

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST · BOULDER

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## Moderator

What interesting times we live in! My tenure as Moderator in March 2021 began with the joy of a baby shower for Kajsa, celebrated on her sunny deck and in a Zoom coffee hour, followed just a few weeks later by the horrific shooting in King Soopers. Much of the year was like that—moments of uplift and grace interspersed with the continuing challenges of navigating Christian community life during a pandemic. Over and over, the members of First Congregational Church showed their resilience and compassion, and their thoughtful reflection and hope.

Our “bias toward action” resulted in a new ministry to address gun violence, the adoption of a new covenant on Climate Justice, the adoption of a resolution supporting peace in Palestine, and expansion of efforts to address racial justice issues. Over and over again, members of our community advocated for more mission work—not just writing checks, but finding ways to partner with other agencies, to support work in Haiti, to help in the resettlement of Afghan refugees, to serve those experiencing homelessness, to open our eyes to the issues in our own community, and to “do” things.

We continued to find new ways to worship and to connect—in person and on-line, in small groups, indoors and outside, and, joyously, at an all-church picnic where we recognized each other even with masks!

We made improvements to our internal organization with the hiring of Julie Griffiths as Office and Facilities Manager and with the retention of the financial consulting firm NFP to support our financial operations with expertise and transparency. We said good-bye to Rev. Pedro Silva, our Associate Minister, wishing him Godspeed as he explores new paths to his future.

With a series of Visioning Conversations, we reflected on what we have learned in the past two years—how we have struggled, and grown, and been grateful for what we are and have. Then we began looking ahead to what we want for the future of this faith community. We want more mission work, an expanded youth program, and new ways to connect and care for each other. We want to look at new ways to worship, and communicate, and organize our efforts. The Visioning/Strategic Planning project that is now underway will provide a roadmap for the next three to five years as we lean into the lessons we have all learned about what is important.

This roller coaster year of joy and sorrow included the welcome of new members and guests from all over, new babies, and the painful impacts of the Marshall Fire on our community. The interminable pandemic has made some of us impatient and cranky, and brought others grace and gratitude. Through all of this, the staff of this church has found ways for us to walk together. They have continued to pivot, and explore, and create, and work non-stop to support the life and growth of this community. Our Covid team has guided us through the continually changing circumstances to keep us safe, but still connected. Our boards, committees and ministries have found ways to continue their work and take on new challenges. I am so grateful for them, and for this entire community of friends in faith, and the opportunity to serve as your moderator.

Karen Cumbo

## Senior Minister

Christina Braudaway-Bauman

In March 2020, when the infectious spread of COVID-19 caused us to close our doors to in-person activity and move our church life online, no one imagined that two years later we would still be recovering from a global pandemic. At this writing more than 900,000 people in the United States have died from this virus. A confluence of critical issues – COVID-19 and its variants, a renewed reckoning with racial injustice, the faltering of our treasured democracy, a mass shooting at a local grocery store that killed ten Boulder neighbors, and a massive fire that turned 1,084 homes in our community to rubble and ash – has required our church to respond and adapt in ways we never could have predicted or prepared for. Our life together as a congregation has been dramatically impacted. While we know that some of our new habits and practices will be lasting, we also sense we've been affected in ways we have yet to fully comprehend.

Some changes are obvious. We installed cameras and computers in the sanctuary, upgraded our copyright licenses, and trained audio-visual technicians, so that we can now livestream and record every worship service. We continued to conduct church meetings and small groups on Zoom, and have taken first steps in learning how to adapt technology for hybrid meetings so that we can join in-person and online participants in conversation. In all of our activities going forward, we expect we will be attending to those who are able to be present in the room and those who are joining us at a distance.

We are expanding the reach of our ministry in other ways as well. A Racial Justice Ministry is now meeting monthly, planning learning activities for the congregation and finding ways to partner with Boulder County's very active chapter of the NAACP. A Gun Violence Prevention Team was formed to work on education and advocacy and our church became a member of Colorado Faith Communities United. Our Climate Action Team led us through a process to become a Creation Justice church of the United Church of Christ.

We are grateful for all the creativity, perseverance, and generosity that enabled the Chancel and Youth Choirs to keep singing, the Bells to keep playing, and the children and youth to continue gathering, including for summer ARTS Camps. Remarkably, in spite of COVID, Calvin Hardy is leading an expanding youth program, meeting safely with middle and high school youth sometimes as many as five times per week. Julie Griffiths joined us in February as Office and Facilities Manager and hit the ground running with her organizational competence and wonderfully good cheer. I am grateful to the whole church staff for their flexibility and dedication during this usual season of church life. Thank you to the Moderators, Karen Cumbo, Charley Rastle, who is also now our Treasurer, and Chris Shearer Cooper for their leadership and for the countless hours they spent supporting the whole congregation and helping to make thousands of decisions.

Having experienced so much in this long and unusual season, we embarked on a visioning process over the summer, inviting folks to come together in small groups, looking backwards at what we learned, and imagining forwards to discern our callings as we emerge. These conversations led to our hiring a consultant, John Wimberly, to assist us in turning our priorities into plans for the next three to five years. We are in the midst of that strategic planning process now.

Near the end of 2021, our Associate Minister, Rev. Pedro Silva, discerned that he was being called to serve elsewhere. In early January, 2022, we thanked Pedro for his six and half years of ministry with us, bade our farewells, and blessed him and his family on their way. A search committee formed by the Church Council and charged to find a long-term interim Associate Minister selected Linda Kowatch, who had just finished her seminary internship with us, as its unanimous choice, a selection affirmed by the Council, who formalized Linda's start at the beginning of February.

As I write this report, I am also preparing for a summer sabbatical, making plans for pulpit and program coverage, so that Linda can spend most of her time attending to pastoral needs while I am away. While I'm in the midst of renewal activities, I am hoping the congregation will take the opportunity for some new experiences and to hear some new voices. Among other things, my plans include two retreats with nine other clergy, intentional time to reflect on how we and our ministries have been changed by the last two years. I am grateful to the Louisville Institute in Kentucky for the gift of a Pastoral Study Project grant that makes this exploration possible. I look forward to returning to you in August with fresh energy and insight as we get ready to implement strategies from our visioning and planning process.

For all that has been and for all that is yet to be in the life of our remarkable congregation, I give thanks. For all the ways God's Spirit lives and moves among us, for each one of you and the life of faith we are blessed to share as First Congregational UCC, Boulder, I am profoundly grateful.

As I write this report, I look forward with eager longing to the day when we can all be together again face to face. That day is coming. But I know that God is here now. Even during this time when we have been apart, God is here with us now.

With Gratitude, Grace, and Peace,

Christina Braudaway-Bauman

## Director of Christian Education

Covid continued(s) and with it, Zoom programming for our children and youth. With warmer weather in spring, summer and fall, small, socially distanced gatherings for children, youth and families were a welcome respite from computer screens.

- ARTS Camp was once again hosted at David & Laura Skaggs farm. With the advent of vaccinations for 12 years and older, we had a residential camp for middle schoolers with girls sleeping in the loft of the barn and boys in individual tents under the trees. Our theme was "Parables." Counselors were Julia Wirth, Sam Bauman, Er-Hsuan Li, Boheng Wang, Noah and Siena Mollerstuen. Elementary Day camp followed Middle school with Susan Wilkinson as Director and the same counselors. It included music, arts & crafts, science, and stories. Altogether we had 10 middle schoolers and 13 elementary children.
- In September we transitioned back to in-person, outdoor Sunday School. Calvin led the Middle School and Youth, I led Elementary, and Ginger Johnson led Preschool & Kindergarten.
- We were able to present our Bibles in person in the sanctuary and record it for our online worship to our 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> graders and our Kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> graders (as we did not present Bibles in 2020).
- We had our annual (except for 2020) All-Church camping trip up at a mountain property owned by my extended family.
- We hosted our first fall Feast Pray Love Fundraising Dinner outside on the Plaza.
- We recorded the Children's portion of our Christmas Pageant at Carol Hindes' property, with our vaccinated youth participating in person on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent.
- We once again gathered to participate in the Boulder Lights of December Parade with a small post-parade gathering on the plaza.
- We tried some new things: A parent happy hour every other week via zoom; a pancake dinner on Shrove Tuesday; a Halloween party on the plaza for families; a Women's Spirituality Group craft project; a pinecone angel craft project for the Advent Spiral; and a Christmas postcard invitation to all our college students for a New Year's Eve party (which was cancelled due to the Marshall fires).
- I also worked on prayer stations for Lent; led worship for Confirmation Sunday, ARTS Camp Sunday, and Christian Education Sunday and collaborated on several

events and activities throughout the year with Chris Braudaway-Bauman and other members of the staff.

