

COVENANT OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE

In the Lord's name we gather together here in Santa Fe
to worship and grow in the Christian tradition,
to minister in love to all persons,
to strive for justice and peace,
to respond to God's word.

We celebrate the heritage of Santa Fe and give
ourselves to its challenges and opportunities.

We endeavor to live in harmony with all creation
as stewards of the earth.

We share in the life and mission of the United
Church of Christ and of Christians everywhere.

To these purposes we unite and covenant with God
and one another, watchful for the guidance
of the Holy Spirit.

THE FORTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE

AUGUST 29, 2022 – JULY 30, 2023

THE UNITED CHURCH OF SANTA FE
2023 ANNUAL REPORTS
 Presented July 30, 2023
 In Person and Livestreamed

*“We gather as Christians to experience and share the power of God’s transforming love
 in our lives, our life together, and the world.”*

Mission Statement of the United Church of Santa Fe

Love God. Love Neighbor. Love Creation.

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Moderator's Report

Kimberly Zeilik

I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.
Psalm 16:8

My tenure on the Council has been book-ended by the pandemic. In August of 2020, Pam Hyde asked if I would serve on the Council, the last two years as Moderator. When I started on Council, services were held via Zoom. When the weather turned cold, we moved the services indoors with protocols in place to keep all members and staff as safe as possible. We recently modified the protocols to reflect current standards regarding masks. Throughout the last three years, the Council has focused on keeping the congregation and staff safe while also providing the spiritual nourishment this congregation needs, expects and deserves. I am proud of the work the Council and Staff have accomplished during not just challenging but ever-changing times.

I am encouraged as Council meetings now focus more of their attention on staff, programming, stewardship, and the recently initiated Endowment Initiative. These are all signs of a thriving congregation. While I don't know what the future will bring, I do know that the Council, Staff, and Congregation have all the "right stuff" to weather any storm (or pandemic).

As Talitha and the Council present their reports, it will provide you with more insight in all we have accomplished this year. Yet, as we move forward, there is much we need to do. Together we can build up United not just for our present needs but as a church that sustains future generations.

I am proud and humbled to have served as Moderator of United this past year and to be a part of this amazing congregation. The Council and Talitha have helped me in more ways than I can name, and I am grateful for their guidance, leadership, and kindness.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Zeilik
Moderator

MINISTER'S REPORT

Rev. Talitha Arnold

Ponder anew what the Almighty can do.

Joachim Neander, 1650 -1680
Pastor in the German Reform Church
(one of the historic traditions of the United Church of Christ)

The Annual Report of a Congregation is many things—a record of church events, a compilation of diverse ministries, an account of how the church has served the wider community and world, a financial report, and a building and grounds update. It also highlights the interconnectedness of all those events, reports, and ministries—from the church's work with children and youth to advocating for refugees to offering pastoral care. The Annual Report underscores how the component parts of a church community—music, education, outreach, stewardship, hospitality, fellowship—are interwoven and dependent on one another. It also underscores how all those ministries flow from the ongoing worship and prayer life of a congregation.

But even with all the accounting and reporting, at its heart the Annual Report of a Congregation is a statement of faith. A “credo,” if you will. Individually and as a community, it invites us to “ponder anew what the Almighty can do” by reminding us what God has already done this past year.

The reports that follow illustrate that faith—past, present, and future. You'll learn about the ongoing work to rebuild the church's ministries and community life as we re-emerge from the pandemic. You'll also read about new ways of doing the ministries to which we've committed in the past but that needed new forms. And you'll read about new endeavors in Desert Faith and the environment, worship, music, children's and youth ministry, stewardship, study groups, and outreach. All of this has come from your commitment to “ponder anew what the Almighty can do” this past year.

A brief overview of some of those new forms and new endeavors:

- Worship, Music, Communion and Sacred Space:
 - **Guest Preachers, Youth Reflectors, Readers' Theater, Dialogue sermons, Lessons and Carols, Jazz and Gospel services, even a Catholic Mass**— all have been part of 10:00 worship this year as we continue to explore ways to engage with scripture and the good news of our faith, even in the midst of the often not-good news of this world.
 - This time last year, the **Early Service** had barely started again after 2+ years of the pandemic. Outdoors for half the year, the service continues to grow and deepen for those who seek quiet contemplation and weekly communion.
 - Week by week, thanks to United's music staff (Brad Ellingboe, Jessie Lo, Becky Brunette, Quiara Cortez, and Steve Kerchoff) and a multitude of volunteer singers and instrumentalists, **a wide range of sacred music offerings** reflects the diversity of all God's people and the joy, depth, and hope of our faith.
 - Every week and in special seasons, the **Sacred Space Team** makes certain that the Sanctuary is as beautiful as the music it holds.
 - A dozen volunteers deliver monthly **Communion Bags**, prepared by Maggie Popp, to persons confined to home. Nyla and Larry Rasmussen also prepare the 10:00 Communion. This Lent we also re-started the midweek Communion.
 - And yes, we definitely have **a virtual congregation** joining worship, thanks to Social Media Coordinator Elijah Marquez and volunteers who provide the livestream of the 10:00 service for people throughout Santa Fe and the country.

- Environmental Ministries:
 - With Larry Rasmussen’s leadership, a study group reviewed and updated our 2009 **“Whole Earth Covenant”** to be discussed and (hopefully) approved at the Annual Meeting. While we’ve lived into many of our commitments as a congregation, our challenge now is keeping those commitments in our individual lives and lifestyles.
 - Thanks to the invitation from Yale Divinity School to be the “Hoskins Fellow” this past February, Elijah Marquez and I developed a documentary on United as a **“Desert Faith Church”** that featured four United members offering their insights and experiences (Dr. Mary Roessel, Navajo/Diné; Linda Churchill, Landscape Chair; Juanito Jimenez, Santero; and Larry Rasmussen, Environmental Ethicist). The Hoskins Fellowship was also an opportunity to share with seminary students and faculty the worship, outreach, and faith formation innovations we’ve developed as a congregation throughout the years.
- Outreach Ministries:
 - Thanks to Marilyn Gardner’s leadership, the Outreach Team was revitalized. We re-started the annual **Advocacy Day** at the State Legislature and 30 United members/friends joined in the first **Pride Parade** in 4 years. When Felipe’s Tacos closed and the needs of **Santa Fe’s Shelters** changed, thanks to Pat Roach, the church developed a new way to provide regular meals and build community among the volunteers. Thanks to Immigration/Refugee Task Force Chair Avril Ekstrand and a host of volunteers, **United We Run** involved twice as many people and raised twice as much money as before. (See the Outreach Report for the full picture of United’s commitment to “Love Neighbor, Love Creation.”)
 - We also connected United’s commitment to the wider community with other ministries of the church. The annual **FebFest Chorale Concert** (a joint effort between United and *Coro Lux*—Bradley Ellingboe’s Albuquerque-based choir—held for the first time at St. Francis Cathedral) raised over \$3,000 for Habitat for Humanity. **United’s children and youth** assembled Church World Service hygiene kits for Ukraine, joined in Compassionate Christmas Gifts with mittens for Growing Up New Mexico, and are harvesting the bounty of the Children’s Garden for the Food Depot. (Thank you, Master Gardener Donna Clark!)
- Children’s and Youth Ministry:
 - **Family Supper Bags, a Ghost Ranch retreat, tamale making, a Navajo Nation trip, “Embarking on the Ark,” “A Year of Helping,” cookies for the firefighters and casseroles for the shelters** were some of the ways United continued—like many other churches—to rebuild our ministry with children and youth following the pandemic—all thanks to Children’s Ministry Chair Karen Wilbanks, Gail Ansheles, Maria Navarette, Caleb Omolo, and other volunteers.
 - We also continue to **rebuild the staffing** needed for a full and vibrant Families, Youth, and Children’s Ministry. And we are grateful for the Youth and Children’s Ministry portion of United’s Endowment to help underwrite that staffing.
- Faith Formation:
 - **Forty-seven Sunday forums, six different study groups and series**, topics ranging from climate systems change to Christian mystics to “Bad Boys of the Bible” to Ukraine to mule racing to stories of resiliency and hope. Whether in person or virtually, United members and friends regularly engaged in study and exploration to deepen their understanding of our faith and this world—thanks to the Wednesday Women (led by Barbara MacPhee), the Pretty Good Guys (Ken Bordner and Greg Gaertner), Joe Neidhardt and Mary Hasbah Roessel, and Faith Formation Chair Larry Rasmussen.

