our Core Values:

- **Authentic Worship**

"I give you thanks, O God, with my whole heart." Psalm 138:1

Everything we do in worship (prayer, music, preaching and witness) should reflect who we are, how we understand Christian faith today and how God is calling us into the future.

- **Surprising Hospitality**

"The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" John 4:9

We share God's love like Jesus did by extending a generous welcome that goes a little beyond what might be expected.

- **Open-Minded Faith**

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God." Romans 12:2

We don't have all the answers and affirm our restlessness as a place where God is at work in us. We honor our histories and pass our faith on to the next generation. Through faith practices we seek to learn, transforming our mind, heart, and lives.

- **Prophetic Witness for Justice**

"What does God require of you? To do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God." Micah 6:8

Aware of our own privilege, we stand for love and justice following Jesus's example through humble service, passionate advocacy, and participation in larger movements for social and systemic change. We show up, ready to serve.

- **Connecting Spirit**

"That they may all be one." John 17:21

We honor the unity and diversity within our community and beyond it by seeking opportunities to connect across all lines of difference, encouraging open and honest communication and practicing inclusive decision-making and transparency.

- **Compassionate Community**

"As God's people, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience." Colossians 3:12

Whether it is a gluten-free casserole when you've just had a baby, a prayer shawl when you are in the hospital, or just a place to celebrate life's many passages, we embody God's love and mercy through ministries of prayer, presence, and active support for one another.

- **Sustainable Stewardship**

"Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received." 1 Peter 4:10

We joyously and with gratitude give our time, talent, trust and treasure (money) so as to magnify God's work in the world. We integrate the active care of God's creation into our spiritual life and social justice work, and we advocate for protection of the natural systems upon which all earthly life depends.



Annual Meeting of the Congregation January 30, 2022

Call to Annual Meeting

The Session has called for the congregation to hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 30, 2022, for the purpose of electing church officers and receiving the budget, and any and all other purposes appropriate for congregational consideration, following the 10 am worship service. The meeting will be held online using Zoom.

Proposed Agenda

<u>Item</u>	<u>Person</u>
Call to Order	John Anderson
Opening Prayer	Chuck Eversman
Statement of Faith	Emily Gurnon
Request that Vice-Moderator Preside at Meeting	Adam Blons
Determination of Quorum	Gail Roberts
Instructions	John Anderson
Approval of Agenda	John Anderson
Consent Agenda	John Anderson
Annual Meeting Minutes (January 31, 2021)	
Special Congregational Meeting Minutes (September 19, 2021)	
Accept Terms of Call	
Slate of Nominees/Election	Emily Gurnon
2021 Financial Review & 2022 Operating Budget	Dwight Johnson, Don McCall & Lee Schafer
Update from PNC	Colin Ward
Invitation from Racial Justice Stewards	Marn Frank & Sheryl Livingston
Recognition of Leaders	John Anderson & Gail Roberts
Adjournment	John Anderson
Closing Prayer	Kelly Stone
Closing Song	<i>Happy Birthday to Adam</i>

 <p>1658 Lincoln Avenue St. Paul, MN 55105</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Minutes</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Annual Congregational Meeting</p> <p><i>Date:</i> January 31, 2021 <i>Location:</i> Online via Zoom <i>Time:</i> 11 am</p>
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Notice of the Annual Meeting

Notice of the Annual Meeting of the congregation was announced during worship services on the previous four Sunday mornings and in the Here & Now newsletter for four consecutive weeks. All members were also sent an email notice four weeks ahead of time, with written notice also sent by U.S. mail for those members who had previously requested print communications.

Call to Annual Meeting

The congregation’s Annual Meeting will be on January 31, 2021 immediately following the 10 am worship service for the purpose of electing church officers and receiving the budget. The meeting will be held online using Zoom and phone connections.

Opening of Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Rev. Adam Blons at 11:20 am with words of welcome and an opening prayer. Rev. Blons then asked Vice-moderator Emily Gurnon to moderate the meeting.

Instructions

Vice-moderator Emily Gurnon explained the voting procedures for the meeting being held via Zoom. Members will be asked for a show of hands during voting so that all votes can be visually tallied including more than one member sharing an on-line connection. Members on phone connections will verbally have their votes counted.

Quorum

The Clerk of Session, Gail Roberts, determined that a quorum was present (over ten percent of active members) by a visual count of 135 voting members on Zoom or phone.

Approval of the Agenda (M/S/C)

Approval of Consent Agenda (M/S/C)

The consent agenda consisted of three parts:

Accept Annual Meeting Minutes from January 26, 2020

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation on January 26, 2020 had already been approved by the Session on February 20, 2020.

Approval of Congregational Meeting Minutes from December 6, 2020

Accept Terms of Call and Housing Allowance

The terms of call and housing allowance of Lead Minister, Adam Blons, and Minister of Congregational Life, Corinne Freedman Ellis, were reviewed and approved by the Session at their December 17, 2020 meeting. The Personnel Committee had also determined that the compensation for both positions is adequate according to our denominations, the Presbytery of the Twin Cities and the United Church of Christ.

Terms of Call

Rev. Adam Blons
Lead Minister

COMPENSATION

Salary	\$33,175
Housing Allowance	\$51,200
Social Security Offset (7.65%)	\$2,130
Additional Cash Compensation	
Medical Reimbursement changed to FSA	\$2,100
Amount requested in lieu of medical insurance for Family	\$4,800

BENEFITS

Pension/Medical/Vision/Dental/Disability (UCC)	\$7,500
<i>Total Compensation and Benefits</i>	\$105,000

PAID TIME OFF

Vacation	Eight weeks
Continuing Education Leave	Two weeks
Outside Professional Activities	up to 5 days

REIMBURSED EXPENSES

Travel Allowance	\$1,500
Continuing Education Allowance	1,700
Professional Expense Reimbursement	\$2,000

Terms of Call

Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis
Minister of Congregational Life

Position being revised at Rev. Freedman Ellis's request to a ¾ time position effective January 1, 2021.

COMPENSATION

Salary	\$20,820
Housing Allowance	\$27,000
Social Security Offset (7.65%)	\$4,003
Additional Cash Compensation	
Medical Reimbursement changed to FSA	\$1,000
Amount requested in lieu of medical insurance for Greg	\$1,516

BENEFITS

Pension/Medical/Vision/Disability (UCC)	\$21,852
<i>Total Compensation and Benefits</i>	\$78,522

PAID TIME OFF

Vacation	Three weeks
Continuing Education Leave	Two weeks
Outside Professional Activities	up to 5 days

REIMBURSED EXPENSES

Travel Allowance	\$1,500
Continuing Education Allowance	\$1,200
Professional Expense Reimbursement	\$1,000

Election of Elders, Deacons, and Congregational Members of the Nominating Committee and Officers

Motion: The Session moves to elect the slate as presented below. (Approved)

- Elders (Class of 2024): Emily Gurnon, Hazel Carroll, Michael Stoick, Harrison Marshall, Rob Ramer
- Elders (Class of 2022): Scott Moen, Kim Craig
- Denominational Commissioners: Rob Ramer, Kathleen Vellenga

- Deacons (Class of 2024): Dan Craig, Connie Lindberg, Kathleen Vellenga, Paula Mackey
- Youth Deacons: Mia Richmond, Satya Blons*
- Nominating Committee: Taylor Coffin, Connie Lindberg, Jared Coffin
- Officers: John Anderson, Vice-Moderator; Don McCall, Treasurer; Lee Schafer, Assistant Treasurer; Gail Roberts, Clerk (appointed by Session)

*In Training (ex officio)

Highlights of 2020

Emily Gurnon introduced a litany where members shared thoughts about how—even in the midst of a year like no other—God showed up through the work that we, Macalester Plymouth United Church, accomplished in 2020.

Emily Gurnon: In 2020, God showed up through our church ministers, staff and congregation members who brought us enriching worship, even after we went online; through Zoom committee meetings that kept the work of the church going and our teams connected; and through online discussion groups around race and justice. Through all life brings, we are God’s people.

Annie Douma: In 2020, God showed up through a youth group through the summer, where we had a group to share and process our many feelings about 2020. We shared our passions on youth-led weeks and started to confront our internalized racism by reading “How to Be an Anti-Racist” together on weeks led by Corinne and Lauren. Through all life brings, we are God’s people.

Paula Mackey: In 2020, God showed up through congregation members supporting our mission as a sanctuary church with good deeds and donations of time and talent, helping our current and former guests in a myriad of ways. Through all life brings, we are God’s people.

Jon Despotes-Tourdot: In 2020, God showed up through the connecting tree, when we reached out to each other to provide support and community at a time when it was not possible to meet in person. Through all life brings, we are God’s people.

Bob Tipping: In 2020, God showed up through people’s time and gifts to renovate a shared music space—the Rex Knowles Room. Through all life brings, we are God’s people

Rob Ramer: In 2020, God showed up through MacPlymouth members who held a night watch to protect the church from violence by white supremacists who threatened Twin Cities worship places. Through all life brings, we are God’s people.

Roberta Olson: In 2020, God showed up through videos used in worship—families welcoming us to church from their front steps, youth affirming their beliefs from their living rooms, and children acting out the Christmas story from their bedrooms. Through all life brings, we are God's people.

Ginger Schneider: In 2020, God showed up through us stepping up when others stepped back and safely opening our church doors for people to cast their important votes and to give life-saving blood during our first blood drive. Through all life brings, we are God’s people.

Don Christensen: In 2020, God showed up through thousands of phone calls, made by ISIAAH volunteers to Minnesota voters, encouraging them to vote for candidates who support the ISIAAH Faith Agenda. Through all that life brings, we are God's people.

John Anderson: In 2020, God showed up through all of us, in all of us, as we figured out together what it means to "Be the Church" in the midst of these difficult, unpredictable times. May we find the courage to continue to "Be the Church" in 2021 and beyond. Through all life brings, we are God's people.

Recognition of Leaders

Rev. Adam Blons and Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis recognized church leaders who are completing terms of service and expressed gratitude for the commitment and service provided. Retiring Elders: Anne Douma and Sam Kellar-Long. Retiring Deacons: Iris Carroll and Cathy Slight. Appreciation was also expressed to Emily Gurnon for her leadership and steady presence as Vice-moderator of the Congregation this year.

2020 Financial Review and 2021 Operating Budget

Dwight Johnson, Chair of the Finance Committee presented an overview of the 2020 Financial Report. The following were some of the accomplishments of the year:

- Pledges came in \$1,452 over budget.
- We were awarded a federal PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) forgivable loan of about \$102,000 which was shared with our pre-school.
- While some expenses went up, others actually went down with the building closed.
- We ended the year with a slight surplus (+\$2,681) and did not need any transfers from endowment/designated funds. This left about \$43,000 available for 2021 and/or future years.

In preparing the 2021 budget the following factors were taken into account:

- Very strong stewardship campaign resulted in \$471,390 in pledged revenue.
- About \$19,000 left over from the PPP program can be applied to the 2021 budget.
- About \$13,500 of the \$43,000 not transferred in 2020 can be used in 2021.

Major changes in the 2021 budget include:

- Insurance (property/liability) went up \$4,423 (+21%).
- On-line giving fees went up \$2,850.
- New computers cost \$2,500: replace an old one and purchase one for live streaming.
- Personnel changes included Rev. Freedman Ellis' request to go three-quarter time.
- Community Builders (PT) offset Rev. Freedman Ellis' reduced time.
- Video Editor position continues part-time for at least six months.
- Buildings and Grounds Maintenance Tech position will be ten to fifteen hours weekly.
- Staff receive a 2% raise.
- Denominational Support increase helps equalize contributions to each denomination.
- Mission & Social Justice budget line increases by \$2,700.