- I had regular supervisory meetings with Calvin Hardy and Ginger Johnson. Ginger continued to deliver craft materials and special Valentines bags to her preschoolers and kindergarteners.
- I was and continue to be a member the Safety teams for both Covid protocols and for general church safety measures.

Overall, it was a year in which I stretched, flexed, explored options, and created new visions for our children and youth. And like so many, living and working within the uncertainty takes a toll emotionally. Helping myself, our kids, our families, and colleagues weather the “covid fatigue” has been side by side with the work this year.

Deborah Voss, Director of Christian Education



## Youth Director

- In January of 2021 we were offering exclusively online activities. We offered two zoom groups per week. One of the groups played the online game Among Us, which was very popular. The second weekly gathering was either a movie night or something different like trivia, board games, or video games. Our attendance was steady during this month with 5-10 kids joining our zoom groups on average, although attendance at zoom groups slowly dwindled as the school year went on (which was not unexpected).
- Starting in February we began offering outdoor gatherings every other week. These gatherings lasted from February through August and our attendance grew in that time from about 3-4 students per gathering to 7-8 students per gathering.
- From February to June, I supplemented these outdoor gatherings with 1 zoom group per week. We alternated between playing Among Us, having movie nights, and doing trivia.
- In June I attended Arts Camp with the middle school students at the Skaggs' farm. This was the perfect opportunity to meet and spend time with many of the middle school students that I had not been able to get to know beforehand.
- I also planned and led a service-based day camp for the high school students in June. We had eight students working with OSMP to reroute a trail each morning for a week. In the afternoons we had fun swimming, camping, and watching movies. The students had a great time, and I loved getting to know more of the high school students as I had not been able to get to know many of them as well as the middle school students.
- From June through September, I led a variety of different small groups, each meeting 1-2 times per month. Each group was designed to focus on a particular type of activity so that students could engage with whatever groups best fit them and get to know other students who shared their interests. The different types of groups included dog walking, hiking, outdoor games, Minecraft, art, cooking, and movies. The groups all had at least 3 students and a couple had as many as 11 students.
- Starting at the end of September we introduced weekly in-person youth gatherings for both the middle and high school groups. Both groups have continued up until the present. The middle school group has grown from 5-6 students per week to 8-9 students per week in the last four months. The high school group has likewise grown from between 2-5 students per week to 4-8 students per week.
- In October we hosted Feast Pray Love where we raised \$7500 for the youth going on this summer's mission trip.
- We have offered 4 outreach events since October. The first saw a total attendance of about 45 people from three youth groups at a private watch party, although our youth group accounted for about 28 of that number (23 students, 5

leaders). In November we went bowling and played laser tag and between our students and their friends we had 27 teenagers in attendance. In December we went ice skating with students from Community UCC. We had 10 students from our group and about 5 from the other group. Finally, in January we had our second watch party at the movie theatre where 23 students were in attendance. This group included roughly 15 students from our youth group, and 8 students who were friends invited by our students.

Calvin Hardy, Youth Director

## Director of Music

The year 2021 began in the same fashion as 2020 – remotely, and no in-person events. Choirs and ensembles continued to meet on zoom and record themselves individually. Kajsa would record hymns and special music from the sanctuary, and the videos would then be inserted in the online services.

In March, Kajsa's son August was born, and Kajsa went on parental leave. Jessica Kressin substituted for the services and coordinated the Chancel Choir recordings. Amy and Steve Volda took over the Bell Choir zoom meetings, and Julia Wirth and Er-Hsuan Li continued to work with the Children's Choirs.

Easter was celebrated online and outdoors in our church parking lot. Kajsa had recorded the music for Holy Week and Easter before she went on leave and had arranged for brass musicians to play for the outdoor services. For the recorded service we hired one trumpeter but decided that it would be safe enough to have a quintet for the outdoor services. We also hired paid singers to help with the hymn support.

Kajsa returned from her parental leave at the beginning of July, and by then we were inviting people back in person for the Sunday morning services. Plexiglass screens were put up, and eventually air purifiers were bought and placed in the sanctuary. We also offered outdoor services during the summer months, with extra music offered by musicians every week.

By the end of summer, the Chancel Choir started meeting in person, outdoors on the plaza. It was quite a production setting up sun umbrellas, the sound system to allow the singers to hear me over the Broadway traffic, and microphones and computers for the people participating via zoom. A huge thank you to Phil Braudaway Bauman who, week after week, helped with the technology setup and breaking down. By September it was clear that we would not be able to continue outdoor rehearsals for much longer, as it was getting dark so early, and the COVID safety team decided the Chancel Choir could rehearse indoors. Kajsa created a rehearsal safety plan, which required all members to wear singing masks (which were bought from Julieta Garcia's former voice teacher in Texas), safe distancing, air purifiers, and moving between the sanctuary and Plymouth Hall. We were also able to start recording the choir as an ensemble instead of doing only at-home recordings from home. The option of recording from home continued for people that could not participate in person. The at home recordings were then added to the sanctuary video with audio only. Normally the Chancel choir offers a large music production for Music Sunday in December every year. The plan was to record "Requiem for the Living" by Dan Forrest, as it would have been very appropriate for the time we are living in, but it became clear that the music was too challenging to learn individually. Instead, the chosen theme was "Christmas Around the World," which included Christmas songs from several different countries (Germany, Sweden, South Korea, Russia, Spain, and

Cameroon), some in the native language. Choir music for Christmas Eve was pre-recorded.

The Congregational Ringers also started meeting in person by the end of the summer. Every Tuesday afternoon, Kajsa set up tables, pads, and music stands on the plaza, and we rang together, masked, competing with the Broadway traffic noise. Eventually we moved indoors, too, trying to stay distanced while rehearsing. It was such a joy to get to ring as an ensemble again! Beginning in December we recorded all our Christmas bell music, which was used as prelude music for Christmas eve. We also took a little trip to Chautauqua and rang at their Winter Festival, which was very appreciated.

Other music events this year included our Sawyer Memorial Organ Concert, which we were able to offer both live streamed and in person. Our organist was Dr. Stephen Hamilton, who offered an exciting and inspiring concert. We are incredibly grateful to Stephen, who agreed with short notice to come and play, after we realized that we would need to postpone the visit by David Cherwien once again.

Our congregation received an invitation to come and sing carols at Chautauqua during their Winter Festival in December, and Kajsa arranged for two days of singing. The event was open to the entire congregation, and turned out to be popular, both among the singers and the listeners at Chautauqua. We even had visitors joining us while we were singing!

I am so grateful to Phil Braudaway Bauman, Sam Bauman, and Chris Shearer Cooper, who all have given a lot of their time to help with recordings, mixing, and organizing the choir google drive page. I could not have done much without them this past year. I am also immensely grateful to all our musical volunteers, both ensemble musicians and soloists. Your courage and flexibility made this past year worth it, despite all the challenges.

Kajsa Teitelbaum  
Director of Music

## Board of Management

The Board of Management (BoM) oversees the business of the Church. Through several committees, the Board oversees our facilities, tenants, investments, contracts, insurance and finance.

### Financial Update

As our church's finances become increasingly complex, we are focusing on financial best practices. At the start of 2021, the church finished our financial audit and incorporated the resulting recommendations into our policies and procedures. Halfway through the year, the BoM acted on the Finance Committee's recommendation to retain NFP Partners as our accounting advisors. NFP is a financial management company specializing in nonprofits. Their client portfolio includes churches of our size and complexity.

The Board was thrilled to see Julie Griffiths accept the church's offer to become the full time Office and Facilities Manager. Julie is no stranger to our office. She has jumped in many times over the years to support FCC, especially during times of transition. Julie supports the BoM by working directly with our property management company, Gibbons White, our nonprofit tenants, the staff and a myriad of groups that use our facilities regularly. There are a lot of hats to wear in our office and Julie wears them all well!

### Tenant Relations

Our full-time tenants are an important resource for the church, offsetting expenses and supporting upwards of 10% of our budget. The BoM helped our three nonprofit tenants adapt to the issues they faced as the pandemic wore on. Mindful Works was able to increase its offerings and operations, expanding into Plymouth Hall and the kitchen while we were not using those spaces. We renewed the Carriage House lease with Baby Bathwater, our only for-profit tenant, despite pandemic-reduced demands for their services.

The Facilities Team navigated another year of reduced use of our facilities while continuing to maintain and upgrade.