- **Faith formation through music** was offered with Coro Lux’s concert of the Ellingboe *Requiem* on the anniversary of 9/11 and also with the FebFest seminar led by André Thomas. Children’s ministry leaders taught our young ones to sing “Jesus Loves Me” in four languages, and we hope to start our African drumming program again.
- Hospitality and Fellowship:
 - Thanks to Discipleship Development Chair Diane Darby and her band of Gracious Greeters, **newcomers, visitors, and long-timers alike** are all welcomed on Sunday morning. Greeters and ushers have also been on the front line as United has worked to keep people safe through requiring vaccinations and masks—and they’ve also dealt with the changes of this past year.
 - Thanks to Fellowship Coordinator Diana Smith (ably assisted by Coordinator Emerita Nancy Merchat) and other volunteers, we’ve started monthly **food and fellowship gatherings** and once again hosted **Las Posadas**, welcoming both the Santa Maria de la Paz and St. Francis Cathedral communities the week before Christmas.
- Pastoral Care:
 - Thanks to John Shaffer and the **Congregational Care Team**, members and friends going through difficult times were visited, provided meals, and sent cards. We’re also realizing that post-pandemic, the pastoral needs of the congregation have risen considerably. Consequently, Luis Zapata is back as the **Sunday Aide** to help people with mobility or memory issues. We’re also evaluating our staffing needs for either a part-time social worker or calling minister.
- Money Matters:
 - Money is a fact of life, and often a challenge for churches. At United, we are blessed with people who can make **church finances fun**—along members and friends, present and past, whose **generosity** has made all the above ministry possible this year.
 - Treasurer Sam Elkind and Stewardship/Finance Chair Sarah Sawtell are the financial wizards who oversee the **details** and explain them to the rest of us. They also keep us focused on the **big picture**. They are ably assisted by accountant Joyce Pohl.
 - Stewardship Chair Bob Ansheles has helped develop new ways of engaging the congregation in sharing God’s resources, whether through **video testimonials, tailgate parties, or Stewardship Speed-dating**.
 - Thanks to the leadership of Frank Wilbanks, a committed Endowment committee, and the good consul of consultant Jerry Henry, we started an **Endowment Initiative** this spring to build on the financial work and planning of previous generations and help insure United’s future. Many of the ministries listed above (e.g., music, desert faith, youth) would not be nearly as vibrant were it not for the existing endowment—and the goal of the Initiative is to broaden and deepen that support. Moreover, as the **cost of living** (especially housing) continues to rise in Santa Fe, strengthening United’s financial foundation is crucial for the coming years.
- Buildings and Grounds:
 - After two years of major covid-related building expenses (new HVAC system, portable purifiers, shade umbrellas, heaters, and video equipment), we had **minor repairs and maintenance** the past 12 months, overseen by David Feldt (even though he’s no longer on the Council 😊.) Weekly janitor Jim O’Connor and Sunday assistant Maria Navarette keep things sparkling.

- We've also started to **welcome outside groups again**, including a church youth group on retreat from Colorado, the monthly Interfaith Shelter board meetings, an opera seminar, and other community musical events.
- **United's outside spaces** are as sacred, nurturing, and beautiful as the indoor ones—thanks to the Landscape Task Force, El Toro Landscaping—and the Landscape Maintenance Endowment Fund 😊.
- Administration and Communication:
 - **Overseeing United's ministries**—past, present and future—is the Church Council, and United has been very well served this year and through the three years of the pandemic. They've been faced with numerous difficult decisions, from HVAC systems and masks to how keep a church connected and safe during “shelter-in-place”—and how to rebuild our ministry and community in an ever-changing landscape.
 - In addition to the Council members mentioned above, **Personnel** Chair Jim Ekstrand has helped with numerous staff transitions, during and after the pandemic. **Council Secretary** Bruce Turnquist has captured both the details and the big picture of council and congregational meetings, providing a solid record of decisions and discussions during this crucial time. And leading it all has been **Moderator** Kim Zeilik, who like several other council members, started her tenure as Moderator-Elect in the 5th month of the pandemic. She's helped guide the church in this challenging time with care, compassion, and deep commitment to God and to the ministries to which God is calling us.
 - Finally, a **strong infrastructure**, supported by talented staff and volunteers, is what makes United's wide-ranging ministries and programs possible. Our church is abundantly blessed by Office Administrator Lin Raymond's blend of multiple skills, calm problem-solving, commitment, and sense of humor. Without his behind-the-scenes work, we would not be pondering even half of what we've could do this year.
 - And without the **social media expertise** of Elijah Marquez—who continues to guide, push, and sometimes drag us (or at least me) into the 21st century—neither the congregation nor the wider community would know what we're doing! That communication work is also supported by office and newsletter volunteers, organized by Lin, who keep us connected through the newsletter and other 20th century communication forms.

Whew! That's quite a Credo! There's a lot to ponder about all the Almighty has done through United this past year. There's a lot to give thanks for, too—thanks to all of you for being the United Church of Santa Fe and thanks be to God this year and every year. As we look to the future, may we continue to “ponder anew all the Almighty can do” in our lives, our life together, and the life of this beloved world.

