

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Presented at the
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2022

LAKEWOOD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
An Open and Affirming Congregation

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Our Mission Statement proclaims our common goal.

*We strive to be a welcoming,
worshipping community of faith,
helping people discover and deepen
their relationship with God, growing as
disciples of Christ, and reaching out in
faith and loving service.*

In keeping with the spirit of our Mission Statement,

*Lakewood Congregational Church,
United Church of Christ,
is an Open and Affirming congregation.
We welcome people of all sexual orientation,
ages, differing abilities, and ethnic, economic,
and racial backgrounds into
the full life and ministry of our church.*

*We declare this in the name of the Still Speaking God,
whose Son, Jesus Christ, welcomed
all people into God's circle of grace.*

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ANNUAL MEETING
February 13, 2022
AGENDA

Jan Young, Moderator

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1) Call to Order | <i>Jan Young</i> |
| 2) Count for Quorum | <i>Jan Young</i> |
| 3) Prayer | <i>Rev. Joanna D'Agostino</i> |
| 4) Motion to take attendance via Zoom | |
| 5) Motion to dispense with the reading of minutes of last meeting | |
| 6) Motion to dispense with the reading of departmental reports | |
| 7) Reports: | |
| a) Report from the Executive Team | <i>Liz Spahr</i> |
| b) Endowment Fund Update | <i>Steve Hotchkiss</i> |
| c) 2020 & 2021 Budget Reports and Approval | <i>Steve Hotchkiss</i> |
| d) ONA statement revision | <i>Michael Komperda</i> |
| e) Listening Team Report | <i>Vicki Smigelski</i> |
| f) Nominating Committee | <i>Melissa Diemert</i> |
| 8) Introduction of Members of Executive Team | <i>Jan Young</i> |
| 9) Reading of the Church Mission Statement | |
| 10) Conversations for the good of the congregation | |
| 11) Benediction | <i>Rev. Joanna</i> |

Lakewood Congregational Church

Annual Meeting Minutes

February 7, 2021

at 11 a.m., via Zoom

After an opening choir piece, moderator Jan Young calls the meeting to order at 11:09 a.m., reviews Zoom housekeeping rules (this is LCC's first remote annual meeting) and conducts a practice poll.

Scott Suttell, who is keeping minutes for the meeting, confirms a quorum with 68 participants and 92 people in total.

Following a prayer, Joanna D'Agostino asks for a motion to dispense with the reading of the previous year's minutes. Vicki Smigelski makes the motion, Karen Wagner seconds it, and the motion is approved.

Liz Spahr, who chairs the Executive Team, notes that Executive Team reports will be done in the form of pre-recorded videos. The overall message: "Hope. This group has been there for each other." She says there have been many "challenging conversations" during the COVID year, and the Executive Team has been up to the task.

Vicki Smigelski and Lauren Smigelski, who lead Welcoming, are the first video. They note that many welcoming functions take place in person, and those functions can't take place - yet. But efforts are in place to reach out remotely as appropriate and needed, and to be ready for the return to in-person worship.

Laura Hampton, who heads Outreach, says the church continues to make an impact even though we aren't gathering together. She notes the church raised \$15,000 for the Mozambique project and is almost 70% to goal. She says 2021 will be a year to advocate for "the last, the lost, the least," adding, "I know the congregation can do it."

Rachel Burns, representing Youth Ministries, starts by talking about the success of Faith Formation and Eliza Jennings prior to pandemic disruptions. The youth musical *Seussical* began rehearsals before the show had to be canceled due to COVID, she notes, before playing a clip of a rehearsal. Faith Formation will restart in March virtually. LCC is moving ahead with plans for confirmation. A Virtual Bible School took place in summer 2020 over five weeks, and there was a virtual Christmas pageant. (Rachel plays a clip of that, too.)

Michael Fleenor, who heads Facilities, reviews an updated building summary. He cites the need for exterior painting and some work in Bowers Chapel. A redesign of the West Clifton hallway is being aided by the efforts of Jill and Scott Richardson. The facilities team is developing a building timeline for improvements and is setting priorities for 2021 that include exterior maintenance and landscaping, improvement in indoor air quality and sanctuary upgrades.

Joanna D'Agostino provides a 2020 stewardship update. She says it ended up being "simple" as far as stewardship, and that leadership is "comfortable" with the financial conditions for 2021. Lauren Smigelski puts the link to the pledge form in the Zoom chat.

Steve Hotchkiss gives the treasurer's report and notes that the amount in the Endowment, \$2,222,274, at this point in 2021 is slightly above that of 2020. The church in 2020 used "very little" from the endowment, only \$18,000. Total pledged revenue continues to rise. "It was absolutely amazing those pledges were maintained" during the pandemic, he says.

Julie Warren discusses the Nominating Committee vote. David Diemert is stepping into the role of leading Nurture & Growth, and Laura Hampton is heading Outreach. Jan Young asks for a motion to vote on nominations. Jim Gibbs makes it, and Jill Richardson seconds. There is no discussion, and the vote is approved.

The presentation portion of the meeting comes to a close with Joanna D'Agostino thanking Darren Toms for his work on the weekly "vurch" services that keep us all connected when we can't be together in the sanctuary. All participants then read the church mission statement.

At 12:10 p.m., we begin the Conversation for the Good of the Church portion of the meeting.

Joanna D'Agostino notes that she would like to shift the operations of the nominating committee itself, but there have been no nominations for that yet. She asks that those interested in joining that committee reach out to indicate interest.

Vicki Smigelski thanks all who worked to put the Zoom meeting together and thanks Joanna D'Agostino for her leadership and embrace of the digital world during this difficult time. She also thanks church staff and Executive Team members for their effort under such unusual circumstances.

Missy Toms adds that she has been "incredibly impressed" with the staff and lauds staff members for their "perseverance and creativity."

Charlotte Petrie asks if there has been progress on adding language related to gender expression to the mission statement. Liz Maugans says this has been on the to-do list, but the pandemic delayed it. Such an updating of language is "important" and "will be back in the forefront" for 2021. Joanna D'Agostino says the issue will be discussed further at the Executive Team meeting.

Joanna D'Agostino leads the benediction, then the choir sings "Give Me a Clean Heart."

The meeting is adjourned at 12:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Scott Suttell

Lakewood Congregational Church

Congregational Meeting Minutes

October 17, 2021, 2:00 pm via Zoom

Call to order: Vicki Smigelski called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm
Heather Tuck-Macalla performed the count for quorum and verified one was reached with 45 members.

Prayer led by Rev. Joanna D'Agostino

Introduction and welcome of Living Water Association General Minister, Nayiri Karjian, by Rev. Joanna D'Agostino.

Rev. Joanna D'Agostino discussed the background to today's meeting and vote as evolving from the past 5 years of visioning discussions that began before she was called to serve the congregation. She discussed a need to live into our visioning as well as adapt to change and allow for transitions and shifting priorities to meet our needs in liminal times of global changes and challenges. During this time, it became increasingly clear that there was a need for more ministerial support.

Our church's growth from a pastoral church to a programmatic church was also discussed, creating the need of more lay leaders to provide support to church members through the Diaconate such as Called to Care or Stephen Ministry. When she reached out to General Minister Nayiri Karjian for assistance it was determined that a need for pastoral support was clear. It was recommended to search for a Minister of Health & Wholeness to address the growing personal and spiritual needs of our expanding congregation, especially during these challenging times of a global pandemic.

Rev. Joanna D'Agostino immediately identified an internal candidate with the ideal gifts to fulfill this role. Due to the need and the holiday season quickly coming upon us, which increases pastoral care needs, it was thought best to expedite the process by asking the congregation to vote to exempt the call from the traditional national call process and from the process outlined in our church Constitution.

The Minister of Health & Wholeness would be a halftime Minister subject to the Living Water Association salary guidelines. This minister would do hospital visitations, pastoral visits, and empower the congregation through trainings to do this type of care.

Vicki Smigelski called for questions from the congregation.

Patti Komperda: Is this person required to be ordained and UCC affiliated?

Rev. Nayiri Karjian: Due to the pandemic, the Association has been proceeding based on need and call. The position calls for special gifts that ordained ministers who are retired and close to retirement often possess. However, it can also be a lay person with specialized training. She

shared, that with the growth of our church, it is important for our church to get used to lay leadership, because one minister cannot do it all. She added that many larger churches are also hiring for this position due to expanding needs and stress levels on Senior Pastors.

Patti Komperda: The church formerly had this as an active position 15 years ago, so there is precedent.

Rev. Joanna D'Agostino: Let the congregation know that the candidate for the position is an ordained minister.

Liz Spahr: Explained traditional search and call process written in Constitution. An executive committee of 7-14 members is created to do a national search and call process that includes interviews and in person visits. The process to call Joanna took 6-9 months.

Rev. Nayiri Karjian: Emphasized that the congregation will vote on how the search and call is conducted but not on "who" would be offered the position.

Rev. Joanna D'Agostino: Once the congregation votes for exemption, the hiring process will mirror that of Rachel Burns, Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries.

Beth & Tom Clark: Do we have funds for the position?

