

PILGRIM
CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT
2024



February 2, 2025

25 SOUTH MAIN STREET
SHERBORN, MASSACHUSETTS

Pilgrim Church

United Church of Christ

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Office Hours

9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Monday – Friday

Church Staff

Senior Pastor – Reverend John F. Hudson

Church Administrator / Assistant Treasurer – Cindy Sullivan

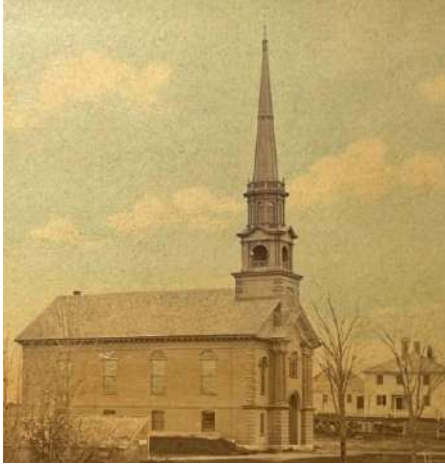
Director of Congregational Ministries – Janet Walsh

Director of Music – David Tiedman

Director of Christian Education – Victoria Gaisford

Social Media Coordinator – Saul Mendoza

Sextons – Robson & Ana DaSilva



**Founding and Foundational Documents and Statement
Pilgrim Church, United Church of Christ,
Sherborn, Massachusetts
Founded 1830, by departing members from the First Congregational
Society, founded 1683.**

The Covenant of the Evangelical Church of Sherburne—1835 (alt.)

In the presence of God and this assembly, we now solemnly vow the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to be our God, the object of our supreme affection, and our portion forever.

We cordially acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as our only Savior; and the Holy Spirit as our Sanctifier, Comforter, and Guide. We humbly and cheerfully devote ourselves to God, in the everlasting covenant of his grace; and we consecrate all our powers and faculties to his service and glory; that we will give diligent attendance to his word and ordinances; and that we will seek the honor and interest of his kingdom. We join ourselves to this Church of Christ, to walk with its members in charity, meekness and love, and to strive for its edification and purity. Amen.

Pilgrim Church Mission Statement (adopted by Congregational vote, February 7, 1994)

Pilgrim Church is a loving and welcoming church where members, children, friends and strangers may find joy in community and solace in times of crisis, doubt or suffering. As members of the United Church of Christ we are children of God who believe in Jesus Christ as our risen Lord and Savior and are guided by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Dedicate ourselves to the enrichment and transformation of our spiritual lives through worship, sharing and caring, and Christian education for persons of all ages. Commit ourselves to being stewards of our God-given resources, protecting the Earth and using our diverse talents, our time, and our riches to do God's work. Build faith within and beyond our congregation by offering help, hope, and support believing that service through mission is essential to our purpose as a Christian Church. Act on the biblical call to "Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)

Welcoming Statement

(adopted by Congregational votes: October 15, 2017; September 26, 2021)

At Pilgrim Church, there is an open seat at God's table for you. We welcome you, no matter who you are, or what you look like, or what labels the world puts on you. We welcome you if, like us, you struggle with flaws and imperfection but have a loving spirit and strive to let the light of Jesus shine within you and then to share it with others. We dare to welcome all because God, and not any human authority, extends this gracious invitation. We believe that we are called to love for, "...if we love one another, God abides in us." (1 John 4:12) Therefore, every member and friend of this congregation is invited to participate fully in all the sacraments, rites, privileges, and responsibilities of our shared life at Pilgrim Church, United Church of Christ.

The only requirement for life at Pilgrim Church is a desire to deepen your relationship with God and neighbor. As an Open and Affirming Congregation, we extend this radical welcome to people of every gender identity and sexual orientation, and to persons of every skin color, culture, physical and mental ability, and every diverse expression of humanity found in God's universe.

Table of Contents

Senior Pastor	1
Moderator’s Report ..	2
Clerk Report.....	3
Director of Music	4
Director of Congregational Ministries	4
Christian Education	6
Diaconate Committee	8
Finance Committee.....	9
Financial Statements & Proposed 2025 Budget	12
Memorial and Endowment Committee.....	16
Memorial and Endowment Financial Summary.....	20
Stewardship Committee	21
Missions Committee	23
Missions Ministries Local Donations.....	24
Sacred Arts Committee	25
Personnel Committee	26
Property Trustees Committee	27
Report of the Grounds Maintenance Committee.....	28
Report of the Solar Committee	28
Outreach and Engagement Committee.....	29
Welcoming Committee	30
Pilgrim Church Creation Care Committee-Green Initiative	31
Capital Campaign Exploratory Committee.....	32
Minutes of Annual Meeting Feb 2024.....	33
2025 Church Officers and Committee Members	37



All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. --Acts 2:44-47a

Pastor's Annual Report for the Year 2024

Dear Members and Friends,

The news story was heartbreaking. It came out of the California wildfires now destroying oh so much in the Golden State. Scores of people have died. Thousands of homes have been lost. Pets are separated from owners. Businesses have succumbed to the flames. And oh so many churches, synagogues, temples and mosques have been lost, by one estimate at least 12 and probably many more.

What happens and what is lost when a faith community's building ceases to exist? Worship in a beloved sanctuary, probably historic as well. All the church programs—youth groups, bible studies, choirs—it is all disrupted. AA lost a place to

meet along with food pantries, homeless shelters, and thrift shops. No more Scouts can meet there either. Or seniors for lunch. Or kids at a pre-school. Or that young moms support group. The blood drive will have to find a new venue too.

This heartbreaking tragedy reminds us of how central houses of worship are to the communities that they serve. How irreplaceable these are too. Pilgrim Church, United Church of Christ, is such a place. We are in the heart of Sherborn and the heart of MetroWest Boston, have been since 1685, and so, so much happens in our building, and in our body of Christ. It is easy to take that truth for granted, just how much good and Godly work we do in service to our members and friends, and all the towns we serve as well. In service to our state, nation, and this beautiful and broken world too.

2024 marked a period of institutional stability we've missed through COVID and staff changes and big shifts in how people do (or do not do) church. So many, too many, of our fellow houses of worship have closed or are closing. But by the grace of God and the generosity and commitment of our members and friends and staff, we are still standing, and we are healthy. Let us not forget this gift and miracle from God!

The world needs Pilgrim Church (UCC). We all need our church home. As we look to a new year and new opportunities to gather and to serve in the name of Jesus Christ, let us never, ever take this place, this people and the God that we love for granted.

Thank you all for giving me the gift of serving you as pastor.

Peace, Pastor John Hudson

Moderator's Report

I'm learning to juggle – and I'm slowly developing the skills necessary to keep a few balls in the air at a time. Eventually I'd like to have a well-choreographed routine that results in a mesmerizing ability to keep numerous balls of past, present and future Pilgrim Church activities in the air at any given time. My progress has been uneven, but fortunately, we have many talented and dedicated Pilgrims launching, tracking, catching, and passing balls in a church community that has been doing this for almost two hundred years. The pages in this report reveal just how much love Pilgrim has in the air at any given time. All the ministries, projects, committee work, prayers, hymns, and acts of friendship whizzing toward heaven in communal acts of faithfulness are quite lovely to watch and even more beautiful to experience. I'm grateful to be part of it and humbled to serve as Moderator this year.

One of the projects that we should keep our eyes on is the slow work of the Archives group. They have been charged to sort and archive boxes of old records that have accumulated for years in various places in our church. Preserving our past is one good way to prepare for our future, a thought that is not far from our archivists' efforts as they look toward our two hundredth anniversary in 2030!

The Report of the Strategic Planning Committee that was presented at the 2024 Annual Meeting launched several spheres of renewed focus for our church. Two new working groups began their work in 2024. The Welcoming Group has rallied their members to examine our efforts and routines of greeting and embracing visitors and new members and they have made changes to Fellowship Hall to make it more comfortable as a meeting space. The Outreach and Engagement Group has challenged our committees to follow their example in creating new programs that will offer opportunities for our members to connect and to learn. In addition, the Strategic Planning Committee highlighted the charge to our Christian Education Committee to minister to all members of our community as they rallied around our Church's continued efforts to provide meaningful programs for our children and young people. The institution of our fourth Sunday Adult Forums of discussion and discernment were a direct outcome of this focus. The ongoing efforts of our new Christian Education Director, Victoria Gaisford have been particularly inspiring to watch this year, as she has stepped into the Pilgrim Community as a master juggler and patient teacher.

One giant ball that was launched this year was the work of the Capital Campaign Exploratory Committee that began its work in September and is making its report at this Annual Meeting. It immediately burst into myriad individual projects of varying size, complexity, and rate of speed that require careful analysis and further handling by the whole congregation, a challenge that the committee is prepared to explain and support. I am very grateful to have our wonderful Church Administrator/Assistant Treasurer, Cindy Sullivan volunteer to work on this committee as her skills and knowledge in so many areas has been invaluable. The Capital Campaign Exploratory Committee's work paves the way into Pilgrim's future, fixing what needs to be fixed and preparing to face into a modern, third century of God's work in the world.

Read through this report and you will see into the many ongoing ministries and daily work output of our staff members, leaders, committees, youth workers and volunteers to Pilgrim members and to God's wider world. Read through it and you will begin to understand the interrelations among them and, I think, you will be inspired and grateful too. We are so blessed. -Respectfully submitted - Judy Cranshaw

Clerk's Report

Official Membership reported on December 31, 2023

381

** Designates Church Member*

Add: **10**

New Members, all by Affirmation of Faith:

January	Camryn Leiser* Karen O'Connell* Andrew Raser* Claire Richardson*	4
February 11	Megan Page	1
May	Confirmation class	0
June 2	Sarah Benedict* Jeremy Benedict* Alexis Madison*	3
November 17	Christine Duncan* Nancy Kelly*	2

Subtract: **10**

Deaths: 3

March 23	Mark Alan Young*
August 14	Anthony Dunster Whittemore*
December 24	Natalie Barlow*

Known Transfers	0
Members moved away	2
Members moved to inactive	5

Official Membership reported on December 31, 2024

381

Funerals, Memorial Services or Receptions:

March 2	Janice Elizabeth "Beth" (Watson) Jenkins	<i>Graveside Service, Pine Hill Cemetery</i>
March 16	Edgar J. Mailhot	<i>Prayer service at Everett Funeral Home, Natick</i>
April 7	Mark Alan Young*	<i>Service at Pilgrim Church</i>
June 29	Margaret E. "Peggy" (Adams) Fleming	<i>Service at Pilgrim Church</i>
July 14	Barbara Baker	<i>Celebration of Life, First Congregational Church, Wolfeboro, NH</i>
August 24	Gregory Buchanan	<i>Prayer service at Everett Funeral Home, Natick</i>

Weddings at Pilgrim Church or elsewhere:

June 29	Erik Hammond and Felicia Agbanyo	Silverwood Farm, Sherborn, MA
October 19	Frank Sinapi and Sophie Kossakowski	West Park, NY

The Annual Meeting was held following church, February 4, 2024.