Blessings, Talitha

Worship

Special Services (August 2022 – July 2023):

- Outdoor Services
 - Early Service (every Sunday from May through mid-October)
 - St. Francis Sunday Blessing of the Animals (Oct. 2, 2022)
 - Blessing of the Children’s Garden (May 21)
- In-Person Services (August 2022 through December 2022):
 - *Blessing of Students and Educators* (Aug. 14)
 - *A Service of Remembrance for 9/11* (Fiesta Sunday, Sept. 11)
 - *Credo* for Reformation Sunday with Schubert’s Mass in G (October 30)
 - *Song of Faith and Hope: “Thanks-singing!”* (Nov. 20)
 - *A Gospel Magnificat: Advent Lessons and Carols* (Dec. 11)
 - Christmas Eve (5:00 Candles and Carols; 7:00 Candlelight with Choir; 9:00 Candlelight Communion)
 - *The Gift of the Magi* – Christmas Day Readers Theater with 6 lay readers
- In-Person Services (January 2023 through July 2022):
 - *New Year’s Sunday* (Jan. 1)
 - *Epiphany, Martin Luther King Day and Renewal of Baptism* (Jan. 8)
 - *A Gospel Mass: FebFest Choral Festival w/Dr. André Thomas & Guest Pianists/Musicians*
 - *The Light We Carry: Mardi Gras Sunday* (Feb. 19, with Andy Kingston Trio)
 - *Ash Wednesday* (March 22, 12:00 noon and 7:00 pm)
 - Holy Week: *Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday Tenebrae* (led by youth), *Good Friday, Easter Sunrise Outdoor Service, Easter Sanctuary Service 10:00* (with choir and trumpet)
 - *Children’s Sunday and Recognition of Graduates* (May 14)
 - *United’s 43rd Birthday: Look Back in Wonder* (May 21)

Guest Worship Leaders and Preachers:

- Preachers: Rev. Ben Larzelere
- Dialogue Sermons (with Talitha Arnold): Composers André Thomas and Bradley Ellingboe (trialogue); Rev. Craig Ellingboe; Jerry Henry; Rev. Melanie Harris.
- Reflectors: Youth Initiates: Sasha Smucker, Derek Darby, Luke Rand, Bailey Gordon, Weston Puglisi (*Prayers for Our World*); Avril Ekstrand, David Feldt, Pat Roach (*What Calls You to the Work You Do?*); Dusty Caruso, Louise Cavatta, Jennifer Graves, Tom Stewart, Alicia Wolfe, Craig Hay, Kim Zeilik (*Look Back in Wonder* for United’s 43rd Birthday)

Abundant thanks to all who made worship beautiful and meaningful, in-person or online:

- Music Staff, Choir, and guest musicians, conductors, and pianists. (Please see Director of Music Brad Ellingboe’s and Pianist Jessie Lo’s reports for details.)
- Sacred Space Team: Please see report.
- Readers and Liturgists: over 70 adults, youth, children throughout the year
- Monthly Communion Preparers and Deliverers
- Office Administrator: Lin Raymond; Media Coordinator: Elijah Marquez
- Greeters and Ushers: 20+ people for the Early and Late Services, organized by Diane Darby

And you, the Congregation!

Director of Music

Bradley Ellingboe

Another year has flown by and it's time, once again, to look back on the last 12 months and take stock. As always, I'll begin with some statistics.

The Sanctuary Choir sang 72 anthems in the last year, not counting special events. This is a level of commitment that puts them right at the top of volunteer hours for the church. Moreover, the choir has grown both in size and skill in the past 12 months, and their singing adds an important and nuanced element to our worship. When you next see a member of the choir, please do thank them. And let me add my thanks to yours at this time.

We also had many members of the congregation contribute their musical gifts over the course of the year, including Bonnie and Maggie Bannerman, Andy and Nathan Kingston, Diane Johnston, Jessica and Jack Smucker, Leonard Stovall, and Kathleen Wilson. Thank you all, and my apologies if I left anyone off this list.

Besides those from within the congregation who gifted us with their playing or singing we enjoyed, at various times, the offerings of Leif Atchley and Dasa Silhova, trumpets, and Madison MacGregor, oboe.

This has been Jessie Lo's first year as our pianist and I'm sure I speak for us all when I thank her for her contributions. It is a joy to hear her solos and to sing with her as she accompanies hymns and choir anthems.

I think it's important for the choir to have some larger works to sink their teeth into, and this year was no exception. One of the highlights was their singing of Schubert's *Mass in G Major* last October, accompanied by Elizabeth Young and Carla Kountoupes violin, Grant Hanner, viola and Amy Huzjak, cello, with Jessie at the piano. We also presented Robert Ray's *Gospel Magnificat* for our annual Lessons and Carols service. Robert Ray was a friend of mine and he died, after a long struggle with Alzheimer's, only a few days before our presentation, making the service even more meaningful for me. That day we fittingly raised the roof to the glory of God and to honor Robert's memory. That piece was accompanied by Jessie, along with Wayne Thelander, string bass, and Hovey Corbin, percussion. Rebecca Brunette was alto soloist.

As an aside I might mention that in April of this year my new cantata *A Place Called Home* was premiered in Carnegie Hall, and three members of the Sanctuary Choir (Larry Rasmussen and Jody and Peter Spalding) sang the premiere, with several members and friends of United (including Talitha) cheering us on in the audience.

The United Church and my Albuquerque chorus *Coro Lux* once again sponsored what was our 5th annual FebFest. This was the biggest one yet, welcoming the distinguished African American composer and conductor, Dr. André Thomas to Santa Fe. André participated in Sunday morning worship and then later that afternoon conducted the festival concert, which was given at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis before an audience of 500. The free-will offering taken at that event raised \$3,000, which was split evenly between the Albuquerque and Santa Fe chapters of Habitat for Humanity. Additional musicians playing for that event included Mary Ann Ybarra and John Helgen, piano, Wayne Thelander, string bass, and Loren Bienvenu, percussion.

Other connections between the church and *Coro Lux* included a small group from *Coro Lux* presenting my *Requiem* last September as a commemoration of the anniversary of 9/11. That Sunday afternoon concert included a small orchestra of 6 players. And I pressed into service our Choral Scholar, *basso profundo* Steve Kerchoff, to help augment *Coro Lux* when we presented two concerts of the magnificent *All Night Vigil* by Sergei Rachmaninoff in Albuquerque. Also singing for those performances were the Spaldings, and Choral Scholar Rebecca Brunette, who are regular members of *Coro Lux*.

There were some staffing changes with our Choral Scholars this year. We lost tenor Curtis Storm when he took a similar position closer to home in Albuquerque. We have yet to replace him in the tenors but we currently have nine tenors on our roster, so I have the luxury of taking my time on that hire. (Let me state for the record that there is no choir I know of in the US that has a choir our size that has 9 tenors!) And our soprano Kathleen Wilson resigned from her post (though she continues to sing when in town) to spend more time at her home in Mexico. But we were fortunate to hire Quiara Cortez to augment the soprano section and she's been a blessing, including helping to lead the hymn singing during the summer. And I offer my continuing thanks to the wonderful and ongoing musical contributions of Scholars Rebecca Brunette and Steve Kerchoff.

Finally, after a hiatus of four years, we're delighted to welcome back apprentices from the Santa Fe Opera to grace our summer services once a month.

In conclusion, we've emerged from the pandemic musically stronger than we were before, which is remarkable. The fact that we've done so is a testament to your support, as well as the work of wonderful staff. So, I conclude with my thanks to you all, to the music staff and to Talitha, Lin, and Elijah.

Soli Deo Gloria,

Respectfully submitted,
Bradley Ellingboe

Pianist

Dr. Jessie Wenchieh Lo

It has been an action-packed year at United Church of Santa Fe with its diverse and beautiful music program.

The piano solo selection during the Gathering time is carefully selected to support the center theme and spirit of that particular service in the following ways, depending on the topics: (1) give a reflective mood for the congregation to create a deeper connection with that service by choosing the music that "speaks" to the quotes at the beginning section of the bulletin under "For Reflection"; (2) give a preview of what the sermon direction might be focusing on; (3) respond to, as well as connect the theme of the sermon throughout the service, in the hope that would enhance the experience of the worship by setting the tone with the beauty of unspoken words which directly reaches one's heart.

