



Annual Meeting Agenda and Report  
for  
2014

January 25, 2015

431 South Third Street  
Elkhart, Indiana 46516-3233  
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[www.firstucelkhart.org](http://www.firstucelkhart.org)

Annual Meeting

**First Congregational Church**

**UCC Elkhart, Indiana**

**January 25, 2015**

Agenda

1. Opening prayer
2. Minutes of Annual & Budget Meeting 2014
3. Portfolio reports
  - a. Pastor
  - b. Moderator
  - c. Vice-Moderator
  - d. Treasurer
  - e. Building and Grounds
  - f. Congregational Care
  - g. Education
  - h. Campus Coordinator
  - i. Music
  - j. Outreach/Missions
  - k. Worship
4. Church Council Portfolio Slate (\* New members to the council)
  - a. Moderator, Dot Hansen (2014-2015)
  - b. Vice Moderator, Peg Thornton (2014-2015)
  - c. Secretary, Marie Cobb (2014-2015)
  - d. Treasurer, Don Frandsen (2014-2015)
  - e. Building and Grounds, William Coffey (2014-2015),  
Dennis Anderson (2014-2015)
  - f. Congregational Care, Jeri Stahr\* (2015-2016)
  - g. Education, Judy Atwater\* (2015-2016)
  - h. Campus Coordinator, Jill Larson\* (2015-2016)
  - i. Music, Dick Dunn (2014-2015)
  - j. Outreach, Scott Baker\* (2015-2016)
  - k. Missions, Don Cheesman (2014-2015)
  - l. Worship, Amanda Schelle (2014-2015)
5. Questions/discussion
6. Adjourn

## **Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes 2/9/14**

The annual congregational meeting was called to order by moderator Rick Unsicker and opened with a prayer by Pastor Rob. It was determined that a quorum was present.

The minutes of the three congregational meetings of the past year were approved via a motion made by Judy Atwater and seconded by Judy Jackson.

A five year plan for First Congregational was presented by Pastor Rob. Bob Shaefer moved the plan be accepted. The motion was seconded by Jason Moreno and the motion carried. The slate of officers and portfolio holders was presented. Jane Martin moved that they be accepted, Phyllis Gordon seconded the motion and it carried. Complete details of these two items are found in the Annual Report for 2013.

Certificates of appreciation were presented by Pastor Rob to council members, Steve Poyser, Kelly Rider, And Rick Unsicker who were rotating off the council. Reggie Stevens, who was absent, was also recognized.

Jane Martin moved the meeting be adjourned. Phyllis Gordon seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned.

A chili cookoff , featuring 11 pots of chili was held after adjournment . Janet Pontius was the big winner!!!!!!

Peg Thornton  
Secretary

## SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL BUDGET MEETING - December 14, 2014

The meeting was called to order by Moderator, Dot Hansen and Pastor Jody Betten opened with prayer.

Copies of the proposed 2015 Budget were available for review. Bob Shaefer presented a power point Financial Forecast for 2015, reviewing the 2014 budget plan to use income previously designated as the Charitable Fund to cover operational losses and building improvements. Although many major improvements have been made this year, many areas of the church still need to be repaired or updated. The boiler needs to be replaced, a new digital sign in front would bring attention to our message, there are roofing and gutter issues and 50 year old flooring needs to be replaced. The church needs to be updated to appeal to new and younger families. Pastor Jody noted that we are a small, but a great congregation! Dot reported that the Outreach/Missions portfolio has been split to better concentrate on each area. Pastor Jody indicated that for a church in transition to have the income available (through an endowment) that this church has is incredible. There are different ways to grow a church spiritually.

Rick Unsicker, moved that the proposed Budget for 2015 be accepted. Motion seconded by Peg Thornton. Judy Jackson asked why there is no budget for charitable missions. Don Frandsen replied that this could be added if it was the wish of the congregation. Bob Franklin made a motion to amend the proposed budget to add \$5000 for charitable giving and the motion was seconded by Fran Frasier. Following discussion, this amendment was approved. Following further discussion, the motion to accept the proposed budget, as amended was approved.

Motion to adjourn was made by Rick Unsicker and seconded by Judy Jackson. Motion was approved.