Respectfully submitted, Chuckie Blaney, Clerk

Music Director

The year 2024 continued to see an increase in attendance at services, an indication that people were beginning to feel safe and wanted to “get back to normal” at church, as well as in every other aspect of their lives.

Again, this year, Bob Brunsdon was hired as a bass. Because of job and other commitments, that section was often reduced to two people. The addition of another bass has helped to solidify that section a lot. The choir numbered 15 regular members during the year, one less than last year; Jeff Begley found the commute from Palmer to be too much: sopranos – Jeri Brian, Judy Cranshaw, Heidi Dostoomian, Kay Dunlap, Janet Slayton; altos – Barbara Ambos, Marilyn Marlette, Nan Vaida; tenors – Ron Jantzen, Nevin Shanabrook, Frank Villa; basses – Bob Brunsdon, Peter Liffiton, Bart Morse, Steve Solomon.

The Handbell Choir, though small in number for the fall, still did a great job of ringing for Christmas Eve and Easter. They also rang the Sunday before Christmas Eve as a prelude to the annual Christmas Tableau. The choir numbered eight regulars: Barbara Ambos, Heidi Dostoomian, Jim Hartman, Marilyn Marlette, Jack Mulhall, Nancy Schaad, Janet Slayton, Beth Villa. Joining us on Christmas Eve was former member Ben Hartman, always a very welcome addition to the bass bells. One addition is expected for the spring session in 2025.

As of now, the church has a 21-rank pipe organ, a five-octave set of Schulmerich handbells, a five-octave set of Hand Chimes, a Falcone seven-foot grand piano in the sanctuary, a Yamaha five-foot grand piano in the Music room, a Sohmer grand piano in Fellowship Hall and an old 19th century upright piano in Room 10.

A personal note – On Sunday, October 13, the congregation and choir wished me a happy 80th birthday, a very nice gesture that was greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted – Dave Tiedman

Director of Congregational Ministries

A good year with many positives! Services were consistently well attended throughout the year and there is energy for service work, committee work and social events. Coffee hour participation has been wonderful and a steady time of weekly fellowship. I’ve been fortunate to support many activities in 2024, following are some highlights.

Ministries

Miracle on 25 S. Main Street – On November 10th we hosted our 10th consecutive year! We packaged 40,000 single meals (which equals 6600 family meal packets, and 190 full boxes to pantries!) in a day with 140+ volunteers. Thank you to Nan Theberge and Kate Potter for the time and efforts they put into this event. 190 boxes were distributed to the following:

A Place To Turn, Natick MA
Project Just Because, Hopkinton MA
Rose's Bounty, Boston MA
Harrison Food Bank, Harrison ME

METCO Inc., Boston MA
Salvation Army, Waltham MA
My Brother's Keeper, Easton MA

Family Promise MetroWest – Family Promise is going strong with their shelter location in Natick and is growing this year with outreach through successful preventative support programs. Pilgrim's participation continues through gifts of homemade meals, gift cards, and shopping donations. We covered three full support weeks in 2024 in February and September.

Thank you to our many Pilgrim Church volunteers and to our 2024 Pilgrim Church Family Promise team for organizing this ministry:

Heather Dragsbaek, Pilgrim Liaison
Jennifer Searle & Janet Walsh, Volunteers Co-Coordinator
Cindy Maguire, Shopping Coordinator

Pearl Street Cupboard & Café –Thanks to Rick Stone for organizing this ministry through 2024. A dedicated group of volunteers served hot homemade style meals on Wednesday evenings quarterly in Framingham.

Food Drives, Coat Drives and Outdoor Clothing/ Supply Drives were once again organized in September, October, November and December:

Pilgrim Church members for *A Place to Turn Food Pantry*, Natick
The Senior High Youth Group for *City Reach*, Boston
The "Getting to Know You" Group for the *Anton Cleaners Coat Distribution Drive*. (This group includes members from Pilgrim Church and our sister church Bethel AME.)

We will be hosting a new ministry coming in 2025 to serve a community group in Natick who meet every Monday through an organization called **Open Door**. Pilgrim is providing and serving meals in February and June of 2025.

Caring Groups - We continue with our small group ministry teams that provide meals, weekly cards, visits, and rides in times of need. Thank you to the many people who help, and a special thank you to Frank Villa for his work coordinating the Caring Cooks, and to the Correspondence group who wrote notes of joy and comfort every week throughout the whole year: Betty Schlenker, Sally Tipton, Megan Hall, Margo Powicki, Joanna King and Kristy Barnard.

Membership

Pilgrim membership has remained consistent in recent years and hosts members from Sherborn, Natick, Holliston, Medway, Norfolk, Dover, Medfield, Needham, Hopkinton, Ashland, and many surrounding towns in the MetroWest area. Members join us in person and virtually from across the country, and the world. In 2024 we have 381 members and over 130 active non-member friends who are part of our church family. This year we hosted four new member classes and welcomed 10 new members on our

New Member Sundays in January, February, June and November. Please see the Clerk's report for additional information.

Hospitality & Outreach Committee

The Hospitality Committee spent another very busy year hosting coffee hours, receptions, and supporting many all-church events. We couldn't do it without the support of weekly volunteers who sign up to host Coffee Hours and who bake, serve, and clean up for service receptions and all-church events. Thank you!

We once again started the year with the Welcome Sunday Picnic in September and celebrated our year end in June with a fun Berry Festival. In March we helped with Trivia Night, in October the Church Fair, in November we provided goodies for those at the Miracle on 25 S Main, and in December provided hot chocolate and treats for the families attending The First Christmas Story event. In between we filled in for open Coffee Hours.

Thank you again to the many volunteers who step up each week to serve and thank you to my fellow Hospitality & Outreach Committee members who provide welcome and care with grace and kindness: Faith Carson (Co-Chair), Sally Tipton, Betty Schlenker, Joan Whitman, Cindy Stewart, Barbara Yates and Barbara Koman.

Respectfully submitted - Janet Walsh

Director of Christian Education

After my first full year as the Director of Christian Education at Pilgrim Church, it's clear that we are navigating a landscape of evolving patterns of participation that echo broader societal trends. Families are attending church services and Christian Education programming with less frequency than in previous years. The usual attendance is about once per month rather than weekly, a pattern likely driven by youth sports seeping into Sunday mornings. As work demands overlap with evening and weekend hours, there is also decreasing energy for volunteer commitments. Most parents need worship time for themselves on Sunday mornings. Families still feel a strong sense of belonging at Pilgrim Church, and they continue to value Sunday morning worship and Sunday School, even if they are unable to attend every week.

Adult Education

I conducted an Adult Education survey early in the year, which revealed the strongest support for a public issues discussion group. In response, we launched the Fourth Sunday Forums—a series of conversations that start with a presentation of background Christian theology. Topics have included human migration, environmentalism, Christian nationalism, citizenship, and consumerism. These forums have been well-attended, often crowding the conference room.

In the Fall, we scheduled a workshop to align with our church's theme for 2024-2025, "Love Thy Neighbor, No Exceptions!" A couple of weeks before election day, we hosted a special workshop, "Speaking Across Differences," led by Rev. Betsy Waters. It attracted participants from outside of the

church community and was a resounding success. We look forward to continuing these types of discussions in 2025.

Sunday School

Sunday School takes place during worship on most Sunday Mornings from September to early June with the exception of holiday weekends. I teach Godly Play, the Montessori-based curriculum, with a rotation of high school aged assistants which are currently Sophie Bloecher, Piper and Dagny Abbett, and Savannah Gaisford. Attendance varies by season, with around forty participants attending at least once and most Sundays welcoming an average of ten kids. The Winter of 2024 saw the usual dip and rebound in Spring. We began the Fall with a healthy number of participants, but shortly afterward, attendance dipped significantly— unusual from my previous experience. This dip delayed our plans to expand into two classrooms, a goal we will now work toward for February 2025. By the time Advent arrived, attendance had rebounded significantly, especially before and during the Christmas Pageant, which saw a robust turnout and many new faces.

Special and unique Sunday School activities have generally seen higher participation. The culmination of the Sunday School year in June of 2024, Children's Sunday, was particularly successful, with children returning from months' absence specifically to participate in this celebratory event that included singing, instrumental performance, and children preaching.

Youth Group

The Middle School Youth Group remains a bright spot in our Christian Education programming. Together with Pastor John, Eric Brooks (who retired from youth group involvement this Fall), and Dan Hartman, I have enjoyed participating in bimonthly meetings and service project field trips. This year, we designated, decorated, and furnished a new youth room in the Christian Education wing, providing a space that the youth can call their own. Around 20 youth participate in total with a normal attendance of around 10 youth, including several from Dover Church. The Senior High Youth Group is also a cooperative group with Dover Church and is led by Rev. Kayla and meets there. As with other programming, attempts to schedule activities outside of the normal time often fall through. We had to scrap a trip to the Prison Book Project in the Spring when the softball schedule came out with conflicts.

Our Whole Lives, the comprehensive sexuality education program developed by the UU and UCC churches and offered most years for the last thirty, did not have enough interest to run this Fall. I did find a co-leader, Lisa Larsen, who is excited to teach it with me when we have enough interest. A Confirmation class of three will begin in January 2025.

Family Events

Family events have continued to evolve as we explore what best fits the needs and schedules of Pilgrim families. A survey was sent out to families in late Summer to gather feedback on the programming, but the response was minimal. From the feedback we did receive, it's clear that Sunday mornings remain the most desirable time for programming. The most well-attended programs are the ones for the youngest children (who are not doing sports yet!) including the First Christmas Story and the First Easter Story. We experimented with Facebook advertising this Fall, which yielded some success. One new family began attending church after seeing our advertisement for the First Christmas Story.

Nursery Care

Nursery care is always provided on Sunday mornings from 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM. We added a soft climbing feature to the nursery room in the Spring. Typically, we have one child in the nursery at a time. We are still contracting with Mother's Helpers to provide professional care, and happily we have had a couple consistent carers who now know us well.

Looking ahead, we might consider the possibility of hiring a dedicated nursery attendant or utilizing teens from the church community for this role. We are committed to creating a welcoming and safe environment for our youngest members.

Areas for Growth

Several areas of growth and development are on the horizon for CE. First, we will continue to explore social media to publicize events. An idea for a Pilgrim Families Facebook group was not well received and thus scrapped, so optimal communication strategy is still up in the air. In 2025, my focus will include expanding the Sunday School program into two classrooms, continuing to try new family events such as an Earth Day hike and clean up, and continuing to grow the Adult Education offerings. I also aim to strengthen the volunteer base for both Sunday morning activities and family events.