### 2021 highlights:

- Upgraded the internet speeds to allow direct streaming video from the sanctuary
- Replaced our old copier with a state-of-the-art Xerox digital printer
- Installed a new floor in the Standish Room
- Protected the lower-level lead windows of the Sanctuary with tempered storm windows
- Replaced the controller for the HVAC system and continued to make other HVAC improvements
- Repaired and repainted the parking lot

### 2022 plans include:

- Complete the Church's transition to 100% LED lighting and energy saving switches
- Continue to improve the church's mechanical systems (HVAC)
- Continue research and possible action on replacing the floor in Plymouth Hall
- Replace the Sanctuary floor. During 2021 we researched replacing the 115-year-old floor in the Sanctuary. It has worn so thin that it cannot be refinished again; it must be replaced. We will be aided by a \$60,000 grant from the State Historic Fund.

Words of Thanks Please join us in giving special thanks to our outgoing members for their service:

- Susan Bryant chaired the Tenant Relations Committee
- Karl Kurtz chaired the Facilities Committee
- Bob Cutler chaired the Investment Committee
- Scott Allman was on our IT team

In gratitude, Roy McCutchen & Jill Schaefer, CoChairs BoM

## **Board of Missions and Christian Social Action**

BMCSA coordinates mission outreach and Christian social action of First Congregational Church. According to the FCC constitution core duties of the board include:

- Distribution of benevolence funds through a grant process.
- Support, review, removal and addition of mission and social action activities, programs and ministries.
- Communication, and support for growing edges of concern within the congregation.
- Resolutions to the general synod.

On behalf of the congregation and with approval from church council, the board distributed \$37,750 to 27 mission partner grant applicants. This year the focus was on organizations meeting basic needs in our community as well as those programs that supported our covenants and addressed growing edges of concern in our congregation such as racial justice and the environment. In addition, BMCSA continued to support long standing partners representing a wide range of needs locally and internationally. List of grantees is attached to this report.

Other outreach included:

- Crop Walk for Hunger - Coordinated by Joanne O'Keefe.
- Fourth Sunday Soup Kitchen - Coordinated by Soo Rhee and Elizabeth Gold and many dedicated volunteers from the congregation and wider community.
- Community Table coordinated by Denise Cone on first Wednesdays.
- Habitat for Humanity- received funds from our grocery card program.
- School supply drive, for BVSD students coordinated by Steve Whitehead, in partnership with Impact on Education's "Crayons to Calculators" fundraiser.
- The Alternative Gift Market was held five Sundays during the Advent season, giving congregation members an opportunity to purchase gifts in honor of others by contributing to causes supported by Alternative Gifts International (AGI). The 29 projects this year included books for children in Ethiopia, planting trees in Central America, eco-stoves in Guatemala, and leg braces in the Congo. Final gifts to AGI totaled \$9,098.
- Neighborhood Food Drive organized by Don Reed and Men's breakfast. Highly successful quarterly food drive Benefiting Emergency Family Assistance Association (EFAA) and Boulder County Aids Project (BCAP).
- Communications through Mission Moments and the weekly: Sherry Leach continued to support a moment for Mission once each month during the worship service, highlighting Christian social action and offering ways for the congregation to get involved.

- BMCSA managed special offerings which, through the generosity of our congregation, contributed to UCC funds that include Neighbors in Need, One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, and the Christmas Fund (Veterans of the Cross). This year there was an additional special offering to support those most impacted by the Fires. In addition, the board maintains memberships with the following organizations: NAACP, Together Colorado, Interfaith Alliance, and the Colorado Immigrants Right Coalition.
- The Family Learning Center, whose client families were deeply impacted by the Marshall Fire, received an additional \$11,605 as a result of our efforts (UCC Rocky Mountain Conference \$8,605 and Global H.O.P.E. Disaster Ministries\$3,000).

With Gratitude for the generosity of our congregation and the many hands and feet that make this work possible,

Amanda Brown and Amy Shoffner, Co-Chairs  
 Laura Riihimaki, Treasurer



## Grants from the Benevolence Fund in 2021

Association for Community Living	\$500
Attention, Inc (TGTHR)	\$1,400
Boulder County Aids Project	\$1,500
Boulder County Food Rescue	\$2,000
Bridge House	\$1,000
Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition (CIRC)	\$1,007
Emergency Family Assistance (EFAA)	\$1,000
St. Benedicts Health and Healing	\$1,000
Faith 4 All	\$750
Feet Forward	\$2,693
Flatirons Habitat for Humanity	\$1,000
Growing Gardens of Boulder County	\$2,000
Haula	\$500
Homeless Cares	\$2,000
Intercambio de Comunidades	\$2,000
International Rescue Committee	\$1,000
Mother House	\$2,000
Motus Theater	\$2,000
One School at a Time	\$500
Opportunity Tree	\$1,000
The Reentry Initiative	\$2,000
Voces Unidas c/Philanthropiece	\$500
Wildlands Restoration	\$2,000
Windhorse Guild (Mindful Works)	\$2,500
YWCA of Boulder County	\$2,000
Seminarian Scholarship Support	\$7,410
Pastor's Purse (Discretionary Fund)	\$2,000
Soup Kitchen	\$900

## Special Offerings

Crop Walk	\$240
Guns to Gardening Tools	\$1,520
Family Learning Center	\$323
Meals on Wheels of Boulder	\$323
Alternative Gift Market (2020 and 2021)	\$15,606
UCC Christmas Fund/Veterans of the Cross	\$323
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$3,180
Neighbors in Need	\$1,800
Strengthen the Church	\$1,000
Christmas Eve Offering (split evenly between Rise Against Suicide and RIP Medical Debt)	\$5,209
Marshall Fire Relief	\$26,000 (\$13,000 Community Foundation, \$2,000 Family Learning Center, \$11,000 Pastors Purse for Direct Needs)

## **Board of Christian Education**

As we continue to deal with the COVID-19 epidemic and its multiple variants, we have flexibly adjusted our processes and events to accommodate remote attendance, allowed for in-person meeting where we could, and provided local opportunities for situations that would have previously required travel. In addition to the typical, large activities that I will describe below, we supported the youth groups as they elevated the number of routine weekly and monthly activities for middle school and high school students to help support them, and in so doing, also provided Calvin with additional hours so that he could provide the required amount of attention and effort to support these additional events. These activities began as virtual activities (e.g., game nights playing 'Among Us'), and ultimately evolved to dessert and activity nights as we returned to in-person activities around September.

These frequent events have resulted in consistent, inclusive participation from a core of students in both the middle school and high school groups (about 5 core students in each group), and we are excited about the potential of these groups to flourish as we continue to support them.

In terms of larger activities, after pandemic-related changes in 2020, 2021 saw the return of both sleep-away ARTS camps (held at the Skaggs farm) and a Work camp (local, in partnership with OMSP) that enabled for safe community building. We continued our in-person activities with an inter-generational camping trip in late August and began to plan for the full return of ARTS camp (in Estes Park) and Work camp (Grand Bahama) in 2022. In the service of the 2022 Work camp, we completed the Feast Pray Love fundraiser in the fall and raised \$7,553 to support this work. In December, we continued our participation in the Parade of Lights and with the recreation of a Christmas Pageant.

As we look forward to the new year, we are identifying opportunities for a second fundraiser ("Feast Pray Love Lite") that focuses on the auctioning of parties donated by the Congregation. While Omicron is surging, this is currently still under evaluation. We are also considering how we could potentially leverage the outdoor patio space for additional youth activities in the spring (e.g., an outside Spring dance).

Further, we began the process of participating in the Church's strategic visioning sessions to review where we feel like there are opportunities we can explore. This process will continue through Fall 2022.

Tara Cone and Jeremy Reynolds, co-chairs

## **Board of Spiritual Life**

The Board of Spiritual Life met throughout the year on Zoom. Despite the presence of the Covid-19 pandemic, the church offered many ways to offer worship services. The BSL committee was supportive of the creative ideas proposed by the church pastors.

Easter was celebrated with outdoor services on Pine Street as well as on-line. Beginning in June, services returned to the sanctuary and were also live streamed. All services in the sanctuary were properly spaced and masks were required. During the summer months, services of reflection were offered on Thursday nights on the patio and in the chapel. In the fall, there were prayer stations set up in the sanctuary. Members of the BSL participated throughout these months as ushers and communion assistance.

Advent and Christmas were a busy season for the BSL, with members helping to decorate the church with the Hanging of the Greens, ushering services, and helping to plan and assist with four Christmas Eve services. There was also the annual pilgrimage set up at the Skaggs Farm for any worshipers to attend.

January and February brought a return to live streaming only, as the Omicron variant halted attendance in the sanctuary.

As co-chairs, we warmly acknowledge the constant support and volunteer spirit of all the members of the Board of Spiritual Life.