Motion: On behalf of the Session, the Finance Committee moves that the congregation accept the 2021 budget as presented. (See 2021 Budget below) (Approved)

**Macalester Plymouth United Church
2021 Budget**

	<u>2021 Budget</u>	<u>2020 Budget</u>	<u>2020 Actual</u>
REVENUE			
Total Contributions	500,840	481,000	481,624
Rental Income			
Pre-School	17,762	20,178	18,579
Building Use	5,000	11,600	4,930
Total Rental Income	<u>22,762</u>	<u>31,778</u>	<u>23,509</u>
Other Income	-	8,000	428
PPP Loan Forgiveness	19,000	-	59,162
Total Revenue	<u>542,602</u>	<u>520,778</u>	<u>564,722</u>
Budgeted Transfers			
Endowment Income	20,000	20,000	-
Memorials	3,500	3,500	-
Designated Funds	15,000	11,000	-
Additional End./Des. Trans.	13,530	8,500	-
New Opportunities	5,100	1,350	1,350
Total Budgeted Transfers	<u>57,130</u>	<u>44,350</u>	<u>1,350</u>
Accumulated Surplus (Prior Years)	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Available Revenue	<u>599,732</u>	<u>565,128</u>	<u>566,072</u>
 EXPENDITURES			
Personnel	374,778	364,389	377,005
Operations	131,196	135,362	108,444
Denominational Support	16,412	6,666	9,782
Finance	31,725	30,475	31,308
GEM	2,000	2,000	1,373
Congregational Fellowship	4,370	3,950	3,218
Education	3,000	3,000	924
Mission & Social Justice	22,750	24,350	24,350
Worship	8,400	8,400	5,639
New Opportunities	5,100	1,350	1,350
Total Expenditures	<u>599,731</u>	<u>579,942</u>	<u>563,392</u>
Net Surplus (Deficit)	<u>1</u>	<u>(14,814)</u>	<u>2,681</u>
 Additional Mortgage Payoff			
Mortgage Payoff Donations		-	50,000
Add'l Mortgage Principal Payments		-	(50,000)

**Macalester Plymouth United Church
2021 Budget**

	<u>2021 Budget</u>	<u>2020 Budget</u>	<u>2020 Actual</u>
PERSONNEL			
Salaries	291,656	292,077	303,729
Employee Expenses	82,622	81,812	73,067
Session Expense	500	500	208
Reduction by Dec 2020	0	(10,000)	0
Total Personnel	<u>374,778</u>	<u>364,389</u>	<u>377,005</u>
OPERATIONS			
Office Expense	29,635	24,700	24,787
Church Maint & Utilities	73,676	87,600	65,583
Other Ownership Costs	27,885	23,062	18,073
Total Operations	<u>131,196</u>	<u>135,362</u>	<u>108,444</u>
EDUCATION			
Adult Education	1,000	1,000	150
Children's Ed	1,000	1,000	558
Junior & Senior High	1,000	1,000	216
Background Checks	0	0	0
Total Education	<u>3,000</u>	<u>3,000</u>	<u>924</u>
MISSION & SOCIAL JUSTICE	22,750	24,350	24,350
GROWTH EVANGELISM & MEMBERSHIP	2,000	2,000	1,373
CONGREG'L FELLOWSHIP	4,370	3,950	3,218
FINANCE			
Church Support	-	-	-
Mortgage Interest	25,825	25,825	25,825
Regular Mortgage Principal	5,900	4,650	5,483
Other Finance Expenses	0	0	0
Total Finance	<u>31,725</u>	<u>30,475</u>	<u>31,308</u>
DENOMINATIONAL SUPPORT	16,412	6,666	9,782
WORSHIP			
Worship Service & Supplies	850	850	470
Music	7,550	7,550	5,169
Total Worship	<u>8,400</u>	<u>8,400</u>	<u>5,639</u>
NEW OPPORTUNITIES	5,100	10,000	1,350
Total Expense	<u>599,731</u>	<u>588,592</u>	<u>563,392</u>

Closing of Meeting

A participant at the meeting, Anne Elstrom Park, was chosen at random to receive the MPUC Golden Gavel Award for participating in the first ever virtual Annual Meeting of Macalester Plymouth United Church.

Adjournment and Closing Prayer

As there was no further business, M/S/C to adjourn. Christine Ford, Seminary Intern, closed the meeting in prayer at 12:20 pm.

Submitted by: _____ Approved by Session of Macalester Plymouth United Church

Gail C. Roberts

Gail C. Roberts, Clerk of Session

2/18/2021

Date

Minutes

Special Congregational Meeting

Date: September 19, 2021

Type: In-Person and Virtual

Meeting on Zoom

Time: 11:15 - 11:30 am

Notice of the Special Congregational Meeting

Notice of the special meeting of the congregation was announced during worship services on the previous four Sunday mornings and in the Here & Now newsletter for four consecutive weeks. All members were also sent an email notice four weeks ahead of time with reminders in the following weeks.

Call for Special Meeting

The purpose of the meeting was to elect members of the Pastoral Nominating Committee for the vacant position of Minister of Congregational Life.

Opening of Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Rev. Adam Blons at 11:10 am. with words of welcome and an opening prayer.

Quorum

The Clerk of Session, Gail Roberts, determined that a quorum was present (over twenty percent of active members) by a visual count of 120 voting members in-person (87) or on Zoom (33).

Welcome Denominational Representatives

Rev. Blons introduced Rev. Gale Robb, Acting Executive Presbyter, PTCA and Rev. Cindy Mueller, Steward for Search & Call, UCC. who joined the meeting via Zoom.

Request for Vice-moderator to run the Meeting

Rev. Blons then asked Vice-moderator John Anderson to moderate the meeting. John announced the purpose of the meeting and introduced Emily Gurnon, member of the Nominating Committee, to present the motion to elect members of the Pastoral Nominating Committee.

Business of the Meeting

Motion: The Nominating Committee moves that the congregation elects the following people to serve as the Pastoral Nominating Committee, who will search for a new Minister of Congregational Life. (Approved)

The following slate of nominees was presented:

Daniel Seburg – Co-Chair

Tim Johnson

Hope Walburn

Cathy Latham – Co-Chair

Daniel Nicla

Colin Ward

Rick Hedrick

Suzanne Sackett

The Vice-moderator asked if there were any additional nominations from the floor, but there were none. After a brief discussion, the motion was put to a vote by a show of hands. The motion passed with all present voting in the affirmative and no one opposed or recording an abstention.

Adjournment and Closing Prayer

As there was no further business, M/S/C to adjourn. Rev. Adam Blons closed the meeting in prayer at 11:25 am.

Submitted by:

Approved by the Session of Macalester Plymouth United Church

Gail C. Roberts

10/21/2021

Gail C. Roberts, Clerk of Session

Date

**Clerk of Session Report
January 30, 2022**

I. Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the congregation was held on January 31, 2021 using Zoom technology. The minutes of this meeting were approved by the Session at the February 18, 2021 meeting.

II. Special Meetings

One special meeting of the congregation was held on September 19, 2021 in-person and on Zoom. The minutes of this meeting were approved by the Session at the October 21, 2021 meeting.

Sacraments

I. Baptisms*

The following persons received the sacrament of baptism during 2021:

Name	Date of Birth	Date of Baptism	Parents
Johannas Brave Chambers	7/11/2020	7/11/2021	Tanner and Kaia Chambers
Eliza Ann Nicla	9/29/2020	8/15/2021	Daniel and Laura Nicla

*The Book of Order permits baptism by several methods. See Book of Order W-3.3605, which provides: *“The water used for Baptism should be common to the location, and shall be applied to the person by pouring, sprinkling, or immersion. By whatever mode, the water should be applied visibly and generously.”* All baptisms during 2021 were conducted by sprinkling.

II. Celebrations of the Lord’s Supper

The sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was celebrated 14 times during 2021 as follows:

Date	Service/Type
January 10	10 a.m. worship service
February 14	10 a.m. worship service
March 14	10 a.m. worship service
March 20	Men’s retreat
April 1	Maundy Thursday service
April 11	10 a.m. worship service
May 9	10 a.m. worship service
June 13	10 a.m. worship service
July 11	10 a.m. worship service
August 15	10 a.m. worship service
September 12	10 a.m. worship service
October 10	10 a.m. worship service
November 14	10 a.m. worship service
December 12	10 a.m. worship service

The pastors also served Communion to home-bound members and friends as requested.

Membership

I. Members Added to Active Roll

7 persons became active members of Macalester Plymouth United Church during 2021 as follows:

No.	Name	Date	Type
2948	Margaret Anderson	1/31/2021	Transfer
	J Michael Anderson	1/31/2021	Member of the Presbytery
2949	Tim Carpenter	1/31/2021	Transfer
2950	Kathryn Nelson	1/31/2021	Transfer
2951	Kelsey Renk	1/31/2021	Affiliate – dual membership St John’s UCC New Albin, IA
2952	Ada Ramirez	1/31/2021	Affirmation of Faith
2953	Vanessa Bradby	1/31/2021	Affirmation of Faith

II. Members Removed from Active Rolls

34 members were removed from the active membership roll during 2021. Unless otherwise noted, members were removed from the active rolls either by their request or by Session action because they had not responded to inquiries about clarification of their membership.

No.	Name	Date	Reason (Transfer/Session action/ By request/Death)	Deacon? (ord. yr)	Elder? (ord. yr)
2159	Meg Cole	1/28/2021	By request		1994
2705	Janet Stradtman	3/25/2021	Death		
2102	Carla Bailey	2021	Transfer		
2103	Warren Turner	2021	Transfer	yes - previous church	yes - previous church
2323	Grace Anderson	8/19/2021	Transfer - First Congregational; Cannon Falls, MN		
2753	Matthew Benson	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2664	Caroline Brown	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2735	Lily Brown	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2772	Julie Brown	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2804	Simon Brown	6/17/2021	Session Action		2012
2551	Elise Diedrich	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2800	Laura Halferty	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2755	Cassi Hansen	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2754	Jordan Hansen	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2805	Avery King	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2756	Tasha Langesley	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2848	Jiwoo Lee	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2700	Ron Lenehan	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2593	John Newsome	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2701	Mark Nissen	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2702	Stan Rothrock	6/17/2021	Session Action		
1541	Carol Schnepf	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2715	Annette Scott	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2298	Ed Steinhauer	6/17/2021	Session Action		2012
1261	Peggy Stivers	6/17/2021	Session Action		1978

2849	Jacob Tjaden	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2530	Heidi Vardeman	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2550	David Weeks	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2233	Robb Westawker	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2234	Tina Westawker	6/17/2021	Session Action		
2403	Joy Benson	7/17/2021	death		
2710	Kevin Peacock	7/17/2021	death		
2951	Kelsey Renk	8/6/2021	Transfer - Anoka UCC		
215	June Nelson	8/10/2021	death	1996	

There are three types of membership under the provisions of the Presbyterian Book of Order: active, baptized and affiliate (G-1.04). Only active members are included for determining the amount of per capita apportionments due from the congregation to the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area and the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Book of Order states: G-1.04 The membership of a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) includes baptized members, active members, and affiliate members. And our By-Laws state that we use those definitions, even though they refer to inactive status.

III. Statistical Profile and Summary of Membership

	Total
January 1, 2021*	429
Affirmation of faith	4
Confirmation	
Letter of transfer	3
Reaffirmation of faith	
Reinstatement - Session	
Total gains	7
Loss by death	4
Loss by transfer	4
Request by member	1
Session action	25
Total losses	34
December 31, 2021	402

Marriages

No members were married at Macalester Plymouth United Church during 2021.

- Member, Fred Smith and Larue Roder married May 21, 2021 at the MN Arboretum; Rev. Adam Blons officiated.
- Former members, Steve Anderson and Katie Hollie were married September 25, 2021 at Macalester Plymouth United Church; Rev. Adam Blons officiated.