Stephen Hotchkiss: The church budget was on schedule, until the end of the year came near. Pledges are short \$30,000, likely due to the challenging economic climate. The exterior painting project and cost of hiring a new minister makes the church budget short. It is proposed to make a 5% draw from our endowment fund of \$130,000 which is still short of the constitutionally allowed 6% or \$160,000 endowment withdrawal.

Karen Wagner: Is the draw affirmed by the Endowment Committee?

Stephen Hotchkiss: The Executive Team has the authority to make additional draws up to 6%, and we are only drawing 5%. Further discussion was made that one member of the endowment committee was present, that all members were apprised of this need, and the lack of attendance was due to desire not to be on Zoom, not in objection of the draw.

Joanna: Further discussed that in the last two years, the endowment withdrawals were down, and that the endowment is up. Stephen Hotchkiss further explained that the endowment has had 8%-10% growth the last few years, with an even higher growth rate this past year.

Emma Petrie-Barcelona: Past person in this position was not visible to the congregation. What is the vision of this role in regard to being involved with the greater church and congregational leadership?

Lauren Smigelski: The minister would work with Diaconate to create a Care Team. Liz Spahr further explained that this minister would help people in transition such as retirement, divorce, aging parents etc. They would create educational programs around these topics for

the congregation to participate in. The possibility to have this minister preach when needed is also there.

Sandra King: What is the background of the person selected?

Rev. Joanna D'Agostino: Registered nurse, single parent who was called to serve as a pastor when she became an empty nester. She served as a pastor of a small congregation for 6-7 years. She has most recently served as a hospital chaplain. While working as a pastor, she also maintained her nursing license. Sandra stated that this was a nice blend of gifts for the position.

Karen Wagner: Expressed support and trust for Rev. Joanna D'Agostino and the Executive Team and will vote yes. However, it will only be for this one time. In the past, this type of hiring process was used to discriminate against women and minorities. She emphasized we are a justice-based church, and the congregation must be involved in selecting particular candidates in the future. Sandra King concurred.

Rev. Joanna D'Agostino: Affirmed her strong confidence in this candidate and the significant need to fulfill the role, which is why she is pushing for this expedited process. Liz Spahr concurred and said she sees this candidate and time of calling as a God moment.

Vicki Smigelski calls for a motion for exemption to forgo the formal Search and Call Process as outlined in the church Constitution.

Darren Toms: Called for the Motion and Erin Sislowski seconded the motion.

Further Discussion:

Jill Richardson: How will Diaconate be called? Will the Diaconate need to be separated and changed based on who does and does not want to perform care duties?

Liz Spahr: Yet to be determined how the care group will function under Diaconate. The Executive Team can appoint new people. Only those interested in the work will participate. Diaconate members not interested will not be required to do so. The new minister will meet and discuss with the group and call on the congregation for anyone who wants to make lay ministry their calling.

Vicki Smigelski: Calls for a voting poll to be initiated. The motion passed by 86% with 5% of members abstaining.

Rev. Joanna D'Agostino opens discussion on the proposed capital campaign with the Social Hall as a priority as determined through visioning conversations. Between now and the end of year, a listening campaign will begin. She feels we are primed and equipped to begin. A conditions assessment was done on the building by the Cleveland Restoration Society. The church will use this as guidance for appropriate maintenance and repairs. A future

presentation on these findings is in the works. Individuals may also contact the church office to view it on their own.

Patti Komperda and Vicki Smigelski discuss updating our Open & Affirming statement that was created 15 years ago. Michael Komperda is leading a team to work on the update. Those interested are welcome to join him and the team.

Liz Spahr: Emphasized that as we grow from a pastoral to a programmatic sized church that the Executive Team is available to field questions.

David Stair: Thanked Rev. Joanna D'Agostino for going above and beyond in her duties and for presenting at the meeting. Vicki Smigelski seconded this sentiment.

Liz Spahr: Thanked Vicki Smigelski for moderating.

Rev. Joanna D'Agostino closed the meeting with a benediction.

STAFF REPORTS

SENIOR MINISTER

Dear Church,

Writing an annual pastor's report is one of the most daunting tasks of the year for me. I don't know how to sum up a year in ministry. There's so much you'll see in the other reports included here: numbers, summaries, names, events, projects, and so on. It's beautiful to see what we've been able to put onto paper, but the impact of LCC in 2021 is so much greater than the sum of this packet.

It would be better to share a steady stream of stories about the people we've met, the conversations we've had, and the way the Holy Spirit shows up in both the extraordinary and the mundane. The way in which LCC's staff coordinates time and resources to offer support never ceases to amaze me. Each member of our staff team— Karen, John, Ben, Rachel, Patti D. and now Phil and Catherine— has a clear understanding that our ministry together is much broader than a job description or title.

It's been another challenging year for just about everyone. By the grace of God, we've continued to see the growth of authentic connection, faith, and discipleship even through varying degrees of physical separation.

On Epiphany Sunday each year, I have been choosing a "star word" for our church; a word to follow in the year ahead to provide direction. In 2021 I chose the word "Unlock." Literally— to unlock our doors again. Figuratively— an unlocking of our hearts, minds, and arms to provide access to our discernment and vision. I shared three goals for 2021: 1) Defining and organizing our outreach ministry, 2) growing our culture of congregational care, and 3) dreaming and

scheming about our social hall and kitchen. (You can look at the details of those goals in last year's report).

With deep clarity and excitement, we pursued the second goal by calling Rev. Catherine Lawrence to be our half-time Minister for Health and Wholeness. She began her ministry on November 1st, and in just 2 months she has already had a huge impact on the lives of many in our church and we cannot wait to see what she brings to us this year.

The first and second goals are ongoing, but we certainly worked on them in 2021. Through the season of Lent, a group met on Zoom to learn about Faith-Based Community Organizing, and the way in which church outreach ranges from direct service (such as our community meal) to direct action (such as policy reform). We began following the direction of the Living Water Association (our regional association of the United Church of Christ) by embracing the title "Faith in Action" rather than "Outreach," and we deepened our connections within Greater Cleveland Congregations. That journey will continue to be a priority for many in the year ahead.

Likewise, there were frequent conversations about our Social Hall and kitchen, but we will continue them in 2022. We did, separate from the social hall and kitchen, accomplish a beautiful overhaul of our West Clifton Lobby, designed by Scott Richardson/Richardson Designs. We will have a "ribbon-cutting" of sorts to celebrate the space in the coming months.

The star word I chose for 2022 is "Rootedness." I love goal-setting and adventure-seeking, but as we extend into the third year of this pandemic, it's becoming clear that our primary focus is to remain steadfast and non-anxious in the midst of restlessness and chaos. To be rooted does not mean we are unmoving or unchanging. In fact, it is quite the opposite, because by reaching deeply into the source of life, we generate and grow a strong and healthy sense of purpose and identity, now and in the future.

In the spirit of Rootedness, I'm not naming any specific new goals for 2022. Instead, the goal is to remain steadfast and non-anxious. To absorb the richness we've already tapped into, and to listen and watch intently to see what God has to generate from us. I have every ounce of confidence in Lakewood Congregational Church to remain faithful to God's call.

Personal Ministry Updates

My own theological and spiritual journey is foundational in my ability to serve LCC, so I will also take some space to talk about some personal ministry endeavors. Spiritually, 2021 challenged me, but it was also filled with profound grace. Pastoral burnout was a common topic among clergy throughout the country this year. A Barna Group survey caught widespread attention when it showed a significant increase in the percentage of clergy who considered leaving full time ministry in the past year.¹ That survey, which I encourage you to read, notes that 46% of pastors under age 45 have considered leaving ministry, and raises red flags about the overall health and well-being of America's clergy. Nothing in the survey surprised me, and I am keenly aware of the risks of burnout. Personally, thanks be to God, I continue to feel

¹ <https://www.barna.com/research/pastors-well-being/>

called and equipped. It is my priority to maintain and increase my own well-being so I can continue to serve God through pastoral ministry.

I meet monthly with a “Communities of Practice” group consisting of four other UCC Pastors in the Living Water Association. Through the Lakewood Ministerial Association, I meet with and have ongoing relationships with area clergy including Rev. Sara Cogsil of Trinity Lutheran Church. I also maintain contact online with clergy throughout the UCC. I treasure these relationships and trust them for advice, encouragement, accountability, and care.

This year my term was renewed on the Living Water Association Council (our Association within the United Church of Christ) and I began serving on the Strategy Team for Greater Cleveland Congregations (ie: Board of Directors) alongside eight other Jewish and Christian faith leaders on the East and West sides of Cleveland. Through GCC, I am continuing to work on the development of the Cuyahoga County Diversion Center, which officially opened on May 1, 2021.

Through Eden Seminary, I completed a doctoral course called “Black Theology as a Resource for Transformative Leadership,” which I really enjoyed. Technically, I’ve completed a full year of Doctor of Ministry (DMin) classes through Eden, but I took a step back in the fall and am discerning when or if to further pursue a DMin degree.

