

MATTAPOISETT
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2023

April 21, 2024





MATTAPOISETT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

ANNUAL MEETING—April 21, 2024

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FINANCIAL REPORTS TO BE PROVIDED SEPARATELY

**MATTAPOISETT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
MATTAPOISETT, MASSACHUSETTS**

WARRANT

TO: Karen Gray, Clerk

Greetings:

To: Karen Gray, Clerk

You are hereby asked to notify the members of said Church to meet in Reynard Hall of Mattapoissett Congregational Church on Sunday, April 21st, 2024 immediately following the 10:00AM worship service to attend the Annual Meeting and to act on the following articles;

Article 1: To determine and declare a Quorum of at least 30 members.

Article 2: To receive and approve the minutes from the Annual Meeting of 2023.

Article 3: To receive the reports of the Church Council.

Article 4: To review the reports of the Treasurer, Finance Committee and Audit Committee. This includes the proposed budget and yearly contribution to the UCC and to act upon this proposal.

Article 5: To approve the slate of Executive Officers, Committee Chairs and Committee Members and approve those who are extending their terms.

Article 6: To approve the Revised By-Laws as recommended by the By-Laws Committee. Advance copies will be available at MCC in the office, on the table by the Minister's office and on-line.

Article 7: To act on any other business brought before the membership as well as new business put forward at the meeting.

This Warrant shall be posted at the Meeting House for twenty-five (25) days prior to the time of the meeting on April 21st, 2024. This Warrant will also be posted on MCC's website, emailed via Constant Contact and emailed with the Annual Report to the Congregation.

Phil Jackson, Council Chair and President
Mattapoissett Congregational Church Council

I have this date of March 26th, 2024, posted this Warrant on the main bulletin board of the Mattapoissett Congregational Church, and made arrangements to have it posted on-line and emailed accordingly to the Congregation.

 Karen H. Gray, Clerk

MATTAPOISETT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
ANNUAL MEETING
March 26, 2023

Rachel Deery called the meeting to order at 11:16 AM. The meeting was held in Reynard Hall.

Dr. Richard Wolf offered a prayer.

Karen Gray confirmed that there was a quorum as we had over 30 attendants at the meeting.

Church Clerk, Karen Gray certified that the Annual Meeting Warrants were posted on the main bulletin board of the church on February 24, 2023. The warrant also was distributed via mail and email. A motion was made to accept the minutes of the Annual Meeting held on April 24, 2022. Motion was seconded. Rachel opened the floor to any discussion, corrections or amendments and clarifications for the minutes. There was no discussion. The vote was taken and the minutes accepted.

Church Chair Council Report:

Phil Jackson spoke to the congregation. Phil thanked the congregation and the many volunteers on our committees. He thanked Rich and Margaret for their time here so far and looking forward to the next half. He announced that Alexandra Caine will be our new Vice Chair. Phil reviewed his Council Chair Report. Phil stated that a Search Committee has been established for our next Pastor: Tara Rajaniemi, Elliot Talley and Phil Jackson are Tri-Chairs, Roxanne Bungert, David Dunn, Carolyn and Matt Pawlishen, Julie Menino, Nancy Perry and Susan McMahon.

Pastor Rich Wolf addressed the congregation. He spoke about the transition and the future, looking at our search for our new Pastor. He spoke about the governance of the church and the model for this in need of updating. There will be a by-laws task team put together in order for the right sizing of our governance. We will be looking closely at hospitality (helping new members join) and Stewardship planning and understanding the practice. Personnel policies and practices will be looked at into the future.

Committee Reports: Rachel asked for a motion to accept the committee reports, with the exception of the financial reports (Treasurer, Financial and Audit), seconded. Rachel then invited those who had questions or comments regarding any of those reports to speak as she read through the list of reports in the annual report. A vote was taken and the motion accepted.