Session and Congregational Meetings Held During 2021

Date	Type
January 21, 2021	Stated Session Meeting
January 26, 2021	Special Session Meeting (new members)
January 31, 2021	Annual Congregational Meeting
February 18, 2021	Stated Session Meeting
March 18, 2020	Stated Session Meeting
April 15, 2021	Stated Session Meeting
May 6, 2021	Special Session Meeting (Receive resignation of Associate Minister)
May 20, 2021	Stated Session Meeting
June 17, 2021	Stated Session Meeting
July 8, 2021	Special Session Meeting (Plan to re-open building)
August 19, 2021	Joint Session Meeting with Deacons
September 16, 2021	Stated Session Meeting
September 19, 2021	Special Congregational Meeting (Pastoral Nominating Committee)
October 21, 2021	Stated Session Meeting
November 18, 2021	Stated Session Meeting
December 16, 2021	Stated Session Meeting

Stated session meetings – 10

Special session meetings – 3

Joint meeting with board of deacons – 1

Annual congregational meeting – 1

Special congregational meeting – 1



Reports from Officers and Staff

Vice Moderator of the Congregation

John Anderson

At the start of this past year, I shared with Session two passages of scripture that I felt spoke to what we were (and still are) facing as a church as we continue navigating through this pandemic. In one passage, a centurion asks Jesus to heal a servant who was ill. Jesus offers to go to the servant and heal him, but the centurion insists that is not necessary. He knows Jesus can heal the servant, even if they are not together. In the second story, four people try to carry a paralyzed man to Jesus to be healed. The crowd was so large that the people had to climb on top of the home where Jesus was staying, tear an opening in the roof, and lower the paralyzed man down to be near Jesus. For them, all they desired was to get near to Jesus so their friend could be healed.

When read together, I find these stories striking for what they have in common despite how different they are in the details. In the first story, the centurion felt it was not necessary for Jesus to see his servant in order to heal him; the men in the second story went to extreme lengths to get their friend physically close to Jesus. But whether Jesus was distant from or near to the person in need, healing still took place, and it was the faith of the people in these stories that Jesus found so remarkable.

Something about those two stories captures our experience together as a church in 2021, doesn't it? The year started as 2020 ended—all of us worshiping remotely, thanks to the hard work of our church staff and our video editors. Distant from the church and from one another, we remained faithful to each other and found ways to share a common experience and support one another.

As the availability of vaccines made in-person activities feel safer for some of us, we worked incredibly hard to make in-person church activities possible. We created safety protocols and purchased tents to gather outdoors in the hot summer months—and even had an outdoor congregational meeting! We wore masks, practiced social distancing in the sanctuary, adapted how we take communion all so that we could worship and fellowship with one another in-person as safely as possible.

Yet not everyone felt safe enough to join in in-person activities. Vaccines are still not available to everyone, and some people who are vaccinated remain at higher risk. To help people experience worship safely from home, the church invested in equipment to produce a high quality live stream of our worship services so that everyone can worship together in person and virtually.

Whether we are side by side (socially distanced, of course!) or far apart, our faith has led us to find new and creative ways to support one another and the communities around us during these unprecedented and difficult times. As I look back on this past year as the congregation's Vice Moderator, I am filled with gratitude to so many who at times moved mountains to make possible different ways for us to make connections with each other, with our neighbors, and the values and the faith that anchor us as a community of Christians.

Lead Minister

Rev. Adam Blons

Perhaps the main storyline for the church in 2021 should be the congregation's incredible adaptation to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. But it could also be our continued awakenings around racism and white supremacy as our community continues to reverberate from the murders of George Floyd and Daunte Wright. Or it could be about the departure of another beloved minister, Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis. Or maybe the main story to tell is about all of the little things done by congregation members this year to care for one another, care for the church, and care for the wider community. No doubt this report will touch on all of these things and more. Reflecting on events around us and putting our faith into action is essential to being a vital congregation and a big part of what defines us. But I hope this report will also give glimpses beyond the tasks to see the generous Spirit guiding our efforts, the hope uniting our decisions, and the grace that held us together through another very challenging year.

After the huge changes we made in 2020 to move the entire life of the church online because of the pandemic, 2021 brought the possibility back for some of us to gather again in person. Led by the research and discernment of our COVID Adaptation Team, we began with some small groups meeting outside in the spring, followed by outdoor worship in June followed in July by our first in-person worship service in the sanctuary since March of 2020. To facilitate this transition while connecting with everyone who still was not able to attend in person required a heavy investment in technology, especially in the sanctuary. Two mounted cameras connected to a computer in the balcony with professional video-mixing software allowed us to begin live streaming worship every week, and we never looked back. Thanks to the incredible efforts of our AV techies, Norm Tiedemann, Rich Passmore and Jim Johnson, we also began having more hybrid (in-person and online) events where all could interact with each other. Underneath all of these changes was an incredible commitment to community and inclusion. The pandemic stretched the social fabric of our lives, creating so much isolation. That isolation continued as the year closed, especially for families with small children who were not yet eligible for vaccinations. We missed those children and their parents so much! Without naming it as such, we were following Jesus as we became more fierce in making sure people felt connected. Though we have a ways to go before we can all be together in person again, what a joy it was to see people in the pews again, hear congregational singing (even through our masks), and see how we stuck together through all these changes.

Not a day went by that we weren't reminded of the urgent call to racial justice. In the wider community, 2021 brought the trials of the officers involved in the murders of George Floyd and Daunte Wright in April and December. November elections reflected the sense of urgency to respond to inequities. In the congregation, a generous gift to the church from Joe Peacock's estate allowed us to begin training twenty congregation members to lead our racial justice work. Calling them Racial Justice Stewards, we contracted with AMS Consulting, a group of trainers who help schools, churches and nonprofits deepen their understanding of racism and develop anti-racist practices. Their approach includes a focus on somatics, a body-awareness practice that was particularly important for our heady congregation.

The deeper work, it turns out, is not just increasing white people's awareness of the experience of black and brown people, but increasing white people's engagement with their own experience around racism and learning to shift towards embodying anti-racism. As the Racial Justice Stewards grow in their leadership, other efforts around the call to racial justice have included work with three neighboring congregations that I hope becomes more significant in the coming year.

Did you keep up with all the staff changes this year? Besides the departure of Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis, our staff evolved to meet the evolving needs of the congregation. Iris Carroll, our Video Editor at the start of the year, got us started with live streaming before leaving for college. We hired Caleb Tracy and Colin Ward to be our live streaming techs. Alan Richardson Hohn was hired as our Building & Grounds Manager, a new position that now oversees our buildings and grounds so that our ever faithful volunteer operations team can take a break. We created four Community Builder positions to help people connect in this disconnected time. Each focused on a different demographic: youth, families with young children, middle-aged adults, and young adults. Lauren Dickinson (youth), Jennifer Marshall (families), Emily Gurnon (middle age), and Kira Pollack (young adult) were hired into this role. The task was more challenging than we all expected with the continuing uncertainty of the pandemic. We ended the year interviewing candidates for a Sabbatical Coverage Minister, who will serve while I am away in March/April of 2022. Our incredible core staff really kept us moving forward throughout all of these changes. I am so grateful for the ever faithful Ginger Schneider, Brad Bradshaw, Meegan Hall and Lynn Liepold.

Everyone misses Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis. Her resignation last spring came as a surprise at first but was understood to reflect her need for better family/work balance after the anticipated birth of their second child. Corinne will be remembered here for her open heartedness towards everyone, her way with words in worship, her passion for social justice in the wider community, and her profound support for our youth. I am grateful for the incredibly collaborative and mutually supportive working relationship she and I had. She left just before we started worshiping back together in person, so we had a "drive-by" farewell with Corinne in the parking lot. It wasn't the kind of farewell we are used to, though we still found ways to celebrate her ministry and express our appreciation. The search for the next Minister of Congregational Life is beginning. Meanwhile, many have stepped up to support the life of the church in the interim. I want to particularly thank the four Worship Leaders who stepped in to lead worship with me this fall: Don Christensen, Jeanyne Slettom, Dustin Moretz, and Kelly Stone. Their support meant so much during this transition.

Maybe we shouldn't be surprised to find ourselves in a good position heading into 2022. God continues to call the good people of this congregation to lives of compassion, meaning and difference-making, and you all continue to say, "Yes!" We especially thank the members of Session and Board of Deacons who have led us during this challenging year despite not once meeting in person. Everyone's openness and willingness this year allowed God to sustain our congregational vitality. The pandemic forced many tasks to change or be left behind. What hasn't changed is the connecting Spirit at work in and through all of us.

I find myself feeling both gratitude and hope as I look back and look ahead. I am grateful for the many ways God's grace carried us through the challenges and changes this year through creativity, commitment, patience, questions, openness, growth and goodwill. I am grateful to serve a congregation that takes the pandemic seriously and is cautiously embracing the opportunity to gather again while still protecting one another. I am grateful for the support of the congregation for me to take a portion of my deferred sabbatical leave in the new year. I am grateful for the privilege of being your pastor. I carry great hope into the new year: hope for a successful pastoral search; hope for discipleship that empowers us to be both more vulnerable and more bold with one another and in the wider community; hope for new ways to support children, youth and families; and hope for revitalized intergenerational congregational life that is worshipful, empowering and sustainable. I thank God for this church and look forward to our shared ministry continuing.

Christ orients us now and always towards growing in love of God and neighbor. May it be so in 2022.

(Note: For fun, see if you can find the hidden word in this report.)

Worship Leaders

Don Christensen, Dustin Moretz, Jeanyne Slettom, Kelly Stone

In lieu of finding temporary pastoral support after Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis' resignation in June, four clergy in the congregation were invited to serve as part-time worship leaders from September through December, leading six services each and preaching once. We are grateful for their creativity, leadership and steadfast presence during this time of transition. They were Dustin Moretz (seminarian), Rev. Kelly Stone, Rev. Jeanyne Slettom and Don Christensen. Their reflections on their experience follows:

Dustin Moretz

Serving as a worship leader this fall has been such a life-giving experience. To get a peek into the planning process has helped me understand all the work and intentionality that goes into crafting meaningful worship experiences at MPUC. The whole MPUC team puts so much thought and energy into crafting worship services that echo the themes of the sermon or theme of the season and make sure the details are thought through. Even if we're still unable to be together due to the pandemic, it's been wonderful that we've been able to continue the live streaming of our services. Whether participating in person or remotely, it helps me to remember that we're connected by something so much deeper than our proximity: our love and care of one another as the Body of Christ. Even apart, we're not alone. That is such a source of joy and comfort!

Kelly Stone

Participating in planning and leading worship has been joyful and meaningful; allowing me to tap into collaborative partnerships and contribute to the creative work of MPUC. My personal work style is deeply collaborative, and being part of a team has allowed me to tap into a well of creativity that is nourishing. Amidst the joys and challenges of the moment, we are a church with good news to share! It takes many hands, hearts and voices to proclaim this good news afresh each week. I am honored to be part of this work.

Jeanyne Slettom

I am grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with Don, Kelly, and Dustin—each of whom brings distinct gifts to worship—and, of course, to work with Adam and Brad and Ginger. Mac-Plymouth is fortunate to have such dedicated and talented members and staff! Being part of the Mac-Plymouth community is both rewarding and faith-strengthening. To be part of worship and planning was an additional, and much appreciated, blessing. Thank you!

Don Christensen

I am grateful to have been invited to serve the congregation as a member of the Worship Leadership Team. I have learned a lot and have much enjoyed sharing the process of planning and leading worship with Adam and members of the team. It has been good to be reminded of the time, creativity, work, worry, and lost sleep that are required of one who would craft sermons and prayers that speak to the congregation; I am filled with appreciation for our pastors that are expected to do this on a weekly basis! Thank you for the honor of entrusting me with the challenge and responsibility of leading the congregation in worship.

Community Builders

Emily Gurnon, Jennifer Marshall, Kira Pollack

What have been the joys and challenges of building community within the church this year?

Mid-Life Community Builders/Emily Gurnon

At the beginning of 2021, I think most of us felt that the pandemic would soon be behind us. It hasn't turned out that way, certainly, and each of us has made our own personal decisions about how to come back into community with our church friends. I have been privileged to serve as a community builder for the "mid-life" group, and a few of us have enjoyed getting in touch by phone and catching up via a few casual get-togethers. I hear from a number of our members that they are still not ready to jump wholeheartedly back into in-person fellowship, and that's OK. It has prompted me to think about other ways to connect.