I’ll end with personal gratitude. LCC’s love, support, and care for my family is such a profound blessing. When my Father-in-Law died on Good Friday, my family felt your strong embrace. Our grief was, and continues to be, a true challenge for all five of us. Through our loss, as well as many other joys and concerns of the year, you have been so full of Grace. It is abundantly clear to me that LCC is not only the church for me; it is the church for my family. It is our extended family and our faith home, and we feel deeply blessed.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Joanna

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRIES

Dear Church Family,

When Dr. Seuss’ book, *Horton Hears a Who*, was published in 1954, could anyone have imagined that the story would have the journey it’s had? From a children’s book to an animated film and then onto the Broadway stage as the main story of *Seussical*, and recently to our very own church through the performance of *Seussical* this past summer, I would say that’s a success story if I’ve ever heard of one!

There are many beloved characters in the book and musical. If you are familiar with the story or if you saw our production last summer, then I’m sure you remember Jojo (played by Cora Barcelona) and also Jojo’s parents, Mr. and Mrs. Mayor (played by Thomas Tamilio and Ariana Marich). Jojo was a challenging child and Mr. and Mrs. Mayor were about at their wits’ end trying to figure out the best way to raise him. In the song “How To Raise a Child,” they sang,

"He's a perfect little boy, but he's acting very strange. Is it all a part of growing up or did something make him change? We could just lay down the law. We could simply let him grow. Oh, where are the instructions on how to raise a child? Who has the instructions on how to raise a child? Who has all the answers? I don't know."

Mr. and Mrs. Mayor's lament sounds incredibly familiar.

As the scene moved on, the parents received a flyer from the Cat in the Hat (played by Audrey Warren) and read it aloud:

"As a parent, are you overwhelmed? Insecure? The help that you seek is inside this brochure!"

Oh, how I wish it was that easy. (It turned out not to be that easy for Mr. and Mrs. Mayor.) I have found myself singing "How To Raise a Child" from time to time, sometimes in my head and sometimes out loud. It's usually when I'm at my own wits' end as a parent, or when I'm listening to another parent or caregiver share their stories. Where *are* the instructions? Wouldn't it be nice to have a reliable flyer that read:

"As a caregiver, are you overwhelmed? Is your child facing multiple challenges due to the impact of Covid-19? Are you and your child feeling insecure? The help that you seek is inside this brochure!"

There are many, many resources regarding raising children, but could anything have prepared us for the past two years? I can honestly say that I was not prepared, but I can also say that my faith in God and the love of my church family allowed me to be somewhat equipped. The same seems to be true for many of you whose stories I've heard. Throughout the ups and downs, the uncertainties, and the instability we've faced and continue to face, to me (and I hope to you), our church feels like solid ground. I'm so grateful.

Throughout 2021, Lakewood Congregational Church provided a constant presence in the lives of our children, family, and youth. It was a wild mix of virtual and in-person surrounded by continuous change, but we trusted God and each other and we did not give up.

In January, we had become pretty familiar with most of our interactions with each other not being in-person. Family Faith Formation videos which included our opening ritual, Bible stories, and quite a bit of silliness were created every week for families to watch through YouTube. I wrote out the lesson plan (which looked more like a script) each week and then Harmony the Cat (Audrey Warren), Harold the Cat (Chris Burns), and I recorded from the Faith Formation Playhouse set that I created in the youth room. In 2020, I learned how to use iMovie and other video editing resources for the first time and in 2021, I enjoyed learning more editing techniques to make our videos more fun and interactive.

Throughout winter, in addition to Family Faith Formation videos, we continued to have Youth Group, kids' nights, parent chats, and Confirmation Classes through Zoom. In February, children and youth were provided with Lent packets which included resources to guide families through the Lenten season. Lindy Warren and I partnered up again, as we did with the 2020 Christmas pageant, to direct and produce a virtual Easter pageant starring the children of LCC

with Andy Barlow as Jesus. An Easter pageant is not tradition at LCC, but since we were not working towards a youth musical, we were allowed the time for this fun endeavor. The children learned the story of Holy Week and Easter in a new way and loved being able to see themselves on screen, especially with the movie magic which made it appear like they were all together in a group when they were all recorded individually or in family groups. The congregation enjoyed the opportunity to see the faces and hear the voices of the children of the church.

Through the grace of God, on Easter Sunday, April 4th, our LCC family was able to join together for worship on the front patio of church. It was such a blessing to worship together. The children created “Easter Jingers” with ribbons and bells from their Faith Formation supplies and blew bubbles, helping to create a truly joyful Easter Sunday.

In May, we began having monthly ‘Play at the Park’ gatherings for families which continued through the summer. In May, we also had our first gathering in the sanctuary when we had a Confirmation service for the confirmation class of 2020 and the class of 2021. 16 youth were confirmed on May 23rd. A second confirmation service was held on October 10th for youth who were not quite ready for Confirmation in the spring or who were not available. 4 youth were confirmed on October 10th. It was an incredible experience for the church to confirm 22 youth in 2021. These young people were from both the “Ketchup” confirmation class of 2019-2020 and the “French Fry” confirmation class of 2020-2021. The newly confirmed youth were presented with wooden hand crosses which were carved by Tom Campbell. The crosses are designed to fit comfortably in the palm of one's hand to hold while praying or to provide comfort. Both the French Fry and Ketchup classes displayed banners which the church will hang for years to come on Confirmation Sunday along with banners from years past. The large banners were made by Lori Waddell. The youth each chose a symbol to represent their own faith and the symbols were added to the banners to create a wonderful piece of art representing their classes.

June brought us back to worship in the sanctuary. During worship, we were able to provide nursery care outdoors on the front patio. Nursery care continued on the patio until October when the weather became too unpredictable for outdoor nursery. The Nursery remained indoors through the rest of the year. Working in the nursery were Sarah Donaldson, Morgan Hall, Laura Kressler, and Lindy Warren. Lee Mechenbier and Cameron Wereb volunteered regularly. On June 6th we held our Baccalaureate service where we celebrated 6 college graduates and 8 high school graduates.

In the summer months, I worked with David Diemert (Nurture and Growth) to develop a structure for the groups of the church. This was rolled out to the church in the Rally Day letter and we held our first round of Core Groups during Advent.

Vacation Bible School, which was held virtually in 2020, returned in-person with a 3-day event held in the evenings. It was held mostly outdoors, and the theme was “Seuss on the Loose.” Noah Hamrick (music) and I provided leadership along with an amazing group of youth and adult volunteers. We had 23 children participate.

Throughout June and July, the leadership team for the 2020 youth musical was able to put together an opportunity for the youth to turn the 2020 musical, *Seussical*, into a 2021 summer production. Most of the cast returned and virtual auditions were held for roles that needed to be rearranged. We had a complete cast full of talent and a very efficient youth stage crew, led by Stage Manager Allison Kressler. Thanks to Covid vaccinations and a drop in covid numbers in our area, the youth were able to perform *Seussical* unmasked. The production was held in the Sanctuary to allow for better air circulation and more spaced-out seating. This was LCC's 50th youth production and the whole process felt like a celebration. The leadership team included directors Domenic Farinelli and Lindy Warren, music director Noah Hamrick, and myself. Shawn and Julie Warren were integral in creating the set (along with many set volunteers) and added to the overall success of the show. Chris and David Burns ran sound. Many parents stepped in to help with preparations, organization, costumes, and more.

A day camp style mission trip for the youth was scheduled for July, working with Building Hope in the City. Due to many youth not being available or not yet comfortable with that type of activity due to Covid, the trip was replaced with some local mission opportunities for the youth. Youth had the opportunity to help with the community school supply drive, "Supplies 4 Success" and also RallyCLE which was an intergenerational day of service in Cleveland through Building Hope in the City. The youth were able to have in-person Youth Group in July and in August all ages came together for S'More Time with God.

The pace really picked up at church in August as families prepared for and then were sending their children back to school. We held our annual 'Blessing of the Backpacks' during worship on August 15th and later in the month some of our Confirmation Class of 2021 were able to tour the Cleveland Museum of Art, with Karen Wagner.

I spent a lot of time in August and September preparing for our Faith Formation classes to begin. The classrooms needed a lot of work when it came to cleaning out what could no longer be used, organizing, and stocking with supplies. I rearranged classrooms to best fit the needs of our classes and also created a new storage and workspace which is shared with Haynes Nursery School. This process, along with the hard work of Claire Stair and the archives team and the remodeling of the lobby, led to a new space to keep books for children, youth, and families to browse through and borrow. Books are now located on shelves below the CYF bulletin boards near the lobby. The books we have available to families are a mixture of books we have had for quite some time and new books that we continue to add. The goal of our collection is to provide books for families which reflect the values and mission of our church. As in years past, a binder is located on one of the shelves which includes space to sign books out if anyone would like to borrow them. I encourage all ages to browse through our current selection.

In September, we all rallied for Rally Day on September 12th and also had an installation of our Faith Formation teachers. Our Faith Formation teachers included Melissa Armstrong-Brine, Chris Burns, Laura Germaine, Nora Germaine, Amy Lardi, Chris Burns, Becky Machovec, Julie Marlin, Charlotte Petrie, Paul Pierce, Bri Raynes, Evelyn Richards, Paige Smigelski, and Scott Suttell. On September 19th, we presented Bibles to our Kindergarteners and 6th graders and also kicked off the Faith Formation school year with our children in-person for classes for the

first time in 17 months. The classes met outdoors on the front porch and patio until October when the weather became too unpredictable. It was a joy when we were able to move safely back into our classrooms.