Finance Report: Rachel asked for a motion to approve the Finance Report. Motion made, seconded. Rachel invited Jen Shepley to present this report. Jen presented the Finance Report and moved into a budget presentation as follows:

The music salary line 54 was corrected to read \$31,706 to reflect the 3% increase which had been given for staff. That \$996 increase in results in slight budget deficit of \$996 and an overall differential of \$8,806 on line 59 at the very bottom. Jen stated they are doing our best with investments and pledges on hand. We are appealing to volunteers to run Stewardship as we have been doing this in the Finance Committee. Jen asked for any questions on the Budget Report, and she reviewed each page of the report. Jen asked for a motion to accept the Finance Report. After the vote, the motion accepted. Rachel asked for a motion to approve the budget. Jack Eklund made a motion to approve budget with corrections as explained by Jen, seconded. The budget motion was also accepted.

Treasurer's Report: Paula Bonney thanked Tina for her help. Tina helped her a lot this year. Welcomed Suzanne McLaughlin to the Finance Committee. Asked if anyone had questions, no one asked a question.

Nominating Committee: Rachel called for a motion to accept the slate. Motion made, seconded. Betty Hill presented for the committee and highlighted the Officers and the ballot/slate for committees. Betty Hill stated that we have Pat Goss and Ali Caine. She thanked those who answered the calls for serving. Jack Eklund made a motion to amend the slate to correct the spelling of Bruce Rocha's name on the ballot, stating that Bruce Rocha is with an A. Motion was seconded and accepted. Another motion was made to correct the spelling of Dale Thackeray's name. Seconded and motion to amend also accepted. Also, during discussion, there was a question regarding Carole Clifford, who is set to serve on 2 committees – Stewardship and Faith Formation. Jack Eklund stated that this can happen as the 2 committees are not major committees in the by-laws. Rachel then called for a vote on the main motion to accept the entire slate as amended to correct all the spelling errors, Motion accepted.

New Business: Jack Eklund thanked everyone who has worked over the last couple of years and thanks Rich and Margaret during this transition. Motion made to thank them. Motion accepted. Steve Bonney made a motion to have our church be an open and affirming church. Seconded by Jack Eklund and then he spoke. He fully supports this, but he did not know whether we can affectively take this step under the national UCC by-laws or guidelines, without having a congregational vote. He deferred to Rich's expertise to determine if would we run against the UCC guidelines. Rich stated the procedure is very similar to the Just Peace we presented. Present this to the congregation so everyone knows what they are voting on. There is designation by the national church, a 1-year track going through a longer process, or another track is the informed leadership, and the leadership council votes for it. Rich felt we should do a town hall for this and explain the meaning of open and affirming church. Jack Eklund moved to recommend that the church vote here to promptly establish a committee to study and present this to the congregation as to whether we are to become open and affirming, there was a second, but Tom Openshaw suggested amending Jack's motion to simplify it. Tom's amended motion was to put together a committee to study open and affirming to present it to the congregation to help the us bring it to a vote. The amended motion was seconded and accepted.

Voted to adjourn the meeting at 12:07 p.m.

Respectfully,

Karen H. Gray, Clerk

**MATTAPOISETT CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
SPECIAL MEETING
DECEMBER 31, 2023**

On Sunday, December 31st, 2023, Reverend Michael Frady led our congregation in worship and delivered his Candidating Sermon to the 92 attendees. Immediately following the worship service, Jack Eklund served as Moderator and called the congregation wide meeting to order. A motion to Call Reverend Frady to be our settled Pastor was made and seconded. Ballots were distributed to the 73 voting members in attendance. The ballots were then cast and counted by the Deacons. The results were unanimous with Reverend Frady receiving 73 votes For and 0 Against.

Congratulations to Reverend Michael Frady and to all of us!

CLERK'S REPORT

Covenant members as of 1/1/2023 219

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Additions* | 7 |
| Confirmation | 0 |
| Re-Affirmation | 0 |

Subtractions:

| | |
|--|----|
| Transfer out | 1 |
| Death | 4 |
| Transfer to inactive (based on response to survey) | 93 |

Baptisms: None

Deaths of Covenant Members:

Lois Murray
 Carol Shute
 Carol Atkinson
 Gail Dunn

Weddings: 2 (none church members)

Confirmations: None

Total Covenant Members as of 12/31/2023 128

***New Covenant Members:**

Ashley Weber
 Linda Gurney
 Brad Gurney
 Tara Rajaniemi
 Suzanne McLaughlin
 Margaret Ishihara
 Gail Broderick

COUNCIL REPORT

As I reflect over the last 5 years as your Council Chair and sit down to write my Annual Report, I always look to start with the theme, the “story” of the preceding year. Circles!, Pandemic!, Taking back our church! and Transition! have served each year well. I already know that the story of 2024 will be New Beginnings! as we say goodbye to Doctor Wolf and welcome Pastor Michael Frady as our new, settled Pastor. But what about 2023? What did 2023 mean in the life of our church, in our lives as a congregation? What was our story?