After determining what kind of hymn tune will go well with the sermon and the spirit of the day, I would then carefully choose a good piano arrangement on hymn tunes that is well-written and resonates strongly with me. It could also be a classical piece that supports the general atmosphere and spirit of the service. Some examples of the classical composers that I selected from in this past year include Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Grieg, Gounod, Mahler, Dvořák, Florence Price, to name a few. Very frequently I also rearrange hymn tunes myself or compose a medley that contains multiple hymn tunes.

I greatly enjoy making music at United Church of Santa Fe, no matter if it is playing piano solo, or supporting the choir, or collaborating with guest artists. This community has great taste in music and I immensely enjoy the conversation with people at church about all kinds of topics: music, religion, different culture backgrounds, travel, language, arts, civil rights, environment awareness, etc. I appreciate the like-mindedness as well as the diversity this congregation possesses. To be able to share the love of music and create music together in worship with a company you enjoy is the greatest blessing in daily life. I also appreciate the fact that the United congregation cares about me, my cultural heritage, and my family in Taiwan.

This year (2022-2023), we welcomed many excellent guest pianists that brought their musical gifts to United: André Thomas, John Helgen, Mary Ann Ybarra, Andy Kingston, Haewon Yang, Lin Raymond, and Robert Krupnick. Our talented young pianists (and my piano students), Bonnie Bannerman and Maggie Bannerman, presented their arrangement of their piano duet to accompany the children and the whole congregation leading “Jesus Loves Me” in five languages (English, American Sign Language, Spanish, Taiwanese and Swahili). We appreciate their talents and musical gifts greatly, as well as the time and energy they put in to enhance our services at the United Church of Santa Fe. We hope to see them more in the future!

I look forward to continuing to cultivate the many great relationships that I have at United Church of Santa Fe, to continuing to share more precious musical moments with more people that are in the congregation, in this community, as well as the people that come to worship with the United Church of Santa Fe.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Jessie Wenchieh Lo

Children and Youth Ministry Team

Chair: Karen Wilbanks

Team: Gail Ansheles, Katherine Freeman, Marilyn Gardner, Bruce Turnquist

This ministry year began with the goals of engaging youth through the efforts of Kate Murphy, Youth Director, and engaging younger children through finding ways to reach out to the congregation, friends of United, and neighbors with a variety of “showing care” projects. Covid and its continual impact on all ages of our community has driven our decisions. As is the case for many churches, restarting United’s children’s and youth programs continued to be daunting this past year. Each time the pandemic landscape changed or staffing changed or attendance changed, some things got put on hold, but United remained committed to ministering with our children and youth and we tried different ways to do so.

We were able, with the help of Children’s Aide Maria Navarette and the newly hired Caleb Omolo, to offer, starting in September, pull-out activities for younger children during Church services. Maria and Caleb have continued to be great additions to our staff and have proven their value with the younger children. Media Coordinator Elijah Marquez continued to be a huge help with getting the story of our children and youth out into the community.

Our “Year of Caring” included many ways to share God’s love:

- Children and Youth participated in the planting and care of the **Children’s Garden** as well as decorating our front entrance with flowers potted by the children and some youth.
- We also continued the **Prayer Child Program** that matches United adults with children or youth, with the commitment to pray for the young person every day for the year. To support parents, we continued providing **monthly family dinner bags** throughout the school year.
- We had a special celebration with young children for **Martin Luther King Day**, decorated **cookies for the firefighters** down the road for Valentine’s Day, and handed out candy to the congregation. We did it again on Father’s Day!

- Throughout the year, children, youth, and adults worked together to **assemble kits for the Ukrainian refugees** and to prepare monthly **casseroles for Santa Fe shelters**. They joined in *United We Run* to raise money for immigration and refugee relief, the SF Watershed, and BookKids.

We also sought to **engage children regularly in worship**:

- In August we had a **blessing of educators and students** before the beginning of school. They brought their **pets for blessing** during the outdoor St. Francis service in October.
- The **Christmas Eve “Candles and Carols”** service is geared toward children, youth, and families, with each young person receiving a Christmas gift from the church. This year it was a Candle of Peace made by women in Iraq refugees camps to remind them of God’s light.
- On **Easter Sunday**, Talitha prepared a special children’s sermon involving the symbols of the Easter basket. The outdoor Easter Egg hunt then had eggs filled with many of those symbols.
- The children and children’s ministry crew prepared a special presentation of **“Jesus Loves Me” in five languages for Mother’s Day**.

Our ministry with **middle school and high school youth** also had a number of components:

- The **Youth Initiation program**—United’s 2-year “Rite of Passage to Adulthood” for young adolescents—began with a one-day retreat to Ghost Ranch, followed by the Rite of Initiation service in September. The group met regularly on Sunday mornings after 10:00 worship.
- **Middle School and older High School youth** joined with the Initiates for social activities like a bowling night, tamale making, preparing casseroles for Santa Fe Shelters, and Game Night.
- Last summer, four high schoolers participated in the Rocky Mountain **Church Camp**.
- Middle school and high school youth helped **lead worship** as readers, liturgists, and musicians throughout the year, including leading the **Maundy Thursday Tenebrae**.
- In June, six youth and three adults went on an **immersion trip to the Navajo Nation**, touring the capitol Window Rock, learning about the Navajo’s “Long Walk,” taking a jeep trip through Canyon de Chelly, and meeting with the pastors at Good Shepherd Episcopal Church with which United has had a 30-year relationship.

We continued with a **Children and Youth Ministry Team** consisting of Karen Wilbanks, Bruce Turnquist, Gail Ansheles, Marilyn Gardner, and Katherine Freeman. After the resignation of Kate Murphy as Youth Director, we are continuing the search for a full time “Family Ministry Director,” to work with families and youth while overseeing the children’s ministries. We still have a goal to make UCSF a place where all youth, children, and families in our community can come together for special programs.

In that vein, we have planned three **summer family nights** to include all of United’s families, other members, and friends. The first event was the Lightning Boy Hoop dancers in June. In July, it’s “United Church Night” at the Fuegos Baseball Game. A third event is planned for August. Over the summer the younger children are pursuing a Noah’s Ark curriculum put together by the Ministry Team.

We will continue to develop special children/youth events, to share God’s love, the light of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit with our children, youth, and parents to deepen the courage and hope they need for their journeys of life and faith.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Wilbanks

Stewardship and Finance Ministry Team

Chair: Sarah Sawtell

Team: Bob Ansheles (Stewardship Campaign Chair), Sam Elkind (Treasurer), Joe Jones, Frank Wilbanks (Endowment Trustees Chair), Trudy Swint, Rev. Talitha Arnold (ex-officio). (Sarah, Sam, and Talitha also serve as Endowment Trustees, along with Caroline Burnett and Ed Barker.)

As we continued to deal with the effects of COVID-19, the 2022 Stewardship Campaign goal for the church's operating budget remained level with the 2021 goal of \$550,000. The Campaign resulted in 184 pledges totaling \$541,286 (only \$ 8,704 short of the goal), which included 23 new pledges. A total of 62 increased their giving over their 2021 pledge. This campaign in the fall of 2022 yielded the majority of the revenue to create the budget of 2023. Although the 2021 Stewardship campaign was not as robust as the 2022 campaign, the S&F Team rolled over year-end surplus funds of \$ 39,000 into the 2023 budget. Several large gifts were received at the end of 2022.