Noah Hamrick resigned from leading music for children and youth as he needed more time for his growing family. Tim Hampton was hired as Director of Children and Youth Music and began his ministry with us in September with the children's music. He began working with the youth Next Generation Band in October. In November, the children sang in worship and the Next Generation performed.

In the fall, we kept up the busy pace. The youth resumed their annual trip to The Spooky Ranch, families had fun carving pumpkins and Y-Haven returned to our stage with their performance of "12,000 Steps." For the Y-Haven performance, our youth served lunch and shared a meal with the performers.

Throughout Advent, I was happy to work alongside our new pastor, Reverend Catherine Lawrence in writing leader guides for our new Advent Core Groups. On December 12th, auditions were held for LCC's 51st youth production, *Shrek The Musical*, which will begin rehearsals in January of 2022 and be performed in April 2022. Our annual Children's Christmas Pageant was able to be in-person and our children did a wonderful job bringing the Christmas story to life. The Christmas dinner was not held due to rising cases of Covid-19 and the pageant was held during worship on December 19th instead of in the evening. The leadership team for the pageant included director Lindy Warren, music director Tim Hampton, script editor, costumer, set, and all-around helper Julie Marlin, and myself.

The Children, Youth, and Family Faith Formation Team was a reliable source of guidance and help all through the year. The team includes Melissa Armstrong-Brine, David Diemert (Nurture & Growth Chair), Melissa Diemert, Sarah Maibauer, Jen Murray, Laura Rickard, and Jill Richardson.

Haynes Nursery School, directed by Shannon Lubas, was able to overcome many challenges this year. They began the year continuing their remote learning and moved to outdoor classes as soon as the weather permitted. In the fall, Haynes Nursery School was able to open the doors of their classrooms and welcome the children for indoor in-person classes.

2021 was an incredible year. It wasn't all easy or perfect, but it was beautiful. I'm blessed to be part of the LCC staff, working with Rev. Joanna, Karen, Ben, Rev. Catherine, Noah, Tim, Phil, Shannon, and John. This team never fails to offer support and encouragement. We all value each other and our LCC family and we are so grateful for the constant support and love from our congregation.

In conclusion, when asked "where are the instructions for how to raise a child?" I can't hand anyone a solve-all brochure. But I can say that one of Chris and my wisest choices as caregivers to our children was to raise them in church. I'm grateful that my family is part of the Lakewood Congregational Church family where we are accepted and loved exactly as we are and taught that God loves us and God loves who we are-even when we feel overwhelmed and insecure.

Whether someone walks through our church doors for the first time or if they've walked through our doors more times than they can count, I hope that all who enter our doors experience that same love and acceptance.

God loves you and God loves who you are.

Much love and Many blessings,

Rachel Burns, Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES

As we continued to navigate our way through the odd rollercoaster that has been the current pandemic, Lakewood Congregational's needs, both inside and outside of our worship services, have evolved throughout 2021. As is common for us, our music program was an important part of fulfilling our needs, continuing to root us in our collective strength and individual voices.

The beginning of the year was still online, including our Annual Talent Show, which was a source of light and laughter, even on the screen. We broke our 2021 Easter service into four services, with the congregation outside and vocalists and trumpet players in the Sanctuary, for everyone's mutual safety. Then, in May, we began to transition back from our virtual worship service format to in-person worship, much to the relief of our musicians, who at that point were ready not to have to keep recording themselves.

Over the summer, we enjoyed a wide mix of different periods and styles of music, while rejoicing in singing familiar hymns and songs together again. In the fall, starting with Rally Day, our music program resumed full force (with pandemic alterations including special masks we acquired, which make it easier to sing through, while with strong protection). We were gratified once again to make music together in person and hear the ringing of our bells and voices of our choir joined in song in our Sanctuary's beautiful acoustic.

All members of our music program were wonderful about adapting to changing conditions and that paid off in truly special music for Advent, featuring talented instrumentalists and vocalists from our congregation as well as guests from the Greater Cleveland Flute Society. Our 9:00pm Christmas Eve service, featuring a brass trio, felt like a wonderful homecoming, after the oddity of last year's online service. Our 5:00pm Christmas Eve service featured joyous singing and playing from our children and Next Generation Band, led by Tim Hampton, who is now our Director of Children and Youth Music. Tim's generosity of spirit, strong faith, and excellence in music making have rubbed off on our young ones, both in Faith Formation and the Youth Musical, and we are very grateful for his energy!

Our organ and piano have remained in great shape. Rocky River's Chamber Music Society, whose solo piano recital we hosted in November, generously funded some work on the action of our 1922 Steinway. That expert fine-tuning has resulted in a much more even feel to the instrument and it sounds even better than ever. With the help of Tom Leatherman, Tom Marlin, and Dan Smigelski, and myself, we have been honing our sound system in a way which balances good sound quality for both folks in the Sanctuary and those watching via our BoxCast live streaming system. That quality will get even better as we upgrade the components of our

system, both our mixing board and microphones and speakers, a process which is anticipated for the coming year.

As I write this in January 2022, our choir is currently on a short hiatus, in response to the spike of COVID cases due to the omicron variant. I am confident that, even as we continue to respond as a community to the twists and turns of current times, our music program will continue to keep us grounded in our faith, providing joys and comfort in equal measure.

Submitted with deep gratitude,
Ben Malkevitch, Director of Music

In Gratitude

As each of us sat down to write our letters, we realized just how many people we had to thank for supporting the mission and ministry of LCC this year. Rather than thanking them in each of our individual reports, we created a Gratitude Page to lift up a few individuals and groups of people.

There is no way we can thank every person who has contributed to the work of our church this year. It's amazing to think of all the people who serve our church in small and large ways, and we appreciate your grace if we forgot your name.

- **Our staff:** Karen, Rachel, Ben, John, Patti Dobro, Phil Brett, as well as David Stair who regularly provides security for outside groups.
- **Our Executive Team:** Jan, Liz, Bill, Steve, Vicki, David D., Laura, Lauren, Mike.
- All involved in creating a meaningful and engaging remote and outdoor Preschool program for Haynes Nursery School during a challenging time: Especially director, Shannon Lubas, our teachers, and the Haynes Board.
- **Gloria Van Peeren**, who continues to assist with our weekly offering and financials.
- **Jan Young, Kay Galloway, and Claire Stair**, our weekly office volunteers.
- **Mike and Peggi Mizen**, who continue to organize and facilitate our Community Meal each month of this pandemic (with the help of many faithful volunteers).
- **LCC and Trinity's Joint Covid Advisory Team:** Laura Hampton, Amy Daso, and Steve Fesko, who courageously kept the Gospel at the heart of their advice even when it was hard to hear.
- **Darren Toms**, who continued to faithfully film and edit "Virtch" until we returned to in-person worship, at which point he continued to regularly manage our livestream camera. Additional thanks to **JB Bando** and **Karen Lee**, who filled in on occasion.
- Our sound team, especially the late **Earl Gottlieb**, as well as **Tom Leatherman, Tom Marlin, Chris and David Burns, Ben Borrell, Ben Malkevitch**, and others who helped with our sound system this year.
- All other worship volunteers: ushers, liturgists, and greeters.
- **Karen Wagner** and the editorial team and writers who put together yet another beautiful Advent devotional.
- Many volunteers who helped in varying ways with decluttering and reorganizing storage spaces, especially the **Warren and Smigelski families**.

- All who assisted with the “Great Archives Move of 2021,” especially **Claire Stair, Joanellen Hurley, Marilyn Minter, Custodian John Mullen, and others.**
- **Workers and volunteers** who provided care in the church nursery (listed in Rachel’s report).
- All who made it possible for our youth to perform *Seussical, the Musical* this year, with unmatched flexibility. Especially **Domenic Farinelli and Noah Hamrick**, who flexed in creative ways during their own major life events.
- **Everyone who has offered ideas and suggestions** for our worship services, and all who have participated.
- **Those who helped plan and implement our many events.**
- All who contributed to altar arrangements and indoor and outdoor aesthetics, especially **the Smigelski family.**
- **Our many Faith Formation leaders** who taught and led classes for our children, youth, and adults in person and virtually.
- **Our musicians - choir members, handbell ringers, vocal and instrumental soloists,** whose shared gifts, enthusiasm, heart, dedication, and teamwork enriched our worship services every Sunday, whether online or in person
- **Our members and friends** who have given their time, energy, and love to countless LCC events throughout the year both virtually and in person.

YEAR IN REVIEW

LAKESWOOD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH HISTORIAN/ARCHIVES

“To say that this last year and a half has been a bit out of the ordinary would be like saying that Bach wrote a few good tunes.” (Ben Malkevitch)

Twenty Twenty-One (2021) began with hopes and dreams for the universe, our country, our families, and our church. Scientists developed a vaccine that would protect everyone in this country and around the world. Unfortunately, not everyone chose to receive the vaccinations, so the Pandemic entered its second year. At LCC we wore masks for services and limited activities.