Marie Cobb  
Church Council Secretary

# PASTOR'S REPORT FOR FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF CHRIST

August 1 - December 31, 2014

What a privilege to be able to serve you as an Interim Minister! To see you in action and to be with you for these months has been a stimulating, joy-filled time for me! I appreciate your history of ministry in the city of Elkhart and your willingness to stay in the city when so many churches leave. I appreciate your many individual gifts and talents and how in the down times you rise to the challenges. I appreciate your willingness to be open and affirming (notice the lower case letters) in a community that is very conservative on LGBTQ issues. I appreciate your friendly welcome and inclusion of me into your community.

I look back at the past 5 months of ministry together and report these activities:

- Contacted most of the members and friends of the church
- Contacted many affiliating organizations and social service providers in the community
- Explored the history of First Church
- Consulted with Conference Staff regarding appropriate information re: First Church
- Introduced Council to Interim Tasks
- Met with and resourced Portfolio representatives as appropriate
- Performed pastoral care and counseling as appropriate
- Officiated for 1 Wedding and 2 Funerals
- Resourced Stewardship Campaign
- Walked in CROP Walk
- Co-facilitated Town Hall Meeting to explore identity
- Updated job descriptions for Custodian and Office Manager
- Facilitated building walk-through for aesthetics, etc. with interested group
- Contributed to News from the Corner and Tower Topics as appropriate
- Created, led and preached in Sunday worship
- Resourced benevolent needs from church family and community
- Resourced Search Committee as appropriate

I feel like part of the community of faith of First Church and have been able to share insights into what I see as an Interim pastor. I find you as a congregation receptive and engaged in being and becoming the best manifestation of God's presence in this community that you can be. I continue to learn and grow, as I experience the various facets of ministry here, in my ability to advise and encourage you through the interim process. I look forward with prayerful and eager anticipation to the future ministry of First Church here in Elkhart.

Respectfully,  
Rev. Jody Betten

## MODERATORS REPORT

2013 was the year of the three Bs...Bylaws, Budget and Building. The foundation put in place by these three Bs was most important as First Congregational faced an unexpected new challenge with the resignation of Pastor Rob Van Ess in April. With this foundation in place, we were better able to move into a time of transition with the support of Dr. Carrie Call, Associate Conference Minister, Indiana-Kentucky Conference.

Pastor Rob's resignation was accepted with our love, our thanks and our goodwill, trusting the Holy Spirit to continue to lead him and bless this congregation in our future. Dr. Call provided great support to the Church Council throughout the process of selection of Interim Pastor Jody Betten, who began on August 1. She came to us with great experience and perspective as a result of her previous Interim Work.

The Church Council then gave prayerful and thoughtful consideration to the selection of a Search Committee which is representative of our congregation. Members of the Search Committee, led by chairperson Douglas Atwater, include Rick Unsicker, Bob Franklin, Todd Grathen, Amanda Schelle, Peg Thornton, and Dot Hansen (as a non voting member). The Search Committee met weekly to develop a profile of our church, which was sent to the Indiana-Kentucky Conference for distribution to potential candidates for our church to consider. Profiles for consideration began arriving on January 5, 2015.

### **Back to the three Bs....**

#### **BUILDING**

As agreed at the Congregational Budget meeting in December 2013, issues related to the infrastructure and ongoing maintenance of the church building were reviewed, prioritized and are being addressed. A summary of the work which has been done in 2014 is included in the report of the Building and Grounds portfolio. However, it should be noted that the efforts, knowledge and oversight of Dennis Anderson (who has been called to Florida due to family health issues), William Coffey and Don Frandsen have been invaluable to this process. Additional improvements which are needed will continue to be addressed in 2015!

#### **BUDGET**

Another successful Stewardship Campaign and the reallocation of funds received from the Elkhart Community Foundation have provided financial stability for the church and allowed the improvements to our facilities to occur. In addition, the Investment Committee of Don Frandsen, Bob Schaefer and Steve Poyser oversee the Investment Portfolio which provides additional stability for the church. In the December Congregational Budget meeting, congregation approved the operating budget for 2015, with the addition of \$5000 for charitable giving.

#### **BYLAWS**

The revised ByLaws, approved in 2013, have been an important resource as the Church Council addressed many issues related to the resignation of Pastor Rob and moving ahead in the selection of a new pastor. The system of Portfolios, to be overseen by members of the Church Council, has been a work in progress. We continue to learn how each of the Portfolio areas can function most effectively in meeting the needs of our church. During the coming year we will separate the

Portfolio of Outreach and Mission into two separate portfolios, which will allow increased emphasis in each of these important areas. We will also expand the scope of Welcome and Hospitality to include Congregational Care in a variety of ways.