My wish for the coming year is that our physical connections can increase—while we create community through whatever means we can find, whether it's through the phone, email, or Zoom. Macalester Plymouth is made up of such great people, and I'm excited to bring more of us together! Reach me at emilygurnon@gmail.com or 651-785-3616.

Children & Families Community Builder/Jennifer Marshall

Taking on the role of Community Builder for our families in the church has been very rewarding as I have been able to be in contact with many of our parents and their children. The pandemic has been challenging to all of us and for our young families most of all. Our youngest population has had to wait the longest for a vaccination and those under five are still waiting. Because of this and other life challenges, returning to in-person church has not been easy and many families are not comfortable with that just yet. My biggest joy this fall was helping to collect stuffed animals and toys to display in the sanctuary, so even though the kids are not there, they are still with us! And let's not forget the smashing performances from our young families in the virtual Christmas Pageant. What a delight!

As I look ahead, I hope that I am able to connect with more families and provide opportunities for small groups to gather in person when it is safe. To me, the people of MPUC are what makes it so special and I hope to continue to connect and build this amazing community. Reach me at jamarshall.jam@gmail.com or 651-470-9731.

Young Adult Community Builder/ Kira Pollack

The Young Adult group at MPUC is still relatively new, and we just started hitting our stride before the pandemic started. We found ways of connecting virtually earlier in the pandemic, but this year we tired of screen time and prioritized in-person gatherings. We spent most of our time outdoors, ice fishing, snacking, and going on nature walks around the metro. Fewer young adults have reincorporated in-person church attendance, whether due to personal risk assessment or convenience (both are totally valid!), but have shown up for special events, like outdoor church, 'Round the Fire Carol Sing, and the Longest Night service. We are all trying to figure out how to prioritize our time after the ebbs and flows of COVID.

My hope for the new year is that we continue to build and strengthen relationships with each other and the church community. I'm always open to ideas or questions! Reach me at 706-338-2871 or kdpollack18@gmail.com.

Music Director

Brad Bradshaw

Once again, another year of unprecedented change for our Macalester Plymouth United Church music ministry has come and gone. During the year of 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person services were suspended until summer. We saw a return of our choirs and other music ensembles—all following protocols to provide a safe rehearsal and performing environment. Though it all, our volunteers, guest musicians, and staff showed great fortitude and patience as we navigated an extremely challenging year.

The following are some highlights from the year of 2021. They include:

- All in-person music rehearsals of more than two people, retreats, social events, and performances were suspended until September of 2021. This included the Alleluia Choir, Chapel Choir, Chancel Choir, and Handbell Choir ensembles;
- Lynn Liepold was formally hired as our organist/accompanist;
- Lynn Liepold also was hired as the Handbell Choir director in September;
- Chancel Choir resumed with limited participation and, for safety reasons, moved its music rehearsals into the main sanctuary space and reduced its weekly rehearsal time from two hours to one hour;
- Chapel Choir resumed in early September, albeit with limited participation, and rehearsed in the newly renovated Rex Knowles Music Room;
- Handbell Choir resumed in September;
- Congregation members and guest musicians provided special music and/or cantored hymns during the appropriate services;
- Alleluia Choir remained on hiatus due to lack of vaccines for children under age six;
- Communication, planning, organizing, and meetings continued in person and via Zoom online; and
- Worship music and special service repertoire was purposely kept to a minimum in order to protect musicians and the congregation;
- During the first half of the year, the Director of Music continued the responsibility of recording (both visual and audio) worship music and added additional creative photos and video where necessary as well as set-up lighting, instruments, liturgical furniture settings, and recording equipment.

As we look ahead, it is important to note that the coming years will be a time of rebuilding our Music Ministry program. It is our hope that as the pandemic lifts, individuals will be able to return in greater numbers and congregate for longer amounts of time. This will help with the time and investment needed to rehearse and provide music for our Sunday and special services. It has been a year of difficult change for sure, but it has also been a year of caring, supporting, and lifting up each other.

Handbell Director

Lynn Liepold

In September 2021 we began work on rebuilding the handbell choir at Macalester Plymouth United Church. We have started out with a small group of dedicated ringers who are doing an awesome job. We rehearse weekly on Wednesday evenings from 5:45 to 6:45 pm. Our goal is to play once a month during worship, which we were able to do on October 3, November 7, and December 5. Our hope is to welcome more ringers and expand our presence in the worship service. Thank you for this opportunity.

Office Administrator

Ginger Schneider

What a year this has been! I continued my 2020 COVID work schedule of working two days inside the church for my accounting/payroll tasks and the other days from home until June 2021. At that time, I increased my days at church from two to four. With COVID still impacting us, I now work Monday through Thursday from 8 am to 2 pm and finish my days from home. With the building locked for the safety of the preschool kids, I slowly opened to church and evening community groups starting in September. We are still missing groups who want to come back; however, for a variety of reasons, it is not possible with our current COVID safety protocols.

In June, I also was given back the task of creating the worship bulletins. After stepping away from that task for about two years, it was a challenge to get up to speed with all the changes in the way the process evolved. I am Google challenged, so there are still bits I discover each week.

I have loved having the accounting/payroll duties these past few years. Being a part of the Finance Team and working with Don McCall has definitely been a highlight this year when everything has been a bit topsy turvy with COVID. I hope I can continue to be an asset being the frontline person tackling the grunt work while the team can focus on other details.

This past summer, we said goodbye to our student residents, Cassie Sawyer and Mike Jenkins, who bought a home by Como Park. We welcomed Ammar Muhammad and Nicole Salazar as our latest student residents. They are rising seniors at Macalester College. With COVID-19 and the church building being closed, there are less set ups to do and more building security being asked of them.

The addition of Alan Richardson Hohn, as the Building and Grounds Manager, is another highlight of my fall. In my former church, I had a great facility manager who taught me a lot of trade tricks, and I can tell I will learn even more from Alan! He has helped relieve some of the pressure of our Operations volunteers, which I am sure they appreciate! I am glad to share some of the building background I have picked up since my arrival in 2013 with him. Wow, has it really been that long?

I am looking forward to helping support the Sabbatical Coverage Minister while Adam is away in March and April. This is my first time working through a pastor's sabbatical, so I am ready for the experience of celebrating Adam's time away and welcoming him back.

I look forward to when we can be together again . . . after COVID; it may not be the old normal we were used to—the main thing is that we will be together!

Communications Specialist

Meegan Hall

Delivering impactful and audience-focused communications to a community of individuals with diverse learning styles is both a wonderful and ongoing challenge. We all learn and absorb information differently. Some of us have a narrative with all the details while some tune out unless key information is listed with bullet points. Some need to know how initiatives tie to our mission and core values. Others will always have additional questions that open us to new possibilities. Doing this work in the time of COVID has required us to reflect, adapt, and innovate. I am grateful to Adam and the entire staff, as well as our lay leadership, for the generosity and openness with which they have approached the ways we communicate with MPUC members and friends during this challenging time.

I see our core value of Connecting Spirit as guiding our communications efforts as we continue to work to provide connection points to help to engage and unify our diverse community. As we head into 2022, I look forward to sharing our redesigned website with the church community and leveraging it to help those in the wider community learn about MPUC.

Congregational Fellowship Committee

Kristie Ellickson, Session Elder

Congregational Fellowship continues to struggle to find ways to support the congregation through the pandemic. Our committee has a lot of traditions, but we have been working to evolve these special fellowship events to meet the precautions needed to reduce COVID transmission. We have had to cancel most of what we used to organize, and so for the most part our committee hasn't been very busy. We have been keeping in touch, and many of us have found other ways to volunteer our time.

First, a lot of gratitude

We are grateful to the committees and church staff that have been very busy because of COVID including Personnel and also the Worship Committee for moving our worship from in person to remote to hybrid.

We are also grateful to the Creation Justice team who have researched an environmentally friendly coffee vendor that we will purchase from once we are able to have coffee at Fellowship in person again.

We are also grateful to the newly formed Kitchen Committee. We are a small committee and organizing/managing the kitchen has become too much for our team. The Kitchen Committee has written and laminated instructions, facilitated a deep clean, completed an inventory, and managed laundry while the kitchen has not been in routine use.

Second, our work

We organized a 'Round the Fire Carol Sing with fire pits, hot beverages and hot soup. Folks sang carols and could chat safely outdoors. We have heard that many people enjoyed this event and appreciated time together. As for our team, this is what we enjoy doing.

Early in the new year, we will be getting together to plan how we can organize other special events to bring people together safely. Thanks to all for their support and participation this year.

Adult Faith Formation Committee

Emily Gurnon, for committee members Kari Stanway, Dan Nicla, and Adam Blons

Who of us would have predicted that the COVID pandemic would still be putting people at risk and disrupting our lives almost two years after it first began? In 2020, it seemed to descend on us overnight, but it is certainly taking its time to retreat. In the meantime, the Adult Faith Formation committee at Macalester Plymouth has continued our efforts in 2021 to bring members together in exploration of the important questions we encounter as Christians.

Many of these efforts have taken place in a hybrid format (some people in person, some people participating on Zoom) that offers advantages as well as drawbacks. As is true with our worship services, people who are home-bound or out of town or not up to in-person gathering can be with us in a very real way via technology. I've been grateful for the church staff and volunteers whose efforts have made this possible.

One of our first projects in early 2021, when the church was still closed, was to gather personal reflections from our members for each of the forty days of Lent and publish them in a Lenten Devotional. We heard from so many of you that this was welcomed and appreciated in an otherwise difficult time. I was overwhelmed at the creativity and thoughtfulness that went into these writings; it was a testament to what we can accomplish when we put our heads and hearts together.

For the summer, we worked with Adam to solicit members' "essential scriptures"—Bible verses or stories that they consider vital for anyone learning about our faith. Adam then incorporated these into an interesting and provocative summer sermon series. It was so interesting to learn which scriptures our fellow church members value and cherish. With the church restarting in-person worship in June, we organized a three-part series in the social hall and on Zoom on the theme "Racial Reckoning: My Perspective." The first program featured reporters Brandt Williams of MPR and Libor Jany of the Star Tribune, men of color who both covered the aftermath of the George Floyd killing extensively. The second program featured former St. Paul police Sgt. Melvin Carter, the father of our current mayor. In the third session, two of our own youth shared their thoughts on race. This series attracted a large number of attendees, suggesting that our congregation wants and needs to explore racial and social justice issues more deeply.

In December, we asked two poetry mavens of Mac Plymouth—Molly Redmond and Marijo Hickock—to gather some Advent-themed poems and present them to us. We met in person and on Zoom to hear these wonderful writings, which were perfect for the season.

We encourage anyone with ideas or thoughts on future programming to share them with us, and we thank all who participated this year!

Mission and Social Justice (MSJ) Committee

Molly Redmond, Elder and Co-chair

MSJ was allocated a budget of \$21,400 at the 2021 annual meeting to spend on behalf of the congregation. The donations were distributed according to the faith principles and values that guide MPUC. The categories listed below reflect those choices. Primary recipients are listed in each category. COVID again limited some of the actual activities we could take part in.

Feeding the Hungry

Hallie Q. Brown; Loaves & Fishes; Interfaith Action/Department of Indian Work Food Shelf; Bread for the World; Help at Your Door

Sheltering the Homeless

Habitat for Humanity/Interfaith Builders; Project Home; People Incorporated; Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action Committee

Accompanying Immigrants and Refugees

Sanctuary work at our church; Tent of Nations (for olive trees replanting); United Palestinian Appeal; Syrian American Medical Society; Kentucky Tornado Disaster Relief

Peace & Justice/Caring for Creation

Compostable supplies; funds unspent due to COVID came back to other MSJ projects

Ecumenical and Interfaith Partnerships

ISAIAH; Joint Religious Legislative Coalition; Presbyterian Peace Fellowship

Global Mission Partners

Presbyterian Mission Partners in Malawi

Youth Addition to MSJ Outreach

Youth donated their unspent funds to Friends of the Mississippi and First Nation Kitchens.