2023 was of course chock full of events, special services, outreach, traditions, fundraisers and fun. As I have been reminded in the past, each Committee Chair likes to recap these accomplishments in their own reports and appreciate it if I don't steal their considerable thunder. Let me just say THANK YOU to each and every one of our congregation for your volunteerism, your financial commitment, your leadership and your dedication to Mattapoisett Congregational Church. We could not be who we are without You! Also, Welcome to the many new faces. All are Welcome here.

But what about the meaning of 2023? What was it all about?

At the Annual Meeting in March of 2023, Steve Bonney raised a motion that we, Mattapoisett Congregational Church, should pursue the official UCC process to become an Open and Affirming Church. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved. An O&A team was formed with Cindy Johnson as Chair and includes Drew Nahigyan, Karen Gray, Dale Thackeray, Tracy Djerf, Ali Caine, Jack Eklund and Steve Bonney. At our Annual Meeting in April, 2024 we will receive an update on their considerable progress and please know that we are close to the goal.

Also in 2023, Council commissioned a committee to review and recommend updates to our MCC By-Laws. Their purpose was to simplify and modernize our governance and they have done a great job. We will be voting on their proposals at the Annual Meeting on April 21st, 2024. Thank you to Lynne Nahigyan, Betty Hill and Barbara Van Inwegen for taking on this important project.

Finally for 2023, as we all know, Doctor Wolf has been serving as our 2 year Interim Minister. He has led us through an incredible transition process with the end goal being to establish a Search Team dedicated to finding a new, settled Pastor to start on April 28th, 2024. A fantastic team was assembled led by Tara Rajaniemi and Elliott Talley. Members included Nancy Perry, Al Meninno, Carolyn Pawlishen, Susan McMahan, Julie Meninno, Matt Pawlishen, David Dunn, Roxanne Bungert and Phil Jackson. After months of searching, interviews and personal meetings, the Team recommended Pastor Michael Frady to become our new, settled Pastor. On Sunday, December 31st, 2023 our Congregation voted unanimously to accept Pastor Michael into our family and he starts on April 28th, 2024.

In the spring of 2023, Reverend Patty Kogut had addressed our church with greetings from the UCC. Reverend Patty is our ACM (Area Conference Minister) from the SNEUCC and she looks over us as members of The United Church of Christ. In her remarks she said “I understand that you are taking on O&A, a review of your By-Laws and a Search for a new, settled Pastor. This is an ambitious church!”

And we did all of this and so much more in 2023. Bucking all trends, Attendance is way up! Pledges are up over 15%! Our Faith Formation and Youth program is rapidly expanding! We are on a roll!

So, what is the story of 2023? I propose “Taking Care of Business and Reaffirming Our Love for All!”

In Faith,
Phil Jackson
Council Chair and President



INTERIM MINISTER’S REPORT

When we began our transitional ministry partnership back in April of 2022, I chose to offer a biblical metaphor for our shared journey as congregation and minister. We then considered the three main movements in the Exodus saga. The people in bondage in Egypt, the wandering in the wilderness and covenanting with God and each other, and the attainment of life in the promised land. The church was in bondage to the past, we wandered together to find ourselves, and now as we finish our time together, the promised land is near. But neither your arriving Pastor Michael nor your departing Pastor Rich are Moses-type leaders. So I don’t really want to call it a promised land, as it isn’t. You are going instead to a land *of* promise.

There is the promise of new beginnings, which has been the theme for our past year or so. I am proud to have been with you to assist in getting you prepared for your pastoral search. I am thankful to have assisted and resourced you on your path toward being designated an Open and Affirming Congregation. I am blessed to have seen you engage in a meaningful and successful search, and now live the promise of a new beginning with a new pastor very soon.

