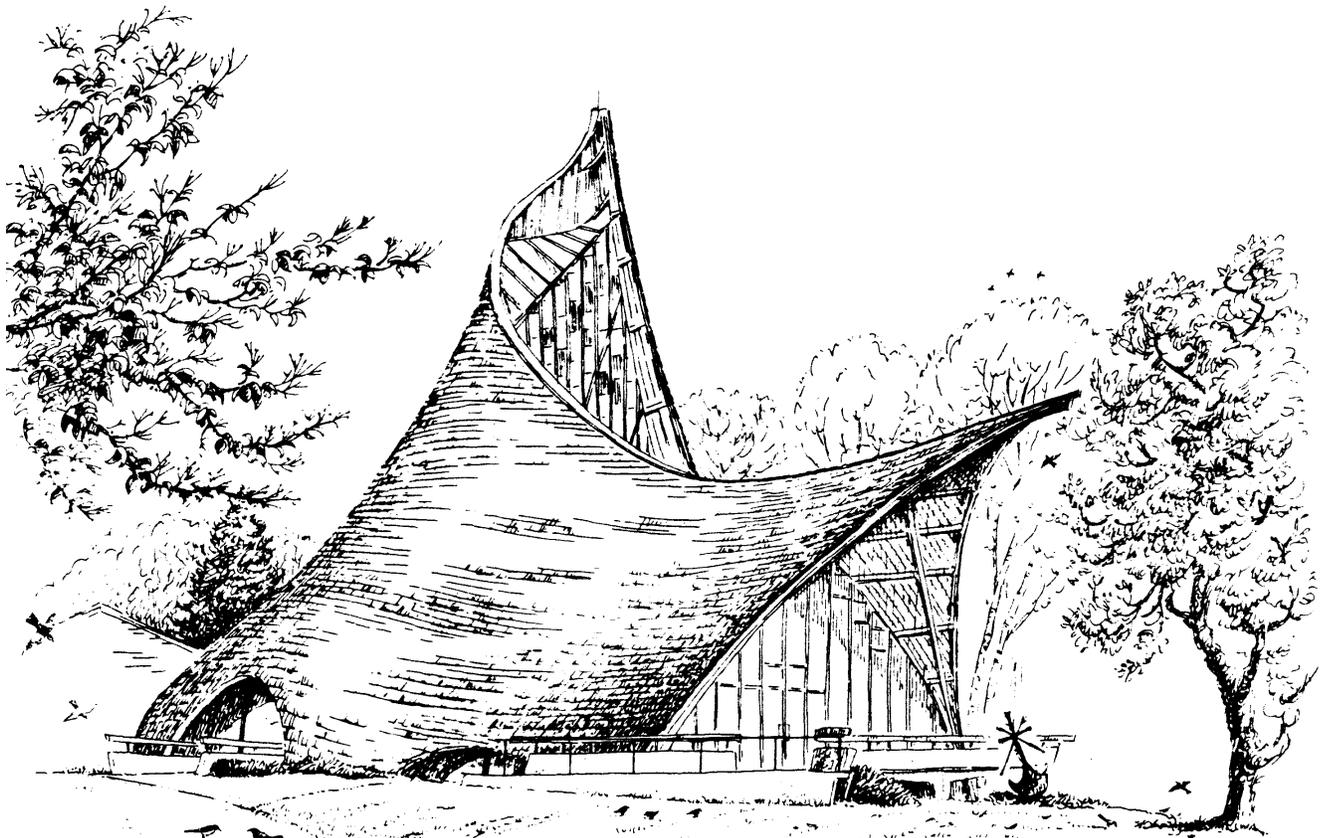


**THE UNITED CHURCH OF ROWAYTON
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

ANNUAL REPORT

2022



United Church of Rowayton

Nina Palliser Craig

The United Church of Rowayton Mission Statement

We are a Christian community, dedicated to welcoming all who seek a relationship with God, to sharing God's Word and love, and to nurturing all in their journey of faith.



Open and Affirming Statement

The United Church of Rowayton is an open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ, which renews and strengthens its commitment to advocate justice and equality for all people. Therefore, led by God's Spirit and with consideration of our brothers and sisters in faith, we declare that we welcome, respect and care for people of every gender, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, economic circumstance, and physical and mental ability into the worship, rites and sacraments, fellowship, and leadership of our church. We recognize and love each and every individual as a child of God. With God's grace we therefore covenant to grow and practice a unity of faith that transcends our differences and celebrates our lives.

Ministers to the Community: *The Congregation*

Interim Pastor: *John Livingston*

Pastor Emeritus: *John Livingston* Founding Pastor: *Donald W. Emig*

Director of Music: *Marsha Hall*

Children's Choir and Youth Handbell Choir Director: *Ellen Dickinson*

Director of Christian Education: *Val Harden*

Director of Communications: *Bill Peltz*

Office Manager: *Kris Jenkins*

Treasurer and Business Manager: *Bill Sarr*

Assistant Treasurer: *Jim Ackerly*

Premier Property Management: *Dileep Chandran*

Office Hours: Tuesday through Friday 9:00am – 12:00pm

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E-Mail: john, kris, billsarr, billpeltz, val or dileep@ucrowayton.org

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THE UNITED CHURCH OF ROWAYTON
71st Annual Meeting, February 5, 2023

OFFICERS FOR 2023

Moderator	Tammy Langalis
Clerk	Bill Peltz
General Treasurer	Bill Sarr
Assistant Treasurer	Jim Ackerly
Business Manager	Bill Sarr

STATISTICAL REPORT

Total Adult Members on rolls as of December 31, 2021	348
Inactive Members Removed from Church Records During 2022	0
Transfers Out During 2022	5
Members Deceased	5
Members Received During 2022	0
Confirmands Received in 2022	17
Adult Members on rolls as of December 31, 2022	338
Baptisms	9
Weddings	3
Funeral and Memorial Services	4

Members and Friends who have died in 2022

Joy Hetherington
Wayne Gamache
Peg O'Sullivan
Patty Genuario
Martha Cook
Betsy English

CHURCH ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS – 2022

In lieu of an annual history and because church records are now archived digitally, this year the congregation decided to include a short list of highlights in the Annual Report.