This past year has seen growth, experimentation, and learning. With the collaboration of the Christian Education Committee which includes Mari Anne Bloecher, Kay Dunlap, Kate Manzolini, and Frank Villa, I look forward to continuing to serve Pilgrim Church and build a vibrant Christian Education program that supports the spiritual growth of children, youth, and families.

Respectfully Submitted – Victoria Gaisford

Diaconate Report

The board of Deacons' responsibilities include the coordination and execution of the Sunday morning worship service, communion, baptisms, funerals, and decoration of the sanctuary for Christmas and Easter. The board also works with the Director of Congregational Ministries on the "Hands to Work, Hearts to God" sign-up to fulfill the other roles on Sunday including lay leader and providing flowers.

The attendance numbers were very good during 2024. The average attendance during the program year was 73. The average attendance during the Summer Services was 33. Our largest attendance days were Easter Sunday, with 300 people at the two Easter services (Sunrise at Farm Pond 93 and the Traditional Service 207), and Christmas Eve with 397 across the two services (Family Service 226 and Candlelight Service 131). Both Easter and Christmas attendance numbers were up significantly from last year (Easter 158 and Christmas 258 in 2023). In addition to regular Sunday services, the Deacons served at two funerals this year. Especially notable was the packed service for long time member Mark Young's service in April.

Two Deacons serve most weeks, and Junior Deacons help when available. Members of the Board of Deacons include youth who chose to serve Pilgrim Church after their Confirmation. Our Junior Deacons are Tyler Dearborn, Jamie Davis and Kelsey Carlson. The Senior Deacon members are Eric Dragsbaek (Chair), Steve Harris (Parish Board Rep), Lois Alexander (resigned in May), Karl Davis, Heather Dragsbaek, Josh Hartman, Marilyn Marlette, Karen O'Connell, Megan Page, Janet Slayton, Beth Villa. The Deacons

thank Eric, Lois, and Karl for their service as they roll off the Board of Deacons at the Annual Meeting. The Deacons would also like to thank Doug Ambos for his faithful service as our videographer. Doug serves most every Sunday and makes continual improvements to our recording capabilities. In addition to the in-person numbers reported above, every week there are people who stream the service or watch the recording later in the week, which expands the number of people we are able to serve.

The Deacons continued to work with the Parish Board during the year on developing safety protocols to help keep our church a safe place for all. The Deacons would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all those who served as Lay Leader, a Greeter, provided flowers, or provided Coffee Hour this year. We pray that together we can continue to offer a safe and welcoming environment to worship God, whether that is your living room, our sanctuary, or anywhere you feel safe and comfortable.

On behalf of the Deacons - Eric Dragsbaek, Chair

Lois Alexander, Karl Davis, Heather Dragsbaek, Steve Harris, Josh Hartman, Marilyn Marlette, Karen O'Connell, Megan Page, Janet Slayton, Beth Villa

Finance Committee

FINANCE OPERATION

The 2024 Finance Committee is comprised of three key positions: **Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer, and the Assistant Treasurer**. They have a broadly defined mission of "Financial Control and Reporting" for the Church (except for the Memorial & Endowment Funds). They are not driven by programs, events, or projects. Their responsibility focuses on protecting and ensuring that there are appropriate financial controls of all **Church assets** - including **monetary, physical**, as well as **information** assets. A Financial Summary report is submitted, presented monthly to the Parish Board and annually to the congregation. Our financials are open to the Congregation members upon request.

Many individuals participate in the church's financial operation, under normal conditions, as noted below. It is structured this way to ensure that there are segregated duties as well as having an imbedded level of checks and balances to the overall process.

First, the **Stewardship Committee** holds an annual campaign to provide funds for the Church Ministry Fund, the Missions Fund and the Memorial and Endowment Fund. As the pledge commitments turn into revenue during the year, they are received in the mail, on-line or in the weekly collection plate. The Deacons are providing assistance with the weekly collection plate and the preparation for the deposit process. The Assistant Treasurer inputs the report information into the Church accounting system and ties the totals to ensure completeness. She receives and verifies invoices and prepares disbursement checks for the Treasurer to review and sign.

The Treasurer oversees the work of the Assistant Treasurer and any of the Church Administrator's financial duties. He also reviews transactions, reconciles the asset accounts, is the only authorized signer for all contracts that are approved by the various committees, is an authorized signer with all bank accounts, and oversees the preparation of the annual budget. Bart Morse is completing his thirteenth year in this position. This is Bart's last year in the role, and we thank him for the time and attention to being treasurer.

The Assistant Treasurer is a part-time, up to 10 hours per week staff position. This position is the custodian of all Pilgrim Church Ministry, Missions, Property Trustee and Work Camp funds. She pays all obligations of the church including Memorial & Endowment, cash transactions and prepares all financial reports. This position is also responsible for handling all employee-related compensation, benefits and expenses along with the annual budget input into our accounting system. Cindy Sullivan is completing her fourth year on staff and continues to add value to the overall finance function with her in-depth knowledge of church-accounting and best practice procedures. Additionally, Cindy has recently accepted the role of Church Administrator and thus has become a full-time staff employee of P.C., responsible for both positions.

Chief Financial Officer: this role is an oversight / advisory role in reviewing the finances of the church in coordination with other Finance Committee members. Keeping in line with sound financial practices, this position does not have the authority to sign any checks on any of the bank accounts. In conjunction with the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, this position will invest our excess funds in safe, stable, liquid assets and jointly prepares / reports to the Parish Board on a monthly basis. I have been in this position since Feb 2024.

Finance Committee Operating Procedures: monthly, the Finance Committee a) meets to review the previous months financials, b) requests as needed further details of both Balance Sheet and Treasurer Report, and c) analyzes, within the context of the approved Annual Budget and previous year's results, reports to ensure accuracy and identify "red flags" requiring Pilgrim staff or Parish Board attention.

M & E Interaction: we continue to work with the **M&E Treasurer**, Jim Campbell, to ensure all transactions are properly accounted for. This position reports to the M&E Committee.

Additionally, there is an Investment Committee made up of the M&E Treasurer, the church's Treasurer and one other member of M&E. The members of this committee work with professional financial advisor Eric Burt from RBC -Wealth Management, who is a member of Pilgrim. Periodically, the M&E Treasurer calls a meeting of the committee to discuss, review and collaborate with Eric regarding our investment portfolio performance and to react to appropriate investment strategies that are in play at the time.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The year-end financial position of Pilgrim Church is shown on the Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Fund Balances following this report. All receipts and disbursements flow through one of the following funds:

Pilgrim Church Ministry Fund – Late 4th quarter, the Finance Committee prepares a draft budget for the next year from committee and staff requests. Then the Stewardship Committee runs a campaign to fund the budget. Pledges are used to allocate budget dollars to salaries, Christian Education, Sacred Arts, Congregational Ministries, Church building, Parsonage and other operating expenses. At the January Parish Board meeting, the budget is reviewed and then recommended to the congregation for approval at the Annual Meeting in February.

Mission Fund – This fund records all monetary donations that will be given to charitable organizations and community-based programs as well as charitable projects within the church. There is a Missions

Committee that handles the annual awards and reports to the Parish Board in the Fall as to the organizations and amounts given.

Property Maintenance Fund – This fund provides for long-term capital expenditures to maintain the church building and the parsonage. There is a Property Trustees Committee that meets regularly to develop a long-term capital plan and coordinate with outside contractors for quotes and execution of the various projects.

Work Camp Fund – This fund supports the annual senior high work camp mission trip usually held in June. Fundraising and donations support the advisors who graciously volunteer to travel with the group each year.

FINANCIAL POSITION

Pilgrim Church continues to rely solely on the generous support of its members and friends to sustain itself. As with any nonprofit, it continues to rely heavily on volunteerism to carry out its mission and reduce the financial burden on the annual budget. I'm pleased to report that Pilgrim Church ended in 2024 on a sound and balanced position.

As noted in previous years, Pilgrim Church has had challenges in predicting and achieving our Stewardship goals. In 2024 we were under our pledge budget by \$40,000. The shortfall was made up for by the \$40,000 allocation from M&E under the new M&E Policy. This is not an ideal outcome, and we will continue to seek alternate forms of income, so we do not rely on the congregation and M&E moving forward.

In 2024, our largest expense overruns were seen in church maintenance, including plumbing and fire system work. Expenses were in line with or under budget for most of the remaining categories.

2025 Stewardship Campaign achieved c. \$475,320 in total operating and endowment pledges, and one-time special gifts meeting their goal.

In 2025, staff payroll related costs account for approximately 70% of the total 2025 expenses. In 2025, there is an increase of 7% based on 3% increase in salary and corresponding increase in pension and insurance. Additionally, we trued up actual hours worked by hourly staff. The second largest budget item is maintenance of the church building, with largest increases in cleaning and landscaping. This is consistent with prior years.

Finally, brief thoughts on the Goals and Challenges facing Pilgrim Church in 2025.

- I.) We are thankful for positive trends occurring in 2024, chief among them **achievement** of our **2024 Pledge dollar goal**. **However, we** cannot ignore the **negative trends** that have continued to plague us over the last few years:
 - 2024's total pledge units actually increased because of new pledge units, however previous year's pledged units continued to trend downwards,
 - while "Unpledged Donations" exceeded budget by > \$26,000 in 2023, and met budget in 2024, unfulfilled pledge dollars continued to occur, and
 - donor concentration remains an issue (we are still dependent on a handful of large dollar donors).

- II.) All staff positions are now fully staffed, an incredible asset for the church, but a large budget item that needs to be managed carefully.
- III.) 2025 needs to be the year for focusing on **Capital Improvements**. Progress toward identifying and prioritizing needed major improvements for both the Church and Parsonage have been made in 2024. The **challenge** now is to **initiate implementation**.