### **HIGHLIGHTS of 2014**

- We supported Church Community Service's Great Race with a \$2000 contribution (\$1000 from members, matched by \$1000 from the church). We also delivered loads of "white products" donated by the congregation.
- The Fall Festival, attracted a large attendance from the neighborhood, and also generated \$400. This money was used to buy additional gift cards distributed to Pierre Moran and Northside Middle schools.
- Members of the church contributed \$460 to Heifer International.
- We supported Susanna's Kitchen with volunteers, donations of cleaning supplies and through a reduction of their rent as they served over 2000 meals each month.
- Members of the church walked in the Crop Walk and provided a water station along the route.
- The Annual Church Picnic at the Poyser farm included a haywagon ride around the farm.
- Eats for 8 (or 6) resumed in the fall with small groups meeting for a meal and time shared together.
- Our church observed the 170<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our founding with a guest pastor and reception following the service. A Time Line, posted in the hallway noted the milestones in the history of our church.
- A Town Hall meeting, held in the fall, provided an opportunity for members to discuss issues important to the future of our church. Input from this meeting was incorporated in the profile developed by the Search Committee and made available to candidates to become our pastor. This input will also be considered in reviewing the Long Range plan and developing further plans for the future.
- We continue to collaborate with Stepping Stones to provide a resource in this community for persons with addictions.
- The rental of office and program space to Keys Counseling offers a safe place for troubled young adults to find support and direction, as well as income to our church.

First Congregational Church is in a good place as we move forward in a search for a Settled Pastor! **The quiet, caring and ongoing efforts of so many, in so many ways, behind the scenes is amazing!** The members of the Church Council are truly dedicated to doing God's work. Our church has an important niche in this community as we look forward to 2015 and a new pastor.

Dot Hansen, Moderator

## **VICE MODERATOR**

This has been a year of learning how much WORK a moderator does! I have tried to shadow the moderator in order to learn and to be helpful. The vice moderator is also a member of the church council. In the absence of the moderator, I assisted in the writing of the News from the Corner, dealing with a death in the congregation, and other tasks vital to keeping the church functioning.

In addition to vice moderator, Judy Jackson and I have served as mission deacons for our congregation. We have participated in all 5 for 5 collections of the UCC denomination, collected food and personal supplies for Church Community Services, collected donations of food and cleaning supplies for Susanna's Kitchen, and collected gift cards for Christmas distribution to Pierre Moran and Northside middle schools. Our fund raising project was the first Fall Festival and Silent Auction. A haystack dinner was held in conjunction with this. The congregation and community participated in raising over \$500 to be used for local mission projects. \$300 of this was used at Christmas to supplement the donated gift cards from the Giving Tree project.

Peg Thornton  
Vice Moderator



## TREASURER'S REPORT

For the eleven months ended November the income was greater than anticipated by \$16,954 while the expenses were \$8,000 less than projected giving an eleven month operating loss of almost \$14,000.

We expect to end the year with a positive cash position due to the receipt of the endowment monies. We received a partial in July just at the point our cash was at a low. We got the balance of the \$85,000 at the end of October, bringing the total from the Elkhart Community Foundation to a little over \$167,000 for the year. We had moved the March 2015 monies up to receive them early to cover repairs and maintenance of the building. The next disbursement from the Foundation will be sometime in the fall of 2015.

Money received from the Foundation was listed as Endowment Fund Income and used for the major improvements for the building, amounting to \$85,974. The total cost of the heat repair and new air conditioning was \$57,980. We have an additional amount to pay Havel for the heating repairs of \$18,990.00, payable with installments of \$3165 per month through June of 2015. After the heating season ends we will pursue replacing the 1960's boiler with a more efficient unit. Havel is working on an estimate for the replacement. Havel will give us time payments also.

Stepping Stones continues occupying the Franklin street building paying the expenses along with a \$1.00 per month rent. They remain self-sustaining. The board has chosen to meet quarterly rather than every two months. The next board meeting will be in January on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday. We have \$436.20 coming from them for utilities for the last quarter.

Keys Counseling continues to rent the upper floor and pay \$1000.00 in rent. Susanna's kitchen will pay \$550 monthly for 2015.

Michiana Rental association met ten times during the year at a rental of \$40 per meeting. Little Cherubs has been the gift that kept on giving. We paid more than \$2300.00, most of which being payroll and taxes that were left unpaid.

Our investment funds were transferred to TD Ameritrade. We invested \$130,000 with them and to date with paying expenses etc. for setup we are .21 cents shy of the original amount given them. \$30,777 is invested in fixed income while \$93,520 is in cash and cash alternatives while the balance of \$5700 is in Exchange Traded Funds (ETF's).