Peter Oakes and Carol Hasselbacher, co-chairs

## **Board of Community Life 2021**

The first meeting of the Board of Community Life for 2021 was held via Zoom on Wednesday, March 10, 2021. New members were welcomed, and retiring members were thanked for their service online, instead of at an in-person potluck. Allison Hamm agreed to stay on a little longer to train someone to create the Grace Gift driver lists, and Phil B-B volunteered to stay on also. Continuing members Joanne O'Keefe and Jane Thomas agree to be co-chairs.

**Care trains:** The Ride Train was mostly inactive this year, as there were few in-person services held in 2021. Ride Train was dropped in April. The Care Train was ably coordinated by Joanne, and cards were sent out whenever Pedro made his list available. The Meal Train, under the direction of Christine Miller, delivered meals to Elizabeth Gold in May and Nancy Wade in September.

**Grace Gifts:** Pedro had 60-80 people on his list for Grace Gifts this year, not always the same people. Gifts were sent out for April 3 (Easter, 70), May 22 (You Deserve a Break), and November 13 (Thanksgiving, 60). BCL offered assistance with the assembly of "explosion" boxes for February 2022, but the assembly date was cancelled due to winter weather, and Calvin and Deb decided to send E-Valentines instead to our college students.

**Small Group Gatherings:** During the summer BCL coordinated the signups for seven small group gatherings at church members homes. Each host decided the date, time, and activity they could host safely outside, with social distancing and masks, and whether there would be food or not. Formcraft provided an automated response to guests, while the co-chairs sent emails to hosts as guests signed up. Hosts were Gail Chadwell and Michael Rollins, Jean Nelson, Karen and Stewart Hoover, Keith Curry Lance and John Bisceglia, Karen Cumbo and Jay Rourke, Linda and Nils Nordberg, and Susan and Andrew Brinks.

**Memorial Services:** BCL members assisted at the July 9th memorial service for Roger Easton, and another service for a non-church member. There were few services this year due to COVID restrictions.

**Fall Picnic:** Described as "a grand success," the annual fall get-together was held at Foothills Community Park in north Boulder on Sept. 12, 2021, with catered sandwiches from Lindsay's Boulder Deli, soda, chips, and cookies from Costco, and flowers donated by the Hess family and BCL members. Over 100 people participated.

**Coffee hours:** In-person fellowship hours were held in October, November, and December as weather permitted, with coffee, tea, and treats offered on the plaza, starting with Open and Affirming Sunday. The church purchased outdoor heat lamps, which helped make the outside comfortable, though sometimes high winds forced people inside, which compromised efforts to remain socially distanced. Dec. 26, 2021,

was notable as Phil Braudaway-Bauman and Matt Hess made their special cinnamon rolls.

**Jingle Mingle/Other events:** Jingle Mingle was held outdoors on the Plaza on Saturday, Dec. 4, 2021 with homemade Christmas cookies and hot chocolate. About 100 attended. Our final event was to have been a special farewell fellowship hour to honor Pedro Silva, but the in-person event had to be cancelled due to a rise in COVID cases. Linda Kowatch, our new interim assistant pastor, will be our ministerial liaison beginning in February 2022.

Joanne O'Keefe and Jane Thomas, Co-Chairs

## Personnel Committee Report

The Personnel Committee had a busy and eventful year.

Office and Facilities Manager – Garry Garcia left the position in early 2021. The Personnel Committee reviewed options for proceeding. After a period of coverage by Julie Griffiths on a temporary basis, the Committee recommended that the Church hire Julie on a full-time basis. Hiring a member of the congregation required approval of the Board of Management and Church Council, and this was finalized in May, with unanimous approval and great joy.

Director of Youth – Calvin Hardy was originally hired for a 30 hour per week position. In 2021, the church funded an additional 10 hours/week so Calvin could provide more support to the youth during the pandemic. Based on input from the Christian Education Committee and church members, the Personnel Committee proposed to BOM to move Calvin to a 40 hour per week position for 2022 in order to continue the extra support during the pandemic and begin planning for an expanded youth program. This was approved by BOM. This will be reviewed at the end of the 2022 with Christian Education, Board of Management, and the input from the Visioning/Strategic Planning process that the congregation has undertaken.

Associate Minister – With great sadness, we received notice of Pedro Silva's resignation from his position as Associate Minister in the fall. After many discussions with Pedro, we finalized plans for the transition. The Personnel Committee defined a process to fill the position with an Interim Associate Minister until we complete the Visioning Process. We presented the process and names of a Search Committee to Church Council, and this was approved by Church Council. The Search Committee launched a nation-wide search in November for a Interim Associate Minister. The Search Committee completed the process of reviewing applications and interviews with candidates during December and January. At the completion of the process, the Search Committee recommended Linda Kowatch as the Interim Associate Minister to the Church Council which approved her for the position to serve until we complete the Visioning Process and determine future staffing needs.

Other Activities – Over the past several years, the Personnel Committee has completed work on an Employee Handbook. During this year, we also continued to review our policies including salary and benefits. We worked with Board of Management to support Kajsa and the church during her Parental Leave. Great planning by Kajsa made this a successful time for the church and great support. At the end of the year, based on input at the Congregational Meeting, the Personnel Committee reviewed and proposed recommendations for Salary Adjustments that reflect the changing economic times. We continue to work with the budget Committee as they complete their work for this year and finalize the Salary adjustments.

Charley Rastle, Chair

## Investment Committee

Investment Performance: 2021 was a good year for stocks in particular, with the S&P500 (U.S. stocks) up +28.71%, the MSCI EAFE (foreign stocks) up +11.26%, while the U.S. Aggregate Bond Index was flat at +.01%. For 2021 the Church's Endowments accounts (60% stocks/40% bonds) were up approx. 12%, while its short-term accounts were up +4.7%. The average annual returns for the endowment accounts over the past five years have been approx. 8.08%-8.80% per year.

Future Expected Returns: Many experts expect returns over the next 10 years to be materially lower than we have seen recently. For example, as of 1/25/22 the US stock market (S&P500) is down 8.6% year-to-date.

The Investment Committee was active this year:

- I. We are maintaining our neutral 60% equity / 40% fixed income & cash allocation. Our trigger to rebalance to neutral is 10% above or below 4,550 on the S&P 500.
- II. We have made modest changes to our investments. One area we have made some changes is to diversify our bonds, to take into account higher inflation and rising interest rates.
- III. We are feeling very good about where and how our investments are invested and positioned.
- IV. The accounts have performed better than their benchmarks for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter and 1 Year.

Our SRI/ESG (Socially Responsible Investing/Environmental, Social, and Governance) investments have generally been doing well and (as of the end of December 2021) make up 60% of total investments.

Distributions for 2021, to be distributed in early 2022: The Investment Committee unanimously voted for a 5.0% Total Distribution, of which 4.0% was our Normal Distribution and 1.0% was a Special Distribution. Of this 5.0%, 4.75% will go to the various committees and 0.25% will go to the Operating Account. The TOTAL to be distributed is \$195,334.93.

### First Congregational Church

#### Baird Investment Accounts - as of 12/31/2021

<u>ACCOUNT NAME</u>	<u>Equity Alloc%</u>	<u>BALANCES</u>
<b>Endowment Accounts</b>		
McMane Arts	60%	\$ 246,975
Benevolence	60%	\$ 1,869,264
Music	60%	\$ 105,391
Capital Needs	60%	\$ 2,501,998
Sawyer Organ Concert	60%	\$ 155,236

MacKenzie Lecture	60%	\$ 158,038
<b>TOTAL Endowment Accounts:</b>		<u>\$ 5,036,902</u>
<b>Non-Endowment Accounts:</b>		
BOM Project	20%	\$ 128,698
New Initiatives	60%	\$ 144,380
Renewable Energy	20%	\$ 42,868
<b>TOTAL Investment Accounts:</b>		<u>\$ 5,352,848</u>
Operating		<u>\$ 266,009</u>
<b>TOTAL ALL BAIRD ACCOUNTS:</b>		<u>\$ 5,618,857</u>

We have a fantastic committee, and we appreciate their service: Eric Nickell, Jean Nelson, and Neil Palmer.

Bob Cutler, Investment Committee Chair



## Endowment Committee

The role of the Endowment Committee:

- Encourage members of the congregation and non-members to make gifts to the FCC Endowment Funds through education and consultation particularly through Legacy Giving.
- Recognize both privately and publicly those donors who have made gifts or are contemplating making a gift to the FCC Endowment Funds.
- Increase the public awareness of the many activities and non-profit organizations funded by the FCC Endowment Funds.
- Make recommendations to the Board of Management and Church Council on how to allocate non-designated donations to the Church.