Respectfully Submitted - Karen Flathers, Chief Financial Officer & Chair

Pilgrim Church
Local Ministry Fund
Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balances
For the Year Ending December 31, 2024
And Budgets for the Years 2024 and 2025

	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	Proposed 2025
Revenue			
Pledges	471,606.00	443,303.82	472,045.00
Unpledged Donations	45,800.00	51,180.42	45,760.00
Funded Program Fees	2,500.00	1,630.00	2,380.00
Facility Fees	3,700.00	6,390.00	6,000.00
Income From Endowment	15,000.00	40,000.00	47,000.00
Fidelity Investment Income and Interest	12,000.00	18,828.99	12,000.00
Total Revenue	550,606.00	561,333.23	585,185.00
Expenses			
Minister Compensation	117,223.00	117,163.22	121,089.29
Minister- Reimbursable Expenses	6,232.00	6,378.96	6,432.00
Christian Education Compensation	37,316.00	29,724.50	40,341.00
Christian Education and Supplies	13,700.00	10,047.75	13,500.00
Sacred Arts Compensation	52,628.00	52,490.95	55,228.87
Sacred Arts Expenses	5,750.00	6,150.06	5,050.00
Church Admin / Finance Compensation	61,931.00	60,245.60	63,011.00
Administrative Supplies and Expenses	25,700.00	23,765.53	21,780.11
Technology Compensation	13,195.00	17,272.60	17,816.00
UCC Related Dues and Expenses	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,220.73
Congregational Ministry Compensation	35,482.00	44,611.05	43,811.00
Congregational Ministry Expenses	4,175.00	3,070.11	4,175.00
Transfer to Property Maintenance Fund	20,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
Church Building Maintenance	73,300.00	75,561.79	82,840.00
Parsonage Maintenance	7,825.00	4,844.80	7,325.00
Insurance	32,758.00	31,676.04	35,965.00
Deacon Expenses	2,630.00	3,747.53	4,300.00
Transfer to Missions	27,000.00	27,000.00	30,000.00
Other Funded Programs	3,050.00	1,715.45	2,300.00
Total Expenses	549,895.00	545,465.94	585,185.00
Revenue Over (Under) Expenses	711.00	15,867.29	0.00
Beginning Fund Balance		192,217.00	
Ending Fund Balance		208,084.00	

Pilgrim Church
Statement of Assets and Liabilities and Fund Balance
As of December 31, 2024 and 2023

	2024	2023
Assets		
Cash and Equivalents	473,800.77	396,921.56
Accounts Receivable	0.00	833.34
Prepaid Expenses	10,212.73	8,949.03
Total Assets	<u>484,013.50</u>	<u>426,265.12</u>
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	12,463.17	22,408.75
Prepaid Income / Deposits	180,509.22	127,871.84
Long Term Liabilities	4,270.37	15,855.32
Total Liabilities	<u>197,242.76</u>	<u>166,135.91</u>
Fund Balances		
Local Ministry Fund	208,064.68	192,217.39
Missions Fund	1,866.55	4,365.55
Hunger Fund	3,539.25	3,789.25
Property Maintenance Fund	43,663.82	27,015.36
Work Camp Fund	13,103.95	13,625.88
Metrowest Covid Expenses Fund	0.00	5,346.90
Church Fair Fund	16,512.49	13,767.88
Total Fund Balances	<u>286,770.74</u>	<u>260,129.21</u>
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	<u>484,013.50</u>	<u>426,265.12</u>

Property Maintenance Fund
Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balances
As of December 31, 2024

Revenue	
Transfer from Local Ministry Fund	20,000.00
Total Revenue	<u>20,000.00</u>
Expenses	
Building Projects	3,220.42
Building Repairs	131.12
Total Expenses	<u>3,351.54</u>
Revenue Over (Under) Expenses	<u>16,648.46</u>
Beginning Fund Balance	27,015.36
Ending Fund Balance	43,663.82

Missions Fund
Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balances
As of December 31, 2024

Revenue	
Transfer from Operating	27,000.00
Total Revenue	<u>27,000.00</u>
Disbursements	
Missions Committee Designated	29,500.00
Linda Klockner	250.00
Total Disbursements	<u>29,750.00</u>
Revenue Over (Under)	<u>(2,750.00)</u>
Beginning Fund Balance	8,155.80
Ending Fund Balance	5,405.80

Church Fair Fund
Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balances
As of December 31, 2024

Revenue	
Fair Revenue	8,278.00
Total Revenue	<u>8,278.00</u>
Disbursements	
Fair Expenses	3,533.39
Donation to Jewish Family Services	2,000.00
Total Disbursements	<u>5,533.39</u>
Revenue Over (Under) Expenses	<u>2,744.61</u>
Beginning Fund Balance	13,767.88
Ending Fund Balance	16,512.49

Workcamp Fund
Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Fund Balances
As of December 31, 2024

<i>*No activity in the fund.</i>	
Beginning Fund Balance	13,625.88
Ending Fund Balance	13,325.88

Memorial and Endowment Committee

Financial Report

The year-end financial summary for the Memorial Account managed by the Memorial & Endowment Committee is presented at the end of our report. As in past years the report presents for each of the endowment and expendable funds the balance at the beginning of the year, the total return earned by the fund during the year, the donations received, the payments made and finally on the far right the balance in the fund at year's end.

This past calendar year, 2024, was another good one for Memorial Account investments.

In our second year of utilizing RBC Wealth Management as our professional fund manager, we achieved a total return (earnings plus capital appreciation) of over \$150,000 which was 8% net of their management fee. Our Equity/Fixed Income ratio remains approximately 60/40, which is fiscally conservative for an endowment fund, but reflective of the likelihood of the Church's need to access these funds near term for major capital expenses.

Transfers from the Memorial Accounts in 2024 totaled \$98,418. The majority of these were from the Unallocated Earnings account for which the major expenses were \$14,688 for initial payments to the architect for the Main Entrance Enhancement project and the 2024 Annual Allocation of \$43,781 to support elements of Pilgrim Church's 2024 operating budget. This distribution was the first per the terms of the M&E Policy change voted at the 2024 annual meeting. Anticipated allocation funds for 2025 are \$47,315.

The total payments in 2024 from all endowments in the Memorial Account amounted to 5% of the overall account's balance at the beginning of the year, which is in line with fiduciary

guidance for non-profit organizations. As in prior years, any unspent financial return during 2024 is added to the corresponding endowment or expendable fund balance for further compounding in the coming year.

Memorial gifts were received this year in honor of Owen Bingham, Peggy Fleming, Mark Young, Evaline Cagney, Trudi Wakeman, Michael Traficanti, and David & Ruth Johnson.

2024 Fund Distributions

The Chair of any committee may seek project funding or release of any designated available funds by submitting a request in writing to our committee.

Fund distributions this year have supported the "Love Thy Neighbor" Campaign; restoration of the south corner stone wall; seed funds for the entryway design; efforts by outreach working groups; landscaping needs at the church and parsonage; a sanctuary table for Sunday materials; Powell Creative Word Symposium; preservation and framing of 1817 sampler; and potential repairs to water filtration/waste water systems. The Committee also authorized a transfer of \$43,781, the 2024 Annual Allocation, to the operating budget as requested by Parish Board. This transfer occurred in two tranches as needs were identified.

Committee Activities

The Committee met monthly this year to be timely in considering requests and to continue conversations regarding relevant policies and best practices. It promoted the month of May as Memorial Month with communications to the congregation about how the M/E funds can serve the church. We hosted a workshop on *Ways to Give* which was well received and as an off-shoot, generated an information piece which was shared with the congregation as part of the 2025 stewardship campaign. With gratitude, we thank Betsy Rigby for sharing her expertise for the workshop and Betsy, Megan Abbett and Janet Walsh for shepherding the flyer.

Under the auspices of the M&E Committee and as provided in the bylaws, an Acquisitions committee was convened to consider two proposed gifts sponsored by the Sacred Arts Committee. The first was an 1817 sampler of "Solomon's Temple" which was offered to the church by Nan Vaida. The second was a painting "Wash Ye One Another's Feet" offered by Nevin Shanabrook. The Acquisitions Committee considered each gift in the context of the policy and recommended that the gifts be accepted. The sampler required dry conservation and framing, partial funding for which was approved by the Memorial & Endowment Committee.

We have devoted a significant amount of discussion to the Memorial Garden and ways in which to ensure its integrity *very* long-term. Parish Board has recently approved a proposal from the M&E Committee to amend the language in the brochure for the Memorial Garden to assure long-lasting remembrance for those whose remains are scattered in the Garden and in the event of extreme circumstances in the very long-term future, a permanent memorial for loved ones at Pine Hill Cemetery.

FUNDS AND PURPOSES

1. MEMORIAL: "*Something designed to preserve the memory of a person*"

MEMORIAL PRINCIPAL FUND: Memorial gifts are a thoughtful way to remember those we love. The donor or the family of the person in whose memory the donation is made may request the gift be placed in the Memorial Principal Fund (and held in perpetuity) or in one or more of our Endowment Funds. Unspecified memorial gifts are placed in the Candlelighter Fund. Earnings from the Memorial Principal Fund are transferred to the Candlelighter Fund as well. (see below).

CHUCKIE BLANEY CANDLELIGHTER FUND: Unspecified Memorial gifts (see above) are put in this fund from which both the principal and interest may be used to enhance the Sanctuary and the spiritual life of the Church.

2. ENDOWMENT: "*To provide with a permanent fund or source of income*"

ENDOWMENT FUNDS: Non-memorial gifts and endowment pledges are placed in the **General Endowment Fund** or a **Restricted Endowment Fund**, according to the expressed wish of the donor. Unless specifically requested by the donor, endowment funds are held in perpetuity. See the Restricted Endowment Funds below.

The **GENERAL ENDOWMENT FUND** is governed by the **Memorial and Endowment Policy and** is available to augment special or unexpected expenses which could not have been anticipated when the annual operating budget was approved.

Included in the M&E Policy is: “the purpose of the Memorial and Endowment Fund Policy of the Pilgrim Church is to enhance the life of Pilgrim Church by supporting the operation of the church in accordance with the Core Values and Faith Statements; and further...that the purpose is to establish a basis and procedure for the disposition and administration of funds or other property received by this congregation.”

Earnings from the General Endowment Fund may be spent according to the Policy.

3. UNRESTRICTED GIFT & BEQUESTS RECEIVED: This fund holds all unrestricted gifts from estates in perpetuity. The principal and earnings may be spent if the Congregation so votes. Individual donors may request that their large outright gifts be held in this fund and subject to congregational vote for use and distribution.

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RESTRICTED ENDOWMENT FUNDS

Funds in which the principal is held in perpetuity

REV. KENNETH D. POWELL ENDOWMENT FOR THE CREATIVE WORD. Earnings honor the memory of Rev. Kenneth Powell with an annual program to enrich the worship and spiritual life of our community by bringing the work of artists, intellectuals and performers who use spoken, musical, and written words to us to learn about and to worship God.

BOBBIE MORRISON ENDOWMENT FOR YOUTH MINISTRIES: Earnings support youth activities including work camps, Sunday School programs, scholarships, Middle and Senior High Fellowship programs and other related activities.

MORRISON ENDOWMENT FOR LANDSCAPING, GROUNDS and GARDENS: Earnings support landscaping needs including the Memorial Garden, Church Grounds, and the Parsonage.

MARGUERITE S. IVERSON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FUND: Earnings support special programs and needs of the C.E. program.

WINNIE AND CHARLIE WILLIAMS ENDOWMENT: The use of this fund is yet to be determined.

MEMORIAL GARDEN PERPETUAL CARE FUND: Earnings are transferred to the Memorial Garden Fund (below).

CAROL W. LEITCH MEMORIAL GARDEN TRUST: Earnings support the care and maintenance of the Memorial Garden, supplements the music program, and provides an annual book award to one or more middle school students.

DR. WILLIS N. PITTS JR. SCHOLARSHIP FUND: Earnings are available to provide scholarship funds for inner city youth.

DAVID and RUTH JOHNSON BIBLE FUND: Earnings purchase bibles for third grade students and for members of the confirmation class.