Special Events

January Activities put on hold due to COVID surge

January 23 -30 Board of Christian Outreach Sunday Undie Drive

February 3 - Weekly Thursday Bible Study Resumes

March 2 - Ash Wednesday Service

March 6 - First Communion Sunday

March 27 - Confirmation Sunday

April 10 - Palm Sunday

April 14 - Maundy Thursday Service

April 15 - Good Friday Service

April 17 - Easter Sunday Services

May 1 - Pastor John's scheduled retirement is moved to June 5, 2022

June 5 - Livingston Retirement Celebration

June 12 Jonathan P. Wildman Memorial Scholarship recipients announced
and high school senior graduates congratulated

June 19 - Interim Pastor Daniel England's first worship service

July – August – Worship in Pinkney Park

September 12 - Rally Day service

Music Program is back! Adult Choir and Adult Handbell Choir

Ellen Dickinson joins staff to direct Children's Choir and Youth Handbell Choir

October 2 – Caregiving Ministry Training is held

October 7 Interim Pastor Daniel England submitted his letter of resignation

November 13 Congregational Meeting – Proposed Budgets are approved

November 19 – Tellabration Returns for the first time since 2019 to celebrate Peg O'Sullivan

December 4 Interim Pastor Daniel England Last Sunday

Christmas Tree Lighting and Pasta Dinner

December 11 - Pastor John Livingston returns as Interim Pastor

December 18 - Living Nativity

December 24 – 4:00pm and 9:00pm Christmas Eve Services

December 25 – Deacons hold virtual Christmas Day Service

From the Interim Pastor

I begin this Annual Report reflecting on the part of 2022 for which Judi and I are most grateful: The Retirement Celebration on Sunday June 5. Every detail was so thoughtful and meaningful. The memory books; the playground naming “Judi’s Place, the Fellowship Hall naming “Livingston Hall,” the future Scholarship, the “Emeritus” title, the financial gift, the reception! Judi and I and entire family were overwhelmed with love and joyful admiration. We will never forget this remarkable day!!

From June to November we enjoyed renovating our home in Bridgeport. We spent days and weeks and months unpacking, painting, gardening, and getting to know and loving the Black Rock community. We also enjoyed time with our family. We had time for exploring the Fairfield and Bridgeport beaches and restaurants. Also, we have enjoyed long walks with our dog, Wylie, along the beautiful Saint Mary’s by the Sea. We joined the YMCA in Fairfield and I have especially benefitted from daily workouts as I continue to strengthen the left side of my body weakened from the stroke. I am feeling stronger and stronger as each week passes and this is the primary reason I felt so positive about the Call to return as your Interim Pastor. Since I accepted this Call to be the Interim Pastor I have felt God’s very strong guiding Presence in my life, really stronger than ever before and I have been so grateful for the gift of life!! I am committed to do whatever is needed to support the search for the new settled Pastor. Unlike any other Interim Pastor that could have been hired, I love this church with all my heart and want the future of The United Church of Rowayton to be led with positive spirit, engaging ministry, strong Pastoral leadership, and loving fun and joyful moments.

I encourage the members and friends of this unique and very special spiritual place to be grateful for the dedication of the people on the chosen Search Committee as they begin this tremendous journey. Be grateful for all the leadership and staff of the church who has worked so hard, since June, keeping the church moving forward. Be grateful!!

In our busy and stressful world, it can be easy to forget to slow down and acknowledge the bounties that many of us already possess, such as shelter, food, and the love of families and friends and a caring Family of Faith. In our efforts to achieve and progress, we may, at times, succumb to pessimism, and lose sight of these simpler and more essential gifts. Our Church, this Family of Faith is blessed with many abundant gifts and gifted people. Be grateful!!

Practicing grateful thinking helps us turn our attention away from negativity and towards what is working in our lives, and how far we have come on our journey. Here are some quotes to help us all focus on gratitude as we reflect upon the past year:

Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others. — Cicero

Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow. — Melody Beattie, author

Let gratitude be the pillow upon which you kneel to say your nightly prayer. — Maya Angelou

With much gratitude and love,

John

FROM THE LAY LEADER

2022 was my first year as Lay Leader/Moderator. What a year it was as we put COVID in the rear-view mirror and started worshiping and meeting in person again. Our congregation got right back in gear with a busy and historic year. All the boards, committees, staff and members who do so much work to keep the church running did not miss a beat. I attended a blur of meetings hoping and praying that things would run smoothly. Thank you to Gehr Brown for his past leadership and teaching me the ropes.

The retirement in June of Pastor John Livingston, who so lovingly led our congregation for 36 years, was a huge change. John took care of so many aspects of the daily functioning of the church that many of us took for granted or didn't even know happened. In appreciation, the Deacons worked for months preparing a wonderful celebration for John, Judi and the Livingston family. Some highlights include naming Fellowship Hall "Livingston Hall," naming the playground "Judi's Place" in honor of Judi's 30 years with the Nursery School, establishing John as Pastor Emeritus, establishing the John S. Livingston Scholarship Fund, reading a Mayoral Proclamation, creating a beautiful memory book, and hosting a wonderful celebration reception after John's last service. Fellowship Hall was packed and people came from far and wide to offer well wishes.

The Interim Pastor Search Committee worked very hard to bring an interim pastor. Pastor Daniel England helped us start transition process for 6 months. When he retired in December, John Livingston was ready to return as our new Interim Pastor and will now help the Settled Pastor Search Committee find a permanent pastor. Again, there will be a blur of meetings making sure all members of the congregation are vested in the process.

Other more mundane but necessary updates include the installation of a new boiler overseen by the Board of Household Concerns and Pat Begos. It was a complex installation process with 2 separate boilers; one for the sanctuary and one for the Meeting House. A vexing leak in the basement was finally resolved with Dileep Chandran and Mike Harden digging a big hole outside the sanctuary to find the cause of the leak. The air conditioning in the Meeting House might be next on the list of repairs.

Board of Christian Education under the direction of Val Harden and Emma Sykes continue to support our children with toddler care, church school, Anchors and confirmation.