The main work of the Endowment Committee for 2021 was the development of a “Give While You Live” campaign, which culminated in year-end gifts to the endowment funds of \$162,402 made by 27 individuals and families. This success builds on the continuing effort of the Committee to expand Legacy giving. To achieve this result, the committee developed a new brochure which includes the traditional Legacy giving as well as the “Give While Your Live” approach, updated a new website page for Endowments, created a campaign letter and list of recipients and contacted each recipient/family personally. We also held two forums on Endowment giving which were presented live and were also available online. Finally, a letter has been composed to thank those who made gifts.

In addition to the Give While You Live campaign, the Endowments also recently received approximately \$80,000 in bequests from two estates.

Dean R. Fowler, Ph.D.  
Chair

## Endowment Financials

### Market Value of Endowments December 31, 2021

Benevolence	\$ 1,869,264
Capital Needs	\$ 2,501,997
MacKenzie	\$ 158,038
McMane Arts	\$ 264,975
Music	\$ 105,391
Sawyer Organ	\$ 155,236

### Endowment Distributions January 1, 2022

\$ 63,850
\$ 103,860
\$ 6,487
\$ 10,300
\$ 4,327
\$ 6,511

### Year End Gifts 2021

Benevolence	\$ 69,750
Capital Needs	\$ 5,250
Sawyer Organ	\$ 6,200
MacKenzie	\$ 200
Music	\$ 9,200

Undesignated	\$ 57,550
New Initiatives	\$ 14,252

## Finance Committee

The Final 2021 Operating Budget is included with this report. Board of Management and Staff did a very good job of managing the budget for the year and the Financial Resources of the Congregation.

### Highlights

- Pledge Revenue exceeded Budgeted Amount
- The church had a surplus for the year and per Financial Policy, the surplus is moved to the 2022 Budget
- Slight increase in Salary Expenses reflecting Calvin working 40 hours a week (approved by BOM)

### Other Activities

NFP Partners – We entered into a consulting agreement with NFP Partners, an accounting firm specializing in non-profits. NFP is providing financial accounting guidance and is responsible for review of our accounting procedures and reports on a monthly basis. In addition, we are working with them to identify opportunities to improve our financial procedures and they will be helping to update our documentation. The first step of that process is the movement to a web-based system for submitting, reviewing, approving, and paying our expenses (started in Jan 2022). This provides more review and much better tracking and reporting in our payments.

Reporting and Budgeting – We are reviewing the reports that we use on a monthly basis to document our financials. Besides the Operating Budget, we are reviewing the procedures for budgeting and reporting on disbursements from our Capital Fund. Goal is to continually improve how the information is presented to Committees and the Congregation.

Transition – Bev Nelson stepped down as Treasurer during the year. Charley Rastle served as the Interim Treasurer after Bev stepped down.

Charley Rastle, Interim Treasurer

## First Congregational Church

## 000 Operating - Revenue &amp; Expenses Budget vs. Actual Summary

January - December 2021 (100%)

	Jan - Dec 21	Budget	% of Budget
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>			
<b>Income</b>			
40000 · Donations	805,926	800,284	101%
40100 · Donations - Other	192,577	140,908	137%
41000 · Building Use	86,391	87,119	99%
42000 · Other Income	7,805	500	1,561%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,092,699</b>	<b>1,028,811</b>	<b>106%</b>
<b>Expense</b>			
70000 · PASTORAL MINISTRY	4,164	7,500	56%
71000 · MINISTRY OF MUSIC	11,082	20,800	53%
72000 · CHRISTIAN EDUCATION STAFF	446	3,000	15%
73000 · C. E. PROGRAMS	10,996	17,901	61%
74000 · SUPPORT SERVICES	121,609	126,864	96%
76000 · FACILITIES EXPENSE	203,035	214,741	95%
77000 · BOARDS AND COMMITTEES	6,536	7,726	85%
78000 · UCC Participation	44,394	44,394	100%
79000 · Salaries & Benefits	610,650	597,376	102%
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>1,012,912</b>	<b>1,040,302</b>	<b>97%</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>79,787</b>	<b>(11,491)</b>	<b>(694)%</b>
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>			
<b>Other Income</b>			
42002 · Grant Receipts	2,000	2,000	100%
42003 · Endowment Admin. Receipts	9,491	9,491	100%
43010 · Investment Interest / Dividends	121		
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>11,612</b>	<b>11,491</b>	<b>101%</b>
<b>Other Expense</b>			
74162 · Investment Fees	1,255		
<b>Total Other Expense</b>	<b>1,255</b>		
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>10,357</b>	<b>11,491</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>90,144</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>2021 Year End</b>	<b>2021 Budget</b>	<b>2022 Budget</b>	<b>Increase / (Decrease)</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Pledges	\$846,828	\$842,498	\$851,669	\$9,171	1%
Pledge Shrinkage	\$0	-\$39,292	-\$38,700	\$592	-2%
Contributions	\$15,748	\$14,435	\$15,748	\$1,313	9%
One Time Gifts	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Capital Needs Contribution	\$0	\$0	\$27,373	\$27,373	0%
Building Use	\$86,392	\$87,119	\$108,426	\$21,307	24%
PPP Grant	\$101,000	\$101,000	\$0	-\$101,000	-100%
ERC	\$7,702	\$0	\$40,000	\$40,000	0%
Late Pledges, Prior Year Surplus & Other	\$46,643	\$34,541	\$127,313	\$92,772	269%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,104,313</b>	<b>\$1,040,301</b>	<b>\$1,131,829</b>	<b>\$91,528</b>	<b>9%</b>

<b>Expenses</b>	<b>2021 Year End</b>	<b>2021 Budget</b>	<b>2022 Budget</b>	<b>Increase / (Decrease)</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Pastoral Ministry	\$4,165	\$7,500	\$19,000	\$11,500	153%
Ministry of Music	\$11,082	\$20,800	\$19,440	-\$1,360	-7%
Christian Education	\$11,441	\$20,901	\$21,175	\$274	1%
Support Services	\$122,865	\$126,864	\$154,117	\$27,253	21%
Facilities	\$203,036	\$214,741	\$222,629	\$7,888	4%
Boards & Committees	\$6,535	\$7,726	\$10,901	\$3,175	41%
Salaries	\$610,650	\$597,376	\$640,065	\$42,689	7%
Dues to Association, Conference, OCWM	\$44,394	\$44,394	\$44,502	\$108	0%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,014,168</b>	<b>\$1,040,302</b>	<b>\$1,131,829</b>	<b>\$91,528</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$90,145</b>	<b>-\$1</b>	<b>\$0</b>		

## **Membership Committee 2021**

Members of the Committee Are:

Linda Nordberg (chair)

Don Mayer

Jon Hinebaugh

Keith Lance

Rhonda Fadum

Adam and Carolyn Reed

Gail McDougale

Carol Polston

In July, Julie Griffiths stepped away to take a church staff position, but she will help with record keeping and some email contact with visitors and new members.

We have hosted two Newcomer Coffee gatherings after church on Sundays, September 26 via Zoom, and October 10, outdoors on the Plaza. They were well received, especially the in-person event.

New Members: In 2021 we had four Joining Sundays.

On Jan 17 we received four members still using the Zoom joining liturgy. On June 20, our first in-person church service in over a year, we received six members. We received two members on July 18, and three on October 31, all in person. That's a total of 15, in addition to our four confirmands. We've continued to give gift bags to new members.

Linda Nordberg

Chair

## Membership Statistics Report 2021

New Member Gains: .....19

- Confirmands 4
- New Members 15
- Returning Members 0

Deaths:..... 6

- Judy Lambert 3/28/2021
- Palmer Carlin 5/20/2021
- Pat Horst 6/8/2021
- Maxine Benson-Cook 10/8/2021
- Joyce Lebra 10/10/2021
- Lue Paddock 12/10/2021

Transferred Out:.....5

Baptisms:..... 3

2021 Membership – 852

2020 Total 844

Losses - 11

833

Gains + 19

2021 Total 852 (Members, Associate Members)

## 2021 Mackenzie Lecture Committee

### Speakers

The Mackenzie Lecture committee hosted two speakers in 2021, both in on-line events. In February we hosted Traci Blackmon, UCC's Associate General Minister of Justice & Local Church Ministries who gave a Friday night lecture, a Saturday workshop, and preached on Sunday. The Lecture had 160 screens tuned in via Zoom and the Saturday workshop had 70 screens tuned in.

In September, the committee hosted Dr. Kristin Kobes Du Mez, author of *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation*. She led a Friday night talk with approximately 120 screens present and led a workshop with approximately 50 screens present. In preparation for Dr. Du Mez's talk, Kirk Nordstrom and Jane Thomas led a successful 4-week book group with an average of ~15 participants.