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Funds from which the principal may be spent

EDWARD H. AND GLADYS Y. BARRY MUSIC FUND: Supports the sacred arts / music program. \$15,000 of this fund was distributed this year as a deposit and installment on updates to the sanctuary organ.

LILLIAN WATERS SERVICE PROJECTS FUND: Supports service and growth opportunities for young people.

CORNERSTONE FORUM: Supports an annual community forum to encourage public discussion about ethical and moral issues facing communities and to identify ways to make our world a better place. The Cornerstone Forum was restructured in 2018 and is currently on hiatus.

PILGRIM CHURCH SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP and the DOROTHY M. QUINN SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP: These scholarships are awarded to first-year college students, selected.

OVERCOME FOOD INSECURITY FUND: Supplements fund-raising for "The Miracle on 25 S. Main Street." If the "Miracle" ceases to exist, all remaining funds shall be applied to similar projects to "Overcome Food Insecurity".

MEMORIAL GARDEN FUND: Supports the care and maintenance of the Memorial Garden.

New funds may be established by donor request - please speak to Pastor John or any member of our committee.

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Respectfully Submitted – Deanna Jantzen, *Chair*
Members
James Campbell
Andrew Meyer
Betty Schlenker
Steve Solomon
SallyTipton

**PILGRIM CHURCH
MEMORIAL AND ENDOWMENT FUNDS
FINANCIAL SUMMARY - December, 2024**

	Balance 1/1/2024	Tot. Rtn. (\$) Allocation	Pledges & Donations	Payments	Balance 12/31/2024
	-----YTD-----				
Donor Restricted Endowment Funds (1):					
General Endowment	447,209.78		1,818.18		449,027.96
Williams Endowment	54,633.28				54,633.28
Powell Creative Word Fund	53,300.66				53,300.66
Morrison Youth Ministries	25,100.00				25,100.00
Iverson Christian Education	10,000.00				10,000.00
Johnson Bible	6,195.00		6,978.28		13,173.28
Pitts Scholarship	5,130.00				5,130.00
Memorial Gdn. Perpetual Care	6,775.00				6,775.00
Leitch Memorial Garden	4,000.00				4,000.00
Morrison Garden/ Landscaping	25,735.59				25,735.59
Donor Specified Use Funds (2):					
Williams Endowment	20,620.21	6,093.19			26,713.40
Powell Creative Word Fund	36,177.21	7,244.92		2,014.55	41,407.58
Morrison Youth Ministries	20,811.31	3,717.38			24,528.70
Iverson Christian Education	13,222.67	1,880.31			15,102.98
Johnson Bible	2,391.91	695.27			3,087.19
Pitts Scholarship	13,249.77	1,488.19			14,737.96
Gladys Barry Music	52,125.08	4,220.51		9,000.00	47,345.59
Waters Service Projects	11,272.76	912.74			12,185.50
Cornerstone Forum	6,722.30	544.30			7,266.60
PC Service Scholarships	3,730.46	302.05			4,032.51
Quinn Service Scholarships	0.00	0.00	1,250.00	1,250.00	0.00
Overcome Food Insecurity	17,060.68	1,381.38	5,584.90	14,346.46	9,680.51
Children's Flowers	312.00	25.26			337.26
Memorial Gdn Perpetual Care	1,801.64	694.44			2,496.08
Leitch Memorial Garden	1,178.50	419.30			1,597.79
Morrison Landscape, Grounds & Gardens	30,966.54	4,591.10	100.00	4,307.31	31,350.33
Congregation Designated Funds					
Unrestricted Gifts & Bequests (3)	355,802.09		5,000.00		360,802.09
Memorial Principal (1)	19,143.33				19,143.33
Chuckie Blaney Candlelighter (2)	68,030.19	7,058.34	1,000.00		76,088.52
Property & Plant (2)	151,849.94	12,295.11			164,145.05
Unallocated Earnings (2)	420,983.21	99,105.42		67,499.65	452,588.99
Total Memorial and Endowment Funds	1,885,531.13	152,669.21	21,731.36	98,417.97	1,961,513.73
Assets					
RBC Investment Portfolio	1,869,081.07	152,664.97		100,000.00	1,921,746.04
MSB Checking Account	10,705.77	4.24		10,710.01	0.00
M&E/Finance Transfer Account	5,744.29		132,441.37	98,417.97	39,767.69
Total Assets	1,885,531.13	152,669.21	132,441.37	209,127.98	1,961,513.73
RBC Total Return YTD (\$)					152,669.21
RBC Total Return YTD (%)					8.1%

Program Payments from Congregation Designated Funds Detail YTD

Chuckie Blaney Candlelighter:	\$ -
Property & Plant	\$ -
Unallocated Earnings	
Main Entrance architect fee (partial)	\$ 14,687.50
Contributon to 2024 Pilgrim Church Operating Budget	\$ 43,781.00
Miscellaneous grant payments	\$ 9,031.15
Total Congregation Designated Funds Program Payments in 2024	\$ 67,499.65

Notes:

(1) Held in perpetuity. (2) Available for spending. (3) Currently held in perpetuity as designated by the congregation.

Stewardship Committee Annual Report

The Stewardship Committee manages the Annual Stewardship Campaign through close collaboration with church administrators and leadership. The Committee distributes pledge information to members and friends and oversees a personalized acknowledgment process designed to create a spirit of gratitude and community.

The charts to the left and below summarize the results of the 2025 campaign.

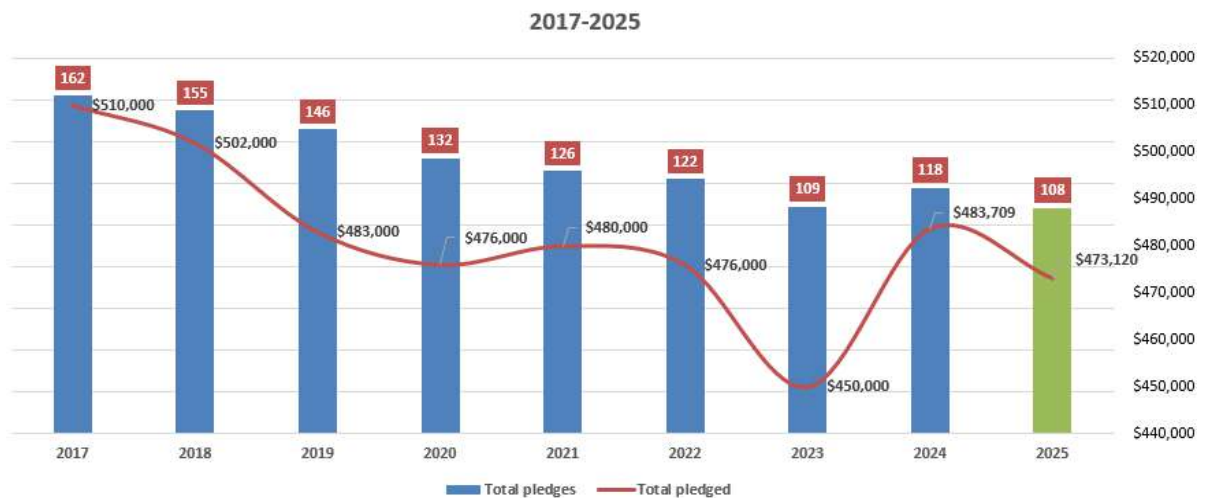
* **Actual vs. prior year:** number of pledges decreased by **8.5%** and dollars decreased by **2.2%**

* **Actual vs. goal:** number of pledges came in lower by **12.9%** and dollars missed by **6.9%**

Key takeaways:

- Shortfall to Prior Year and Goal, primarily driven by 15 non-recurring pledges year-over-year valued at \$21,150
- 100 repeat pledges were received for \$465,120, and increase of \$13,664 or 3.0%
- 8 New pledges were received for \$8,000

Respectfully submitted,
The Stewardship Committee
Megan Abbett, Keith Abbett, Peter Liffiton, Jim Hartman



Vs. Prior

Vs. Goal

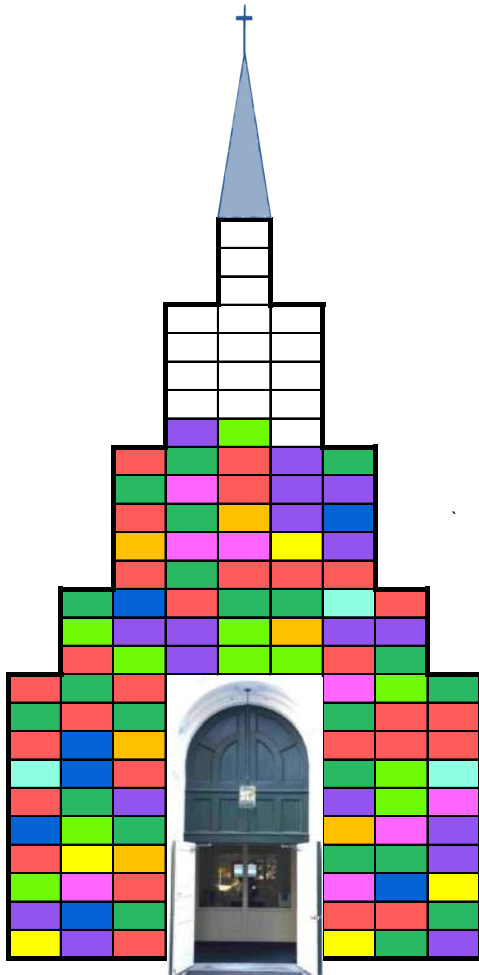
	<u>Prior</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>%</u>
Goal Pledge #	118	108	-10	-8.5%
Goal Pledge \$	\$ 483,709	\$ 473,120	\$ (10,589)	-2.2%
Goal Pledge #	<u>Goal</u> 124	<u>Actual</u> 108	<u>Variance</u> -16	<u>%</u> -12.9%
Goal Pledge \$	\$ 508,000	\$ 473,120	\$ (34,880)	-6.9%

Goal: 5-Year Plan 5.0% increase in pledge # and 5.0% increase in pledge \$



STEWARDSHIP 2025

**LOVE GOD,
LOVE NEIGHBOR,
LOVE SELF**



WAYS TO PLEDGE

On line at
PilgrimSherborn.org
E-mail to: **Pledge**
@PilgrimSherborn.org

Use the pledge card sent to you
in the mail. Bring it to church or
mail it in.

Use the pledge card in the pews
at church.

ANNUAL PLEDGES

3		\$20,000 +
5		\$15,000 - \$19,990
8		\$10,000 - \$14,990
11		\$5,000 - \$9,990
18		\$3,000 - \$4,990
22		\$2,000 - \$2,990
28		\$1,000 - \$1,990
6		\$500 - \$990
7		\$10 - \$490
108	Total	

AS OF 1/13/2025

	PLEDGES	DOLLARS
	87.1%	93.1%
GOAL	124	\$508,000
TO DATE	108	\$473,120
YET TO GO	16	\$34,880

FILL A BLOCK - EVERY ONE MATTERS

Missions Ministries

The Missions Ministries provide outreach, hands-on opportunities, and monetary donations to local, national and global causes. As part of the annual budgeting process at Pilgrim, 5% of the Operating Budget are designated towards our charitable giving each year along with specified donations from our congregational members.