There is the promise of growth. You are a healthy church! I have witnessed no major conflict, and an incredible level of volunteerism. This, along with new and skilled leadership, is the perfect environment for growth as a church. You are missional, and people want a place where they can make a difference. You are concerned with peace and justice, and people want a community that can help change the world for the better. I see vast potential for growth in both your numbers and in individual faith.

There is also the promise of the Holy Spirit's leadership. You are not in any of this alone. God loves you, welcomes you, and challenges you to do great and faithful things as a church. Yes, MCC is a Land *of* Promise.

That covers the promise part. Here is a more traditional "reporting" of my ministry with you in the past year or so:

- I officiated at 3 weddings and 12 funerals/memorials.
- I taught a "Faith 101" adult study last Lent, and we shared a movie series this Lent.
- A class on World Religions was offered last fall.
- We retired the Transition Team, but formed new teams for Open and Affirming, bylaws revision, and a Pastoral Search Committee.
- I continued hospital and skilled nursing facility visits.
- I worked with the Deacons to clean up the membership rolls.
- I attended UCC association and conference meetings.
- The Ora et Labora service took place in June, and a pet blessing was held in the yard in July.
- In September we dedicated our newly remodeled and repaired steeple.
- I continued to staff and meet with: Church Council; Council Executive Committee; Deacons; Trustees; Missions; Just Peace, Open and Affirming; and other sub-groups and working teams.

I also wish to use this space to publicly thank our church staff: Tina, Bryan, and Michelle. I could not have asked to work with a better team. These three souls stuck with the church through both a pandemic and a three-year time with no permanent pastoral leadership.

To conclude, I thank you for the opportunity to serve as your transitional minister. I also thank you for the warm welcome and acceptance Margaret and I have experienced in our time with you. With God's continued blessing, and the leadership of the Holy Spirit, I see great things ahead for this faithful congregation.

Rev. Dr. Richard G Wolf
Interim Minister



FAITH FORMATION

In 2023, FF chair Tara Rajaniemi resigned and I took over the role in Fall of 2023. Thank you Tara for your many years of dedication, service, and hard work serving the children and families of MCC.

Sunday School resumed during the Fall of 2023. The goal when restarting Sunday School was to unite the children of the church and foster a sense of community. Students also learned about God's Creations.

In December, Faith Formation hosted a hot cocoa, craft, and movie night to kick off the month of December. The families joined together to watch a Christmas movie, build gingerbread nativities, and sip on hot cocoa. This event really brought together the children, along with the families of the church. Kim Vinal, a new member of the faith formation committee hosted this event. Fun was had by all!

The annual White Gift Pageant became part of a Sunday service worship like last year. The faith formation team helped to get costumes ready and watch the children as they eagerly awaited their part in the pageant. A big thanks to Abby Fortin and Rylie Coughlin for their support. All of our Sunday School students were participants in the pageant and some of their relatives came to join in on the magical day. Elliott Talley did a wonderful job as the narrator of Jesus. Gavin Pawlishen played the part of Joseph, alongside him was his cousin Hazel Canastra playing the part of Mary. The Sunday School children were glowing playing their important part of an angel, sheep, shepherd, or wisemen. The children brought so much joy and love to the congregation that day. It was a reminder to us all of the true meaning of Christmas. We greatly appreciate the gift cards donated. They were delivered to St. Vincent dePaul to be distributed to families in need.

During the month of January the students learned about what happens when they talk to God and different ways they can talk to God. Children's books were used to teach students they are loved, created, and can rely on God to always be there for them.

During the month of February the Faith Formation team decided it's important to bring the children and the congregation together more often. The children helped to host a coffee hour in the month of February where they brought in yummy baked goods, cookies, and drinks for everyone to enjoy. The children also made Valentine's and distributed them to members of the church to spread love throughout the congregation. Thank you to the hospitality committee for helping us learn the ropes of hosting coffee hour.

The children learned about the story of Easter in March and how God Gave Us Easter so we could be with Him forever. Students are digging deeper into just how much God loves them. The Faith Formation team hosted an Easter Egg Hunt held on the front lawn of the church for the families of the church after the Easter Sunday Service. The donations from the congregation to make this happen were greatly appreciated.