We have a new director of music for the children's choir and youth handbell bell choir. Ellen Dickinson has been sharing her talents and growing the involvement of young people during worship.

The Board of Christian Outreach continues its support of many non-profit organizations in the Norwalk area. Laura O'Brien and her team held many successful drives and donation opportunities.

Communicating with the congregation is now all online with a weekly newsletter and announcements emailed to all members and friends. Work continues with decisions to be made regarding live-streaming or recording the services.

I would like to thank the staff for working through the transition process with Pastor Daniel. Kris Jenkins, Bill Peltz, Bill Sarr, Marsha Hall and Dileep Chandran did so much to keep our church running smoothly. They make it look so easy. We are so very fortunate to have such a dedicated group of people who care so much for the United Church of Rowayton.

As you read the annual report, think what talents and time you might have to offer the church and join a board or committee. I promise it will be a rewarding experience and help you grow in faith.

With gratitude and appreciation,

Tammy Langalis, Lay Leader/Moderator

BOARD OF HOUSEHOLD CONCERNS



The Board of Household Concerns is responsible for all aspects of the Church's finances including the setting of budgets, revenue and support, and expense monitoring; overseeing the Church's endowment and other invested funds; and maintaining the Church's physical property.

I would like to begin by thanking board members:

- Jim Clark (Completing 3rd year; Chair of Investment Subcommittee). Jim has ably managed our endowment through a tumultuous year.
- Bob Eydt, (Completing 2nd year; Co-Chair of BOHC). Bob has been an invaluable sounding board for all of our decisions.
- Penne Weicker (Completing 2nd year; Recording Secretary). Penne has made sure we know and remember what we deliberated and decided.
- Bill Sarr (Completing 2nd year; Business Manager and Treasurer). Bill keeps us on budget and well-informed about our financial status.
- Mike Harden (Completing 1st year). Mike has been willing to get his hands dirty (literally digging holes to find a leak).
- Chris Stiller (Completing 1st year). Chris has offered sound practical advice on our property issues.
- Brandon Snow (Completing 1st year). Brandon contributed to our financial acumen.

There are many others who were indispensable to our work this year:

- Tammy Langalis, our Moderator, has been a true leader and partner in helping us make wise planning and spending decisions.
- Bill Peltz, Clerk and Communications Director, kept our meetings running remotely before we were able to meet in person again.
- Carolyn and Dave Snyder, for running what I hope and expect will be a successful 2023 Stewardship Drive.
- Frank Mullaney, who has provided invaluable guidance and help in managing and upgrading our physical plant, particularly our new boilers.
- Kris Jenkins, without whom our Stewardship Message would have been unheard.
- Dileep Chandron, who keeps us well maintained and operational every day.

Last but not least, thanks to the Congregation for providing the oversight and financial commitment to keep our Church vibrant during a year that has been challenging both financially and pastorally.

Budget

The Church's revenue budget for 2022 was \$534,500. Actual revenue was \$461,811, including \$330,310 in pledge contributions versus a 2022 pledge goal of \$400,000. It was necessary for us to transfer \$60,000 from our endowment to our operating account (of the \$86,000 authorized in the budget). Though our budgets have authorized endowment transfers for a number of years, this is the first year that it was actually necessary to do so. There were two primary reasons why the transfer was required: pledges paid were significantly under pledges made; and we had significant one-time expenses related to John's retirement and the transition to an interim pastor.

An unbudgeted but welcome increase in revenue resulted from the rental of the Parsonage for the last half of the year.

Actual expenses for 2022 were \$555,149 and were higher than budgeted (\$534,500), primarily due to the one-time expenses noted above. Essentially every other expense line item was at or under budget.

Stewardship

Our 2023 Stewardship Drive began in November with a reduced goal of \$360,000 (down from \$400,000 in 2022). We very reluctantly approved this reduced goal after determining that our pledge shortfall in 2022 was largely due to pledging members moving away, passing away, or aging out of active involvement. In addition, a significant number of members had reduced their pledges from 2021 to 2022.

As a result, a significant Stewardship message this year is to encourage members who pledge to increase their pledge from 2022, if at all possible. We would very much like to exceed our \$360,000 goal. And if you have not pledged yet, please do!

Investments

The economy in 2022 was not kind to our Endowment, though our diversified investments weathered the tumult as well as could be expected. Our total investment balance declined from \$2,902,896 on 12/31/2021 to \$2,198,354 on 12/31/2022. This reflects primarily investment declines, and also the transfer to the operating budget.

Property, Plant and Equipment

The major project undertaken this year was the replacement of the boiler that provides heat to the Meeting House and the Sanctuary. A leak was discovered in late 2021, and a decision was made to replace after the repair option proved unfeasible. We now have 2 high-efficiency boilers and the replacement project was completed on time and under budget. A huge thanks to Frank Mullaney, Bill Sarr, Bob Eydt, Dileep Chandron and B&G Piping for making this happen.

We have also completed projects to “refresh” the Parsonage this summer, and address various maintenance issues, such as repairs to Sanctuary windows, and repairing pews, and water infiltration in the Sanctuary equipment room.

Capital projects budgeted for 2023 include: staining the exterior of the Sanctuary and replacing the air conditioning condenser for Livingston Hall.