For 2024, donations were sent to 25 local organizations. Please see the disbursement listing for the organizations and their donation amounts.

Along with determining and dispersing the charitable donations, the stewards have maintained an historical perspective to ensure the church's giving is being dispersed in a fair and equitable manner and was reflective of our giving goals.

Below are the totals and percentages of Mission's giving over the last 11 years:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----|
| • Sherborn Charitable Support | \$ 8,000 | 4% |
| • Homelessness and Hunger | \$ 62,700 | 31% |
| • Health and Wellness | \$ 54,400 | 27% |
| • Social Justice | \$ 69,350 | 34% |

Along with our Missions giving, there are various successful programs such as the Angel Tree providing Christmas presents for young families, clothing drives, gift cards and food support through the Miracle on Main Street programing.

The Linda Klockner Hunger Missions Fund donated to the Natick Service Center for the purchase of IT equipment to monitor temperature levels for their pantry refrigeration systems and their food distribution efforts.

It is a great privilege to represent Pilgrim Church as your stewards of the Mission Ministries. We thank you for your continued generosity to help support and make our community a better place.

After 11 years as a steward on Missions, Eve Smith will be retiring. She will be missed for her thoughtfulness, generosity and her drive to make Pilgrim excel in God's work.

Respectfully Submitted - Nancy Buehler, James Byrnes, Cindy Maguire, Eve Smith

Mission Ministries 2024 Giving

1	Benevolent Society	Local	\$ 500
2	Natick Service Council	Local	\$1,000
	Sub Total		\$ 1,500
3	Family Promise Metrowest	Homelessness	\$ 1,000
4	Habitat for Humanity	Home	\$ 500
5	Pine Street Inn	Home	\$ 500
6	Rosie's Place	Home	\$ 500
7	A New Life Home Furnishing	Home	\$ 1,500
8	Harvard Sq Homeless Shelter	Home	\$ 1,250
9	Daniel's Table-Framingham	Hunger	\$ 1,250
10	A Place to Turn	Hunger/Home	\$ 1,000
	Sub Total		\$ 7,500
11	Community Servings	Medical	\$ 1,500
12	Natick Visiting Nurses	Medical	\$ 2,000
14	ADA-Give Kids a Smile	Medical	\$ 2,000
15	Embrace A Family	Medical	\$ 1,000
16	Care Demension	Medical	\$ 1,000
17	NSC-Backpack Program	Medical	\$ 600
	Sub Total		\$ 8,100
18	Medway House Shelter	Social Justice	\$ 2,250
19	Voices Against Violence	Social Justice	\$ 1,500
20	Baby Blanket Drive	Social Justice	\$ 250
21	Lisnow Respit Center	Social Justice	\$ 2,000
22	Women of Means/Healthcare Care w/o Walls	Social Justice	\$ 2,000
23	Medicine Wheel aka Spoke Art	Social Justice	\$ 2,000
24	Salvation Army-Framingham	Social Justice	\$ 2,000
26	Cooperative Met. Ministries	Social Justice	\$ 500
	Sub Total		\$12,500
	RESERVE		\$ 1,000
	TOTAL		\$30,600

Sacred Arts Committee

The Sacred Arts Committee continues to support Pilgrim's Music Ministry as well as planning new ways for the arts to enrich life here and in the community.

Early last March, we co-sponsored with the Hospitality Committee the second annual Trivia Night. It provided a wonderful time of socialization and tweaked our musical memories for answers. Pastor John again served as MC.

Later in the month, we sponsored the annual Powell Fund for the Creative Word. Rabbi Dr. Ruth Langer, Boston College Professor of Jewish Studies and Associate Director of its Center for Christian-Jewish Learning, was the speaker. During the service, she focused on the topic of 'Lent and Easter through Jewish Eyes'; and at a workshop afterward, she led us through a small group *havruta* study of excerpts of the Laws of Repentance from the Mishneh Torah.

The committee was offered two donations of artwork during the year. Nan Vaida offered an 1817 cross-stitch sampler of King Solomon's Temple, and Nevin Shanabrook offered an oil painting of 2 Amish people 'Wash Ye One Another's Feet', created by his grandfather, Frank Zartman, a former UCC minister in Ohio. The members were unanimously in favor of accepting these items. Acquisition Committee was formed to consider the relevance or need for the non-monetary gifts. Approval was given for both pieces, with M+E financing \$5,000. for an art conservator's dry-cleaning process, then later framing the sampler. T. Rose Holdcraft, conservator/consultant cleaned the sampler. Her digital photos of the cleaned piece showed remarkable clarity and beauty compared to the original condition. She'll bring the sampler to Pilgrim on 1/13/25 for the committee to view and then accompany us to a framing store on 1/15/25.

One display location possibility for the finished sampler will be over the parlor couch. The framing cost of the oil was provided by Chris Winterfeldt, Judy Cranshaw, and Beth Villa, and an explanation plaque to accompany it was paid for by Nevin. Consultation with Victoria resulted in placement of this painting along the Christian Ed. corridor, and possibly in the future, a co-teaching Sunday School lesson by Victoria and Nevin.

Dave Tiedman's 80th birthday was celebrated on 10/13/24, with song, cake, and many cards and good wishes!

During Advent, Sacred Arts also supported sanctuary window décor adjustments that worked with the new indoor storm windows. Outside, members helped set up the front yard Nativity figures. Lastly, we joined Dave, Jim Byrnes, and Victoria to organize and present the intergenerational Christmas Tableau.

Considering 2025, Dave discussed with the committee his interest in taking a 10–11-week sabbatical during the summer. He'll get replacement organists and arrange music presentations for the services during that time. We voted unanimously in favor of his request. Pastor John, Personnel Comm. and Parish Board have agreed to the 10-week option.

A congregational opportunity for Jan. 2025 is a Sacred Space visit, including lecture and tour, of the Old Ship Church in Hingham, MA. It was erected in the 1600's and is the only remaining Puritan structure built in the 17th century.

We continue to be grateful for the effort and talents of volunteer musicians in Pilgrim Band, Bell Choir, and Chancel Choir as well as the capable and dedicated work of our Music Director, David Tiedman. We are blessed to have so many people devote so much time to creating consistently beautiful worship experiences.

Respectfully submitted – Nevin Shanabrook and Beth Villa, *Co-Chairs*
Dave Tiedman, *Music Director*, Judy Cranshaw, Kay Dunlap, Bart Morse, Carol Powell-Morse, Steve Solomon, Chris Winterfeldt

Personnel Committee Report

It is with great joy that we share this report. Our staff continues to demonstrate a deep commitment to serving Pilgrim Church. We are thankful for all they do to ensure our congregation continues to benefit from worship, spiritual programs, education, music and outreach.

Staff Recognition

Victoria Gaisford joined us in the fall of 2023 as our new Director of Christian Ed. She jumped in feet first to her role and has been growing our Sunday School program. Victoria has also been assisting with the Middle School Youth Group.

Cindy Sullivan has done a tremendous job in her role as Church Administrator. Cindy continues to serve as Assistant Treasurer. We have deep gratitude for all that Cindy does to keep our church running smoothly!

Pastor John continues to lead the MSYG. We are very thankful to him for his time and commitment to our youth. The Middle School Youth Group has grown, and we are now in our third year of partnership with the Dover Church. The students love to see their friends from across the river!

Dave Tiedman will be on sabbatical from June 15-September 7th. Dave is taking his first ever sabbatical and we are thrilled that he can do so. We are grateful for Dave's time and commitment to Pilgrim Church.

Janet Walsh continues to work her magic to keep many programs and committees on track. Her quiet leadership keeps everything running smoothly and we are always grateful!

And finally, we have deep gratitude for Saul Mendoza who runs our IT and Social Media. Saul is always busy behind the scenes making sure that information about our church is easily accessible to current and prospective church members.

Respectfully Submitted - Kate Potter, Marilyn Marlette, Lidney Motch

Property Trustees

The Property Trustee Committee oversees the ongoing maintenance of the church and parsonage buildings and grounds, as well as plans and implements major renovations to both properties.

A summary of the major activities for 2024 are as follows:

- Address MA DEP action items related to water system testing
- Parsonage repairs
- Liaison / coordination on the Vestibule Upgrade Study
- Liaison / coordination on Security Improvements
- Coordination on repairs to the phone systems
- Oversee repairs / troubleshooting of the fire alarm system.
- Repairs to the Inclined Lift.
- Repairs to Kitchen Dishwasher
- Repairs to the Boilers based on State Inspection
- Addressing items from BOH inspection for Kitchen including plumbing upgrades
- Compile a list of Capital Repairs need for the church and parsonage

Considering the age of both the church and the parsonage, both properties are in reasonably good condition. The PT's try to keep expenses down to a minimum and stay within our operating budget. We always have made every effort to maintain a balanced budget while keeping the church and parsonage in good working order.

Future Activities we are looking to address in 2025

- Replacement / Upgrade of Fire Alarm System
- Close out MA DEP action items related to water system/testing

As always, it is both an honor and a privilege to help maintain the church buildings and I and the rest of the PT's appreciate your support of our work. Please join me in thanking the rest of Property Trustee members for their continued work in this unending endeavor.

Respectfully submitted,
Douglas Peterson, Chair

Committee Members:

Dawn Borden; Fritz Reinhart; Norma Parrish; John Lovell; Peter Liffiton

Grounds Maintenance Committee

(included as a subcommittee to the Property Trustee Committee)

The Grounds Maintenance Committee (GMC), established in 2021, continued its task of refurbishing Church property in 2024. The subcommittee is composed of volunteers willing to perform individual tasks such as weeding, planting, pruning etc. as well as to manage contractors in the performance of larger tasks such as irrigation, fertilizing, tree planting and pruning, etc.

Ongoing tasks in 2024 included: Continued refurbishment of the church lawn, weeding and leaf mold mulching of the Memorial Garden, front trough, the Church sign bed and the borders of the parking lot across Rte. 27. Our new projects, funded by M&E grants, were managing the repair of the retaining wall on the South property line of the Church and managing the painting of the electrical boxes and conduit on the sanctuary so they would better blend in white siding. During the year we realized that maintenance of the Parsonage grounds was too demanding for GMC members to do personally, so we hired AJ Stonework & Landscaping to do the job professionally.