Other Activities

- Banners: MSJ authorized banners for outside the church as part of our neighborhood outreach. They are currently in production.
- Congregational Activities: MSJ helped coordinate the CSA farmers market this summer with the Hmong American Farmers Association. We also coordinated the School Tools Drive and the CROP Walk.
- In addition to our allocated budget, designated donations plus the five special offerings we collected during the year added another \$28,000. We distributed this to our sanctuary families, remittances, Afghan refugees in Minnesota, some of the groups listed above, and programs of each of our denominations (such as *Neighbors in Need* and *One Great Hour of Sharing*).
- MSJ selects the recipients for the annual Christmas Eve offering. This year we collected about \$2,500 and supported Doctors Without Borders (worldwide medical services including vaccinations) and the International Institute of Minnesota (supporting incoming Afghan refugees).

We're so grateful for the generosity of MPUC members and the ways it enables MPUC to provide support to a variety of needs in our community and world.

Thinking ahead to possibilities in 2022

- A speaker series spread throughout the year.
- Continuing work with the Sanctuary Leadership Team on hospitality and hosting and re-engaging with Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative.
- More coordination with groups such as Creation Justice for more financial accountability and assistance.
- Exploring new opportunities with local groups, such as the Tiny Homes movement and reparations work.

The members of the Mission and Social Justice Committee are Janeen McAllister and Molly Redmond, co-chairs; Kent Verrill, Kathleen Vellenga, Tim Donovan, Darla Baker, Mike Steenson; and Rev. Adam Blons.

Racial Justice Integration Team

Maggie Passmore

The Racial Justice Integration Team began meeting in early 2021 to further the work that the church had begun in discussions, book groups, and small groups about how our church can become an anti-racist congregation. The group had a great foundation of work that many in the church had done over the last several years.

Our biggest accomplishment this year was the development of a group of church members who applied to become Racial Justice Stewards. These twenty members, in addition to Adam Blons, spent several sessions together over the summer and fall working with consultants Scott Fleming and Marie Michael in developing a deeper understanding of our own racial identities and the ways in which white supremacy and white privilege live inside each of us every day. After this journey, we held two meetings with members of the congregation, where Racial Justice Stewards spoke of what the experience meant to them. We also went through an exercise designed to help each of us understand the diversity of our own worlds and then discuss how that process felt.

The team also developed an anti-racist litany that was presented to the congregation to publicly claim our aspiration to be an anti-racist congregation.

This team will continue to work with the Racial Justice Stewards and with the congregation to further this work and journey in the years to come.

The Racial Justice Integration Team members: Adam Blons, Stephanie DeFrance Schmidt, Stephanie Hubbard, Colleen Mackey, and Maggie Passmore

Sanctuary Leadership Team

Deborah Schmedemann, Convener

In January of 2017, the congregation voted to become a “sanctuary church”: to offer housing to individuals seeking to avoid deportation. The Sanctuary Leadership Team (SLT) formed to coordinate this effort. Since then, the SLT has worked to provide a safe and comfortable residence in several rooms in our basement to people who are in challenging immigration situations that require temporary supportive housing (although not always avoiding deportation). We also have taken on other projects in the broad area of immigration justice.

The guest that moved into the church in 2020 moved out in September of 2021. We are grateful to have been a part of his journey toward improved health and financial stability during the time he was with us. (A letter summarizing this experience was sent in November.)

Furthermore on the topic of guests in residence: We made a policy decision this year that guests who are eligible for COVID vaccinations must be fully vaccinated or promptly become so with our assistance. This fall, a robust team of volunteers did a thorough cleaning and refurbishing of the basement space.

The SLT learned about remittances through our various guests. Remittances are the payments that immigrants send home to their communities out of the money they earn in the United States. This year, we made \$1748 in remittance grants out of the funds the congregation generously donated for this purpose to communities in Mexico, Honduras, and Guatemala.

Our work has become increasingly collaborative. As active participants in the St. Paul Area Interfaith Coalition for Immigration Justice, we advised a Lutheran church that is launching an effort to house asylees within its church, and we received a significant donation from a Methodist church for our work. In February, we hosted the monthly vigil for the Minnesota Interfaith Coalition on Immigration, and more recently we provided funding for its legislative effort to designate Minnesota as a sanctuary state (separating local law enforcement from federal immigration enforcement).

The members of SLT are Rev. Adam Blons, Don and Rachel Christensen, Emma Grisanzio, Jim Lundy, Paula Mackey, Janeen McAllister, Tom Richardson, Deborah Schmedemann, and Hope Walburn. Tom Richardson “retired” at the end of the year, and we welcomed Mike Anderson. We could not do our work without the able assistance of our staff members Ginger Schneider and Alan Richardson Hohn and custodian Martinalan Smith; the collaboration of the Macalester Plymouth Preschool; the expertise and support of other teams within the church, such as the COVID Adaptation Team and the Mission and Social Justice Team; and the financial gifts, in-kind donations, and pitch-in-as-needed energy of so many of you. Our team’s mission is to make “radical hospitality” real, and we couldn’t—didn’t—do it without you. Thank you.

Operations Committee

Lauren Wood, along with Michael Stoick, Co-chairs of Operations Committee

The mission of the Operations Committee, working with the church staff, is to be good stewards of the church building and grounds. As a congregation, we use our church building for significant mission work, and we are a good neighbor to the surrounding community by providing space at reasonable or no cost to a variety of organizations and groups.

The Operations Committee assists the staff in managing and maintaining our facilities. In addition, we provide direction and procedures for general building use, student residents' procedures, office computers, the phone system, and overall safety and security issues. Members of the committee are Lauren Wood and Michael Stoick, co-chairs; Rick Lancaster, Ray Olson, Rich Passmore, Ross Jackson; and staff Ginger Schneider and Rev. Adam Blons. The committee also includes many members who assist with the spring and fall clean-ups, gardening, landscaping, and other special projects.

Building Maintenance

Committee members Michael, Ray, Rick, Rich and Ross (along with retired team members Tom Harm and Mark Dickinson) provided their individual talents for all manner of maintenance, repair, replacement and landscaping work throughout the year. Their work often goes unnoticed, but it is vital, and it saves the church a large amount in avoided repair and service charges.

Pandemic Adaptation

Committee member Ginger Schneider deserves special mention for keeping the church functioning during the pandemic. Because of the pandemic, the church building was closed from March 2020 and, as of June 2021, is currently only partially open for a restricted number of activities. Much of the indoor cleaning and maintenance activities were deferred because of the pandemic.

Gardens and Grounds

With the coordination and hard work of Ray Olson, an Operations Committee member, dozens of congregation members participated in projects including a May 8, 2021 spring work day and an October 9, 2021 fall work day (with over two dozen volunteers) for lawn clean-up, gardening, and window cleaning. The committee converted to all-electric mowing in 2021 with a donated electric mower and newly purchased electric trimmer and blower. The committee co-chair, Michael Stoick, and his family volunteered to mow the lawn throughout the summer of 2021 (thank you, Michael).

Building and Grounds Manager

The committee assisted in the development of the MPUC Building and Grounds Manager (B&GM) job description and in the interviewing of candidates. Alan Richardson Hohn, the new Building and Grounds Manager, was hired into that role in September 2021.

Ventilation and Air Filtration

The committee began discussions with NAC (our contractor) to determine a course of action to enhance the ventilation and air filtration throughout the building in response to a request from the COVID Adaptation Team.

Energy Audit

Michael Stoick coordinated an energy audit with Ross and Rich from the Operations Committee with Macalester College and Enerchange. The comprehensive results with suggested improvements and efficiency refunds are being collaboratively addressed with the help of Alan Richardson Hohn and Karen from Enerchange.

Rex Knowles Room

An Operations Committee member, Rich Passmore, coordinated a group of volunteers in the updating of the Rex Knowles Room that included removing the false ceiling; asbestos removal; mending and patching the walls; painting the walls, baseboards and ceiling; installing new light fixtures and occupancy sensors; and replacing the carpet.

Plymouth Room

Another team member, Rick Lancaster, coordinated a group of volunteers in updating the Plymouth Room, which included painting the walls, baseboards and ceiling; new light fixture installation; carpet replacement; and furniture replacement. Occupancy sensors were installed. Fresh paint was applied to the stairwell leading from the basement to the Plymouth Room. The carpet was also replaced in the stairwell and second floor hallway.

Disaster Committee

The MPUC Disaster Committee, a subsection of the Operations Committee, identified the highest probability disasters as cyber insecurity, fire, tornado/windstorm, violent attack, and civil unrest. They hope to select a consultant to develop a preparedness plan in 2022.

Kitchen Organization

The Kitchen Committee, a subgroup of the Operations Committee, met in August to remove all items from the kitchen, sort through the items by usage, and replace the items most frequently used in the kitchen. Cleaning checklists for the kitchen users, the residents, the commercial cleaning vendor and the Operations Committee were developed and posted.

Creation Station Room

The Operations Committee cleaned and organized the craft supplies in the space.

COVID Adaptation Team

Kristie Ellickson

The COVID Adaptation Team (CAT) continued to meet periodically and remotely in 2021. The CAT includes Kristie Ellickson, Paula Mackey, Tom Richardson and MPUC staff Ginger Schneider and Adam Blons.

The primary activities of the COVID Team this year continued to include:

- Reviewing the church in-person meeting guidance and other COVID-related information located on the church website here, <https://www.maclester-plymouth.org/our-covid19-response>
- Addressing questions related to gathering and building use.

We created safety protocols for church and community groups to use in their planning to come back to meet inside the church building. A safety plan is now an important part of the room use request process. A scheduled “room rest” of one hour is built into the request process as well, both before and after an event/meeting.

We decided that, for the safety of the preschool children who cannot be vaccinated, we would not host any church or community group meeting inside the church during the preschool hours. This meant two groups were not able to come back as planned.

Ginger took extra time to slowly bring back community groups starting in September. There are still some community support groups that are not back due to time/space issues. It sounds funny, but she even thought about how many people are in the building and which restrooms are used to keep the co-mingling in the common spaces down.

With the new Omicron variant, we had a flurry of email conversations around the Christmas Eve services. We decided that our safety protocols are working and sent out a special message in our weekly email from Adam and the CAT. The main message we repeat now is that coming to church for worship or a gathering is NOT a zero risk activity; everyone needs to evaluate their own risk.

The CAT team continues to answer questions and provide guidance and decisions that balance the spiritual and social needs of the church but also the safety of our congregation and our greater community. Stay apart but connected; if you can, please get vaccinated/boosted; wear a mask; wash those hands; and get tested if you get exposed. Above all, be safe and stay well and remember, we will be able to be together again!

Personnel Committee

Scott Moen, Elder

The Personnel Committee members are Rev. Adam Blons (ex officio), Lydia Crawford, Barbara Kurtz, Scott Moen, and Deborah Schmedemann.

The 2020 report answered the question: How did your committee adapt to the pandemic in 2020? We started 2021 hoping the year would bring less “transition” and “adaptation” than 2020. Of course, that did not happen.

Through much transition and adaptation in 2021, the committee’s work was possible only because:

- Rev. Adam Blons was our Lead Minister and chief of staff. Through these challenging and even exhausting times, Adam continued to lead and inspire us with his vision and creativity.
- Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis served us so ably the first half of the year.
- Our excellent staff brought their amazing skills, energy, and passion to do great work. It is important to name them:
 - Brad Bradshaw, Director of Music
 - Ginger Schneider, Office Administrator
 - Meegan Hall, Communications Specialist
 - Lynn Liepold, Organist/Accompanist and Handbell Director
 - Alan Richardson Hohn, Buildings & Grounds Manager
 - Community Builders Lauren Dickinson, Emily Gurnon, Kira Pollack, and Jennifer Marshall
 - Worship Leaders Don Christensen, Dustin Moretz, Jeanyne Slettom, and Kelly Stone
 - Live Streaming Techs Caleb Tracy and Colin Ward
 - Student Residents Ammar Muhammad and Nicole Salazar
 - Wedding Coordinator Penny Heubach

The Personnel Committee portion of the budget was not fully spent by year-end. On behalf of the congregation, Session and the Personnel Committee gave bonuses to Adam and the core staff in recognition of their longevity and fine work in another challenging year.