We have been able to continue offering regular childcare in the Family Room during the Sunday service thanks to Abby Fortin and Ryle Coughlin. A few new members have joined the faith formation committee this past year. Maddie Blackburn and Kim Vinal have joined the team! Maddie has assisted in teaching and has been a great support at other events. Kim Vinal has been very helpful with the event planning and supporting in any way she can. A big thanks to Rylie Coughlin, Phoebe Girard, and Julie Menino for teaching Sunday School. I appreciate all the unique gifts of the team and feel blessed to be working with them. Thank you for all you have done in helping the faith formation program grow at MCC.

Lastly, I want to thank the folks on the executive council team for their continued support in helping me to work through some of the growing pains of jumping into my new role. Also, I appreciate Tina's continued support as well.

God Bless,
Carolyn Pawlishen
Faith Formation Chair

BOARD OF DEACONS

The Board of Deacons welcomed two Deacons this past year, Dale Thackeray and Ralph Eustis.

The duties of the Deacons in the life of the church this past year were:

- Lent
- Holy Week
- Remembrance Sunday
- Advent Season
- Family Support at funerals
- Pulpit supply
- Welcoming worshippers on Sunday

We also worked on updating the membership this past year. The important survey of the church membership had not been done in a few years and we felt it was the right time. The survey not only provided the Deacons with an up to date membership, but also provided the representation that was needed to complete the profile for the Search Committee team.

To all that stepped in to help when asked, THANK YOU!

In God's Service,
Board of Deacons
Jerry Baker, Tracy Djerf, Ralph Eustis, Lisa Hill, Elliott Talley, and Dale Thackeray

TRUSTEES

1. **Steeple:** The major steeple repair work was completed – the weather vane was powder coated and re-installed using a new mast. Rotten wood was replaced; all fencing was replaced with plastic or fiberglass. The steeple was scraped and painted. Some minor roof repair around the steeple was done. The steeple lights are to be replaced during this new church year.
2. **Inspections:** All required safety Inspections were conducted- fire alarm and smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, kitchen fire suppression; kitchen health inspection, general safety inspection.
3. **Sanctuary:** Some caulking and painting in the front of the sanctuary was done. A bench was re-installed on the front left side to match the right side.
4. **Girl's bathroom** – An uninsulated copper pipe froze last winter causing a significant water leak. This break was repaired, some insulation installed and the pipe chase sealed.
5. **Lifts:** All 3 lifts have been serviced and are operational. The choir loft lift passed state inspected in Feb. 2024 and the other two passed inspection in March of 2023. Note- inspections are good for 2 years.
6. **Boiler** - A water pump on one of the boilers was replaced. All air vents in Reynard Hall were replaced; they were all heavily corroded and one had leaked. The boilers were serviced with some minor repair.
7. **Exterior work:** The plastic bench was installed facing the church behind the front sign. Lights on the Mechanic Street lot were replaced with LED lights. Rusted chains on the stone pillars were removed. The main fascia board on the front of sanctuary entrance was replaced; it had partially blown off in a storm. A broken tree limb that was hanging over the sidewalk to Church Street entrance was removed.
8. **Lawn Service:** BRW (Brian Wotton) was contracted to do the lawn at both the church and parsonage; they also did fall clean-up at both properties.
9. **Snow Plowing:** Luckily, we did not have a lot of need this year for snow removal. The sidewalks were salted and cleaned as needed by Bryan.
10. **Spring work party:** A clean-up work party was held at the church in June and mulch added to the beds.
11. **Carriage House:** The carriage house roof was power washed. Repairs are being considered.
12. **Metal handrails at Main Church Street entrance:** Bryan cleaned and painted these rails.

13. Parsonage: The window AC units were installed in the late spring. Heat/cooling pumps were installed with a Mass Save program in the parsonage so AC units are no longer needed.