Church services were held remotely from January through later May. Our senior minister, the Reverend Joanna D’Agostino, began her fourth year during a very stressful time. The Executive Team and Joanna decided to reopen the church for services in late May as long as social distancing and masks were in place. As the summer arrived, masks were not required to be worn (once seated) by the congregation. Church services were also available by livestream, on YouTube, and Facebook. Keeping connected was Pastor Joanna’s main focus. *“God of Wholeness and Healing, we worry about our future as a congregation because of the impact not being together in person has on our life in community.”* (Pastor Joanna)

The Reverend Catherine Lawrence was hired for a part-time position as *Minister of Health and Wholeness*. Catherine is a registered nurse and she is also an ordained minister. *“Catherine will support pastoral care and visitation, training and equipping the congregation with tools*

for lay-led spiritual care and support." (Joanna D'Agostino) We were happy to add her to the staff!

Rachel Burns, Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries, completed her second year. Last year's canceled show, *Seussical, the Musical*, was performed in the main sanctuary in 2021. Better social distancing, seating and air circulation made for a wonderful youth presentation. Plans for the 2022 musical, *Shrek, the Musical* were begun in December for early April 2022 performances.

Rachel, joined by her husband, Chris, and Audrey Warren continued to create online events, Faith Formation videos and activities to go along with many of them. Zoom continued to be popular along with puzzle swaps and other outdoor activities. Vacation Bible School (VBS) was held in-person out-of-doors. The theme for the year was "Seuss On the Loose." In September all classes were back to being in-person.

Director of Music Ministries Ben Malkevitch began his fifth full year as choir director, organist, pianist, composer, handbell director and soloist. He is a "man for all seasons!" Ben continued to write very insightful and informative articles about music for *The Columns* each month. He was busy recording hours of videos for virtual services, in-person services and programs. The choir welcomed three new soloists, Jesse Bobbitt (soprano), Gwendolyn DeLaney (alto), and Shaun McGrath (tenor). Festival Arts sponsorship was limited this year.

Office Manager Karen Lee began her fourth year. The office hours were limited to four days a week, 9 am-noon. Beginning in September, Karen resumed her five-day work week, 9 am - 3 pm. The monthly newsletter, *The Columns*, has a bright, new modern look on the Church website. Along with YouTube, Facebook, and livestreaming, we also have an Instagram account. The church directory is always available online and that saves paper, as well as making updates more efficiently. Karen also encouraged the Historian, Claire Stair, to begin scanning the entire church's historical documents to the main server. Ben's technical knowledge was invaluable to the Archival team to purchase a ScanSnap scanner. It is amazing!

Haynes Nursery School marked its 55th year. Classes met virtually through the winter months and then held their classes outdoors through the spring, resuming in-person instruction in September. The new director, Shannon Lubas, began her position in August 2021.

Financial Secretary Patti Dobro announced her retirement from this part-time position in July. In September, we welcomed Phillip Brett to fill her position. He has extensive experience in finance. We were happy to welcome Phil to the LCC staff.

Enhancement of the church was made in several ways. Sprucing up the West Clifton entrance was begun through Richardson Design (members). It included a more modern entrance and it added additional seating for coffee hours and meetings held after church. Look for the completion of this project in 2022. Along with this project, painters were hired to begin painting the trim, columns and front of the church as well as the western side of the building. Completion should be in 2022.

Youth Music Director Noah Hamrick retired after 5 years from this position. Noah and his wife, Hannah, are still attending members of the church. The new director is choir member, Tim Hampton, an excellent percussionist and teacher. He will lead all youth choirs and the Next Generation Band for grades 6-12.

Local and Global outreach projects continued to be important. They included: Rally CLE, Common Threads (a thrift shop in Cleveland), Community meals, Family Promise, Haynes Nursery School (its 55th year), Undie Sundays, Hunger Ministry, Lakewood Alive, literacy groups; books, cash and supplies, Neighbors in Need, Savers: clothing and household items, Lakewood Community Service Center, Supplies 4 Success, Project Angel Tree, storage for the Kiwanis book giveaway program (in former Archives on the third floor), a water project in Mozambique and Heifer International.

The Youth Ministry continued and was active. The 17th annual Homeless Awareness Sleep Out was not held in January 2021. The Youth Mission Trip was planned as a Mini-Day Camp, however, this was canceled as well. Rachel Burns and Lindy Warren created "In the Spotlight" videos featuring various youth members. A virtual Easter Pageant was created by recording children separately and then joining them together through the power of technology. The pageant was directed by Lindy Warren and was produced by Rachel Burns.

Another program for Youth and Adults was created, *God in Our Lives*. This was a church and community discussion group.

The Christmas Pageant was able to be in-person performed during a Sunday worship service.

Children of the church were provided for through the following church offerings. The nursery continued to provide care for children birth to age four. Virtual classes were held for children from pre-school through the 12th grade. In September, classes met in person. Children met for the beginning of the worship service (three times per month) and then were dismissed to go to their classes. The first Sunday of each month is known as Worship for All Ages where children attend worship with their parents. Activity bags continue to be provided with meaningful religious activities.

Connection Groups at the church met by zoom and in-person when appropriate. Groups included: LCC Prayer Chain, CARES team, Second Saturday, Adventures in Reading, Friends' Circle, Men's Group, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Martha's Table, the annual LCC Talent Show by Zoom, Taize/Labyrinth service held virtually, 'Meet for Eats and Deets' (a new member gathering), Pub Theology at Lakewood's Truck Park, S'More Time with God, plus all church book reads.

Other interest groups met when possible. They included: Tai Chi via Zoom and in the summer outdoors, AA, Lakewood Caregivers and the Lakewood Alumnae Association.

The Welcoming Team implemented QR codes for attendance and online set-ups for better organization and to save paper - a sign of the times!

In August 2021, the entire Archives of the church were moved from the third floor to the second floor. Air circulation and only one outlet were not sufficient on the top floor. Our custodian, John Mullen, moved all the files, books, CDs, photos, charts and more to the second floor and then a few months later he was able to move everything again into the permanent home for the Archives on the second floor just off the Sanctuary on the west side of the church that was formerly the library. Archivist, Claire Stair, gathered a team (Joanellen Hurley, Marilyn Minter, Julie Marlin, Bonnie Harbaugh, and Kathy MacDougall) to help her sort through the files, and digitize them to the main server. This project will take at least another year to complete. The new scanner (ScanSnap) makes it all possible.

“At LCC, we are a Body of Christ together. We are in Covenant with one another to provide our love, support and care to the best of our ability, with the help of God.”

(The Rev. Joanna D’Agostino, The Columns, August, 2021)

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Stair, Historian/Archives

CLERK’S REPORT

New Members Received: 14

New Members Received through Confirmation: 20

Baptisms: 7

Members Entered into Eternal Life:

George Alkire, Virginia Hancock, Doris Holmok, Kate Lunsford, Peg Warden (2020),
Earl Gottlieb (2022)

Average Worship Attendance 2021: 165

Membership of the church family as of December 31, 2021: 307

EXECUTIVE TEAM REPORTS

CHAIR OF EXECUTIVE TEAM

Dear Church Family,

This is my final report as a member of the Executive Team...at least for a while! When I reflect on the past six years of serving as a lay leader in this church, the prevailing theme is absolutely the constant of change. We’ve seen full changes in staffing, changes in our membership and demographic, changes in our leadership models, changes to the font in our bulletins, changes

in our programming, and the most significant and unanticipated changes to our world and the way that we interact as individuals and as a community.

I knew some of these changes were coming and, to the best of my ability, I was prepared for them. Others were unexpected and required agility and quick thinking to navigate. What I have learned over and over again is that we have to anchor ourselves to the things that don't change. So here are some things that have served as anchors for me:

1. God's love. It's promised. It's guaranteed. We can't do anything to mess that up.
2. Our church mission statement. Every time I read it and reflect on its meaning as a compass for decision-making, it still rings true to the vision of this church.
3. Our community. There is so much I can say about this community. For this report, here is what I want you to know is true and constant about this church family. They will serve as your safety net and your soft place to land when you need it. When you are feeling your least resilient, or in need of support, or when you "just can't even", I promise you that someone is ready to lift you up, or to carry some of your burden so that you can take the time you need.
4. Our creativity. We have continued to navigate these ever-changing times with a unique perspective and a willingness to "figure it out". As we are anchored in our mission, our community, and God's love, we can always, *always* figure it out. And it will be right. And it will be good. And if not, we'll learn from it!

So through another year of unrelenting change, what have we been able to do as a church family? We returned to in-person worship! It started with smaller, outdoor gatherings before moving inside to our beautiful sanctuary, but we made it happen, and we've continued to do so safely. We've grown our staff again, welcoming Reverend Catherine as our Minister of Health and Wholeness, thanks to the blessings of our congregation and by the Grace of God. We've continued to care for our building and have started a listening campaign to discern the future needs/wants of the spaces within. We've expanded our opportunities for small-group ministry and enjoyed a successful advent season. We welcomed new members, enjoyed worship music, and watched our children and youth grow in their faith.

As we look towards the future and I wrap up my tenure as chair of the Executive Team, I remain hopeful, optimistic and incredibly confident in the community of LCC and the staff and leadership team. Thank you for making space for me to be a part of this work for the past 6 years. It's been a blessing.