### Future Speakers

The committee has invited Dr. Jenny Price to a series of events from March 30 to April 1, including a discussion led by her and Patty Limerick on Jonathan Sacks Book, *To Heal a Fractured World*, a workshop on her book *Stop Saving the Planet: An Environmental Manifesto*, and will preach on Sunday morning.

The committee has confirmed Dr. Serene Jones, President of Union Theological Seminary and author of *Call It Grace: Finding Meaning in a Fractured World*, in February 2023.

### Membership

#### 2021 committee members

Andrew Nicholson, co-chair  
Kirk Nordstrom, co-chair  
Louisa Mathias, treasurer  
Jane Thomas  
Amy Volda  
Patty Limerick  
Chris Braudaway Bauman



## McMane Arts Ministry

The Pandemic continued to affect the Arts Ministry, making it difficult to plan and arrange for exhibits or to host receptions for exhibiting artists. Fortunately, Barbara Olson's beautiful fabric art continued to grace our walls and on June 4<sup>th</sup> we were able to host a small, no refreshments reception for her. Barb Olson has graciously permitted several pieces to continue hanging for many more months.

In February we started planning the Butterfly Memorial project, designing origami butterflies to be hung in the Sanctuary to commemorate the people and loved ones lost to Covid-19 across the state and country. An instructional video and printed directions and suggestions, along with origami paper, were given to the entire Congregation. Our church members, friends and families folded over a thousand butterflies that were hung over the pews throughout the Sanctuary, providing a glittering, flowing, comforting memorial for several months. Following the mass shooting at King Soopers in Boulder on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 10 strands were hung in the Link to commemorate the victims. The butterflies were given to congregants when the hangings needed to be trimmed to allow congregants to sit in the pews. The butterflies commemorating the shooting victims were given to the Museum of Boulder. And the remaining butterflies were ultimately taken down to be burned for ashes that can be used for Ash Wednesday services, as a further healing offering.

During the summer we developed a design for a walking meditation labyrinth to be built into the new Plymouth Hall floor when the floor is replaced. We selected tan and charcoal vinyl tiles to be inserted in a pattern shape within the vinyl tiles to be used for the replacement floor, whenever that is done in the next year or two.

On Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>, we enjoyed the Open Studios reception for their photography exhibit hung near our South entrance, with interesting photos, including a youth honoree from a contest for Boulder Mobile Home residents.

Holiday decorating and activities began with redesigning, making, and installing prayer stations for the Advent labyrinth constructed at David and Laura Skaggs "Only Sunshine Farm". David mowed a winding quarter mile path for congregants to walk, in contemplation, throughout Advent.

We decorated the outside of the church with traditional lights and greens to celebrate Christmas, on three sides of the church, bringing light and cheer to all who drove or walked by.

Melody Fuller, Co-Chair

## Mindful Works Ministry

First Congregational Church's (FCC) Mindful Works Ministry coordinates and supports its mission partner Mindful Works in a range of activities.

Mindful Works is an innovative, mission-driven social enterprise that hires and provides job training and support to individuals striving to overcome employment barriers due to mental health challenges. Program participants have the opportunity to develop various skills such as: on-line marketing, baking-related techniques, and in the design, production, and sales of high-quality, hand-crafted, wellness, and home décor products.

First Congregational Church provides financial and volunteer support to Mindful Works.

- First Congregational Church provides reduced rent and parking to Mindful Works. Mindful Works Ministry facilitated rent and parking contracts which were negotiated in 2021 including detailed space allocation.
- Mindful Works Ministry solicits and coordinates FCC volunteers to participate in MW programmatic activities including sewing, product production, grant writing, and sales.
- Mindful Works and FCC volunteers made signature efforts to educate the Boulder community re: mental health issues in 2021. A Holiday Luncheon including State Rep Judy Amabile and a visit in the fall by Joe Neguse were opportunities to educate the political community re: mental health issues. Mindful Works and First Congregational also hosted a Boulder Chamber of Commerce monthly morning get-together in another effort to introduce Mindful Works to the larger community.
- Mindful Works is invited to sell products after church services and have done so with success. Ruth Bader Ginsburg masks are particularly popular!

Karon Johnson  
Marie Schaffner

2021 Mindful Works Ministry members:

Karon Johnson, Chair,  
Phil Braudaway-Bauman  
Marie Schaffner  
Anne Weiher  
Susan Williams  
Linda Roan-Yager  
Tom VanDeBogart  
Pedro Silva

## A2A (Accessible to All)/Mental Health Ministry

**2021 (A2A/MHM members):** Anne Weiher (chair), Alma Alber (secretary.) Carole Jones, Louisa Young, Kevin Petit, Margaret Perez, Eric Malmborg, Kristen McCullough, Marie Schaffner, Pedro Silva, II (staff)

**During the year, we sponsored and participated in various programs:**

- March 28<sup>th</sup>--Forum on cross cultural adoption. The speakers were Annie Brook and Kristen Mccullough.
- May 15<sup>th</sup>—Sponsored along with the Interfaith Network on Mental Illness (INMI) and other organizations Dr. Sally Spencer Thomas, "Spiritual Practice and Suicide Prevention: The Role of Faith Communities in Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Crisis Response."
- May 22<sup>nd</sup>— Joined with other UCC churches who have adopted the Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged (WISE) covenant for mental health to support the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Walk. First Congregational was the first WISE congregation.
- **June 13<sup>th</sup>—Mental Health Sunday**  
Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund, the first woman Senior Pastor at First Congregational United Church of Christ of Indianapolis and UCC National Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health and Justice, spoke on her book, *Blessed Union: Breaking the Silence About Mental Illness and Marriage*. In this she explores the resilience and strength of family bonds. There was a forum after the service.
- **August 15<sup>th</sup>—Access Sunday**  
Marta and Mandy from Black Forest United Church of Christ presented a program, *Jesus Has Left the Building*, on the adjustments their congregation has made due to COVID and how that has expanded their outreach to those with disabilities. We are in conversation as to how we can do the same.

The Spiritual Support Group for Mental Health and Wellness, an integral part of our ministry, continues to draw individuals from many different geographical regions. Many of our attendees report that they were drawn to the group because of the spiritual component. This group remains somewhat unique as very few communities, congregations, etc. offer such a group. It continues to be facilitated by Carole Jones, Marie Schaffner, and Anne Weiher. Deb Burgess joined the team in October.

We supported several community organizations in their suicide prevention outreach, among them, Community UCC, Hadassah, and Mental Health Partners. We plan to continue that work in the coming year.

Ann Weiher, Chair

## Racial Justice Ministry

Racial Justice is not a new value for our congregation but the unrest in the summer of 2020 brought new attention to this issue. In response to many congregants expressing a desire to increase our church's involvement in advancing just peace in the sphere of racial injustice in America, the church leadership began to envision a new Racial Justice Ministry.

The Racial Justice Ministry held our first meeting on May 26, 2021, and we have seen a strong interest of church members wanting to participate in the ministry meetings and the opportunities we provide or advertise. The committee members feel a shared desire to "do something" but we also are balancing this desire with a realization that we as a predominantly white congregation have a responsibility to learn from our neighbors who are experiencing racism firsthand. So, we have dedicated this initial season of our work to listening. This has not been a passive effort, instead, we have engaged in formative dialogue within our group and have begun to organize or advertise opportunities for our ministry and our congregation to learn more about the challenges, opportunities, and priorities of people of color in our geographic and spiritual communities. Practically this has meant hosting three educational forums with presenters from the NAACP, collaborating with Community United Church of Christ on a city council candidate forum, and advertising learning opportunities provided by other organizations. Members of the ministry have also met with other organizations including the Rocky Mountain Conference, UCC to learn more about their educational offerings and priorities for activism.

As we move into year two of our collective discernment, we are beginning to make some exciting plans. Yet, we hope that the foundation we are completing, girded with a curious and learning spirit, will ensure that listening remains core. Our initial planning has involved the creation of a task force to plan a pilgrimage to [The National Memorial for Peace and Justice](#) during the spring break of 2023. In preparation for that journey, we are planning a series of opportunities to prepare both spiritually and intellectually for this experience. In addition to this pilgrimage, focused on injustice and terror exerted on African Americans we are also exploring opportunities to understand how the Native American genocide played an important role in the founding of Boulder and the needs of racialized immigrants in our region. Finally, we are beginning to understand some of the priorities for action at the county, state, and national levels. These priorities will be worked into a strategic plan that will guide our work in the coming years; this will dovetail with the church's visioning to ensure that we are considering racial equity in this process.