The 2015 projections have not been finalized. We still anticipate additional pledges for the year as well. Church Council is endeavoring to continue to improve the church's appearance to make it more appealing to members and guests alike.

Don Frandsen  
Treasurer

## BUILDING AND GROUNDS

2014 was a year of major emphasis on the condition of our church building! With the approval of the congregation to address the many issues related to the condition of the building, the Church Council developed and prioritized a list of needs. The following have been completed:

- A new air conditioning system was installed
- Energy efficient shades were installed throughout the church
- Electrical systems were upgraded
- Sound system was upgraded
- New exhaust hood installed in the kitchen
- Interior and exterior lighting was improved
- Mold has been removed from the room in the basement and work has begun in the Children's Chapel to remove moisture from the walls. Gutters will be installed to prevent further issues in the future with mold and moisture.

In addition to the issues related to the physical plant, a walk through of the entire church was conducted to look at the building with the eyes of a guest visiting the building. The objective was to look at cleanliness, tidiness, dated décor, and what the general impression of the environment would be. A list of ways we can make our church more appealing has been developed and steps have begun to address these items.

The work of updating the physical plant, as well as the aesthetic appeal of the building will continue in 2015! Ongoing concerns with heat in the Keys Consulting area reinforce the need for a new boiler as the next major project!

Report prepared by Dot Hansen  
On behalf of:  
Dennis Anderson  
William Coffey

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CAMPUS COORDINATOR -Don Cheesman  
No Report

OUTREACH/MISSIONS-Scott Baker  
No Report

WORSHIP-Amanda Schelle  
No Report

## CONGREGATIONAL CARE

2014 started off with a bang! We hosted the Elkhart County NAACP birthday celebration for Martin Luther King Jr. on January 20<sup>th</sup>. A lively reception followed for a great evening. February 9<sup>th</sup> was a Congregational Meeting followed by a chili cook off. During March and April we hosted a Lenten study with dessert and coffee. On Easter Sunday a carry-in breakfast was enjoyed before the service.

On May 18<sup>th</sup>, we provided a carry-in lunch following the church town-hall meeting. We also honored our graduates and Eliza Wertenberger who ended her time as our organist. She graduated from the Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. My co-chair, Peg Thornton, organized a good-bye reception for Pastor Rob Van Ess. Our next get together was a “meet and greet” for the Reverend Jody Betten in early June.

The summer picnic at Poyser’s farm was enjoyed by the congregation in early August. We played games, hiked, talked and of course ate.

Our harvest dinner on November 23<sup>rd</sup> was a huge success. We ate four turkeys. Last but not least, we hosted several receptions after funerals.

Nearly every Sunday has had volunteers to host the coffee hour. Peg Thornton and James Mabie were always willing to help. It is really nice when everybody takes a turn.

Thank You,  
Polly Shaefer

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

I accepted council's offer to take on the Christian Education Portfolio six months ago. I have served twice in my church history on CE committees and also served as chair. The last time I had a very positive experience working with a full time Christian Education minister and a committee of twelve congregants.

This is an exciting and challenging time in our congregation. Pastor Rob left unexpectedly before I started on the council and Pastor Jody had not yet been hired. Since Pastor Jody's arrival, she and I have had several enthusiastic sessions regarding the present and future possibilities for education in our church. In August and September I canvassed the members and visitors for their ideas and support of some of the ideas Jody and I discussed. The following is a list of activities in progress as a result of these efforts:

- The Forum is an ongoing successful small group led by Pastor Jody with an attendance of approximately 6-10 people. They meet on Wednesday morning at 10:00 A.M.
- "Continuing the Conversation" is a small group meeting the first and third Sundays after worship to continue discussing points of interest from the sermon or other member led topics. We have had 5-7 in attendance.
- A study of the book, # *Occupy the Bible*, meets on the second and fourth Sundays after the service. Eleven people signed up as "interested" in doing this study. It is difficult to meet the various time restrictions of individuals and I believe this accounts for a light attendance. We are discussing future studies and schedules.
- We purchased a packet of the book, *Hot Dogs and Hamburgers*, in support on the United Church of Christ's Literacy Initiative. They are available in the church office for your use.

Children's Sunday school is one of the major challenges facing our church. We have a great need for people to step up and prepare to serve as either teachers or helpers on a rotating basis so that we can build a program that will attract and encourage families and children to attend our church on a regular basis. We need fresh ideas and your participation!