Respectfully,

Patrick Begos
Board Chair



TREASURER'S REPORT as of December 31, 2022

<u>Bank Balances</u>	<u>December 31, 2020</u>	<u>December 31, 2021</u>	<u>December 31, 2022</u>
Fairfield County Checking	120,091	119,316	83,921
Fairfield County Money Market	89,657	89,693	19,614
Ameriprise Financial	40,253	31,069	11,259
Total	250,001	240,077	114,794
Benevolence Checking			
Deacon's Fund	9,800	10,625	3,571
Outreach	9,381	13,314	14,680
Sabbatical	10,426	10,394	-
Total	29,607	34,333	18,251
Capital Checking			
Capital	299	990	2,216
Emig Fund	1,200	1,200	6,803
Memorial Funds	3,835	4,260	5,428
Total	15,334	6,450	14,447
Flower Fund	7,203	9,405	11,984
Memorial Garden Checking	3,262	7,738	7,739
Schwab Memorial Garden	34,795	38,230	34,472
Total Bank Balances	340,201	336,234	201,687

2023 CAPITAL BUDGET

<u>Proposed Projects</u>	<u>2022 Budget</u>	<u>2023 Budget</u>
Boiler Replacement	175,000	-
Sanctuary Staining	35,000	35,000
Parsonage Refresh	25,000	-
Building Replacement Cost Analysis	8,500	-
Meeting House Air Conditioning	-	30,000
Unforeseen	25,000	10,000
Total Expenditures	\$ 268,500	\$ 75,000

UNITED CHURCH OF ROWAYTON 2023 PROPOSED BUDGET

UNITED CHURCH OF ROWAYTON PROPOSED 2023 OPERATING BUDGET

	2021 Actual	2022		2023		Comments
		Budget	Actual	Proposed November	Budget February	
REVENUE						
Pledges	420,055	400,000	345,310	360,000	260,000	2023 Pledges as of 1/25
Pledges Anticipated					60,000	
Church and Parsonage Rental	2,160	5,000	24,285	29,000	29,000	Parsonage rented through 7/23
Transfer from Endowment	-	86,900	60,000	94,000	97,000	Maximum of 5% of Unrestricted
Nursery School	29,513	30,600	30,857	32,600	32,600	Assumes Increase of 5% in 9/23
Plate/Unpledged Contributions	5,025	12,000	16,179	16,000	20,000	Increased to 2019 level
Fundraisers, Net	143	-	180	-	-	
TOTAL REVENUE	\$456,896	\$534,500	\$476,811	\$531,600	\$498,600	
EXPENSES						
Board of Christian Education						
Class Activities and Curriculum, Youth and Confirmation Programs, Special Events, Child Care, Adult Ed	3,500	7,000	5,323	7,000	5,000	Cut to slightly below 2022 actual
Board of Christian Outreach						
	45,900	45,900	45,900	38,200	23,800	Reduced to bring revenue and expenses in line
Board of Deacons						
Spiritual Development, Supplies, Music Program Development, and Special Programs	3,635	9,100	6,472	9,100	6,000	Cut to slightly below 2022 actual
Salary and Benefits						
Clergy and Staff including Communications Director, Director of Music, Children's Choir and Youth Handbell Director, Office Manager, Business Manager and Director of Christian Education	289,472	284,000	312,394	276,000	270,000	No staff salary increases
Administration						
Office Expenses, Communications (Video, Broadband, Telephone, Website), Payroll Taxes, Legal, Insurance, Stewardship and Social Committees	67,677	71,000	68,394	72,500	72,500	Increases in Insurance and Legal
Plant and Facilities						
Heating Oil, Electricity and other Utilities, and General Maintenance of House of Worship, Meeting House and Parsonage	103,314	110,000	111,566	121,300	121,300	Increase of 30% on heating oil, 15% on electricity, and 3% on other services
Capital Repairs						
	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	-	No transfer to Capital account budgeted
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$520,998	\$534,500	\$557,549	\$531,600	\$498,600	

BOARD OF DEACONS

The Board of Deacons experienced another busy and at times challenging year in 2022. In addition to its usual responsibilities of supporting the pastor with worship services and assisting with the general supervision of the church, the Board had to prepare for the planned retirement of Pastor John in June, oversee the task of securing an interim pastor, and finalize a search committee for a settled pastor.

In January, Frank Jenkins and Rob Ayala cycled off the Board of Deacons after completing four-year terms. Returning were Chris Sabol and George Albano, who served as co-chairs, Stephanie Close, Meggan Douglas, Sue Guarcello, Neville Peltz and Roger Wachnicki. In March, Lynne Pratt, George Albano (son) and Kurt Nelson were added to the Board, bringing the number of Deacons to 10. Because two Deacons needed to step down during 2021-22, we remained two short of the customary 12 committee members and planned to fill those spots in the near future.

The most pressing item on our 2022 agenda was the retirement of Pastor John Livingston, who announced in September 2021 that he will retire on May 1 after leading our congregation for 36 years. The Board of Deacons formed a search committee for an interim pastor to begin on May 8; however, when the search committee was unable to find an interim pastor, John offered to move his retirement date to June 5, and the Board of Deacons enthusiastically approved. John presented a layout of services and themes for the month of May to honor his ministry. A mailing was sent from the Board of Deacons to members of the congregation explaining the change in his retirement date.

The Board of Deacons organized a “Celebration Committee” tasked with honoring Pastor John’s legacy at the church. Five deacons were among the seven committee members, which had been meeting since February. The celebration began in May when we presented Judi, who delivered the message on Mother’s Day, with a framed photograph (taken by daughter Samantha) of the Five-Mile River, Judi’s favorite view looking out her kitchen window the last 36 years. Two weeks later, on May 22 when the message was “Broadway and Faith”, the Board presented John with a framed poster from the ‘Sound of Music’, his personal favorite, and to John and Judi a package that included Broadway tickets to the show of their choice, dinner at their favorite NYC restaurant and transportation expenses.

The celebration culminated on June 5 with a catered fellowship at the Meeting House following John’s final service. The Board of Deacons presented more gifts, including announcing the establishment of the John S. Livingston Scholarship to be presented annually to a graduating high school senior from our church; honoring Judi by naming the nursery school playground “Judi’s Place”; the naming of Livingston Hall in honor of John, Judi and their family; two memory books with heartfelt letters and drawings from members of our Family of Faith; an anthem commissioned by our Choir in honor of John and Judi; a proclamation from the City of Norwalk honoring and congratulating John; and a cash gift collected through contributions from members of the congregation. The celebration concluded with the United Church of Rowayton bestowing the title of “Pastor Emeritus” to John.

The Board of Deacons continued to be active in many other areas of the church in 2022, including two Deacons of the Month throughout the year whose responsibilities included securing ushers every Sunday and assisting with Communion on the first Sunday of the month.

The Deacons also assisted John during special services in April on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Also in April, John shared a short list of members we had not seen in church recently and asked the Deacons to reach out and check on their wellbeing and needs. In May, the Board was again responsible for handing out flowers to all the Moms in church for Mother's Day.