Matt Hess, Co-Chair, Racial Justice Ministry

## Ministry of Last Things

2021 Annual Report, February 1, 2022

Members: Jean Abbott, Janet Beardsley, Heather LeMasurier, Eric Malmborg, Linda Nordberg, Bob Patoff, Tom Stiers, Louisa Young, Nancy Wade, Carol Young, Rev. Pedro Silva.

First Congregational Church initiated a Ministry of Last Things in the Fall of 2016 under the guidance of our Ministerial Staff and the Board of Spiritual Life. We are dedicated to facilitating discussions, providing spiritual support and encouraging planning around how we approach death and dying as mortals and as Christians.

### 2021 Activities:

Many of the planned activities this year were scaled back due to the pandemic and loss of in-person activities.

The following activities occurred in 2021:

1. Resources for Dementia planning on church Website added to MLT section of church website.
2. April 25: a Sunday Forum on “Dementia: Part 1 – What Planning Would Help my Loved Ones?”.
3. May 30: A Sunday Forum on “Dementia: Part 2 – How can I best speak for a loved one?”.
4. “Shades of Green: How do you die with minimal impact on the environment.” (done with the Climate Action Committee) – Sunday forum, October 17, hybrid with 40 people.
5. Several Weekly Devotionals, with links to MLT resources on web.
6. Several one-on-one conversations with members about planning for serious illness and dying.
7. While the Columbarium initiative awaits the larger church planning conversations, the Ministry did remind leadership through the Church Council to consider this when planning resumes.

Links to multiple resources and documents for members and friends are now available on the church website: <https://firstcong.net/ministry-last-things/> (Under “connect”)

1. Introduction to Ministry of Last Things
2. Overview of Planning for a Graceful Ending
3. First Congregational Church: Thoughtful Endings Planning Document, 2019
4. Conversation Project Starter Kit (short version)
5. Conversation Project What Matters to Me? 2020: Worksheet for Serious Illness and Conversation Guide
6. Your Right to Make Healthcare Decisions (Colorado Hospital Association) blue/green book

7. ABA Proxy Tool: Who Should I Choose As a Spokesperson (Agent)? (from the American Bar Association)
8. ABA Proxy Guide: How to Be a Proxy – What should I know?
9. Questions and Answers for Doctors (modified from Alzheimer's pamphlet)
10. Conversation Project: Conversation Starter Kit for Families and Loved Ones of People with Alzheimer's Disease or Other Forms of Dementia
11. Advance Directive for medical treatments in dementia
12. Dementia letter to my advocate
13. Videos about End of Life and Discussion Triggers
14. Post-Mortem Matters – Shades of Green

Members of the Ministry are always available for one-on-one conversations as people do some of the important work of having conversations and using documents in planning and expressing their values, particularly during this pandemic time.

Jean Abbott, Facilitator

## **Gun Violence Prevention Ministry**

The Gun Violence Prevention Ministry at FCC was resurrected in 2021, in response to the marked increase in gun violence in the United States and the horrific mass shooting here in Boulder. Gun violence is a multifaceted issue involving mass shootings, homicide and suicide by gun, random street gun violence, mental health concerns, and accidental shootings.

- Our first act was to have FCC join Faith Communities United Against Gun Violence (CFCU). CFCU efforts to end gun violence include: action (pursuing strategies likely to reduce gun deaths and related violence), advocacy (actively supporting governmental policies and officials that promote policies that end gun deaths and violence), and awareness (increasing public awareness about the need for reducing gun deaths)
- We established a Rapid Response Team of people at FCC that are willing to write to legislators in favor of or against bills related to gun access and gun violence. This past year, the legislature passed six bills that will prevent some of the escalating gun violence in Colorado.
- We joined with other congregations in Boulder County (St. John's Episcopal, Bonai Shalom Synagogue, Community UCC, and others) to work collaboratively to advocate and educate our local population around issues of gun violence.
- In December, we joined with our other county CFCU congregations to present information about suicide for individuals 65 and older to the staff of the Boulder Senior Adult Center.
- Also in December, around the date of the ninth anniversary of the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, many of our Boulder County congregations held memorial events. At First Cong, we held a vigil in our sanctuary to commemorate those who have lost their lives to gun violence.

All interested congregants are invited to join in our efforts. For further information, contact Carol Young at [ccyoung2010@gmail.com](mailto:ccyoung2010@gmail.com)

Carol Young and Larry Dansky, Co-Chairs

## Climate Action Team

The Climate Action Team at First Congregational was formed in August of 2020, during the height of the pandemic. We currently have fifteen members who work on climate-related issues such as education, advocacy, justice, and worship. Our accomplishments for 2021 include:

- Wrote weekly devotional on climate change (February 2021)
- Created and led Earth Day service (April 2021)
- Led Creation Justice Church forum (April 2021)
- Hosted forum on renewable energy with Ron Sinton (May 2021)
- Interviewed 14 boards, committees, and ministries for Creation Justice Church application (Spring 2021)
- Collected and reviewed information on 30 local environmental groups (June 2021)
- Drafted new Creation Justice Church Covenant (June 2021)
- Board of Missions and Christian Social Action and Church Council approved new Creation Justice Covenant (August 2021)
- Hosted electric vehicle car show (October 2021)
- Congregation approved Creation Justice Covenant (November 2021)

In the coming year, we plan to develop closer working relationships with local climate-change groups and to bring more environmental education opportunities to the congregation, including supporting this year's MacKenzie Lecture.

Sarah Schulte, Chair, Climate Action Team



## **Safe Church Task Force/Covid Safety Team**

The purpose of the Safety Team is to continuously examine procedures at the church to ensure that the building itself is as safe as possible for members and visitors and that activities within the building are carried out in the safest possible manner. Examples of tasks include fire drills, first aid kits for classrooms, CPR training, de-escalation education extending to active shooter awareness. Since the Covid Pandemic has taken center stage over the past 2 years, the original Safety Team has taken a pause in its mission and more emphasis has been on the Covid-19 Safety Team. This focused task force sets a path for the congregation based on reports from the state health department, recommendations from various health and governing agencies (masks, limits to in-person group gatherings, vaccinations, etc.) as well as direction from the UCC conference leadership.

At least monthly meetings were held by the Covid-19 Safety Team, made up of several medical/health care professionals, the FCC staff, moderators, and other church leadership to assess infection risk and make decisions related to worship and group gatherings. Recommendations and actions have been based on the ever-changing dynamic of the pandemic and we have pivoted accordingly. Strategies have included scaled back and limited in-person services, online sign ups, symptom and temperature tracking at events, outdoor worship events, creative music rehearsals and performances, scaled back ARTS camp, limited indoor meetings and vaccination requirements for staff. These actions have stretched the church staff tremendously. The secondary gains include a robust blend of online activities, recorded and live streamed events that rival professional Hollywood production! We are so grateful for the recordings, mixing, taping, slicing, splicing, music, time, and energy that all have endured to keep the congregation safe and what a fantastic product too!

As of January 2022, due to the omicron variant surges, we continue to host online services with limited in person meetings/events within the church buildings. The Covid-19 Safety Team will continue to monitor Covid spread and assess the requests to attend services and events in-person based on the guidance of the medical community balanced with the safety needs of the congregation.

Safety Team co-chairs, Bob Matthias and Kelly McDevitt

### Covid 19 Safety Team

Jean Abbott, Chris Braudaway-Bauman, Karen Cumbo, Julie Griffiths, Kelly McDevitt, Peter Oakes, Carol Hasselbacher, Charley Rastle, Jill Schaefer, Kajsa Teitelbaum, Deborah Voss

## Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee submits the following slate of names for election to membership on boards and committees—the leaders of the church—for 2022. Proposed new members names are in italics. All terms end in March unless otherwise specified.

Charley Rastle, Past Moderator  
Chair, Nominating Committee

## Officers

Chris Shearer-Cooper	Moderator
<i>Carol Hasselbacher</i>	<i>Moderator-Elect</i>
Karen Cumbo	Past-Moderator
Kathy Minter	Clerk
Charley Rastle	Treasurer
	Historian

## Board of Community Life

	Term Ending	
Jane Thomas	2023	Co-Chair
Jim Knopf	2023	
Margaret Drury	2023	
Molly McElroy	2023	
Wendy Hall	2023	
Karon Johnson	2024	
Stephanie Angell	2024	Co-Chair
<i>Julie Graf</i>	2025	
<i>Phil Braudaway-Bauman</i>	2025	
<i>Deb Berghuis</i>	2025	
<i>Linda Richer</i>	2025	
<i>June Crenshaw</i>	2025	
<i>Tom Riis</i>	2025	

## Board of Christian Education

	Term Ending	
Katie Wilkerson	2023	
Garrett Steed	2023	Co-Chair
Ann Thomasset	2024	
<i>Carolyn Reed</i>	2025	
?		
?		