Staffing requirements for in-person worship services and regular church activities remained reduced. Changes in staffing for Children's and Youth Ministries occurred in 2022 and 2023. Changes in the staffing of the music program also took place in 2022. In 2023, we are in the process of searching for a Director of Families, Childrens and Youth Ministries. As more programs are available at the church, we are enjoying the upgrades in the HVAC systems and more extensive use of the video and technological systems in which we invested during the pandemic of COVID-19.

With responsibility for monitoring financial needs of the church, the Stewardship and Finance Team evaluates contingency reserves intended to sustain church operations. United is in the blessed state of "not in the red," but needs to be constantly reviewing and anticipating its financial needs, now and in the future, for its staffing/programming and for outreach to the community.

The Endowment Trustees and the Stewardship and Finance Team are engaging in an Endowment Initiative during 2023 and 2024 to plan for the future. United benefits from an Endowment, which is invested in a moderately conservative fund with United Church Funds to provide growth without undue risk to the invested capital. The endowment is approximately \$1.7 million. During 2022, the market was not cooperative, but it has been more cooperative in 2023. All reserve funds and the endowment are invested in safe accounts operated by the UCC. Frank Wilbanks will provide a more detailed report regarding the Endowment Initiative.

All of these financial plans and actions are enabled by the faithful generosity of the United community. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Sawtell

Treasurer's Report (CY 2022)

Operating Income: \$743,589

Operating Expenses: \$704,432

Summary:

- United's operating income came largely through generous giving by the local congregation and participants connecting through remote worship, although pledges made during the Stewardship campaign for 2022 proved to be lower than for the previous year. A balanced budget was accomplished with a larger than average transfer from Endowment funds, as authorized by Council in accordance with the governing rules of the Endowment.

- As the United community continued to worship in-person and online, the planned budget more than sufficed for operating costs. An open staff position, which proved very difficult to fill, caused the spending in 2022 to fall below plan.
- Surplus funds from 2022 enabled a roll-over that laid the foundation of the 2023 operating budget.

Reports: Monthly and annual financial reports are available through the church office.

Respectfully submitted,
Sam Elkind

“Founded in Faith, Building for the Future” Endowment Initiative

Endowment Initiative Members: Frank Wilbanks, chair; Ed Barker; Caroline Burnett; Bob Ansheles; Joe Jones; Trudy Swint; Sam Elkind; Sarah Sawtell; and Reverend Talitha Arnold.

The Church Council, the Endowment Committee, and the Stewardship and Finance Ministry Team wanted to help ensure a solid financial foundation for United for the coming years. The last three years of the pandemic have shown us the importance of having that foundation. About ten years ago, an Endowment Fund was established for the church, and it has provided funding to help underwrite the operating budget and also for special needs, such as our music ministry, youth ministry, Desert Faith, and landscaping. To provide the staffing and programming that United will want and need in the future, additional funding from an endowment will be necessary to supplement the annual stewardship campaign. The Council, on the recommendation of the Endowment Committee and the Stewardship and Finance Ministry Team, approved the development of an Endowment Initiative beginning in the early spring of 2023. The purpose is to increase the current endowment, with a value of approximately \$1.7 million, through bequests, wills, planned giving, and cash donations.

A reputable team at the firm Alexander Haas, led by Jerry Henry, guided the Endowment Campaign members through the campaign. Mr. Henry, a long-time friend of United, helped us develop our initial endowment ten years ago and knows both the church and the wider Santa Fe community. A graduate of Yale Divinity School, he served local churches and the national United Methodist Church for several years before going into his current calling of working with churches, schools, and other non-profits to achieve their programmatic goals.

The Endowment Initiative members have met weekly since early March. They developed a survey for the congregation and a number of materials and communications about the role of the endowment in enabling United to continue to serve as a faith leader for Santa Fe.

As of July 1, 2023, we have 16 replies with cash gifts and 3-year pledges that total \$239,650. For the legacy gifts (wills, trusts, etc.), we have 14 confirmed replies. Of those 14, eleven have provided estimated amounts that total \$ 1,777,500. Two of the replies have said that UCSF is in their will/trust/IRA as a beneficiary but provided no specific amounts. One respondent is in the process of putting together their will. The total as of July 1 is \$2,017,150. And more responses are expected throughout the summer.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Sawtell

Adult Faith Formation

Chair: Larry Rasmussen

Biblical Studies:

- Pastor Talitha Arnold's Thursday morning Zoom Bible Study *Resilience and Hope*, continues (12 to 15 participants, from Santa Fe, Colorado, New York, Connecticut)
- Pretty Good Guys study of *Bad Boys of the Bible* by Barbara Essex (8-12 participants)

Social Justice:

- *Intro to Advocacy Day* – Outreach Chair Marilyn Gardner
- *Immigration and Refugees:*
 1. Overview of Immigration and Refugee Task Force work, chaired by Avril Ekstrand
 2. *Report from the Border* with Rev. Victoria Ubben and others
 3. *Barriers at the Border* with SF Dreamers founder Allegra Love
 4. *New Mexico Immigrant Law Center* – Sophia Genovese
- Gun Violence:
 1. *After Uvalde*—led by Pastor Arnold (substituting for Miranda Viscoli)
 2. *New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence* with Dir. Miranda Viscoli
- Homelessness and Poverty:
 - Homeless in New Mexico* – Hank Hughes, Coalition for the Homeless
- Gender and Sexuality Justice:
 - Beyond Pink and Blue: Transgender 101*—United member Jess Clark

Eco-Justice and Creation Care:

- *Santa Fe Watershed* – Dir. Mori Hensley
- *Tracking Your Carbon Footprint* – Jim Norton, Dir. of NM Environmental Protection Division (ret.)
- *The Planet You Inherit* – Introduction to Larry Rasmussen's book
- *The Whole Earth Covenant* – 4-session study to reconsider the United Church's Whole Earth Covenant, led by Larry Rasmussen
- *Aquamation* – Veterinarian Amanda Darby
- *Tree New Mexico* – Tamar Randall
- *New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light* – Sr. Joan Brown
- *When We Look to the Stars* – Astrophysicist Ed Barker
- *A Desert Church for a Desert Time* – Video about United's Desert Faith

Other Forums:

- *Churches and Emerging from the Pandemic* – Jerry Henry, Endowment Consultant
- *Stewardship Speed-dating and Tailgate Party; Endowment Speed Dating*
- *Get to Know United* – new member gathering

Classes:

- *Christian Mystics* – 5-week Lenten Study led by Pastor Arnold
- *Dealing with Eco-Anxiety* – 4-part series led by Joe Neidhardt and Mary Roessel

Pastoral Care/Mental Health:

- *When the Holidays Are Different*, led by Pastor Arnold

Other Events:

- Feb Fest weekend with guest conductor and composer André Thomas, co-sponsored with Coro Lux: Saturday workshop, Sunday worship, Sunday afternoon concert at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis
- Tree Planting at the School for the Deaf, Santa Fe, organized by Tree New Mexico (recipient of UCSF monies from the Carbon Offset program)

PERSONNEL MINISTRY TEAM

Chair: Jim Ekstrand

Team: Charlotte Lindsey, Tom Stewart

As we emerge from the pandemic, church staff have continued to be flexible and creative in addressing ongoing challenges. The church has continued to add new members throughout this time, and that is a testament to the church staff, as well as the ongoing faithful support of United members and friends.