In June, the Deacons welcomed Rev. Daniel England as our interim pastor and met with him prior to his first service on June 19 to see how we could assist him moving forward. The Board of Deacons also assisted with 'High School Senior Recognition Sunday' and presented the Jonathan Peter Wildman Scholarship to three recipients. In July, as summer services moved to Pinkney Park, the Board was responsible for transporting and setting up the sound equipment from the church to the park.

The Board invited Rev. Michael Ciba, Regional Minister of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ, to our Sept. 1 meeting to explain the process for choosing a new settled pastor to lead our congregation and Rev. Ciba joined us by Zoom. We also invited Director of Music Marsha Hall, new Children's Choir Director Ellen Dickinson, and Director of Christian Education Val Harden to the meeting to ask how we can better support them. All three attended the meeting.

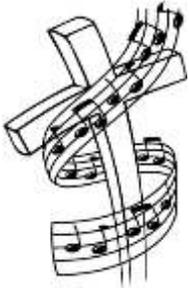
At our October meeting, the Board finalized a seven-member settled pastor search committee, which was introduced to the congregation and receive a blessing from Rev. England during the Nov. 20 service. It was also at our October meeting that Rev. England informed the Board of Deacons he had submitted his resignation and would be stepping down following the Christmas Eve services. The Board of Deacons immediately put into motion the formation of a search committee to find a new interim pastor. Early in the process, however, Pastor Emeritus John Livingston, who was interested in becoming an interim pastor himself at a church close to his Bridgeport home, learned of our vacancy and offered to return on an interim basis and help guide our settled pastor search committee. Both the Interim Search committee and the Personnel Committee approved and John would return to the pulpit on Dec. 11. Rev. England moved his final service to Dec. 4 and the Board of Deacons hosted fellowship in his honor to say thank-you for his service the past six months.

As we moved into the Christmas season, the Board of Deacons arranged to have four families from the congregation light our Advent Candles on four consecutive Sundays, beginning Nov. 27 through Dec. 18. Our final Board of Deacons meeting of 2022 took place at the Livingston home in Bridgeport as John and Judi put on a wonderful dinner for us. The year ended with "Interim" Pastor John leading both the Family Service and Candlelight Service on Christmas Eve, and the Board of Deacons recording a short virtual service for Christmas and New Year's Day for our website.

Respectfully submitted,

George Albano, co-chair

MUSIC DEPARTMENT



2022 has been quite a transition year for the music department. With the help of faithful, music loving friends, the Adult Choir and the Adult Handbell group have been ringing and singing throughout last Spring, Fall and through the holidays. Even through the transition to an interim minister and the still looming COVID, they have been a true mainstay to our Sunday worship.

Ellen Dickinson joined our staff in September. Ellen's resume is impressive to say the least and we are so fortunate to have her and her family join us. She got busy in the Fall and encouraged not only the children to sing but also their parents. The Family Choir has performed throughout the Fall and created an exciting new beginning. The Youth Handbells have been rehearsing and performing. Christmas was exciting with the group singing and ringing.

With the search for a settled pastor, we hope to continue to grow and flourish as a music program that invites music lovers of all ages who love to praise the Lord through their love of music.

Respectfully submitted,
Marsha Hall
Director of Music



ALTAR COMMITTEE

The Altar Committee continues to provide floral arrangements for the altar, bringing the joy and color of flowers into the sanctuary, and enhancing the videos of the services for those who are still cautious about attending services in the sanctuary. The regular weekly arrangements are a joyful opportunity not only for our committee members to express their interests and talents with the lilies of the field, but also for members of the congregation and more distant friends to make donations for memorials for loved ones or to celebrate happy events.

We feel it is important that passing traffic see that the Church is actively celebrating the seasons. For Easter we again decorated the outside Cross with spring flowers. In time for our Harvest celebration we did both inside and outside. For Advent and Christmas there were wreaths on all the doors to the Sanctuary and Meeting House, plus the large wreath behind the pulpit, and the beautiful Advent wreath with candles which in recent years has been Kathy Draper's particular effort. We had the usual red and white poinsettias in the planters, plus around the altar there were white poinsettias, red cyclamen, plus red amaryllis. Lynne Pratt did extra leg work getting us sufficient lengths of roping for the traditional roping and bows. We are very grateful for the extra labor Dileep cheerfully takes on, cleaning up the needles after our decorating.

The Altar Committee also usually provides the carnations for Mother's Day. We take care of the green plants in the planter, a job which Stephanie Close has taken on for the last several years.

Our funding comes entirely from donations to our separate account. We do not receive any funding from the annual church budget.

The committee members are: Stephanie Close, Barbara Currie, Kate Davies, Kathy Draper, Lynne Pratt, Caroline Robinson, Kathy Siever, June Strubinger and Bev Viele.