Faithfully,
Liz Spahr, Executive Team Chair

MODERATOR / PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

In 2021, we were still in the midst of a pandemic, but there were many high points. Our members embraced the vaccines, and we were able to meet again as a congregation, with masks and social distancing. Church life was a little different, but our spirit of community and service remained. Our staff continued their creative and flexible approach to ministry, and LCC didn't miss a beat, even with several personnel changes.

We celebrated the retirement of Patti Dobro, a long-time employee who served as Office Manager and, most recently, as Financial Secretary. Her wonderful personality and knowledge of LCC are sorely missed, but we know she is enjoying her retirement.

In June, we welcomed our new Financial Secretary, Philip Brett. He settled into the role quickly and brought a strong financial background to the position. And this fall, Noah Hamrick, our Youth & Children's Music Director, expressed a desire to step back, so Tim Hampton ably stepped into the position.

To meet the needs of our growing membership, we discerned an opportunity for a new type of position, and welcomed Rev. Catherine Lawrence as our Minister of Health and Wholeness in November. We're excited about the additional support she is already providing to our congregation.

As I write this, we are dealing with a surge from the Omicron strain of COVID, but we worship in person and through live streaming of our services. We continue the activities of the church, both in person and through Zoom. As I said last year, I thank everyone for their patience and support. You continue to show what it means to be a community of faith.

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Young, Moderator

WELCOMING MINISTRY

2021 Welcoming Liaison Annual Report

We are thankful that 2021 saw things return closer to pre-pandemic times for the Welcoming Ministry at Lakewood Congregational Church. Coffee hour returned to the front steps of the church through the summer when we were back to in-person worship. We moved back into the Parlor and the West Clifton lobby in the fall. Many thanks to Charlotte Petrie, Jose Gonzalez, Andy Barlow, Sarah and Paul Pierce, Scott Suttell and Melissa Parlanti for serving as coffee hour hosts through the summer and fall. We were also able to enjoy cake once again at our monthly Birthday Sundays.

A new Welcoming Team was formed in 2021. The team came up with lots of ideas, some of which have been implemented and some are in the works. A standing banner was purchased for the back of the Sanctuary proclaiming, "You're Welcome Here." We started using a QR code to register attendance, replacing the pew pads. We designed a card for visitors highlighting many of the programs here at LCC (thanks to Nora Katzenberger for writing and Devon Stephens for the design). We purchased a sign for the parking lot letting people know they can park at Beck Center when our parking lot is full. We started doing a building tour on the second Sunday of the month for visitors. We are working on a map of the building to provide as well (thanks to Shawn and Julie Warren for their work). Thanks go out to the members of the new team: John Bando, Hannah Belsito, Paula Deal, Nora and Kim Katzenberger, Vicki Kressler, Scott Suttell and Darren Toms.

Scott Suttell continues to coordinate the schedule for our greeters each Sunday morning. Our head usher, John Bando, makes sure the candles are lit and flowers are placed along with many other tasks to make our Sunday services flow smoothly, including coordinating ushers to pass out bulletins and provide a friendly smile. Thanks to both of them and their volunteers. We could always use more help with these volunteer opportunities.

We also hosted several new member desserts in 2021 now known as 'Meet for Eats and Deets'. These are informational meetings to talk about the United Church of Christ and Lakewood Congregational Church. We were so pleased that so many people found their way to our corner of West Clifton and Detroit and have become part of our faith community.

The West Clifton lobby renovation is nearly complete, and we look forward to gathering in this welcoming space for years to come.

We hope that all who enter Lakewood Congregational Church feel the extravagant welcome and find a church home here.

Respectfully submitted,
Vicki Smigelski, Welcoming Ministry

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

*The Outreach Ministries at LCC strive to contribute to local and global initiatives. Due to COVID precautions, we could not serve in the ways we originally imagined, but feel that we have still made a significant impact during the past year.

***The Alternative Gift Market**

We once again held our Alternative Gift Market at Christmas to benefit Global Ministries, a joint ministry of the UCC and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Our members donate in honor of loved ones for alternative Christmas gifts. Global Ministries respond in bold ways to the challenges of poverty and injustice throughout the world by partnering with churches and programs in over 80 countries. Our gifts help them tackle some of the world's toughest problems. This year our Alternative Gift Market raised funds to assist the Mt. Selinda Hospital of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe with various coronavirus pandemic related needs. The donations will provide much needed support including helping with doctor's salaries, COVID-19 response and preparedness priorities, food security efforts, a water reticulation project, and a new ambulance. (Vicki Smigelski)

***Angel Tree**

The Angel Tree prison ministry program was successful again in 2021, helping 50 local children from 23 families connect with their incarcerated parents at the holidays. LCC members purchased gifts for these children on behalf of their parents to help them feel close and know they are loved. The children who benefit from the program receive gifts far beyond those we purchase—they get a chance to feel that their parent is near on Christmas. Members purchased two gifts for each child, one toy and one article of clothing, which were then delivered to families in Lakewood and Cleveland on the morning of December 18. (Christy and Chris Gray)

***Building Hope in the City**

Building Hope in the City (BHITC) is a Cleveland area organization that focuses on the support of refugees. One of its endeavors is The Hope Center, which is the center for services for those in West Park, Lakewood, and surrounding areas. The Hope Center offers citizenship and English courses, as well as after-school tutoring for school-aged children. The Hope Center also has a daycare for children of parents taking courses. LCC has several volunteers that have been volunteering at the Hope Center in various capacities over the past few years. LCC continues to work with BHITC in their annual Rally CLE event as well by supporting community grants and volunteering. We are looking forward to continued partnerships with BHITC. (Laura Hampton)

CLE Diaper Drive

Many Cleveland area families suffer from needing diapers. During National Diaper Need Awareness Week, LCC participated along with many other organizations in the CLE Diaper Drive. The diapers collected went to local agencies that aid families in need. LCC members donated boxes of diapers to the cause. (Laura Hampton)

Community Meal

LCC is one of 12 churches in the Lakewood community serving a community meal on a rotating calendar schedule. Our meal is served the first Thursday of every month. For 2021 we provided 48 take away meals (40 meat based and 8 vegetarian) each month. Our menus varied between a mac and cheese, meat, and vegetable casserole or pork roast, chicken breast, or turkey roast. During the summer months we provided a sandwich-based meal. We have been fortunate to keep our costs under \$100 per month.

We usually have between 20-30 people drive up/walk up each month with all meals taken. Our guests have also benefited from home cooked desserts donated on a monthly basis provided by a committee member. Distribution begins at 5:30pm and we distribute all meals by 6:30pm.

Please contact us if you would like to join this committee which continues to provide a very needed ministry to our neighborhood. We remain very thankful to our church community for your support. (Peggi and Michael Mizen)

***Family Promise/Undie Sundays**

Family Promise continues to provide emergency shelter for homeless families at their site on Cleveland's east side. We once again collected socks and underwear through our Undie Sundays in January which were then donated to Family Promise. This was by far the largest collection since the program began with five large cartons of donations dropped off. Special thanks to the youth group and their families for their focus on donations. Family Promise and their guests are very appreciative of this ministry. (Vicki Smigelski)

***Global Outreach**

For the 2020/2021 year we are again partnering with the UCC Global Ministries and are raising funds to assist the Mt. Selinda Hospital of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe with various coronavirus pandemic related needs. Our church is working to raise \$10,000 to assist the

hospital with a variety of important projects. As of January 2021, we have raised \$6,945.20. In the fall of 2020, we presented music, photographs, and information about the hospital in Zimbabwe during a Sunday service, and we hope to have an additional Sunday in 2021 focusing on the needs of the mission.

With our annual global mission project, we are part of the UCC's global mission church designation. Will you help us with this fundraising effort? (David Sangree)

Lakewood Community Service Center (LCSC) and LakewoodAlive

LCC continues to maintain partnerships with several Lakewood community organizations. Congregation members have assisted in yard clean-up and other volunteering through LakewoodAlive. LCC supports the efforts of the Lakewood Community Service Center through monetary donations and item drives. We look forward to continued work with our community.

Martha's Table

We are calling this an "in-reach" effort for members of the LCC family who are in need of a home cooked meal due to health challenges, birth of a baby, death of a family member or any other need.

Martha's Table team members have the responsibility of preparing a casserole or dessert for the Martha's Table reserve on an as-needed basis. Team members also volunteer to deliver meals as they are available. In 2021 the Martha's Table team delivered 2 meals and maintained a stock of reserve meals for delivery as needed.

Martha's Table team members include Susan Walker, Laura Sangree, Judy Foote, Chiquita Matthews, Mike & Kay Galloway, Peggy Mizen, Debi Kasper, and Jan Young. We receive information about meal needs from Patti Komperda, Karen Lee, Rachel Burns, and Joanna D'Agostino as well as member's requests. (Jennifer Schwelik, Melissa Parlanti)

Laura Blesse-Hampton, Chair

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

2021 was a busy year for the Building & Grounds Committee as our facility needed some additional attention after several months of not being occupied and utilized in the same way because of the pandemic.

Our landscaping contractor was not able to keep up with lawn maintenance because of staff shortage during the pandemic. We had to cancel our contract and hired Double J Landscaping and Weedman to handle mowing, landscaping, and weed treatment.