Thank you to all of you who have made suggestions, attended groups, and helped me find my way with this portfolio.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Judy Atwater

## MUSIC PORTFOLIO REPORT

The following are musical highlights of the past year at First Congregational UCC, Elkhart:

February 14 – A benefit program for the Pastor’s Discretionary Fund was held in our nave with the following musicians performing:

Sonia Hadley, soprano  
Nancy Lerner, pianist  
Kelly Rider, saxophonist  
Dick Dunn, organist

May 25 – Eliza Wertenberger, our organist with us during her final year as a local Mennonite seminarian, concluded her studies and moved to Ohio.

June 1 – Dick Dunn concluded his first retirement as our organist, in order to prepare for his second.

Accolades to the following saints of First Congregational UCC:

- Nancy Lerner, who has accompanied our choral groups, ensembles, and instrumentalists for the past 27 years, is a world class sight reader of difficult music, and has rescued the present organist many times over the years when he couldn’t be present .
- Kelly Rider, our choir director, instrumentalist, and song leader who spends unseen, uncountable hours finding new music for our vocalists.
- Scott Haney, song leader, whose knowledge of hymns, choruses, and worship songs old and new and anywhere in between, is a marvel, and a gift shared with us.
- All of our singers, who under Kelly’s direction, provide us with service music, and lead us together in song.
- All the members and friends of our congregation, who know with Gracie Allen that “God is [not only] still speaking”: God is still singing. Thanks for your willingness and eagerness to “sing unto the Lord a new song.”
- Poets, hymn writers, composers all respond to the Spirit moving in them when the result is hymnody. We need to learn and pass on the Good News by utilizing their gifts. Even though we may have a sharp learning curve at times, I bet God blesses our wrong notes. Thanks for not being a musically derelict congregation

Respectfully submitted,  
Dick Dunn

11:40 AM  
01/07/15  
Cash Basis

First Congregational Church  
Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual  
January through December 2015

	<u>Jan - Dec 15</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
4000 · Offering Income	61,660.00
4010 · Loose Offering	900.00
4030 · ECCF Endowment Income	35,000.00
4100 · Rental Income	18,600.00
4900 · Investment Income	1,200.00
Total Income	<u>117,360.00</u>
Expense	
5000 · Personnel Expenses	121,055.76
6000 · Congregational Care	600.00
6100 · Christian Education Expenses	720.00
6200 · Music Program	2,960.00
6300 · Mission Expenses	10,000.00
6400 · Outreach Expenses	600.00
6500 · Worship Expenses	900.00
6600 · Campus Coordination Expenses	300.00
7000 · Buildings & Grounds	15,400.00
7100 · Office Expense	3,864.00
7200 · Insurance & Utilities	27,411.00
7300 · Professional Fees	2,156.00
Total Expense	<u>185,966.76</u>
Net Ordinary Income	-68,606.76
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
9100 · Endowment Fund Income	88,000.00
Total Other Income	<u>88,000.00</u>
Net Other Income	88,000.00
Net Income	<u><u>19,393.24</u></u>

11:45 AM  
01/02/15  
Accrual Basis

First Congregational Church  
**Profit & Loss**  
January through December 2014

	<u>Jan - Dec 14</u>
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Income</b>	
4000 · Offering Income	80,848.68
4010 · Loose Offering	1,637.44
4020 · Donations	312.00
4030 · ECCF Endowment Income	33,500.00
4040 · Gift in Kind	1,277.36
4100 · Rental Income	25,250.00
4300 · Miscellaneous Income	5,092.22
4900 · Investment Income	249.79
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>148,167.49</u>
<b>Expense</b>	
5000 · Personnel Expenses	102,096.28
6000 · Congregational Care	329.85
6100 · Christian Education Expenses	334.41
6200 · Music Program	1,280.98
6300 · Mission Expenses	7,930.31
7000 · Buildings & Grounds	16,723.36
7100 · Office Expense	4,275.00
7200 · Insurance & Utilities	26,608.20
7300 · Professional Fees	2,235.00
8000 · Other Expenses	3,796.84
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>165,610.23</u>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	-17,442.74
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Other Income</b>	
9100 · Endowment Fund Income	167,600.00
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<u>167,600.00</u>
<b>Other Expense</b>	
9500 · Improvements to Building	89,139.75
<b>Total Other Expense</b>	<u>89,139.75</u>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<u>78,460.25</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<u><u>61,017.51</u></u>