Respectfully submitted,
Kate Davies
Altar Committee Chairperson

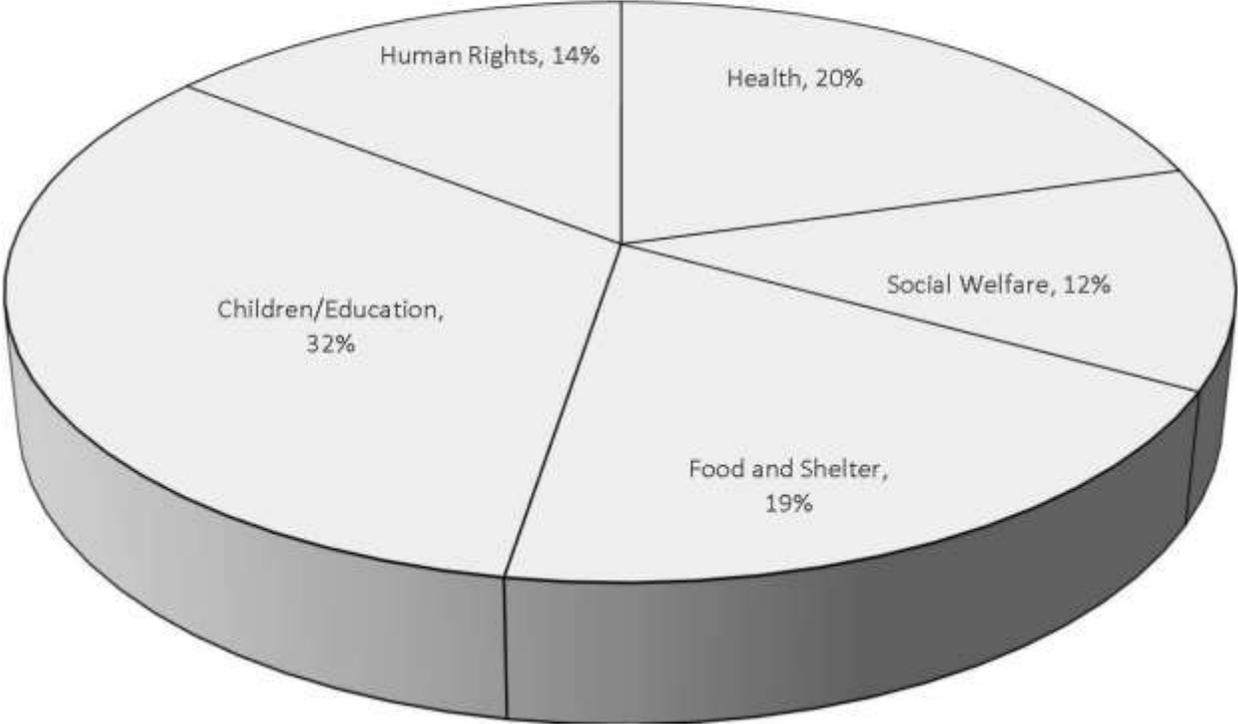
BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH

BOCO BENEVOLENCE 2022			
HEALTH		SOCIAL WELFARE	
(medical services and treatment, patient and family support, medical rehabilitation)		(aimed at alleviating distress and poverty and/or ameliorating the conditions of casualties of society; includes housing, income maintenance, and personal welfare)	
Americares	\$ 500.00	Elderhouse	\$ 2,000.00
Appleby	\$ 3,000.00	Person To Person	\$ 2,000.00
Keystone House	\$ 1,500.00	Malta House	\$ 500.00
STAR	\$ 2,000.00	Norwalk Senior Center	\$ 1,000.00
Visiting Nurse and Hospice	\$ 2,000.00		
TOTAL	\$ 9,000.00	TOTAL	\$ 5,500.00
PERCENT OF ALLOCATIONS	20%	PERCENT OF ALLOCATIONS	12%
FOOD AND SHELTER		CHILDREN/EDUCATION	
Food Rescue Us	\$ 1,000.00	Child Guidance Center	\$ 2,900.00
Hilltop Homes	\$ -	Family and Children's Agency	\$ 5,000.00
Meals on Wheels	\$ 2,000.00	Carver Foundation	\$ 2,500.00
Open Door Shelter	\$ 4,000.00	Norwalk Grassroots Tennis	\$ 1,900.00
Thanksgiving certificates	\$ 1,500.00	Silver Lake	\$ 900.00
		Junior Art and Music	\$ 1,600.00
TOTAL	\$ 8,500.00	TOTAL	\$ 14,800.00
PERCENT OF ALLOCATIONS	19%	PERCENT OF ALLOCATIONS	32%
OTHER		HUMAN RIGHTS	
	\$ -	Domestic Violence	\$ 2,500.00
Operation Gratitude (not funded in 2022)	\$ -	Family ReEntry	\$ 3,500.00
	\$ -	Triangle Community Center	\$ 500.00
TOTAL	\$ -	TOTAL	\$ 6,500.00
PERCENT OF ALLOCATIONS	0%	PERCENT OF ALLOCATIONS	14%
Total Allocated 2022	\$ 44,300.00	Budget	\$ 45,900.00
Percent of allocations	97%	Total Allocated in 2022	<u>\$ (44,300.00)</u>
		Under/Over	\$ 1,600.00

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH

Health	Social Welfare	Food and Shelter	Children/Education	Human Rights
20%	12%	19%	32%	14%

Areas of BOCO Benevolence - 2022



BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH

<p style="text-align: center;">MISSION & PURPOSE</p> <p>The mission of the Board of Christian Outreach is to improve the lives of those in need in the greater Norwalk area with love and compassion. It accomplishes this primarily by benevolently disbursing funds to agencies and individuals, offering mission and service programs, holding drives and collections, and providing educational opportunities and information for our Family of Faith. It can extend its impact worldwide by participating in programs approved by this Board.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">BENEVOLENCE - ALLOCATIONS</p> <p>BOCO allocated \$45,900 to 24 agencies, the majority of which were Norwalk-based. In addition, material evaluated at approximately \$8,500.00 was donated to drives.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Children/Education:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">32%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Food, Material & Shelter:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Health:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Human Rights</td> <td style="text-align: right;">14%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Social Welfare</td> <td style="text-align: right;">12%</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding-left: 20px;">Other:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0%</td> </tr> </table>	Children/Education:	32%	Food, Material & Shelter:	19%	Health:	20%	Human Rights	14%	Social Welfare	12%	Other:	0%
Children/Education:	32%												
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<p style="text-align: center;">EDUCATION</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0; background-color: #e6f2ff;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;"><i>Updated Volunteers Opportunities</i></p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0; background-color: #e6f2ff;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Due to the ongoing pandemic concerns there was no Volunteer Fair. It will be looked at again with the new 2023-24 Board.</p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center;">EMIG FUND</p> <p>The Emig Fund was new in 2019. It is a special fund to be used to allocate grants of up to \$10,000 each year to local agencies and individuals in support of special projects that fall within BOCO's mission and purpose. This fund is independent from BOCO's annual budget.</p> <p>Due to the pandemic in 2020, BOCO was unable to meet based on the procedures created for the administration of the Emig Fund Grant program. When we opened up in the fall we met and decided to allocate \$20,000 the 2021. This year, we went back to \$10,000 and we will announce the recipients in February.</p>												
<p style="text-align: center;">OUTREACH</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0; background-color: #fff9c4;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">The Open Door Shelter has been undergoing kitchen construction. They will let us know when we can resume volunteering.</p> </div>	<p>We, the 2022 Board of Christian Outreach, thank you for supporting our activities this year.</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">Board: Ginny Pitman, Carolyn Snyder, Wendy Blattman, Melanie Lynch and Yvette Eenkema van Dijk.</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">Laura O'Brien (Chair)</p>												
<p style="text-align: center;">DRIVES & COLLECTIONS</p> <p>We held five drives/collections this year. The total donation value on these activities was approximately \$11,500.</p>													

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

“Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.” Proverbs 22:6

The first half of 2022 was fairly low key. Vaccinations for children were just becoming available so attendance had yet to rebound. We continued sharing God’s word with the children who attended with masks, social distancing, and their own craft kits. Calls to the families to check-in and stay connected were appreciated.