A large group of volunteers came together on Saturday, June 26th to mulch our beds—the first time we had done that in a few years. Volunteers also planted some new perennials in the West Clifton beds to fill in for plants that had been lost.

The front and West Clifton sides of the building were painted in the fall by Dependable Painting. The cost was \$42,000 and those elevations look great. We will do the other elevations this year.

A decorative soffit had to be removed from the exterior of the Archives Room after it became unattached from the building. The company that did this work identified damage our roof had sustained in storms last summer of which we were unaware. Both roof and soffit repairs will occur this year.

On the interior, West Clifton Lobby Renovation was also completed in the fall. Thanks to Scott Richardson, of Richardson Design, this formerly underutilized space is more comfortable, functional, and welcoming as the “lobby” of our building and an extension of the Parlor.

The upstairs restroom was renovated and repainted.

At the request of our sister congregation, Trinity Lutheran, the pews were removed from Bowers Chapel and stored in the former choir room. This creates a more open and functional space for Trinity.

A much-needed handrail was added to the Chancel. Fortunately, an existing, historic handrail was available at a truncated staircase that once led from the hallway outside the Sanctuary up to the Lincoln Room. A gracious gift in Memory of Virginia Hancock, an update to the sound system in the Sanctuary will be completed in 2022. This gift will enhance our sound quality and the accessibility of worship both in-person and online.

Light bulbs were replaced in the fluorescent fixtures in the Fellowship Hall, greatly improving comfort and visibility in that room. This was no easy task, requiring the use of scaffolding. These fixtures are at the end of their useful life and will eventually need to be replaced. A Listening Team was formed to start gathering information about the use and opinions related to the condition of the Fellowship Hall, as it is evident that more upgrades are needed in that space.

We have several large projects planned for this 2022 for which we have bids, including carpet replacement in the Sanctuary, parking lot repaving, and tree trimming.

After being delayed by months, we had a committee from the Cleveland Restoration Society complete a building assessment of our building and make recommendations for maintenance and rehabilitation scope. The Building & Grounds Committee had all of the church blueprints professionally digitized so they will be more accessible. We also went through thirty years of Annual Reports to determine how often major maintenance items such as painting, paving and roof repairs occurred, so we will be better prepared for anticipating these expenses.

I am so thankful for the care that our staff takes in maintaining this facility—Office Manager Karen Lee, who is involved in coordinating and contacting for so much of the work; our fantastic custodian John Mullen, who does a lot of work himself; and Senior Minister Joanna, who has a vision for how our building can aid our ministries. I also want to thank the very

dedicated Building and Grounds Committee, John Bando, Leo Christopher, Eric Macalla, Laura Sangree, and David Stair.

Michael Fleenor, Chair, Buildings and Grounds

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

*This slate of candidates is presented by the 2020-2021 Nominating Committee. Below is the current list of church positions and the date the term expires. Names in **bold** represent people seeking election in a new position to serve their first term/slated to renew a position in which they are currently serving.*

Executive Team (2-year terms, may serve 2 terms)

Position	Candidate	Starting Term Year	Ending Term Year	1 st or 2 nd Term
Chair	Bill Fraunfelder	2022	2024	1 st /only
Chair Elect	Laura Germaine	2022	2024	1 st /only
Moderator	Jan Young	2022	2024	2 nd
Treasurer	Laura Sangree	2022	2024	1 st
Welcoming	Vicki Smigelski	2022	2024	2 nd
Nurture and Growth	David Diemert	2021	2023	1 st
Outreach	Heather Tuck-Macalla	2022	2024	1 st
Diaconate	Lauren Smigelski	2022	2024	2 nd
Building and Grounds	Michael Fleenor	2022	2024	2 nd

Diaconate (2-year term, up to 18 members, may serve 2 terms)

Term 2021 - 2023 (continuing their term)	Term 2022 - 2024
Lisa Blasko (2 nd term)	Andy Barlow (2 nd term)
Paula Deal (2 nd term)	Jeremy Borrell (1 st term)
Evelyn Richards (2 nd term)*	Jose Gonzalez (1 st term)
	Debi Kasper (2 nd term)
	Nora Katzenberger (2 nd term)
	Patti Komperda (2 nd term)
	Charlotte Petrie (1 st term)
	Parker Toms (2 nd term)*

*indicates a youth member

Changes may be announced at the Annual Meeting

Nominating Committee (up to 6 people, a 2-year term, may serve no more than 2 terms)

Candidate	Term	1 st or 2 nd
Steve Hotchkiss	2021 - 2023	1 st
Jen Murray	2021 - 2023	1 st
Karen Wagner	2022 - 2024	1 st
Amy Lardi	2022 - 2024	1 st
Scott Suttell	2022 - 2024	1 st

Admin Board

Candidate	Term	1 st or 2 nd
Michael Komperda	2022 - 2024	1 st
Julie Warren	2022 - 2024	1 st
Liz Spahr	2022 - 2024	1 st
John Hancock	2022 - 2024	1 st
Susan Walker	2022 - 2024	1 st

Changes may be announced at the Annual Meeting

Nominating Committee: up to 6 people, a 2-year term, may serve no more than 2 terms.

ADDITIONAL REPORTS

OPEN AND AFFIRMING COMMITTEE

About 15 years ago LCC explored what it means to be an Open & Affirming (ONA) congregation in the United Church of Christ and the congregation ultimately voted overwhelmingly to adopt the following statement:

"Lakewood Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is an Open and Affirming congregation. We welcome people of all sexual orientation, ages, differing abilities, and ethnic, economic, and racial backgrounds into the full life and ministry of our church. We declare this in the name of the Still Speaking God, whose Son, Jesus Christ, welcomed all people into God's circle of grace."

Over the years, we have made efforts to live fully into that statement. Part of this effort is understanding that we will continue to learn, adapt, and work to be more extravagantly welcoming of all God's children. At the past few Annual Meetings, we have discussed reviewing and possibly revising our ONA statement to reflect where we think we are as a congregation 15 years after it was first adopted, particularly as it relates to gender identities and expressions. A group of LCC members met several times during the fall of 2021 to discuss revisions to the statement. Those members were: **Cora Barcelona, Thom Geist, Michael Komperda, Liz Maugans, Charlotte Petrie, Bri Raynes, and Missy Toms**. Both Thom and Missy served on the original committee that developed our current statement.

In our meetings we identified three areas that needed updating:

- Reference to gender identity and expression
- Acknowledgement that we want to be welcoming of not only all backgrounds, but also of all circumstances
- Making the statement more concise and eliminating redundancy with the church Mission Statement which accompanies the ONA statement

Ultimately, we arrived at the following statement, which we would like to put before the congregation for discussion and adoption:

"Lakewood Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is an Open and Affirming congregation. Wherever you are on life's journey, we welcome you and all people of every sexual orientation, age, ability, gender identity and expression, and ethnic, economic, and racial background into the full life and ministry of our church. We declare this in the everlasting grace of the Still-Speaking God."

We recognize that a statement like this is meant to be a work in progress much like our congregation and ourselves. We *should* revisit our ONA statement regularly and assess how we are living into it, and how we can continue to "widen the circle." Thank you to those who served on this committee, and please feel free to reach out to any one of us with questions before the Annual Meeting.

Michael Komperda, Chair

COVID-19 ADVISORY TEAM

Brief Timeline

3/8/2020 Initial closure for in-person worship

4/4/2021 Reopen for in-person, outdoor worship

5/30/2021 Reopen for in-person, indoor worship

1/2/2022 Closed for one week due to Covid cases and staffing shortages

1/9/2022 Reopen for in-person, indoor worship

Through the course of the pandemic, we have remained in consultation with informed sources and community partners to make decisions that align with our Gospel commitment to extravagant welcome, love of neighbor, and protection of the most vulnerable.

While reopening our sanctuary for in-person worship, we also procured livestream technology so those who were not comfortable attending in-person would be able to worship with us. Protocols such as masking and social-distancing were implemented in varying ways based on the status of the pandemic in our community. A survey of the congregation to determine our vaccination rate returned 176 responses, all of whom were vaccinated. We continue to adapt our protocols as we learn more and the status of the pandemic evolves. Our members

consistently took wise actions to quarantine, isolate, test, mask, and stay home when experiencing symptoms. Church meetings and groups met both in-person and on Zoom.

The joint Covid-19 Advisory Team for Trinity Lutheran Church and LCC initially consisted of Rev. Joanna D'Agostino, Rev. Sara Cogsil, Laura Blesse-Hampton, PA-C, Amy Daso, MD, and Steven Fesko, Professional Engineer. As the year went on, the team disbanded but remained available for advice and recommendations as needed.

To our knowledge, there have been no known outbreaks of Covid as a result of our worship, meetings, or church events.

ADVENTURES IN READING

Adventures in Reading is an informal book review/discussion group that has been in existence since 1962. We read books recommended by members and are chosen from a variety of genres such as bestseller, classic, fiction, non-fiction, mystery, biography, memoir, and others. Each month, one of our members serves as discussion leader. We currently have 16 members on our roster and an average of 10 are at any given meeting.