Staff transitions since the last Annual Meeting include the resignation of Choral Scholars Kathleen Murphy (moved to Mexico); Curtis Storm (too many jobs :-), and Kate Murphy as Director of Youth Ministries. To replace this position, we have created a new position combining the children's and youth ministries into a new full-time position for Director of Families, Children's and Youth Ministry. We are recruiting for this new position as widely as possible with the hope and prayer that we have someone on board by September. United remains strongly committed to the children's and youth ministries and by creating a full-time position combining responsibilities for these ministries, we anticipate it will be easier to recruit candidates who may need to relocate to Santa Fe.

This past September, we welcomed Caleb Omolo to the staff as Children's Ministry Teacher.

Evaluation conversations were conducted with Director of Music Bradley Ellingboe and Pianist Jessie Lo. Similar evaluations are planned for other staff in the coming months.

The church staff is to be commended for continuing to faithfully deliver creative programs in what continues to be a challenging environment.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Ekstrand

Discipleship Development

Chair: Diane Darby

The primary focus has been to provide a welcoming environment for worship services each week, both before and after the service.

Volunteers from the congregation are asked to sign up to greet and usher. A core group of volunteers are contacted by email when additional help is needed. Our goal is to have one person outside to welcome people as they come in, then two people at the Welcome Table for visitors, and two ushers at the Sanctuary doors to offer bulletins and welcome once again. Pam Hyde and Karen Wilbanks have staffed the Welcome Table each week. They also greet and encourage visitors to sign in and provide contact information for a follow-up from the church. Supplies for setting up the Welcome Table are organized in a box in the Community Room closet.

In May, we re-hired Luis Zapata as the Sunday Aide to assist persons with mobility or memory issues for the 10:00 service.

We have held three newcomer "Get Acquainted with United" gatherings this past year and are delighted to have welcomed 16 new members since the last Annual Meeting in August 2022.

Parish Life

We've continued to rebuild the United community through the 3rd year of the pandemic in a number of ways:

- Thanks to the leadership of Diana Smith, with help from Parish Life Coordinator Emerita Nancy Merchat (and her able helper Tom :-), we shared a variety of **common meals and cupcakes receptions** (outside as often as possible). Sometimes the church supplied the full meal (with the help of Albertson's); other times people brought their own entrée (sandwich, salad) and church provided the rest.
 - August 21 – Reception following baptism of Augustus Vaughn Stone
 - Sept. 4 – Labor Day Picnic
 - Nov. 6 – Stewardship Speed Dating
 - Nov. 13 – Stewardship Tailgate Party
 - Dec. 16 – Youth and Parents Tamale Party
 - Dec. 22 – Hosted Las Posadas with Santa Maria de la Paz
 - Feb. 5 – FebFest Lunch (100 singers and instrumentalists)
 - Feb. 19 – Mardi Gras Brunch
 - Apr. 9 – Easter Cupcake Reception
 - May 7 – United We Run
 - May 21 – United's 43rd Birthday
 - July 2 – 2nd of July Picnic
 - July 23 – Pretty Good Guys Pancake Breakfast
- Special events included:
 - Christmas Light Walk (United's trees decorated with abundant lights from Advent through Epiphany)
 - Lightning Boy Pueblo Youth Hoop Dance Performance – June 2023
 - Santa Fe Fuego Baseball Game – July 2023

Thanks to Children's/Youth Chair Karen Wilbanks and a number of volunteer cooks, we continued our Monthly Friday Supper Bags for school-age families. In addition, the church hosted a number of receptions after memorial services, thanks to Diana, Nancy, and other volunteers. Such gatherings are an important part of United's overall pastoral ministries, providing not only food but solace for families and friends. Receptions since July 2022 included those for the memorial services for Bobbie Smith, Pieter Hull, and Terry Vermillion.

Congregational Care Team

Chair: John Shaffer

Team: Debbie Maloney (through May 2023); Janyth and Ferol Fell, Dave Wilkison, Rev. Dusty Pruitt, Diana Smith, June Yoder, Rev. Victoria Ubben (through spring 2023); Paul Vogel (joined winter 2023), Talitha Arnold (ex officio)

We provide Pastoral Care support to our faith family at United Church and the broader community, writing notes of care, concern and support, and of joy, encouragement, and congratulations. Our Food Group prepares and delivers meals for those with situational needs. We offer yearly "When the Holidays Are Different" gatherings to help persons who have experienced loss navigate the holidays. We are truly blessed to attend to the cares and joys of our family at United Church.

Women's Study Group

(Barbara MacPhee)

The Women's Study Group met in person on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from September through June. Fifteen to twenty women participate regularly, with group members leading the discussion. Since September, we read *The Four Vision Quests of Jesus* (Steven Charleston), *How the Word Is Passed* (Clint Smith), *The House at Otowi Bridge* (Peggy Pond Church), *The Gates of Europe: The History of Ukraine* (Serhii Plokyh), *The Henna Artist* (Alka Joshi), excerpts from *In the Sanctuary of Women* (Jan L. Richardson), *Crazy Brave* (Joy Harjo), and *Running with Sherman* (Christopher McDougall). We start again this September. All women welcome!

"Pretty Good Guys" Men's Group

(Rev. Ken Bordner; Rev. Talitha Arnold)

The "Pretty Good Guys" meet the second and fourth Wednesday of the month, year-round. This winter, we began a conversation about "Toxic Masculinity," after reading an article by Rev. Peter Marty, publisher of "The Christian Century." We then began a study of *Bad Boys of the Bible* by UCC scholar Barbara Essex, focused on different men of the Hebrew Bible (Adam, Abraham, etc.), with different people leading the discussions. We also held our first ever "All Church Pancake Breakfast." All men welcome to join in the conversations!

OUTREACH MINISTRY TEAM

Chair: Marilyn Gardner

Team: Diane Bethune, Char and Bruce Cebell, Avril Ekstrand, Pat Roach, Marilyn Gardner, Talitha Arnold

As we move into post-pandemic mode, we continue to build on the efforts of previous Outreach Teams. United's commitment to "love neighbor, love creation" remains strong. A testament to that strength is seen in increased contributions to our Outreach efforts and the growing number of volunteers involved in our Outreach ministries.

The closure of Felipe's Tacos necessitated a rethinking of our monthly shelter meal support for the Interfaith Shelter, Casa Familia, and St. Elizabeth. The new process includes: (1.) volunteers providing meatloaf; (2.) purchasing salad mix, dessert, and drinks; and (3.) "Chop & Grate" to prepare vegetable casseroles. This year, we delivered over 1660 meals to Pete's Place and each month 25 volunteers shop, chop, cook, and deliver. Many thanks to Pat Roach for coordinating.

Thanks to the generosity of the United congregation and friends, far and near, the 2022 Compassionate Christmas gifts raised \$7,280 (\$2,630 over 2021; a 57% increase).

For the first time in 4 years, we had United's annual "Advocacy Day" at the State Legislature. Twenty-three United people visited the State Capitol to advocate for bills that addressed Homelessness, Gun Violence, the Environment and Human Rights. Bills that were signed into law included Expansion of Human Rights Act; Regional Water System Resiliency; Storage of Certain Radioactive Waste; and the Special Immigrant Juvenile Classification Act that aligns New Mexico with the SIJS federal statute.