## Board of Mission and Christian Social Action

	Term Ending	
Kim Kanas	2023	Co-Chair

Allison Tatterson	2023	Treasurer
Sherry Leach	2023	
Steve Whitehead	2023	
Laura Riihimaki	2024	Co-Chair
Karen Hoover	2024	
Allison Hamm	2024	
Jill von Trebra	2024	
<i>Lauren Goldsmith</i>	2025	
<i>Janet Beardsley</i>	2025	
<i>Jeremy Reynolds</i>	2025	

### **Board of Spiritual Life**

	Term Ending	
Gigi Birkeland	2023	
Marj Fowler	2023	
Matt Hess	2023	
Mary Jane Longanecker	2023	
Kevin Pettit	2023	
Cathy Woods	2023	
Wesley LeMasurier	2024	
Susan Pfretzschner	2024	Co-Chair
<i>Rhonda Fadum</i>	2025	
<i>Anne Byrne</i>	2025	
<i>Elise Burnor</i>	2025	

### **Board of Management**

	Term Ending	
Roy McCutchen	2023	Co-Chair
Stewart Leach	2023	
Daphne Mendel	2023	
Eric Nickell	2023	
Jeanne Lounsbury	2024	
Bill Gilbert	2024	
Jill Schaefer	2024	Co-Chair
Ed Byrne	2024	
<i>Caitlin Smith</i>	2025	
<i>Emily Phillips</i>	2025	
<i>Jill Holmstrom</i>	2025	
<i>Ty Ostwald</i>	2025	

### **Investment Committee**

Eric Nickell	Chair
Bob Cutler	
Jean Nelson	

Neil Palmer  
*Christina Ingersoll*

### **Personnel Committee**

	Term Ending
Karen Cumbo, Past Moderator	2023
Chris Shearer Cooper, Moderator	2024
<i>Carol Hasselbacher, Moderator Elect</i>	2025
Chris Braudaway-Bauman, Senior Minister	
Tania McEvoy-Champlin	2023
Kristen Aldretti	2024
<i>Kathryn Oakes</i>	2025

### **Stewardship Committee**

Libby Black	Chair
Betsy Barrett	
Nancy Stevens	
Jon Hinebauch	
Tom Lounsbury	
Laura McCutchen	
Nicole Speer	
Allison Hamm	
Tara Kelly	
Rick Kron	

### **Membership Committee**

Linda Nordberg	Chair
Jon Hinebauch	
<i>Rhonda Fadum</i>	
<i>Adam Reed</i>	
<i>Carolyn Reed</i>	
<i>Don Mayer</i>	
Keith Lance	
<i>Gail McDougale</i>	

### **Endowment Committee**

Dean Fowler	Chair
Jon Hinebauch	
Louisa Young	
Libby Black	
Tom Stiers	
Bob Patoff	

Tom Lounsbury

**MacKenzie**

Andrew Nicholson

Co-Chair

Kirk Nordstrom

Co-Chair

Louisa Matthias

Amy Volda

Jane Thomas

Carol Green

Patty Limerick

**Conference Delegates**

Jane Strohm

Kevin Pettit

Stewart Leach

Thomas Riis

Gail McDougale



## 2022 Stewardship Annual Report

Wow! First Congregational Church is **so blessed** with generosity. Many, many thanks to all.

Because we were again this year mostly online for worship and fellowship, we kicked off the season with a doorstep gift bag of comfort and love. Our outstanding witnessing stewards, speaking to the deep meaning of their personal giving, inspired many of us to consider our church giving in new ways. We remain grateful to Chuck and Debbie Brown, Joanne O'Keefe and Jeanne Quinn.

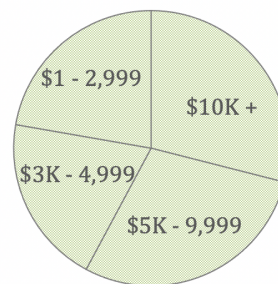
We came oh-so-close to our goal this year which was a 2% increase over our 2021 pledging. By annual meeting, we had 99.5% of our 2022 goal of \$858,000.

- 63% of our families increased their pledge
- 10% of our 2021 pledgers decreased their pledge
- Welcome to the 9 new pledgers this year – even in the midst of online worship!
- As is typical, we had some zero pledges (12) for a variety of reasons and 12 families who pledged last year that we could not reach.

You can see in the pie chart that every dollar level of giving is critical to our budget – with each at about ¼ of our total. Every pledge counts!

% of Dollars Pledged by \$ Range

	<b>Dollars Pledged</b>	<b># of pledges</b>	<b>Average Pledge</b>
<b>2022</b>	\$ 853,109	236	\$ 3,614
<b>2021</b>	\$ 816,153	245	\$ 3,438
<b>2020</b>	\$ 807,651	243	\$ 3,324
<b>2019</b>	\$ 727,778	236	\$ 3,084



A second thank you to all for fulfilling your 2021 pledges. As the pandemic continued through 2021, the church fulfilled 100% of our pledge income! Truly remarkable! Our Church is forever indebted to those who give so much, in so many ways. Thank you. Thank you.

**Submitted with Deep Gratitude,**

**2022 Stewardship Committee:** Libby Black, Chair

Betsy Barrett, Chris Braudaway Bauman, Allison Hamm, Jon Hinebauch, Tara Kelly, Rick Kron, Tom Lounsbury, Laura McCutchen, Nicole Speer, Nancy Stevens

## **First Congregational Church of Boulder**

Investment Committee Report – Q4 2021 (meeting 1/12/2022)

Submitted by Robert Cutler, Investment Committee Chair

Committee members: Jean Nelson, Eric Nickell, Neil Palmer

### **I. Investment Performance**

- a. The church's Endowments accounts (neutral allocation 60% stocks/40% bonds) in Q4 were up 4.30%, while short-term accounts were up +1.32%. For Q4 the S&P500 was up +11.03%, the MSCI EAFE (foreign stocks) was up 2.69%, and the U.S. Aggregate Bond Index was up +.01%. The accounts have performed better than their benchmark for the Quarter and 1 Year. The average annual returns for the endowment accounts over the past five years have been approx. 8.08%-8.80% per year.
- b. Future Expected Returns. Many experts (assuming a 60/40 stock/bond allocation) project an average (over the next 10 years) total return (after inflation) of ~2%/year.

### **II. Investment Asset Allocation and Investment Changes**

- a. Investment Changes
  - i. No investment changes were made at this meeting
- b. We are maintaining our neutral 60% equity / 40% fixed income & cash allocation. Our trigger to rebalance to neutral is 10% above or below 4,550 on the S&P 500.

### **III. Socially Responsible Investments (SRI)/Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)**

- a. Currently (with today's changes) 58% of our total investments and 78% of Equity Holdings are SRI/ESG.
- b. In general, our SRI/ESG investments have been performing well.
- c. We did have a good discussion regarding Socially Responsible Investing:
  - i. What is Socially Responsible investing?
  - ii. What does it mean to each of us?
  - iii. What does it mean to the church?
  - iv. How to determine if an investment is Socially Responsible or not and to what degree. Resources?
  - v. How much Socially Responsible investments should we have?
  - vi. New creation justice covenant adopted November 2021...

### **IV. Committee Changes:**

- a. We are recommending that Eric Nickell take over as chair (Bob is term-limited).
- b. We are looking for one new committee member, ideally someone who has investment (and/or financial) experience.

### **V. Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 13, 2022.**

# First Congregational Church

## Baird Investment Accounts - as of 12/31/2021

<u>ACCOUNT NAME</u>	<u>Equity Alloc%</u>	<u>BALANCES</u>
<b>Endowment Accounts</b>		
5406 FCC McMane Arts	60%	\$ 246,975
4701 FCC Benevolence	60%	\$ 1,869,264
5150 FCC Music	60%	\$ 105,391
8750 FCC Capital Needs	60%	\$ 2,501,998
2899 FCC Sawyer Organ Concert	60%	\$ 155,236
5125 FCC MacKenzie Lecture	60%	\$ 158,038
<b>TOTAL Endowment Accounts:</b>		<u><u>\$ 5,036,902</u></u>
<b>Non-Endowment Accounts:</b>		
2813 FCC BOM Project (NotEndow)	20%	\$ 128,698
5596 FCC New Initiatives (NotEndow)	60%	\$ 144,380
7695 FCC Renewable Energy (NotEndow)	20%	\$ 42,868
<b>TOTAL Investment Accounts:</b>		<u><u>\$ 5,352,848</u></u>
5092 Operating		<u>\$ 266,009</u>
<b>TOTAL ALL BAIRD ACCOUNTS:</b>		<u><u>\$ 5,618,857</u></u>