Recurring landscaping projects were funded by a combination of sources: the Landscape line items within the Property Trustee annual operating budget and the Morrison Landscaping account within the Memorial Fund. We also used the Morrison Fund to repair the split rail fence around the Memorial Garden, hopefully extending its life another few years. The GMC subcommittee is currently composed of:

Co-chairs: Dave Tiedman and Jim Campbell

Members: Barbara Ambos, Heidi Dostoomian, Jim Hartman, Bart Morse, Carol Powell and new member Jeremy Benedict

The GMC again appreciates the contribution of Church member Skip Smith, owner of Sanborn Landscaping, who for over 15 years has provided mowing of both the Church and Parsonage lawns throughout the summer as well as ground cleanups in the Spring and Fall. In addition, Sanborn plows the Parsonage driveway throughout the winter.

Solar Committee

(a sub-committee of the Property Trustees)

The church solar collection system went online at the end of January 2023. It has been in continuous operation since then.

Year 2023 – Solar production was 40.75 MWH (megawatt hours) and consumption was 27.83 MWH.

Year 2024 – Solar production was 43.56 MWH and consumption was 34.62 MWH.

The excess production was shared with the parsonage such that there are currently no electricity charges for either the church or the parsonage. This is a budget savings of roughly \$10,000 a year.

The formula for sharing excess capacity is complicated. We must assign a fixed percentage of the excess generation to be shared each month. That percentage may only be changed twice a year. Presently, we are sharing 40% of each month's excess generation for the parsonage. We are still learning if and how much more excess capacity we may have. It is further complicated by the fact that we have far more excess capacity in the summer than in the winter.

Since inception the system has saved 136,045 pounds (68 tons) of CO2 emissions or an equivalent of planting 1,028 trees.

Respectfully submitted,

Pilgrim Church Solar Committee - Peter Liffiton, Chair
Members - Jim Campbell, Fritz Reinhart, Ron Jantzen

Outreach & Engagement Group

This group was proposed by the Strategic Planning Group and approved by the 2/4/24 Annual Meeting. The Group's members are: Jennifer Bethel, Melissa Bowman, Ron Jantzen, Cammi Maguire, Paul Maguire, Bart Morse and Nan Vaida.

As envisioned by the SPG, the O&E Group is to generate active engagement among congregants and the community. The O&E Committee would be responsible for:

- Working with other Church committees, volunteers, and staff to offer faith-based opportunities for enhanced social engagement and activities outside of worship. Each of the church's committees is to offer one activity yearly and O&E is here to help them.
- Initiating new events to engage the congregation and community.
- Creating a comprehensive communications program to build interest in and welcome people to Pilgrim Church; exploring best practices and perhaps hiring a firm to help the Church identify and reach local communities and develop standardized professional materials that all ministries and staff could use to promote events.
- Creating an outreach plan for families that recently moved to Sherborn and neighboring towns.
- Investigating and updating ways to communicate internally for the staff and the congregation.
- Creating protocols for staff and volunteers to promote events at Pilgrim Church.
- Ensuring the Church's calendar of events is published at the beginning of the program year to help people plan.

In 2024 the Group:

- Co-sponsored with the Sherborn Council on Aging a 5-week series on "Aging in Place – Stay or Go?" in May and planning has started on another 5-week program in 2025;
- Is working to help church committees to plan their annual event;
- Actively involved finance and administration in a review of the church's software in order to provide an improved database about members' interests, skills, experience, etc., improve internal (staff and members) communication and the usability of the church calendar;
- Is putting together a congregational questionnaire to find out members' interests and preferences to help guide us in our engagement work;
- Has started comparative evaluation of Pilgrim's marketing with other churches and UCC.

Respectfully submitted - Bart Morse

Welcoming Committee

The Welcoming Committee was established as an ad hoc committee by the Strategic Planning Study in February 2024 by a vote at Annual Meeting. Its purpose is “to create intentional procedures for welcoming to worship service, identifying visitors and potential new members, and maintain contact with visitors and new members . . .”

The committee began meeting in late April and has accomplished the following:

In coordination with Janet, each week a greeter welcomes attendees and encourages them to wear their name tags so they can be referred to by name. Lanyards were added to the name tags to make them easier to wear. Visitors are offered paper name tags. A script is provided each week to the Lay Leader to remind people to wear their name tag and for visitors to fill out a visitor card and put it in the offering plate. Most importantly, tracking visitors is an ongoing project that requires our getting contact information and developing an improved plan and database for follow-up (data regarding number of visitors, their needs and how we communicate with them). We are working with Janet (DCM) and Victoria (Christian Ed Director) to facilitate this.

To make Coffee Hour more welcoming to members and visitors alike, we undertook a refresh of Fellowship Hall during the summer. Carol Powell-Morse, working with Donna Barone, selected fabric and reupholstered the three pew benches in Fellowship Hall.

Funding was provided by the Church Fair Committee. Carol also updated the décor, adding pillows to the pews, new lamps and seasonal window arrangements.

Additionally, we provided input to the vestibule redesign committee.

In September the committee hosted a Harvest Potluck dinner in Fellowship Hall which was attended by 35 people. We had “get-to-know-you” games, wonderful food and small group discussions.

Our committee also provided greeters at the Church Fair in October and hosted Coffee Hour in December.

We will continue working to make sure that everyone – members and visitors – feel welcome and enthusiastic about what Pilgrim Church has to offer.

Special thanks to our committee members who have worked tirelessly in this effort.

Respectfully Submitted - Susan McBride, *Co-Chair*

Carol Powell-Morse, *Co-Chair*

Members - Ron Jantzen, Nancy Kelly, Alexis Madison, Joan Whitman, Barbara Yates

Pilgrim Church Creation Care Committee: Green Initiative

(Environmental Stewardship & Justice/Sustainable Living/Climate Action)

In 2022 this ad hoc committee/Green team was set up to participate in Southern New England Conference, UCC's Green Congregation Challenge, a step-by-step program of actions in five categories: Educate, Organize, Reduce/Recycle/Rethink, Connect and Advocate and four levels of achievement to engage our congregation.

A web page can be found at the church website: www.pilgrimsherborn.org/green-church-initiative/ It has been updated periodically to include links to multiple climate related websites, in adjoining towns, locally, regionally and nationally. Special events and some newsletters have been posted regularly to the blog page offering ideas and resources March through September with updates sent to our mailing list. The roof top solar photovoltaic system will have completed its' second year of operation this month of January. See Solar Committee report.

On Earth Day Sunday was held early on April 14, to fit the calendar of events. The film *Common Ground* was shown. " ***Common Ground*** unveils a dark web of money, power, and politics behind our broken food system. As the highly anticipated sequel to '*Kiss the Ground*', the film profiles a hopeful and uplifting movement of white, black, and indigenous farmers who are using alternative "regenerative" models of agriculture that could balance the climate, save our health, and stabilize America's economy – before it's too late." Discussion followed.

Eliminating the use of single use plastic continues. More often, ceramic mugs and china and stainless utensils are being used during coffee hour. The Property Trustees should be recognized for continuing to make energy saving improvements to the church building with the installation of interior storm windows for the sanctuary. Air sealing and insulation are on the agenda for 2025.

The Environmental Stewardship Assessment through Mass Interfaith Power & Light to give us a road map for investing in additional cost saving, energy saving, carbon emissions reducing actions that we can take awaits data gathering/ has not been done yet.

YOUR VOTE COUNTS: Faith Matters. Remember that and Vote Your Values relative to saving the environment with a sustainable future, in all elections, local, state and national. We need our leaders to take action, NOW before it is too late and move away from fossil fuels and the greenhouse gases they produce. Still the same message, but it is becoming More Critical.

People are invited to become part of a Green Team to coordinate our efforts or join our mailing list for periodic updates. At the October 19 Church Fair, we had a self-service table offering multiple handouts. We note that the Town of Sherborn Sustainability Coordinator resigned December '23.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Jantzen, Facilitator for the Green Team, Beth and Frank Villa, Kay Dunlap and Judy Cranshaw

Capital Campaign Exploratory Committee

Executive Summary

The Capital Campaign Exploratory Committee was formed by a vote of the Parish Board in June 2024 with a mission to consider and prioritize possible needed repairs and improvements to the physical plant of the Pilgrim Church building and the Parsonage. The initial project list was a compilation of direct inputs from the Property Trustees, church staff, Parish Board and church members and friends. The committee met on multiple Thursday evenings beginning in September 2024 and sought out project cost estimates from contractors and quotes from suppliers. We deliberated the relative merits and needs of each of the suggested projects.

In our deliberations we considered whether a project rises to the level of near-term implementation, and if so, what priority it merits. The committee further decided whether each project should be considered a major repair or maintenance items (>\$5,000), or a new item to be funded by a protentional capital campaign.

This final report presents the list of recommended repair/maintenance projects totaling \$478,900 which we believe should be implemented in 2025 using available funding resources at Pilgrim Church. We believe these projects should be authorized by vote of the Congregation at the upcoming Annual Meeting.

This final report also presents a second list of projects totaling \$406,500 that we believe are significant enhancements and/or improvements to our capital plant. Because they are not simple repairs of what's already in place we believe that these projects should be considered for a capital campaign and as such would be funded by money yet to be raised. The committee believes that following competitive bidding, these projects should be authorized by a vote of the congregation at a special Congregational Meeting to be called prior to Summer 2025.

In 2017 when we constructed the new elevator, we applied for variances from the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (AAB) regarding ADA accessibility specifications. We recently learned that the approval sought and granted for these six variances was only temporary in nature, so they may need to be reapplied for to make them permanent. We have already approached the AAB and asked for guidance. Depending on their response, this process could add unanticipated expense and delay to the implementation of the recommended projects, both those listed as Repair/Maintenance Projects and as Potential Capital Projects.

We also recommend that an additional ten percent of the total capital campaign goal be added to the cost and dedicated to mission work in the wider community, i.e. for funding a Habitat House, and/or funding capital projects for non-profits we currently support, like Family Promise or a Place to Turn. We believe this would enhance the campaign and reflect our church's historic commitment to serving and bettering the communities we call home.

Respectfully Submitted, Judy Cranshaw, Jim Campbell, Peter Liffiton, Peter Moores,
Pastor John Hudson and Cindy Sullivan

**A full report is available separately at the February 2, 2025 Annual Meeting.*

ANNUAL MEETING
Pilgrim Church
February 4, 2024

The meeting was held in person and on ZOOM. A quorum of 25 members being present in the Sanctuary, the Meeting was called to order by Co-Moderator, Kay Dunlap, at 11:07 a.m.

Pastor John led an opening prayer, asking for God's help in making good decisions.

Co-Moderator Steve Solomon noted this is the 342nd Annual Meeting of Pilgrim Church! He thanked the staff, lay leaders, volunteers and the congregation for all they've done this past year.

A Motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting. This passed unanimously. (Per our by-laws, those members attending the meeting in person could vote on motions; those in ZOOM could not.)

A Motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the October 2023 Special Congregational Meeting. This passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report (Bart Morse):

The 2023 Actual and Budget numbers and the proposed 2024 Budget are on page 19 of the Annual Report, printed in January 2024. Bart reviewed the highlights of our actual financial experience in 2023 and discussed the 2024 budget:

In my 12 years of being your Treasurer, this Treasurer's Report is the best one so far!