Summary of 2021 Personnel activities:

- Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis began the year with a three-quarter time work schedule reduced from full time in 2020.
- To offset Corinne’s reduced work schedule, we added very part-time Community Builders for congregational connection.
- Because the pandemic put Adam’s 2020 sabbatical on hold, Adam got much needed time away from work with three weeks of leave in April.
- Corinne announced her resignation effective in early June.
- In response to Corinne’s departure, we adopted a transition staffing plan for the last half of the year, which included hiring four very part-time Worship Leaders.
- In June, long-time residents ended their tenure and new residents moved in.

- Adapting to COVID meant Sunday services went from video editing to in person with live streaming, so we hired live streaming techs.
- Based on Corinne’s departure, we searched for a temporary minister but ended the search when it became apparent finding a suitable person was unlikely.
- We added a COVID-19 Vaccination policy to the Personnel Manual.
- We hired Alan Richardson Hohn as Building & Grounds Manager.
- A search committee began work to hire a new Minister of Congregational Life.
- We are now preparing for Adam’s sabbatical for eight weeks in early 2022. We worked on a transition staffing plan and searched for a Sabbatical Coverage Minister, to begin work in mid-February.

Terms of Call for Rev. Adam Blons, Lead Minister

COMPENSATION

Salary (2% COLA) 

Housing Allowance 

Social Security Offset (7.65%) 

Additional Cash Compensation

 Medical Reimbursement changed to FSA 

 Amount requested in lieu of medical insurance for Family 

BENEFITS

Pension/Medical/Vision/Dental/Disability (UCC) 

Total Compensation and Benefits 

PAID TIME OFF*

Vacation 

Continuing Education Leave 

Outside Professional Activities 

REIMBURSED EXPENSES

Travel Allowance 

Continuing Education Allowance 

Professional Expense Reimbursement 

*Rev. Blons also has paid sick and safe time under the St. Paul city ordinance.

MOTION: Adequacy of Compensation of Lead Minister

The Personnel Committee has determined that the compensation for the minister meets the minimum salary, pension and benefits requirements set forth by the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church (USA), pursuant to the requirements of the Book of Order G-2.0804.

**Ministers make their own decisions as to the allocation of salary and housing allowance.*

A licensed, commissioned or ordained minister may be able to exclude from income the fair rental value of a home (a parsonage) or a housing allowance provided as compensation for ministerial services performed as an employee. A minister who receives a housing allowance may exclude the allowance from gross income to the extent it is used to pay expenses in providing a home. Generally, those expenses include rent, mortgage interest, utilities, repairs, and other expenses directly relating to providing a home. The amount excluded cannot be more than the reasonable compensation for the minister's services.

If you own your home, you may still claim deductions for mortgage interest and real property taxes. If your housing allowance exceeds the lesser of your reasonable compensation, the fair rental value of the home, or your actual expenses, you must include the amount of the excess in income.

The minister's employing organization must officially designate the allowance as a housing allowance before paying it to the minister.

Pastor Parish Relations Committee

Maggie Passmore

The purpose of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee is to provide support to Adam as the leader of our congregation and also to provide the congregation with a group that can provide feedback to Adam from our community.

During 2021, the Pastor Parish Relations Committee met with Adam several times to provide support in his work with Corinne as they led our church virtually. When Corinne announced her resignation, we also met with Adam to understand what support he needed from the Committee and from the church during the interim time of being a solo pastor. We also met to discuss the planning needed for his upcoming sabbatical (now scheduled for two months in March and April of 2022 and one month sometime in 2023).

We continue to be grateful for Adam's leadership during this challenging and fluid time and appreciate the opportunity to provide support to him going into next year.

Members: Craig Bower, Maggie Passmore, Lee Schafer, Deborah Schmedemann

Worship Committee

Gail Roberts, Elder

The role of the Worship Committee is to help plan and provide support for worship services including hospitality, liturgy, communion, music and ushers. Many of the adaptations for worship experiences as virtual events continued during the first half of 2021 with pre-recorded worship services broadcast on the MPUC YouTube channel and sometimes other gatherings meeting on Zoom. During the summer we transitioned to in-person worship with simultaneous live streaming of services for those viewing at home.

Highlights of some of the worship experiences this year included:

- A gradual transition back to some forms of in-person worship was made starting in June, following COVID protocols with masking, social distancing, and smaller numbers attending services. Several outdoor services were held during the summer and fall months to allow for more people to participate safely.
- New cameras and related technology were installed in the sanctuary to provide live streaming of worship services and other events. The technology team has done an amazing job in helping us bring the worship services to all members of our church community as well as a wider audience.
- We said good-bye to Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis, Minister of Congregational Life, during June. Rev. Freedman Ellis provided guidance and support for this committee for many years, as well as providing leadership for many memorable worship experiences for our faith community.
- A group of four Worship Leaders, composed of three clergy and a seminary student, joined Rev. Blons in planning and leading worship during this transitional year while the search process for a new Minister of Congregational Life continues. We deeply appreciated their many and varied gifts and ways of enriching our worship services.
- We rejoiced in the return of the choirs and live music led by our Director of Music, Brad Bradshaw, and organist, Lynn Liepold.
- We found new ways to serve communion consistent with our COVID protocol. During the summer and fall months communion was served outside, and during the winter months communion was served in the pews using individual compostable cups holding a grape and gluten-free cracker.
- The season of Advent was celebrated with hanging of the greens, lighting of the Advent candles, and a virtual Christmas pageant. Christmas Eve services returned to an in-person family Christmas Eve service at 5 p.m. and the traditional candle-light Christmas Eve service at 10 p.m. Both services were also broadcast as live streamed services for those participating at home.

We continue to be grateful for new worship experiences and new ways of sharing our services with others. Many volunteers have helped with both our live streamed and in-person services. These include the technology team, the usher teams, communion servers, liturgists, the sanctuary arts team, and musicians. Special thanks to committee member Pam Johnson, who represented the Worship Committee on the Adaptation Team and helped plan the safe return to in-person worship, as well as coordinated the usher teams. Committee member Janet

Humphrey helped find new ways of serving communion and faithfully prepared the communion elements each month. The Worship Committee has been blessed by the participation of our ministers, Rev. Corinne Freedman Ellis during the first half of the year and the Rev. Adam Blons during the later half of the year. We welcome others who would like to join the Committee in the new year!

Members: Janet Humphrey, Pam Johnson, Gail Roberts, Rev. Adam Blons.

Board of Deacons

Rachel Christensen and Ginger Carroll, Co-presidents

The Board of Deacons serves members of our congregation during times of need, particularly those who are elderly, ill or grieving. Reaching out to MPUC members with Christian love, the deacons encourage the congregation to create and sustain a culture of care. “It means a lot to connect with the deacon board members and amazes me how much we share and care together.”—a deacon

Deacon Board membership in 2021 included (in alphabetical order): Adam Blons (pastor), Satya Blons (youth deacon), Ginger Carroll (co-president), Rachel Christensen (co-president), Jon Despotes-Tourdot (treasurer), Sheila Hatchell, Connie Lindberg (secretary), Paula Mackey, Clay Meydell, Tom Richardson, Mia Richmond (youth deacon), Dan Seburg, and Kathleen Vellenga. Dan Craig extended his deacon term to help coordinate memorial receptions. Adapting to the COVID pandemic restrictions for a second year, the deacons sponsored activities and programs described below.

Care Contacts

Adjustments were made in the deacon care ministry when COVID pandemic restrictions were ordered. Created in March of 2020, the Connecting Tree allowed those on the deacon care list and others to receive regular phone calls from MPUC volunteers and deacons. The Connecting Tree continued in 2021, but with COVID restrictions easing and in-person worship services returning in midsummer, the Connecting Tree transitioned to staying in touch informally. For a summary of this ministry, see the Here & Now for October 14-21, 2021. In early summer, A Time to Gather was offered to senior members interested in getting together outside for informal conversation. Following MPUC COVID protocols, deacons provided small group gatherings in the Memorial Garden, meeting weekly for one hour over six weeks. In September, once again, the pastor assigned members he thought might benefit from ongoing deacon connection.

Card Ministry

Deacons extend our caring to the church community by sending bereavement cards and books to church members who are mourning the loss of a loved one, get well and encouragement cards to members who are included in the Prayer Chain, and birthday and Christmas cards to members who are eighty years and older. A prayer shawl, crocheted by a church member, is given as needed. Also, deacons provide a small gift to students when they graduate high school and a care package containing cookies and other treats at Christmas during their first year of college. “I enjoy connection and comfort with those in our congregation to whom I send cards to remind them that deacons are praying for God's presence during their sickness or other worries.”—a deacon

Prayer Chain

At the request of our members, the prayer chain was activated on at least 101 occasions. The number of individual prayer requests totaled 135.

Act Now

Deacons help coordinate the preparation of meals by beacon volunteers for members during times of stress and need. During July, November, and December delivery of meals was activated for two families needing support. (Beacons are church members who answer a call put out by the deacons.)

Rides to Church

With pandemic restrictions lifted, rides to church were again organized for members unable to drive to weekly worship services. Since September, a carpool of nine drivers, rotating Sundays, has provided transportation to three MPUC members and one guest, all residents at New Perspective Senior Living.

Memorial Service Receptions

Two longtime members were remembered in memorial services held in the sanctuary. The memorial service for Ray Brovold was August 13th. The deacons, assisted by beacons, arranged and served a luncheon following this service. The memorial service for June Nelson was held August 24th, and a reception hosted by the family was held off-site. The deacons provided some ushers for her service.

Easter Flowers

MPUC held Easter services virtually again in 2021, but members could order flowering plants for Easter through the church website with coordination by the deacons. The day before Easter, Youth Group members and other volunteers sorted the 88 flower plants for pick-up in the church parking lot and delivered plants to homes of those unable to pick-up their order. Energy was high that day with spring just around the corner as volunteers greeted each other (masked, yet in-person). The deacon coordinator remarked, "It was fun and worked out great."

Grants and Awards

Each year deacons award small grants to community organizations that reflect our mission of care and concern for those in need. Criteria guiding selection were that the organization be local, serve the elder population and their families, have a minority/diversity focus, and state a mission aligning with our congregation's racial justice focus. Deacons selected the following three deserving organizations: Hallie Q. Brown Community Center (\$1400); Neighborhood Network for Seniors (\$1400); and Department of Indian Work at Interfaith Action of Greater Saint Paul (\$1000). Information about these organizations is found in the Here & Now for December 9, 2021.

Life Transitions Programming

The Board of Deacons sponsored programs designed by the MPUC Life Transitions Team entitled "Putting Your Life in Order: A Gift from One Generation to Another." Topics evolved from the MPUC publication *In Life and In Death We Belong to God: A Planning Guide*. In February a workshop on "Legacy Writing" was presented by Rachael Freed. More than 85 participants attended over Zoom. From this, a Legacy Writing Group formed, meeting monthly to share stories.

In the fall two programs were scheduled that provide information on end-of-life issues:

- “What do I want to happen to my body after I die?” offered on three Thursdays in September. Topics included water and fire cremation, natural burial, and body donation. Thirty-one participants registered, including residents from senior housing complexes in the neighborhood.
- “How can I cope with the inevitable? Facing loss and grief in my life” offered on three Saturdays in November. Sixty-five people attended the sessions, open only to MPUC members who met at the church. Guest speaker Tom Ellis spoke on “This Thing Called Grief: New Understandings of Loss.” To continue discussion, a Loss and Grief Support Group has been formed.

For spring 2022 two programs are planned:

- “What forms are important to complete so my loved ones are prepared for the end of my life?”
- “Gathering after I die: What words, music, and stories are important to me?”