14. Weekly opening/closing: The trustees continued to open and lock up the church for Sunday Services.

15. On-going Projects: Projects that need to be addressed include the following:

- a. Church Street Door near office – an electric door opening device should be considered.
- b. Class Rooms – continuation of cleaning is needed.
- c. Gutter on front of building on conference room side to be fixed in the spring.
- d. General painting - to be reviewed (includes front shutters)
- e. Window Shutters on church on Barstow Street side need to be replaced.
- f. Landscaping - to be reviewed
- g. Water fountain - to be replaced
- h. Carriage house – needs some repairs
- i. Lights on Church Street entrance to Reynard need replacement.
- j. Choir Loft – ceiling needs fixing
- k. Girls’ bathroom floor needs addressing
- l. Kitchen Ceiling tiles need work
- m. Sanctuary recessed light bulbs – to be replaced
- n. Painting of the whole exterior of the church

Respectfully Submitted Mar 15. 2024 by Richard Van Inwegen, Chair of the Trustees

Additional Trustees: Lauren Keene, Dave Kaiser, Chuck Talley, Erich Carroll, Jim Mitcheson.



MISSION 2023

“Our mission is to share the love of Jesus Christ through good works and gracious acts of giving.”

It has been a year of helping people in need, both with our donations of time and money and with our individual prayers. We are extremely grateful for the leadership Rev. Rich has provided over this past year. He has encouraged us to be bold in our Mission outreach.

We accomplished a great deal on behalf of the Mattapoisett Congregational Church:

Fighting hunger

We continue to support Mercy Meals and More with our donations.

We volunteer at the Share the Harvest Farm at the YMCA in Dartmouth and the Full Plate Project at the Wareham Y. We also support these organizations with a financial donation.

We participated in the PACE Thanksgiving food drive.

Education

We want to acknowledge and thank Cindy Johnson for her ongoing work at Carlos Pacheco School and Jen Shepley for her work teaching English to local immigrants.

Helping folks in need

We continue to collect warm clothing and shoes – distributing them to the refugee families in our local community and to Mercy Meals and More.

We provided Christmas gifts to families through PACE.

We sponsored 5 inner city children for one week at the local YMCA Camp.

We are especially proud of our large donation to support the Immigrant Assistance Center’s mental health counselor who works closely with the young immigrants who come here often unaccompanied and who are asked to deal with the challenges of living on their own.

We hosted a special dinner with our immigrant friends from Afghanistan. The food was delicious and the support of the community was inspiring.



Your mission donations supported the following in 2023:

\$5,000 to SNEUCC (Southern New England UCC)

\$1,650 to YMCA Camperships

\$1,500 to Interchurch Council of NB

\$1,500 to Buzzards Bay Habitat for Humanity

\$1,500 to Gifts to Give

\$1,500 to Women's Center of NB

\$3,000 to Mercy Meals and More

\$2,000 to Salvation Army

\$2,000 to Share the Harvest

\$1,000 to Full Plate Project

\$2,000 to CEDC

\$400 Dinner with Afghanistan community

\$500 to Mattapoisett Fire and Police

\$500 gift for PACE Thanksgiving food drive

\$194.00 for Christmas gifts to PACE families

Thank You

We are so grateful for your continued support and trust. We have a committed group of individuals working hard on your behalf and we are truly appreciative that we can carry out the churches mission work with your support.

Respectfully submitted by your mission committee:

David Anderson, Gary and Susan Grosart, Jennifer Schlitzer, Margaret Ishihara, Katherine Gaudet, Alison Noyce, Drew and Lynne Nahigyan

AUDIT COMMITTEE

We have examined the operational income and expenses for 2023. We find that the results have been recorded according to proper procedures.

Peg Olney and Bruce Rocha Sr.

JUST PEACE REPORT FOR 2023

The Just Peace Team enjoyed another year of important initiatives. We met monthly and spent our time together sharing resources, ideas and developing plans for how we can take action. Some of these are listed below.

Environmental Issues

We had an “Earth Friendly” display January 15th following Rev Jim Antal’s sermon on climate change. Rev. Antal’s book “Climate Church, Climate World” was available for purchase.

Earth Day was April 22nd and we had a group that helped with the town wide cleanup.

The Trex bench found its permanent home in front of church behind the wayside pulpit.

Immigration

We enjoyed listening to "Pihcintu"-a multinational girl's chorus that has brought immigrant and refugee girls from 34 countries, into a family of singers dedicated to making music embracing peace.

In March we held “Stories Beyond Borders” which was a video presentation put on by Tara and followed by a discussion with representatives from the Immigrant Assistance Center and the CEDC.