United member Debbie Maloney continued her leadership of BOOKKIDS, with Diane Bethune helping coordinate with schools. This year 2,307 students received five books each (totaling 11,535 books). Teachers chose 500 books for their classroom libraries. With Debbie moving, Diane takes on an expanded role for the '23-'24 school year.

United We Run, organized by Avril Ekstrand with a host of volunteers, raised \$5,105 (40% over 2022) for BOOKKIDS, SF Watershed Association, and Immigration/Refugee Relief.

United Church of Santa Fe is committed to providing both direct support and advocacy for Immigrants and Refugees around the globe. We support Afghan and Central American refugee families in Santa Fe, Ukraine refugees through Church World Service, and asylum seekers at the U.S./Mexico border. The Immigration and Refugee Task Force (led by Avril Ekstrand) also helps educate the congregation regarding immigration issues and policies.

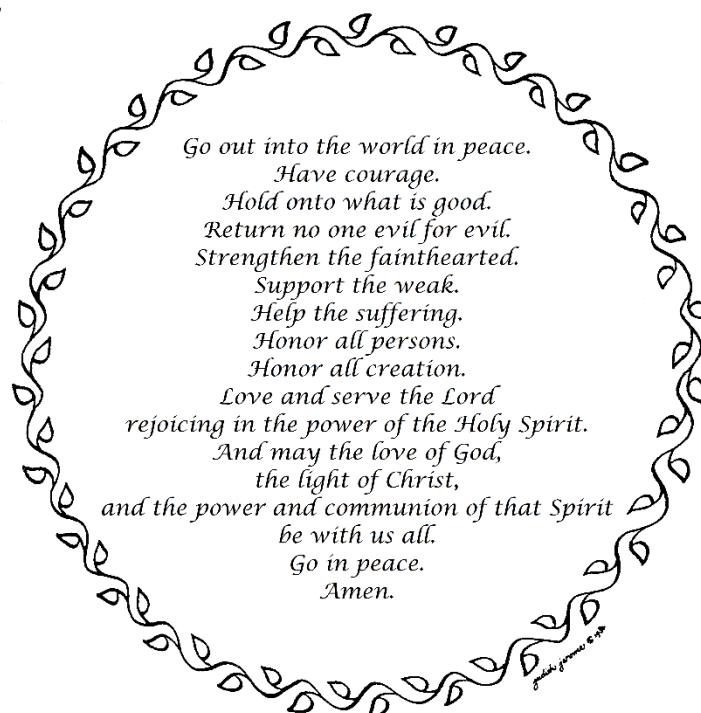
We also continue all of our environmentally focused programs: Compost collections, Carbon Offset, Santa Fe River clean up, support for the New Mexico Interfaith Power & Light organization, and Tree New Mexico.

In the first June Santa Fe Pride Parade in four years, 30 United members and friends marched!

Many volunteers make United's Outreach ministries possible, as does the United staff. Office Administrator Lin Raymond, Accountant Joyce Pohl, and Pastor Talitha Arnold all provide the administrative and organizational support needed by multiple fund drives. In addition, both Lin and Talitha are on the front line for individuals from the wider community who need special support, which ranges from grocery cards to mental health care to funerals. Social media specialist Elijah Marquez gets the word out about United's outreach work and fundraisers through Facebook and Instagram. Director of Music Bradley Ellingboe's leadership of both United's Choir and Coro Lux results in special annual outreach funding through FebFest.

I want to close my report by thanking Avril, Char, Bruce, Diane and Pat for the outstanding job they have done this year. Each of them has taken on a leadership role for which I am extremely grateful. As we look to the future, United's commitment to "Love God, Love Neighbor and Love Creation" continues to deepen, and we will continue to find new ways, or revised ways, to live that commitment.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Gardner



2022 Outreach Giving

Thanks to the generosity of the United Church community, in Santa Fe and across the country this past year, the United Church distributed \$113,455 in outreach funds. That is a 12.5% increase over 2021. We are also on par to meet or exceed contributions for the first half of 2023.

2022 OUTREACH

| CATEGORY | PROGRAMS, AGENCIES, ETC. | TOTAL |
|---|---|------------------|
| Refugee Relief & Resettlement, Immigration, Advocacy | NM Immigrant Law Center, Church World Service (Ukraine, Haiti), Los Samaritanos, Bueno Pastor United Church of Christ, Santa Fe Afghan Resettlement, Direct support for individuals & families with legal and medical needs (Pastor's Fund) | \$40,030 |
| Disaster Relief (Global/National): Haiti, Tornado, Hurricane, etc. | One Great Hour of Sharing, Oasis (Honduras), CWS | \$5,010 |
| Housing, Homelessness, Food Insecurity | Santa Fe Shelters (Interfaith, Casa Familia, Youth Shelter, St. Elizabeth, Food Depot) | \$34,670 |
| Health (Physical, Mental) | Solace Crisis Center, Individuals (Pastor's Fund) | \$1,300 |
| Coved Relief -- Navajo Nation | Good Shepherd Episcopal Church (Ft. Defiance, AZ); Episcopal Diocese of Navajoland | \$2,975 |
| New Mexico Fire Relief | NM Conference of Churches, Cancer Foundation, Direct Aid | \$5,000 |
| Solidarity and Advocacy | Ads in New Mexican and SF Reporter after Texas Synagogue shooting, support for increased security at Temple Beth Shalom, Beit Tikva, Chabad Center | \$2,100 |
| Environmental Advocacy and Action | New Mexico Interfaith Power & Light, Tree NM, Reunity Resources, Recycling, SF Watershed, Audubon Ctr., Recycling, SF Watershed, Audubon Ctr., NM Environmental Law Center | \$5,180 |
| Education | Growing Up New Mexico, Communities in Schools, Lightning Boy Pueblo Youth | \$5,170 |
| Wider United Church of Christ, Ecumenical support | Southwest Conference UCC, national UCC, support for clergy and congregations, Interfaith Leadership Alliance | \$12,020 |
| TOTAL OUTREACH GIVING | | \$113,455 |
| Additional expenses: | Staff time (Office Administrator, Accountant, Sr. Minister) | \$87,590 |
| | Supplies for Outreach event | \$675 |
| In-kind donations | 130 pairs of socks, non-perishable food for Food Depot, 2 carloads of hygiene supplies for Mexico/U.S. border center, supplies for Church World Service refugee hygiene kits, meatloaves for monthly shelter dinners, etc. | |

Property & Maintenance

Following the major upgrades of the last few years, in particular all the furnaces and the purchase of a host of air purifiers so we could resume community life in the time of covid, this year has primarily been a regular maintenance time. Some highlights:

1. Steps into the outdoor worship area have new paint and better friction grips.
2. Repainting and repairing of Sanctuary walls.
3. Addressing a water retention problem in the basement (and finding pipes that led to nowhere).

Many thanks to David Feldt for overseeing these and other projects, even though he is no longer chair of this Ministry team.

An ongoing project is maintaining a list of vendors and repair companies, as well as a yearly maintenance schedule for everything from the fire extinguishers to the HVAC systems. A major project for this coming year is to develop a long-range maintenance schedule to help the church prepare—financially and otherwise—for things like replacing the roof, re-stuccoing the building, replacing carpet, etc.

If you'd like to help with light, handyperson jobs around the church, let Dave Feldt or Talitha Arnold know. Thanks to all!!