Here are some highlights of the year:

February 13th - Fourth graders attended their Communion Class in preparation for celebrating their first Communion.

March 2nd - Ash Wednesday was well attended by the Anchors and the Confirmation classes.

March 6th - Our first communion class enjoyed their special day with their families despite social distancing...and being “on camera” for the virtual service. They were so happy to continue on their faith journey, accomplishing this important milestone without missing a beat...and being able to share it virtually with their extended family and Church family that could not attend in-person.

March 20th - Child care resumed for Sunday Services as COVID precautions relaxed.

March 27th - Congratulations and Blessings to the Confirmation class of 2022, celebrating their Confirmation with Pastor John.

April 17th - Easter was phenomenal. We had 3 classrooms going with crafts for the little ones. Thank you to the small army of teens and adults who assisted. Your service was greatly appreciated! All the Easter eggs were collected at our annual Easter Egg Hunt by a crowd of over 20 children and their families. Even though we are recycling the plastic eggs, we’re going to have to invest in a few more this year as we can already see attendance is growing again!

September 10th - Rally Day was a great kick-off to the academic year 2022-2023. Thanks to the Board of Christian Education members for all their help in making it a success. While the wrapped ice cream treats were delicious, is anyone looking forward to building your own Sundae next year. I know I am!!

November 30th - First and Second year confirmation students shared a fun holiday tradition, working together in teams to shop for toys for the children and their families who are assisted through Person to Person. They spent their funds perfectly within the budget-a small Christmas Miracle!

December 4th - Annual Christmas Tree Lighting. Interim Pastor Daniel England lead the families gathered around the tree in prayer and blessings for the season...and supervised the lighting countdown. We ignited our Christmas spirit singing carols and cheered as the tree lit up. Then we gathered around the table to enjoy a scrumptious pasta and salad dinner, with candy cane treats for all from you know who....SANTA!!! What a wonderful way to bring families together as we prepare for celebrating the birth of Jesus and renewed life.

December 7th - Anchors enjoyed their annual Nativity themed Ornament Swap/Holiday Party

December 18th - Living Nativity - The production directed by Sky Livingston was flawless and stellar. For the first time the Anchors joined the confirmation classes as shepherds in this joyful Advent Season production. Can't say enough about our awesome students.

It has been such a joy to get back to normal, ...better than normal with children back in person, without mandatory masking and social distancing.

The students are responding well to the transition; motivated to participate in classes, read at services, team up for UCR's charitable endeavors, and enjoy singing and ringing bells. Ellen Dickinson has brought music opportunity back to the children and Marsha welcomes the teen youth to sing in the adult choir. The kids are loving it!!

Class participation:

Sunday Service Child Care - attendance ranges from 1 - 10. Lead by Emily Zerega.

Sunday School - attendance ranges from 2-13. We will be outgrowing the single combined age class soon. Lead by Val Harden. BOCE members and parent lesson leaders are volunteering as well. I am grateful for their support.

Anchors - 7 regularly attend. Two of the 8th graders moved to the 2024 confirmation class. Lead by Val Harden, Brian Anderson and Meg Douglas, and intern Brielle Renwick

Confirmation Class of 2024 - 12 registered, including 2 recent additions this month! Lead by Val Harden. Pastor John will continue to provide curriculum guidance.

Confirmation Class of 2023 - 7 registered, with one attending remotely! Lead by Val Harden. Supported by Pastor John. Will be confirmed by Pastor John.

Administrative updates: During the interim pastor and settled pastor search time there has been increased responsibility for the CE Director including leading Confirmation classes, adding Sunday Services Children's Moments, and involving students in services while continuing Sunday School and Anchors responsibilities. Volunteer training is on the radar to continue.

The congregation's involvement in the Christian Education program is vital. We, the BOCE, appreciate your continued support and effort through this challenging year! You are

instrumental in strengthening the faith experience within this Church family for now and the future.

Sincere and heartfelt thanks also go to former Interim Pastor Daniel England, Pastor John (Emeritus and Interim) and Judi, the Deacons, and the Council for their guidance, support, and faith in me and the BOCE to continue efforts on behalf our students.

Kris, Bill Peltz, Bill Sarr, Dileep, Marsha, Ellen and all the volunteers - Your work is invaluable!

With gratitude,

Val Harden, Christian Education Director

Emma Sykes, BOCE Chair

BOCE Members: Brian Anderson, Sarah Sykes, Leslie Borum, Jennifer Nelson

Anchors volunteer leaders: Meg Douglas and Brielle Renwick



COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE 2022

Communications is evolving. As we started to recover from the pandemic and began offering in-house services, we transitioned from pre-recording worship services to recording live, in-house services. We stopped offering all recordings on July 30 because that work conflicted with our other responsibilities. Public relations and press releases fall under the aegis of Communications. We were pleased by the press coverage of Pastor John Livingston's retirement, including an article in the Rowayton Civic Association's *Currents* and a front-page article in *The Hour*. Major church events are now reported in the Sixth Taxing District newsletter. Because we publish weekly emails, a bimonthly newsletter had become redundant, and so we stopped publishing it in October. Responsibility for the hallway members' art exhibit transitioned from Sandy Aldrich to Alyssa Sarr. We thank you, Sandy, for creating and shepherding this display; what other church displays its members' creative side and does so with such great pleasure? The Welcome tables have been stocked with infographics and other materials for visitors. A digital church calendar was created and shared with all departments. What can you do? Every time you see one of our posts, hit the Like button. That allows more people to see them, too.