We hosted an Afghan dinner put on by the local Afghan immigrants and attended by many in the community.

We discussed how we could act regarding a ceasefire in Gaza. The UCC website provided prayer and opportunities for financial contributions to assist with the humanitarian mission for both Israelis and Palestinians.

Racial and Social Justice

Tri Town Against Racism continues to offer opportunities to get involved. On January 19th they had a book study on “The Hate U Give.”

The Whaling Museum showed a documentary on January 24th on [Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North - New Bedford Whaling Museum](#).

During Black History month we challenged everyone to take part in 1 or more of the local events.

Tara and Elliott shared their experience at the General Synod and the issues the UCC is working on.

We continue to talk about gun control and Phoebe has provided numerous resources for us to get involved in.



MEMORIALS AND CELEBRATIONS COMMITTEE

The bylaws of the Mattapoisett Congregational Church (MCC) require the Memorials & Celebrations Committee to keep an accounting of all 'general' memorial and memorial scholarship funds, which are maintained in separate accounts by the Church treasurer. Periodically, the Committee may establish a list of items or projects outside the scope of the operating budget to support the work of the Church, to be purchased using unrestricted memorial funds. The Committee is asked to consider the wishes of donors, when known, and take appropriate action for the disbursement of funds with the approval of the Church Council. We must keep a visible record of memorial gifts and inform the appropriate committee(s) in the event a donor(s) wishes to restrict their gift. Lastly, the Committee administers the Memorial Scholarship Fund. Committee members are responsible for establishing the number and dollar amount of scholarships in accordance with available funds, distribution of scholarship applications, review and evaluation of the candidates' qualifications and awarding of scholarships.

In 2023 two \$2,500.00 scholarships were awarded to two students; one attended ORR High School and the other attended Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School. In addition, we awarded \$1,000 scholarships to four other applicants.

In January 2024, the Committee began planning for the 2024 scholarship award application process. The application was available online to allow applicants to apply electronically; the cover letter was updated; the call for applications was included in "Spiritually Speaking," posted on the MCC website and sent to local media. Applicants were instructed to send inquiries, completed applications, transcripts and letters of recommendation via email to Barb Van Inwegen. Notices to guidance offices at ORR, Old Colony, Bishop Stang, Falmouth Academy, Bristol County Ag. Tech, New Bedford Votech, Upper Cape VoTech, Fairhaven and Tabor informing them of the process were transmitted electronically. The timeline was established as follows: deadline for application submission March 29th; applicants will be notified by April 26th; introduction of scholarship winners during worship on May 12th.

We are very grateful to those who contribute to the Church in memory of family and friends. It is very helpful if donations indicate to which church project money is being contributed.

To sustain a consistent scholarship funding the Mems & Celebs Committee would like to remind everyone that gifts to the MCC Scholarship fund are most welcome whenever an important event, such as the birth of a child, a wedding, a 'special' birthday, anniversary or graduation, is being

celebrated. We also offer a second scholarship, the Dagmar Coquillette Scholarship, through the generous donations of the Coquillette family. We continue to monitor the portion of the funds under our oversight in a UCF fund that offers a better increase in earnings. We strive to fulfill the responsibilities of the Committee with care and consideration and to be good stewards of the funds contributed to the Memorials & Celebrations accounts.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Bungert, William Coquillette, Linda & Brad Gurney, Carolyn Price, Barbara Van Inwegen

Memorials & Celebrations Committee

For the financial report of the Memorials & Celebrations Committee, please refer to the addenda, prepared by the treasurer.

MUSIC COMMITTEE

The sound of music is alive and well at Mattapoissett Congregational Church. The Christmas season was enriched by the Christmas Cantata "Sing Joy to All the World." Michelle arranged for artists from the Seaglass Opera Company to join the choir. It was well attended and seemed to be very well received.

The choir now boasts 12 members, from a total of 4 members after we returned to church from the pandemic. We are always looking for new choir members, and welcome anyone to come to Choir Rehearsal at 9:15 on Sunday morning in the Sanctuary.