Landscaping Task Force

Linda Churchill (Chair), Donna Clark, Nyla Rasmussen

Thanks to the vision, persistence, and hard work of the Landscape Task Force over the past several years, the church's grounds have been a great blessing throughout the pandemic. Thanks to the good stewardship of the church's Endowment, we also have the funds to hire a weekly landscaping service (El Toro) to do regular maintenance.

In addition to the outdoor Early Service (May through early October), church members and neighbors regularly use the property for walks, play, and reflection; the Children's Garden grows food for the Food Depot; and church picnics and other food and fellowship events generally take place outdoors. (In addition to the summer umbrellas, we now have 4 propane heaters to use on the patio in the winter). We adorned the garden trees with lights at Christmas and have a number of programs for children and adults outdoors. When you see Linda, Donna, or Nyla, be sure to thank them!



Membership (as of June 30, 2023)

(August 28, 2022, to June 30, 2023)

MEMBERSHIP AS OF: August 28, 2022: 253 (237 in-town, 16 out-of-town)
 June 30, 2023: 250 (203 in-town; 18 out-of-town)
 (Active in-town participants: 55-60; not known # of virtual participants)

MEMBERSHIP PATTERNS (year-end)

1987: 132 (100 in-town, 32 out-of-town)
 1998: 197 (162 in-town, 35 out-of-town)
 2008: 333 (303 in-town; 30 out-of-town)
 2013: 254 (231 in-town, 23 out-of-town)
 (We created a “friendly former member” category for persons who had moved away.)
 2015: 278 (257 in-town, 21 out-of-town)
 2020: 260 (252 in-town, 12 out of town) (1st year of the pandemic)
 2021: 236 (219 in-town, 17 out-of-town)
 2022: 233 (212 in-town, 21 out-of-town)

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE AT WORSHIP:

1987: 75 adults, 20 children/youth
 1990: 89 adults, 20 children
 1997: 120 adults, 45 children
 2001: 135 adults, 28 children (added Community Room and Nurture Ctr., 1998-2000)
 2003: 155 adults, 42 children (completed Sanctuary expansion in 2002)
 2005: 168 adults, 58 children/youth
 2010: 151 adults
 2015: 170 adults, 30 to 35 children/youth
 2018: 170 adults (dedicated Education Wing, September)
 2020: 185 adults through February; online worship only from Mar. 22 -Dec. due to pandemic
 2021: Worship online only through March 21, then started in-person services (outdoors through end of October) as well as online. Average in-person: 87 (adult/children/youth)
 2022: In-person: 115 adults through end of July (added 8:30 service in late June); 126 adults (August through December)
 2023: In-person: 136 adults; Online: 81 adults (January through June)

EASTER WORSHIP ATTENDANCE:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1987: 180 adults, 30 children | 2020: 457 views on YouTube (pre-recorded only) |
| 1993: 310 adults, 70 children | 2021: 110+ people in person (outdoors), 220 views on YouTube (pre-recorded); |
| 1998: 384 adults, 80 children | 2022: 270 outdoor (Sunrise & 10:00); 140+ online pre-recorded |
| 2000: 290 adults, 80 children | 2023: 50 outdoor sunrise & 242 indoor (11 kids); 292 total adults (online: 100) |
| 2005: 357 adults, 77 children | |
| 2010: 390 adults, 62 children | |
| 2015: 416 adults, 60-70 children | |
| 2019: 402 adults, 40 children/youth | |

CHRISTMAS EVE ATTENDANCE:

| | |
|--|---|
| 1990: 169 adults, 26 children | 2020: Pre-recorded only: 161 – family/children’s service; Communion service and music services—343 |
| 2000: 265 adults, 50 children | 2021: 196 adults/children in-person (4:30, 7:00, 9:00); 115 livestream (2 services—4:30/7:00) |
| 2010: 295 adults, 50 children/youth | 2022: 3 services totaling 221 adults & youth; 20 children; 88 online |
| 2015: 395 adults, 60 children/youth | |
| 2017: 285 adults, 30-40 children/youth | |
| 2018: 330 adults | |
| 2019: 330 adults, 57 children/youth | |

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES (August 28, 2022, through July 15, 2023)

NEW MEMBERS (16)

REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH (7)

| | | |
|------------------|----------------|----------|
| Leonard Stovall | Joan Doolittle | JD Wynne |
| Stephanie Hubley | Dave Doolittle | |
| Janice Arlen | Jennifer Wynne | |

LETTER OF TRANSFER/ASSOCIATE MEMBER (9)

| | | |
|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| Ben Larzelere | Kris Dorris | Renate McLelland |
| Bev Larzelere | Paul Vogel | Roscoe Morton |
| Jim Dorris | Jim McLelland | Cheryl Morton |

REMOVED (20)

Deaths: (2)

| | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Terry Vermillion | Rev. Betsy Bueschel |
|------------------|---------------------|

RESIGNED (4)

| | |
|---------------|--------------|
| Bonney Hughes | Jackie Neel |
| Hank Hughes | Richard Neel |

MEMBERS RECATEGORIZED AS "FRIENDLY FORMER MEMBERS" (14)

(Inactive in-town members or out-of-town members who moved in the past year. Some stay on United's communication lists, but aren't part of current congregation; therefore, not part of UCC Per Capita dues.)

BAPTISMS (1 *-infant/child)

Tatum Amaya Archuleta*

MARRIAGES (1)

Anne Hillerman and David Tedlock

MEMORIAL and/or INTERMENT SERVICES: (2) (*member)

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| *Terry Vermillion | Pieter Hull |
|-------------------|-------------|

United Church of Santa Fe Whole Earth Covenant
(Adopted 2009; updated for review at July 30, 2023 Annual Meeting)

The founding Covenant of the United Church of Santa Fe includes this pledge: “We endeavor to live in harmony with all creation as stewards of the earth.” In keeping with this, and in keeping with the church’s motto, Love God, Love Neighbor, Love Creation, we propose the Whole Earth Covenant.

We live and move and have our being in God, Creator of Earth and cosmos.

God’s creation is seamless, dynamic, and on-going. It births and sustains all life, together.

Creation’s lesson is clear: Human life and well-being derives from nature’s health and provision; if the rest of nature does not thrive, neither do we. We are companions in creation and participants in God’s “first and everlasting covenant.” This is the covenant with “every living creature of all flesh...for all future generations.” (Gen. 9: 8 - 17), a covenant we share and celebrate.

Yet now we humans are altering the conditions for life as we know it and cherish it. With global warming and climate system change we render the future of Earth’s life uncertain. Christian faith, itself forged in turbulent times amidst uncertainty and danger, calls us as followers of Jesus Christ to new dimensions of Earth-honoring discipleship, a discipleship of humility, awe, and compassion for the full community of life.

To that end, we commit ourselves to the following.

As a congregation:

- to develop, through worship, education and our interpretation of Christian traditions, a spirituality that reflects our home in the desert and our responsibility to learn from the desert, its peoples and their heritage, and to protect its delicate ecosystems.
- to live out daily institutional practices that sustain and restore resources as we work with the wider community to promote peace and justice *to* creation as well as *in* creation.

As individuals:

- to deepen our awareness of the sacredness of all creation and of God’s call to live in harmony with the natural world of which we are part – and practice it daily.
- to find ways continually to reduce our carbon footprint and help others to do so as well.
- to recognize as desert dwellers that we have a special responsibility to use wisely the water that is indispensable to life.