Why you ask?? Let me start with our actual financial experience in 2023.

2023: Our total revenue exceeded Budget by a lot. \$533K vs. \$478K or up 11%. Interestingly, the mix was unusual, again.

Here's why: payments to fulfill actual pledges fell slightly short by \$11,000 or 3%. However, unpledged donations were far higher (about 100% higher) than Budget and vs. our past experience, again. We also had increased income from our Fidelity account (which includes CD interest and the net of gains and losses of donated securities). All that meant we didn't have to use any of the \$15,000 Reserve for unpaid pledges, which is like adding \$15K to our revenue.

Switching to Expenses: Total expenses were higher than Budget by 4%, primarily due to needed IT work, water testing under new DEP requirements, computer hardware and support and the accrual for employee bonuses to be paid in 2024 (this bonus was triggered by our 2023 surplus being over \$20K).

Note that the Solar Project's savings were over \$7,000 vs. 2022 and more savings are expected in 2024 with it operating all year. The final result in 2023 was that the overall surplus of revenue over expenses was \$28,259 !!

A Motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report. The Motion passed unanimously

2024 Budget (Bart Morse):

Many of you may remember that the October Stewardship mailing included what we called an “Aspirational Budget” to help inspire us all to give. This was to show what would be needed in order to have a robust Christian Education program, a full-time Administrator, the first salary increase for the staff in many years and the implementation of the church’s Strategic Plan.

Well, what I’m presenting to you, as the recommended 2024 Budget, is that Aspirational Budget. The Stewardship Committee and you contributors made our stretch goal. Congratulations and Thank you!

Looking at Revenue: Pledge units (that’s the number of individuals or families pledging) increased for the first time in years. The pledge units for this campaign were 119, compared to 109 for the previous campaign. That is significant. We set the Pledges line at the amount that the Stewardship Committee and you achieved for the operating budget in last fall’s campaign, or \$446,500. Added to these actual pledges were estimates for the Unpledged donations, still very significant but at a more historical level (i.e., higher than 2022, but lower than the amazing 2023 level.

We estimated a need for \$15,000 from Memorial & Endowment, under the new M&E Policy, half of which was to meet total expenses and the other half was to fund a \$7,000 increase in the church’s Missions donations to meet the Parish Board’s goal of donating 5% of our operating budget. And, we were able to reduce the Reserve for Unfulfilled pledges from last year’s \$15,000 to zero, because under the new M&E Policy, we could access that amount from M&E if needed. Along with some other smaller revenue items, we budgeted \$550,606 total revenue which is \$72,000 more than last year’s \$478,000 Budget and \$17,000 above the actual 2023 revenue.

Expenses: Compensation represents 60% of our total expenses. We budgeted a 3% salary increase for the staff. The good news is that total compensation cost will be up vs. last year, as we have now filled all vacant positions. The Property Maintenance Fund contribution stays the same as last year at \$20,000. This will be added to the current balance in that Fund to bring its total for the start of 2024 to \$47,000.

The 2024 Budget is balanced.

A Motion was made and seconded to accept the proposed 2024 budget. The Motion passed unanimously.

Kay Dunlap asked for approval of the Committee Reports as presented in the Annual Report. Lidney Motch was added to the list of candidates for the Personnel Committee (term ending in 2027). The Committee Reports and the slate of Officers and Committee Members were approved. Pastor John is grateful for all who help keep the church running – blessing leaders and volunteers and asking God for strength, courage and wisdom for all.

Solar Panels (Peter Liffiton): All electricity in the Church and parsonage is paid with our Solar energy panels – it saved the Church \$7,000 this year. There are no moving parts. There is \$2,800 in reserve with the electric company and in a couple of years we should be able to assess annual usage and donate excess energy to a non-profit.

Strategic Planning Report (Bart Morse) :

This is the final stage of communicating to everyone about the Strategic Plan before the vote today. To go to the beginning of our Group, in May 2022 Parish Board commissioned the Strategic Planning Group to develop a plan to identify priorities for Pilgrim Church's Christian mission for the next three years (2024-2027) and to strengthen the engagement and involvement of the Pilgrim Church congregation and our communication with the wider community. The following members were appointed to the group: Jennifer Bethel, Judy Cranshaw, Susan McBride, Frank Villa, Melissa Bowman, Karl Davis, Carol-Powell Morse, Ron Jantzen, Steve Ciesielski, Bart Morse.

We began our work in the summer of 2022. We started by gathering information about the current situation and what other organizations are doing. We interviewed UCC leadership in New England, leaders of other churches, Pilgrim Church's minister, staff, committee chairs and the congregation's members, friends and visitors. We also studied the Pilgrim Church organization and documents, including bylaws and job descriptions. We designed and distributed a survey and led discussion groups to better understand the congregation's aspirations and suggestions.

During this extensive process, the following areas of concern arose:

1. Less congregational engagement in church activities, less volunteerism (including committee participation) and less financial support than in the past
2. Fewer new participants joining our church than in the past (perhaps in response to insufficient welcoming and integration of potential new members and outreach to the wider community.
3. The Pastor and Director of Congregational Ministries doing too many administrative tasks that crowd out their regular responsibilities due to staff vacancies and some reduced staff hours.
4. A reduced level of administrative oversight, including goal setting and performance evaluations by committees and staff.

After much analysis, discussion, thought and prayer, the SPG recommends the following actions to address these impediments to reaching our full potential as a Christian church:

1. Increase the Administrator position from part time to full time (Done)
2. Increase the hours of the CE Director and fill that vacant position (Done)
3. Organize our committees to revitalize the church --
 - a. Create two new committees:
 - i. The first is Outreach and Engagement – to provide faith-based opportunities for enhanced social engagements and ministry events outside of worship for the congregation, and to invite the wider community. We want to enhance our sense of community.
 - ii. The second is Welcoming – to create intentional procedures for welcoming people to the worship service -- identifying visitors and maintaining active personal contact with them to integrate them into the church activities and community. To review the new member brochure, organize greeters, engage new families with mentors.

- b. Next, the Christian Education Committee concentrates on lifetime CE, including Sunday School, Youth Groups and Adult Christian Education.
- c. Missions Committee coordinates all the Church's mission efforts, including social advocacy, to increase overall participation and effectiveness.
- d. Hospitality and Outreach concentrates on Hospitality and turns over Outreach to the new Engagement and Outreach Committee.
- e. To aid staff in recruiting enthusiastic and qualified individuals for the committees each year, every October a group made up of the Pastor, DCM and one member each of the Engagement & Outreach committee and the Welcoming committee work together to identify and contact appropriate potential committee members for approval by the Annual Meeting in February.

The details of all this are in the Executive Summary in the Annual Report and the full Strategic Plan Report on the church's website. This Plan was presented to the Parish Board in October. Parish Board voted to accept the report and to set up an Implementation Committee to get started on key steps for integrating the Plan's recommendations into the normal operations of the church. Parish Board then voted to forward the Plan for approval by the Annual Meeting.

Susan McBride *moved* to accept the Strategic Planning Report. This was seconded. Approved unanimously.

John Hudson commended the Strategic Planning Committee for all their hard work – they've done an amazing job. It creates hope and encouragement for future growth and work of the church.

Deanna Jantzen, representing the Memorial and Endowment Committee, thanked Chuckie Blaney for her fifty years on the Committee.

The gavel was handed to Judy Cranshaw, the new Moderator. Pastor John noted that he's been here 17 years and in the last two years, people asked to be Moderator stepped right up and said "yes!" He presented a plant to Kay Dunlap and Steve Solomon, thanking them for their steady and persistent leadership over the past two years. He then offered a closing prayer – Asking God to let us know what he wants us to do and to be.

Judy Cranshaw, in her first official act as Moderator, called for a Motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded and approved at 11:40 a.m.

Pilgrim Church Officers and Committee Members - 2025

Committee	Yr. Term Exp.	Committee Member	Committee	Yr. Term Exp.	Committee Member
Officers - 1 yr. Term			Missions	2026	Jim Byrnes
Moderator	2026	Judy Cranshaw	Min. 3 Members	2026	Nancy Buehler
Clerk	2026	Chuckie Blaney	1 yr term	2026	Cindy Maguire
Chief Financial Officer	2026	Karen Flathers		2026	Diane Erickson
Treasurer	2026	OPEN			
			Pastoral Relations	2026	Craig Winterfeldt
Christian Education	2026	Mari Anne Bloecher	5 - 7 Members	2027	Owen Searle
4 - 6 Members	2026	Kay Dunlap	3 yr. term	2027	Carole Marple
3 yr. term	2027	Kate Manzolini		2027	Eric Burt
	2027	Frank Villa		2028	Tad DeMarco
				2028	Stacy Ciesielski
Diaconate	2026	Steve Harris			
8 - 12 Members	2026	Karen O'Connell	Personnel	2026	Kate Potter
3 yr. term	2026	Josh Hartman	Min. 3 Members	2027	Lidney Motch
	2026	Janet Slayton	3 yr. term	2028	Marilyn Marlette
	2027	Heather Dragsbaek			
	2027	Marilyn Marlette	Property Trustees	2026	Fritz Reinhardt
	2027	Megan Page	Min. 6 Members	2026	Norma Parish
	2027	OPEN	3 yr. term	2026	Peter Liffiton
	2028	Beth Villa		2027	John Lovell
	2028	Rae Dearborn		2028	Doug Peterson
	2028	Faith Carlson		2028	Dawn Borden
	2028	OPEN		2028	Tom Erickson
Hospitality and Outreach	2026	Sally Tipton	Sacred Arts	2026	Bart Morse
3 - 7 Members	2026	Betty Schlenker	6 - 8 Members	2026	Carol Powell Morse
1 yr. term	2026	Faith Carlson	3 yr. term	2026	Beth Villa
	2026	Janet Walsh		2027	Judy Cranshaw
	2026	Joan Whitman		2027	Nevin Shanabrook
	2026	Barbara Yates		2028	Kay Dunlap
	2026	Cindy Stewart		2028	Steve Solomon
	2026	Barbara Koman		2028	Chris Winterfeldt
Memorial and Endowment	2026	Steve Solomon	Stewardship	2026	Jim Hartman
Min. 6 Members	2026	Andy Meyer	3 - 5 Members	2026	Peter Liffiton
3 yr. term	2027	Deanna Jantzen	2 yr. term	2027	Megan Abbett
	2027	Betty Schlenker		2027	Keith Abbett
	2028	Jim Campbell			
	2028	Sally Tipton	UCC Delegates	2026	OPEN
			Yearly	2026	OPEN

Bylaw member numbers and term requirements are noted under Committee name. New and renewing members are in bold.

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NO EXCEPTIONS!

Pilgrim Church Sherborn pilgrimsherborn.org