Michelle is continuing to compose Preludes and Postludes and arrange some Choir Anthems for the church. Local Vocal Artists, Andy Crain and Alisa Cassola, sang for the Christmas Eve Services. Local Vocal Artist, Patrice Tiedemann, joined the church for Homecoming at Ned's Point. Trumpeter Bob Williamson joined both Patrice Tiedemann and the Choir for our Easter Sunday Service.

We are grateful that Brad Gurney, the husband of Choir member Linda Gurney, shared an anthem that he composed with the choir, and we enjoyed presenting it to the congregation in 2023.

Michelle is already planning for our Easter service as we need to book any musicians now. Patrice Tiedemann is already booked so Michelle is scheduling another soloist named Kara Lund. She has sung with the Rhode Island Philharmonic and with Patrice.

Music Team:

Chair: Karen Gray, Tracy Djerf, Pat Cole, Michelle Gordon – Director of Music

FUNERAL SUPPORT

We served refreshments following the funeral services for:

Jerry Johnson January 14, 2023

Lois Murray April 01, 2023

Ann Briggs May 26, 2023

Carol Atkinson July 11, 2023

Gail Dunn September 29, 2023

Respectfully,

Kathy Langevin
Funeral Support Comm.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

Hospitality continues to be a fun social time of community and fellowship after service (with the exception of summer), nearly every Sunday. Our goal every week is to provide a nice environment to stop and reconnect with our friends and fellow parishioners.

We continue to work toward eliminating the use of materials that end up in landfills. Our machine washable, reusable cloth napkins are in a redesign upgrade stage. They are being cut down to a 'snack' size, rather than being a dinner size. We'll get back to using them, instead of paper in the near future. Tablecloths have to be washed anyway, so it's very easy to toss in napkins as well. No ironing involved and better for the environment.

The official weekly 'crew' right now consists of Susan McMahan and Mary Jackson. We want to be sure to thank ALL of the additional helping hands, on any given Sunday, that help out, starting with the Trustees and Phil who are always there first thing to set up tables and pull in chairs where everyone gathers. We also want to thank people coming in before service who stop and check in to see if we need help. We especially want to thank those who help clean up after and get the kitchen back in order. It would be a bigger job without them. So thanks to ALL of you very much!



One of our projects for the coming year is to recruit a few more regular helpers and/or setting up some kind of a revolving schedule for additional help because we can't always be there. This past year each committee handled a week while people traveled and it seemed to work out well. So maybe we could do that again? Any thoughts on how to accomplish this

are welcome. Also welcomed is anyone who can sign up to be part of the 'regular crew' on Sunday mornings. 'Team work makes the dream work' as someone likes to say!! Here's to the coffee hour that we all enjoy!

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Your volunteers on Finance serve willingly and joyfully. Thank you to Alice Openshaw and David Dunn for their continued participation.

Paula Bonney, our Treasurer, has worked diligently to keep church members well informed and accurately record our income and spending.

Pastor Rich Wolf has helped us through some rough waters as we are short of committee members. He will be missed.

The budget this year includes bonus checks for long-serving and dedicated part-time workers: Bryan Davidson , Michelle Gordon, and Tina Zantrofski.

2023 stands out for our complex health and property insurance renewals and expenses improving the parsonage. With Pastor Michael Frady, our new settled pastor coming, building use of the parsonage is planned.

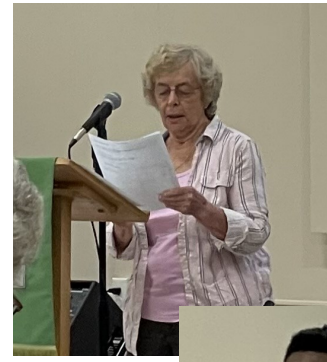
In God's Service,
Jennifer Shepley for Finance Committee

FLOWER COMMITTEE

The many gifts of flowers brought beauty during our time of worship. As a church we are so fortunate that many church members, as well as friends from the Mattapoissett community, shared bouquets. We thank you and appreciate each and every beautiful arrangement. May God be glorified with your gifts.









Mission Statement

Our mission at the Mattapoisett Congregational Church is to live and demonstrate the Good News of Jesus Christ. We are:

Attentive to God's word
Welcoming to and inclusive of all of God's people
Responsive to the needs of God's world
Supportive of one another

Mattapoisett Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
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