Bill Peltz
Communications Director

LAY DELEGATE TO THE SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST AND TO THE FAIRFIELD WEST ASSOCIATION 2022

The Delegate attends Conference and Association meetings, as well as Ecclesiastical Councils, and is empowered to vote on matters that come before those bodies. But I've always thought the most important responsibility of a delegate is to bring relevant information back to the church.

The Fairfield West Association and the Southern New England Conference have been instrumental in advising our interim pastor and settled pastor search committees. Michael Ciba, who for 16 years has been our Team Leader and Southwest Area Conference Minister, played a pivotal role in this area. He retired on December 31. His successor will be Rev. Margret Hofmeister. Because she starts on March 1, Rev. Samantha Houser will provide bridge coverage.

Bill Peltz

♥ CAREGIVING MINISTRY ♥

Dedicated to listening and keeping in touch

MISSION STATEMENT

The Caregiving Ministry of The United Church of Rowayton is dedicated to utilizing its spiritual gifts in a shared ministry that provides for the well-being of God’s people. Caregivers are caring Christian friends who listen, understand, accept, and pray for and with care receivers who are experiencing the joys and sorrows of life.

**

This year we were happy to welcome Carol Soennichsen to the Ministry team – joining Diane Albano, Joanne Brown, Stephanie Close, Ann Dileone, Debbie Douglas, Lynne Pratt, Caroline Robinson, Marcia Smith, Donna Wachnicki and Roger Wachnicki. We are so thankful for their dedication to the Church Family.

The Caregiving Ministry, which was created in 2003 to support the Pastor in serving the Congregation continues to deliver caregiving to those in need. Upon receiving an assignment, caregiving ministers make calls and visits to those in the congregation who have a need – a need, perhaps, as short-term as phone calls and a hospital visit following surgery or as long-term as being a companion to one with a chronic, debilitating illness or bereavement. There are also those in our congregation experiencing the joys of life – special birthdays, anniversaries or births that we like to celebrate with them.

All of our work is strictly confidential.

Respectfully submitted,
Joanne Brown
Lynne Pratt
Co-chairpersons

Caregiving Ministry



MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

The Memorial Committee has received gifts for the year of 2022 in memory of the following:

Joy Hetherington
Peg O'Sullivan
Patty Genuario
Martha Cook
Betsy English

MEMORIAL GARDEN COMMITTEE

The Memorial Garden, is for past and present members of The United Church of Rowayton, and their immediate families: spouse, partner, siblings, children and parents. Applications for a reservation are available in the church office and online. While the answers to many frequently asked questions are available on the Church website, any member of the Memorial Garden Committee will be happy to answer any questions that may arise.

In 2022 there were no new reservation and three interments. The Memorial Garden now has 269 members, with 148 interments. With the current Garden configuration, there are 15 available spaces as of the end of 2022.

All of the Memorial Garden funds have come from reservations of Church members and contributions specifically designated for the Garden. During the year the Memorial Garden transitioned the financial responsibility for maintenance and upkeep of the garden to the Church, while retaining oversight of the standards and style.

The Memorial Garden Committee thanks our Church Family for their continued support for this beautiful project.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Ackerly, Treasurer



NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Nominating Committee is responsible for enlisting the volunteer support of church members to serve on the various Boards and Committees that guide the operations of the United Church of Rowayton.

The Committee also prepares an annual Proposed Slate of candidates for presentation and approval at the church Annual Meeting held each February. The members of the Committee wish to thank all those who currently serve and those who have agreed to serve new and extended terms.

The Committee welcomes all members of the congregation who wish to participate in service to our Church and Community. If you are interested and would like to serve or recommend someone for service, please contact one of the members listed below.

Currently serving on the Nominating Committee: Meggan Douglas and Julie Begos

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Douglas
203-803-9634

Julie Begos
203-858-0547

UCNS AT A GLANCE

Our Mission

The preschool program at United Church Nursery School guides children on their early childhood educational journey. Through active exploration alongside interaction with adults, peers and materials that are developmentally appropriate, our goal is the social, physical, intellectual, creative and emotional growth of every child in our care.

Enrollment and Staffing

We are currently at our maximum daily capacity (50 students in building at one time) and have 66 students enrolled for the 2022-2023 school year: 13 in our Pre-K Fives; 19 in our Pre-K Fours; 18 in our Threes; 16 in our Twos.

We employ 13 staff and all are part-time. UCNS employs Gina Ely as Director and Sue Lue as Finance Manager/Pre-K Fives Head Teacher, with three (3) additional Head Teachers for a total of four (4) with this distinction (the State of Connecticut's Office of Early Childhood requires that one Head Teacher must be on site at all times).

Licensing

UCNS is fully licensed by the State of Connecticut's Office of Early Childhood. In October 2022, we recently passed our annual state inspection and our license has been renewed until December 1, 2026.

In addition to the annual licensing inspection, we are required to have yearly inspections completed by the City of Norwalk Health Department, the local Fire Marshall, and SNEW performs a lead water test.

Parent Board

UCNS has a four-person Parent Executive Board that oversees all nursery school operations, with a focus on fundraising and building our school community. The UCNS Director reports directly to the UCNS Executive Board.

We are hoping to form an Advisory Board by September 2024, which will consist of past UCNS parents, faculty and community members.

UCNS BUDGET 2022-2023

Projected Net Income

Tuition	\$ 472,349
Lunch & Extended Day, Camp	\$ 17,260
Fundraisers	\$ 11,275
Grants, other income	\$ 19
	\$ 500,902

Projected Expenses Compensation

Payroll taxes	\$ 366,367
Rent (not including camp month)	\$ 28,971
Classroom Expenses	\$ 25,600
Office	\$ 18,935
Property Maintenance, Playground	\$ 35,029
Legal, Consultants, Professional Dev	\$ 9,500
Family, Community Expenses	\$ 5,500
Insurance	\$ 11,000
	\$500,902