A webpage containing recordings of the presentations as well as related resources can be found on the church website at <http://www.macalester-plymouth.org/life-transitions>.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee was enthusiastically led by Taylor Coffin during 2021, with participation from Jared Coffin, Connie Lindberg, Vanessa Martin, Kelly Hulander, Emily Gurnon, and Adam Blons.

We started our work earlier in the year than previous Nominating Committees have done—devoting ourselves to collecting and assembling descriptions of the many boards and committees that offer opportunities for members to plug in and serve! This was done in conjunction with the overhaul of the church website, and the website will soon include this information.

With the departure of Corinne Freedman Ellis, the committee went into high gear as we began recruiting members for the Pastoral Search Committee. When that was complete we turned to our search for new Elders, Deacons, and Nominating Committee members. For 2022, we hope to plan and present an event thanking our wonderful church volunteers—all of the many people who contribute their time and energy to doing the vital work of our faith community.

We urge all Mac Plymouth members to prayerfully consider what new connections you might be interested in making—whether it’s a committee, or help with worship, or another interest you’d like to pursue. We welcome your questions! Write to mpucengage@gmail.com.

Elders Class of 2025	Debra Jessen	Michael Steenson	Kristie Ellickson	Tom Huie	Lauren Wood
Elders Class of 2023	Molly Redmond				
Denominational Commissioners	Rob Ramer	Kathleen Vellenga			
Deacons Class of 2025	Penny Heubach	Deb Mackay	Sigi Leonhard	Charlie Kurtz	Youth: Libby Roller (ex-officio)
Nominating Committee in 2022	Connie Lindberg	Vanessa Martin	Emily Gurnon	Fred Smith	Cley Meydell
Vice-Moderator	John Anderson	Lauren Wood (2023-24)			
Treasurer	Don McCall				
Assistant Treasurer	Lee Schafer				

Macalester Plymouth Preschool

Kris Dunford and Pemly Fink, Co-directors

We hope everyone had a wonderful holiday celebration.

We are looking forward to the new year and all the wonderful things it holds for all of us! Our preschool has been a blessing to many over the years, especially during COVID, when we all are clinging to some sense of normalcy and routine throughout this pandemic. Thankfully, our student numbers have increased from last year, and we are hopeful that as vaccinations for all become available, those numbers will return to pre-COVID status. We hired one new substitute teacher, Britt Moore, and we welcomed back Ann Vitko, who has been subbing in my classroom.

ROOM 1- Ms. Kris

My classroom has seen an increase in student numbers this year. I have two morning sessions and both classes are at capacity, which is twenty students in each session, with a total of forty students. Unfortunately, I was not able to get enough students to sign up for the afternoons, so I am assisting Ms. Pemly with her afternoon session. After last year's numbers (twenty-two total students) I am thrilled to have so many families sign up and trust in our COVID Preparedness Plan. We are hopeful that things will continue to improve as the vaccinations become available to all!

This has been an interesting year for me, personally. I was diagnosed with breast cancer and had a double mastectomy the last week of September, with a few complications along the way. I was on medical leave and returned on Monday, January 3. Shannon Korb, one of my assistant teachers, has been leading the class in my absence, along with the support of Tracy Pirozzolo, Rita Brandt, Britt Moore, and Ann Vitko. They have been doing an amazing job while I have been recovering, and I am very thankful to work with such a wonderful and talented group of people. Though I have not been teaching the class, I prepared all the lesson plans and materials needed for the weekly lessons. The children have learned about Germs, Fire Prevention, Bats, Leaves, Thankfulness, and Holiday Celebrations Around the World (Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, and Christmas). For our annual service project, the children made holiday cards for The Willows of Ramsey Hill, a memory care facility in St. Paul. The residents loved them and are working on sending the children a thank-you card to show their gratitude.

As a co-director, I want to acknowledge Ms. Pemly for handling our annual visit from the licensing inspector and any other preschool issues while I was out. I could not ask for a better person to co-direct with. I am very grateful to her!

Finally, thank you to the Preschool Board for their continued support. We are very lucky to have such a committed group of people, whose love for the preschool and its mission are evident at every meeting.

ROOM 2 - Ms. Pemly

Room Zoo has maintained a similar enrollment to last year. Last year we had thirty-five enrolled, and this year we are at thirty-three. We lost a student but gained two beginning in

January. M-W-F is at fifteen, T-Th at fourteen, and the afternoon at eight. The afternoon is the biggest challenge, despite the lower numbers. Lots of strong personalities!

Sarah Ylvisaker stepped up to help in the afternoon during Ms. Kris's recovery. We will keep her for at least the first week so Ms. Kris can get acclimated. Ms. Madi has been staying for our two students who stay for both morning and afternoon sessions. She will continue to do that for the rest of the school year.

One thing we would like to consider is having Lunch Bunch just for the kids in my room. I think it would be good to get through January and revisit how the year has progressed as far as contact tracing and positive cases. We have reminded all of our families, as well as staff, to test their students before returning to class.

I would also like to commend the teachers who stepped up to support Ms. Kris during her recovery. Ms. Shannon was great and would often check in with me re procedures, suggestions about a COVID issue, etc. It is very clear that we have a wonderful staff who love their jobs and are always very supportive!

We continue to foster empathy, kindness and compassion in the classroom. Our units on MLK, Rosa Parks and Ruby Bridges will enforce those principles. Then we fall into our February Art month, which encourages self expression and creativity. I will be adding an artist this year (possibly Matisse) to make the whole month about art! Then the Iditarod, Japan, Rainforest, Planet Earth, etc. We also hope to get the kids outside for fresh air. I purchased some snow toys to make it fun! Hopefully we can make some snow art for the parishioners of MPUC to enjoy!

Thank you to the outgoing Board Members! We have all been such a strong team for so long. It will be sad to see you go. Your continued support of the Preschool has always been appreciated!

Finance and Stewardship

Dwight Johnson, Session Elder

Members of the committee Dwight Johnson, Don McCall, Gail Morrison, Steve Nicholson, Lee Schafer, Dale Thompson, Ginger Schneider (office administrator) and Adam Blons (lead minister).

The Finance and Stewardship Committee is responsible for stewardship, finance, endowments, and memorials. The committee normally meets monthly. Some of our ongoing functions include preparing monthly financial statements, reviewing periodic investment performance, overseeing counting the offering, engaging an annual outside financial review, reviewing insurance coverage, maintaining online giving, supporting the annual stewardship campaign, and raising funds for the church's denominational contributions.

As of this writing, 2021 expenditures are well under budget for the year due primarily to the vacancy in the Minister of Congregational Life position. Revenues are trending at or slightly above budgeted amounts. The Session has approved a motion to allocate most of an expected surplus for a growing list of needed capital projects.

During the past year some of our accomplishments include:

- Completed our second full year of ESG "socially responsible" investing of our endowment with excellent results
- Added Planned Giving educational materials to the church website.
- Diversified the investment of temporarily idle cash funds
- Developed new events accounting procedures
- Managed a successful per capita fund raising effort for our denominations
- Developed an early preliminary budget in the fall to guide stewardship planning
- Conducted an outside review of our accounting procedures and reported the results to Session
- Reviewed proposed capital projects for the next five years and potential funding sources
- Assisted with preparation of the annual budget.

The annual Stewardship Campaign Team included Alan Whipple, Chuck Eversman, Lynda Withbroe, Beth Cutting, and Lynn Douma along with great support from Adam and Ginger.

The stewardship campaign is still ongoing at this writing. To date, we have received 131 pledges for \$ 459,716. The average pledge is up more than 6.5 % so far. We continue to be so amazed and grateful for the generosity of the congregation.

Some goals for 2022 include:

- Continue progress toward sustainable church finances
- Consider funding strategies for long-range replacement needs of equipment and furnishings
- Enhance future planned giving opportunities.

Endowments (Stewardship and Finance Subcommittee)

Don McCall, Treasurer

The goal of the Finance and Stewardship Committee with regard to endowed funds is to manage investment and use of those funds to ensure (1) that the principal is preserved in order to create long-term income for the Church and (2) that funds are used according to the wishes of the donor. The committee maintains records of instructions from donors to the endowment fund and memorial funds established by donors at the Presbyterian Foundation to benefit MPUC. Endowment investments are governed by an internal investment policy statement and professionally managed by RBC Capital Markets. Memorial funds at the Presbyterian Foundation are managed by the Foundation. Income from both sources is received based on the historic financial performance of the funds.

Endowment

The performance of the church's endowment fund is generally representative of the ups and downs of the overall market. The market saw less volatility in 2021 than 2020; the fund balance enjoyed growth consistent with the overall market. It began the year with a fund balance of \$508,558 as of December 31, 2020 and increased to \$544,093 as of December 31, 2021. To smooth out market volatility, our distribution policy instructs us to use the average market value of the prior twelve quarters. The average endowment balance for the prior twelve quarters amounted to \$476,998. The investment goal for the endowment fund is to obtain long-term growth sufficient to allow for a 5% annual payout and maintain the balance, adjusted for inflation. The committee meets periodically with the advisors to review investment performance and make necessary changes.

In the recent few years, there has been considerable growth in the options available for investors concerned with socially responsible investing. During 2019, the finance committee reviewed and revised our Investment Policy Statement, and the session approved the revisions that fall. As part of that revision we updated our socially responsible screening criteria to the following:

“Macalester Plymouth requests its advisors to direct its investments toward funds that incorporate Responsible Investing principles and specifically ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) factors wherever reasonably possible. While ESG considerations are only one factor in overall analyses and may vary by industry, ESG is an important tool to help assure that the values of MPUC are honored and to help encourage similar values in the business community. Additionally, MPUC has a strong preference to not invest in fossil fuel related businesses.”

All of the endowment funds held by MPUC were contributed by donors with instructions as to the use of the funds. Following these instructions, the 2021 allocation of endowment payout was: Session Discretionary 38.9%, Building 16.9%, Youth Ministry 9.9%, Mission and Social Justice 19.8%, Music 4.7%, and Deacons 9.9%. The annual payout of endowment funds in 2020 was \$22,300, in accordance with the 5% payout policy.

During 2020 the church received a forgivable PPP loan from the federal government as part of the COVID stimulus program. As a result of that good fortune we deferred the use of the 2020 endowment for use in a future year. We have been without a Minister of Congregational Life since June, and as a result not being fully staffed, the normal expenditures from the endowment funds were also deferred to a future year. To illustrate how those funds are typically used, we are including the table from 2019.

In 2019, the endowment income was distributed as follows:

Area	Amount	Uses 2019
Session Discretionary	\$7,500	General Operations
Building Funds	\$6,000	Extraordinary Repairs
Children & Youth Funds	\$3,000	Youth Staff Salary
Christian Service, Mission	\$6,500	General Mission Giving
Music	\$1,000	Special Music
Deacons	\$2,870	Add'l Mission Donations; Sidewalk Leveling
Total	\$26,870	

The income from the endowment is maintained in designated accounts and used per the annual budget. The funds may have balances that carry over from year to year. These funds may be used for the designated purposes in future years.

Designated Funds

Separate from the church's endowment funds, members and families periodically establish funds at the Presbyterian Foundation and designate MPUC as the beneficiary of the income from the funds. The principal is held by the Foundation. MPUC has no authority over either the investment of the funds or the timing or amount of income received. The committee maintains records of the purpose of each of the funds and has accounts to hold the income when it is received from the Presbyterian Foundation. The annual budget includes an amount for use of this income according to donor instructions. A complete list of these funds and their designated use is available from the Treasurer.

There are currently eighteen funds at the Presbyterian Foundation from which MPUC receives periodic income. That income is added to any unused balance from previous years. For reasons previously mentioned, the 2021 Presbyterian Foundation Funds were also deferred for use in a future year. To illustrate how those funds are typically used, we are including the table from 2019. Funds were expended in 2019 for the following purposes:

Area	Amount	Uses in 2019
Deacons (Presbyterian Foundation)	\$574	Memorial Services; Elderly Services
Session	\$2000	General Operations
Mission & Social Justice	\$4000	General Mission Giving
GEM & Fellowship	0	
Christian Ed	\$232	Program Materials
Worship & Music	\$6000	Special Music; Hymn Contest
Total	\$12,806	

The income from these designated memorials accounts is maintained in designated accounts and used per the annual budget. The funds may have balances that carry over from year to year. In 2021 the church used some income that had been received in prior years and carried forward as balances. These funds may be used for the designated purposes in future years. Other designated fund accounts exist for specific purposes, such as the Youth Mission Trip account, accounts for special offerings, and donations received for a specific use. The receipt and use of these accounts are reviewed, but the committee does not have authority to make decisions about use of any of these funds.

Macalester Plymouth United Church
Fund Balance Sheet
Opening Balances as of January 1, 2021
Ending Balances as of December 31, 2021

ASSETS	Beginning 01/01/21	Change	Ending 12/31/21
Current Operating			
Bank Cherokee - General Fund	417,230	(237,872)	179,358
Bank Cherokee - Designated Fund	27,458	(16,346)	11,112
Bank Cherokee - Capital Fund	4,743	(3,213)	1,530
RBC - Designated Fund, MM and ST Investments	34,326	233,847	268,173
Total Cash in Bank	<u>483,757</u>	(23,584) #	<u>460,173</u>
Other Current Assets			
Prepaid Expenses	-	10,371	10,371
Other Brokerage Services	1,297	82	1,379
Other Receivables	-	-	-
Federal Withholding Receivable	295	-	295
Amortizable Loan Costs	12,494	-	12,494
Accumulated Amortization	(12,494)	-	(12,494)
Due from Mac Preschool	7,094	(7,094)	-
Total Other Current Assets	<u>8,686</u>	<u>3,359</u>	<u>12,045</u>
Total Current Assets	492,443	(20,225)	472,218
Endowment Assets at Market			
Endowment Assets - RBC	508,558	20,076	528,634
Endowment Organ Loan to MPUC	43,200	-	43,200
Total Endowment Assets	551,758	20,076	571,834
Fixed Assets			
Building & Fixtures	3,123,052	-	3,123,052
Accumulated Depreciation	(1,473,783)	-	(1,473,783)
Fixed Assets Net of Depreciation	1,649,269	-	1,649,269
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>2,693,470</u></u>	<u><u>(149)</u></u>	<u><u>2,693,321</u></u>

**Macalester Plymouth United Church
Fund Balance Sheet
Opening Balances as of January 1, 2021
Ending Balances as of December 31, 2021**

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	2,692	1,999	4,691
Credit Card Payable	138	389	527
Payroll Taxes Payable	-	1,169	1,169
Prepaid Pledges	65,436	(19,296)	46,140
	<u>68,266</u>	<u>(15,739)</u>	<u>52,527</u>
Total Current Liabilities			
	68,266	(15,739)	52,527
Total Funds Liabilities			
Mortgage Payable	233,720	(14,175)	219,545
Loan Payable New Cov Organ	43,200	-	43,200
	<u>276,920</u>	<u>(14,175)</u>	<u>262,745</u>
Total Funds Liabilities			
	276,920	(14,175)	262,745
Total Liabilities	345,186	(29,914)	315,272
Total Designated Fund Balances	244,341	7,328	251,669
Total Net Assets	<u>2,103,943</u>	<u>22,437</u>	<u>2,126,380</u>
TOTAL RESTRICTED AND UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	<u><u>2,693,470</u></u>	<u><u>(149)</u></u>	<u><u>2,693,321</u></u>

**Macalester Plymouth United Church
Statement of Activities
Year Ended December 31, 2021 and 2020**

	<u>2021 Budget</u>	<u>2021 Actual</u>	<u>2020 Actual</u>
REVENUE			
Total Contributions	500,840	523,070	481,624
Rental Income			
Pre-School	17,762	17,762	18,579
Building Use	5,000	3,565	4,930
Total Rental Income	<u>22,762</u>	<u>21,327</u>	<u>23,509</u>
Other			428
Total Revenue	<u>523,602</u>	<u>544,397</u>	<u>564,723</u>
Budgeted Transfers			
Endowment Income	20,000	-	-
Designated Funds	28,530	-	-
Memorial Funds	3,500	-	-
PPP Loan Foriveness Funds	19,000	-	-
New Opportunities	5,100	1,500	1,350
Total Budgeted Transfers	<u>76,130</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>1,350</u>
Unbudgeted Transfers & Receipts			
Miscellaneous Income	-	1,304	59,162
Total Available Revenue	<u>599,732</u>	<u>547,201</u>	<u>566,073</u>
EXPENDITURES			
Personnel	374,778	325,600	376,493
Operations	131,196	138,035	108,444
Denominational Support	16,412	16,054	9,782
Finance	31,725	32,625	31,308
GEM	2,000	100	1,373
Congregational Fellowship	4,370	257	3,218
Education	3,000	1,064	1,436
Mission & Social Justice	22,750	22,750	24,350
Worship	8,400	8,481	5,639
New Opportunities	5,100	1,500	1,350
Total Expenditures	<u>599,731</u>	<u>546,466</u>	<u>563,393</u>
Net Surplus (Deficit)	<u>1</u>	<u>735</u>	<u>2,680</u>

**Macalester Plymouth United Church
Statement of Activities
Year Ended December 31, 2021 and 2020**

	<u>2021 Budget</u>	<u>2021 Actual</u>	<u>2020 Actual</u>
OTHER MISSION GIVING THROUGH DESIGNATED FUNDS			
Christmas Offerings		4,365	3,950
Creation Justice		300	-
Deacons Fund		1,865	669
Facilities Fund		1,575	1,500
Food & Shelter		2,940	4,655
Memorials		3,190	107,227
Memorial Garden		825	2,250
Misc Pass Through Gifts		12,114	5,834
Music Fund		100	-
One Great Hour of Sharing		7,095	8,561
Peacemaking Offer		3,354	2,120
Pentecost Offering		1,250	1,600
Plymouth & Rex Knowlesw Rooms		7,825	22,491
Racial Justice Stewards		6,525	-
Sanctuary Mission		8,105	11,213
Youth Mission - Donations & Fees		<u>6,346</u>	<u>3,990</u>
 Total		 <u><u>67,774</u></u>	 <u><u>176,060</u></u>

**Macalester Plymouth United Church
Statement of Expenditures
Year Ended December 31, 2021 and 2020**

	<u>2021 Budget</u>	<u>2021 Actual</u>	<u>2020 Actual</u>
PERSONNEL			
Salaries	291,656	264,146	303,729
Employee Expenses	82,622	61,064	72,555
Session and Leadership Expense	500	390	208
Total Personnel	<u>374,778</u>	<u>325,600</u>	<u>376,492</u>
OPERATIONS			
Office Expense	29,635	27,435	24,787
Church Maint & Utilities	73,676	82,877	65,583
Other Ownership Costs	27,885	27,723	18,073
Total Operations	<u>131,196</u>	<u>138,035</u>	<u>108,443</u>
EDUCATION			
Adult Education	1,000	261	150
Children's Ed	1,000	401	558
Junior and Senior High	1,000	402	216
Teaching Expenses	-	-	512
Total Education	<u>3,000</u>	<u>1,064</u>	<u>1,436</u>
MISSION & SOCIAL JUSTICE	22,750	22,750	24,350
GROWTH EVANGELISM & MEMBERSHIP	2,000	100	1,373
CONGREG'L FELLOWSHIP	4,370	257	3,218
NEW OPPORTUNITIES	5,000	1,500	1,350
DONOMINATIONAL SUPPORT	16,412	16,054	9,782
FINANCE			
Mortgage Interest	25,825	11,650	14,731
Regular Mortgage Principal	5,900	14,175	11,094
Other Finance Expenses	5,900	6,800	5,483
Total Finance	<u>31,725</u>	<u>32,625</u>	<u>31,308</u>
WORSHIP			
Worship Service & Supplies	850	2,977	470
Music	7,550	5,504	5,169
Total	<u>8,400</u>	<u>8,481</u>	<u>5,639</u>
DEACONS' ACTIVITY			
Outside Mission Activities	NA	4,000	1,300
MPUC Deacons' Activities	NA	3,236	979
Total	<u>NA</u>	<u>7,236</u>	<u>2,279</u>

**Macalester Plymouth United Church
2022 Budget**

	<u>2022 Budget</u>	<u>2021 Budget</u>	<u>2021 Actual</u>
REVENUE			
Total Contributions	503,340	500,840	523,070
Rental Income			
Pre-School	21,134	17,762	17,762
Building Use	5,000	5,000	3,565
Total Rental Income	<u>26,134</u>	<u>22,762</u>	<u>21,327</u>
Other Income	-	-	1,305
Total Revenue	<u>529,474</u>	<u>523,602</u>	<u>545,702</u>
Budgeted Transfers			
Endowment Income	20,000	20,000	-
Memorials	3,500	3,500	-
Designated Funds	15,000	15,000	-
Additional End./Des. Trans.	19,530	13,530	-
PPP Loan Forgiveness	19,000	19,000	-
New Opportunities	5,100	5,100	1,500
Total Budgeted Transfers	<u>82,130</u>	<u>76,130</u>	<u>1,500</u>
Accumulated Surplus (Prior Years)	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Available Revenue	<u>611,604</u>	<u>599,732</u>	<u>547,202</u>
 EXPENDITURES			
Personnel	365,514	374,778	325,600
Operations	149,088	131,196	138,035
Denominational Support	17,762	16,412	16,054
Finance	32,725	31,725	32,625
GEM	2,200	2,000	100
Congregational Fellowship	4,370	4,370	257
Education	3,000	3,000	1,064
Mission & Social Justice	22,750	22,750	22,750
Worship	9,000	8,400	8,481
New Opportunities	5,100	5,100	1,500
Total Expenditures	<u>611,509</u>	<u>599,731</u>	<u>546,466</u>
 Net Surplus (Deficit)	<u>95</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>736</u>

**Macalester Plymouth United Church
2022 Budget**

	<u>2022 Budget</u>	<u>2021 Budget</u>	<u>2021 Actual</u>
PERSONNEL			
Salaries	298,998	291,656	264,146
Employee Expenses	76,016	82,622	61,064
Session Expense	500	500	390
Reduction by Dec 2020	(10,000)	0	0
Total Personnel	<u>365,514</u>	<u>374,778</u>	<u>325,600</u>
OPERATIONS			
Office Expense	36,405	29,635	27,435
Church Maint & Utilities	82,120	73,676	82,877
Other Ownership Costs	30,563	27,885	27,723
Total Operations	<u>149,088</u>	<u>131,196</u>	<u>138,035</u>
EDUCATION			
Adult Education	1,000	1,000	261
Children's Ed	1,000	1,000	401
Junior & Senior High	1,000	1,000	402
Background Checks	0	0	0
Total Education	<u>3,000</u>	<u>3,000</u>	<u>1,064</u>
MISSION & SOCIAL JUSTICE	22,750	22,750	22,750
GROWTH EVANGELISM & MEMBERSHIP	2,200	2,000	100
CONGREG'L FELLOWSHIP	4,370	4,370	257
FINANCE			
Church Support	-	-	-
Mortgage Interest	25,825	25,825	25,825
Regular Mortgage Principal	6,900	5,900	6,800
Other Finance Expenses	-	-	-
Total Finance	<u>32,725</u>	<u>31,725</u>	<u>32,625</u>
DENOMINATIONAL SUPPORT	17,762	16,412	16,054
WORSHIP			
Worship Service & Supplies	1,450	850	2,977
Music	7,550	7,550	5,504
Total Worship	<u>9,000</u>	<u>8,400</u>	<u>8,481</u>
NEW OPPORTUNITIES	5,100	5,100	1,500
Total Expense	<u><u>611,509</u></u>	<u><u>599,731</u></u>	<u><u>546,466</u></u>