2021 continued with our meetings via Zoom. Susan Walker was our Zoom host, and we finished the balance of the reading season (2020-2021) with our online connections. Books discussed during the months January - May were:

Rust: A Memoir of Steel and Grit by Eliese Colette Goldbach
Five Little Pigs by Agatha Christie
Carnegie's Maid by Marie Benedict
Born a Crime by Trevor Noah
The Overstory by Richard Powers

In June we celebrated the end of the reading season with a "bring your own lunch" picnic at Clifton Beach. It was so good to be together again as we celebrated another year of book discussions. We remember long time member, Ginny Hancock, with fondness as she passed from her earthly life to her eternal life. This was also a time to say farewell to Judy Foote before she and Richard moved to Maine.

The Fall 2021 season of the book club resumed with meetings in the church parlor. It was wonderful to have in person gatherings and renew our connections. We gathered with our lunches and shared conversation before the book club. A few meetings also included Zoom opportunities for those not able to attend at LCC. Books discussed during the months September - December were:

The Four Winds by Kristin Hannah
American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins
The Gown: A Novel of the Royal Wedding by Jennifer Robson
My Remarkable Journey: A Memoir by Katherine Johnson

As 2021 came to a close, we were reminded how fragile our gathering in person can be. Once again, our meetings will depend on the status of the Covid presence. We are grateful for the technology through Zoom that has allowed us to stay connected and share our love of books, but we appreciate every meeting we can share in person.

We have transitioned to meeting the second Wednesday of the month to accommodate the schedules of more members. All are welcome to join us.

Kathy MacDougall, Chair

THE LYMAN G. FARRAR COLUMBARIUM

*The church dedicated The Lyman G. Farrar Columbarium on September 11, 1994. It allows for the interment of a loved one's remains following a cremation.

It is located in the area directly behind the sanctuary. There are 210 niches with oak fronts for an urn or a container of ashes. A brass nameplate is placed on the front of the niche when ashes have been placed inside.

The cremated remains of Kate Lunsford were committed to the Columbarium this year.

At the present time we have 76 of the niches either in use or reserved. The price of an individual niche is \$400.00. If you are interested in purchasing a niche(s) or if you have any questions regarding the Columbarium, please contact Reverend Joanna.

DIACONATE

Members of Diaconate: Lauren Smigelski, Chair, Andy Barlow, Lisa Blasko, Chris Burns, David Burns, Paula Deal, Debi Kasper, Nora Katzenberger, Shannon Katzenberger, Patti Komperda, Evelyn Richards, Jill Richardson, Jennifer Warden, Robin Suttell, and Parker Toms

Members of Diaconate are responsible for assisting the pastor in providing a meaningful worship experience. Typically, we prepare and serve the Sacrament of Holy Communion on the first Sunday of the month. Communion is served two ways: at the altar by intinction and in the pews. However, this year members of Diaconate only prepared elements for the altar. The elements you may have had at church were the "lunchable" or "creamier cup" communion packs. While no less meaningful, members of our team had less to do this year. We look forward to returning to more traditional Communion service when the time is right.

Diaconate continues to seek ways to provide additional spiritual support and connection to everyone at LCC. We were very excited to have Rev. Catherine join us at LCC late last year as the Minister of Health and Wholeness. Perhaps you've already felt her caring presence and support in your life. Part of her role this coming year will be to work with members of Diaconate and other church members to develop a congregational care program. We hope to train and empower members of our community to care and support each other in a more structured way. We don't have exact details on what this will look like, but we hope to update

you soon and invite anyone interested in congregational care to reach out to Lauren Smigelski or Rev. Catherine.

We thank outgoing members, Beth Clark, Jill Richardson, Jennifer Warden, and Robin Suttell, for their service on Diaconate and we look forward to working with the new members of the Diaconate.

The Diaconate
Lauren Smigelski, Chair

HAYNES NURSERY SCHOOL

Haynes Nursery School (HNS) operates under the authority of the LCC Executive Team, which has placed HNS under the general supervision of the Haynes School Board. The Haynes School Board members include: Rachel Burns, HNS Board Chair and Director of Children and Family Ministries; Sarah Banyasz, LCC member-at-large; David Diemert, LCC Congregational Executive Team representative; Shannon Lubas, HNS Director; Susan Frost, HNS teacher representative; Joanna D'Agostino, Lakewood Congregational Senior Minister; parent representative, Abigail Eshbaugh.

The 2021-2022 school year is one of getting back on track. Last year ended with outdoor learning so our students could be in person as we still struggled with the pandemic. As our teachers went above and beyond during the 2020-2021 school year to serve our students, our goal was to do everything possible to keep our students in the building during the 2021-2022 school year. Masks are required by all students and staff at all times during our school day except snacks, at which time children stay 3-6 feet apart and for less than 15 minutes. This had served us well as, at this time, we have only had one case of Covid during our school year.

The board continued to meet quarterly with some of our meetings being virtual. In 2021, the HNS Board worked with the Executive Team to:

- In June we said goodbye to Jennifer Schwelick as the head of the Haynes Board and welcomed Rachel Burns
- Establish a scholarship for one student whose family continues to struggle because of the pandemic
- Maintain and oversee the budget for the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school year,
- Help guide and support director Shannon Lubas in making decisions to keep our Haynes families and teachers safe and healthy through Covid.

Highlights this year included:

- An end of year celebration in May at Kaufmann Park.
- Continuing the February fundraiser that focuses on heart-felt love for Haynes' children, employees, parents, graduates.
- Continuing the involvement of Lee Mechenbier as a permanent Haynes volunteer.
- A welcome party for all families at Lakewood Park with almost every family in attendance.

- A September 2021 return to in-person learning that we have been able to maintain.

The HNS fiscal year runs July 1st to June 30th to more easily manage the funds. The HNS board works closely with the LCC office staff who oversees the HNS income and expenditures. Due to decreased numbers in students and not having a 3day4s class, Haynes is running in a deficit this year. Due to the PPP loan and previous director Alison Yonkers being able to put money in the bank, we have money in our account to make up this deficit. The Haynes student population reduced from 87 in 2019-20 to 26 in 2020-2, but is back up to 45 in 2021-2022. We currently have 49 children registered for the 2022-2023 school year. Based upon the increase in students we already see and the number of emails and phone calls received each day, we are confident that our number will continue to rise. LCC member children have priority to the seats available in HNS.

The 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 tuition rates are:

January 2-day 3-year-old class	\$115
2-day 3-year-old class	\$115
3-day 3-year-old class	\$155
3-day 4-year-old class	\$195
4-day 4-year-old class	\$225

There is an \$85 non-refundable registration fee.

The balance in the HNS KeyBank checking account is \$79,862 as of December 31, 2020; however, this number will change greatly as Haynes expenses have been paid by LCC and Haynes will need to reimburse this money from HNS KeyBank account.

Shannon Lubas, Haynes Nursery School Director
Rachel Burns, Head of the Board

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

A Pastoral Relations Committee is a common practice in United Church of Christ congregations, but it is fairly new to LCC (about 2 years old). Its purpose is to support the relationship between the pastor and the congregation, without being an evaluative or decision-making body. Our current Committee consists of Stephanie Fries, Thom Geist, Peter Kuhn, Michael Komperda, and Emma Petrie-Barcelona. The group met with Pastor Joanna several times in 2021, primarily in the earlier half of the year.

If you'd like to understand more about the purpose of a PRC, please don't hesitate to reach out.

STEWARDSHIP

This year, we connected stewardship with Psalm 1: *Happy are those who delight in God's wisdom. They are like trees planted by streams of water: resilient, resourceful, generative.*

A stewardship mailing (included at the end of this Annual Report) shared highlights of the year, questions for discernment, and information about how to make a pledge. Members submitted their pledges online, by mail, and over the phone.

A few helpful numbers, as of 2/1/2022:

- 91 Total Household Pledges
- Total pledge amount of \$297,336
- Average Annual Pledge: \$3,267
- Median Annual Pledge: \$1,560
- The two most common annual pledges are \$1,200 and \$3,600 (\$100/month and \$300/month)

This year's numbers represent a consistent increase in pledges over the past 4 years, from \$206,876 (78 households) in 2019, to \$297,336 (91 households) in 2022.

Our giving trends portray a striking anomaly among Mainline Christian Churches in America through the Covid-19 pandemic. The commitment of our church family is nothing short of marvelous.

Rev. Joanna

TREASURER'S REPORT

Dear Friends and Members of LCC,

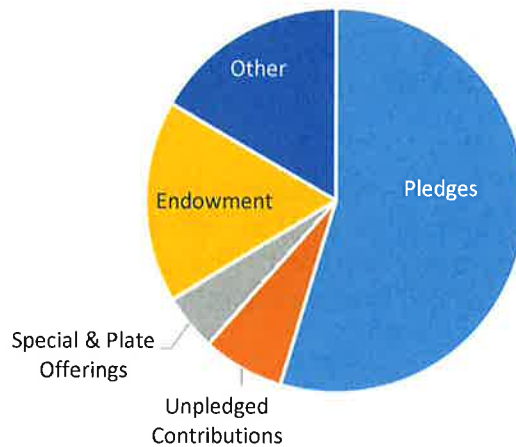
Verily I say unto you, this poor widow cast in more than all they that are casting into the treasury: for they all did cast in of their superfluity; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living

Mark 12.43 - 44

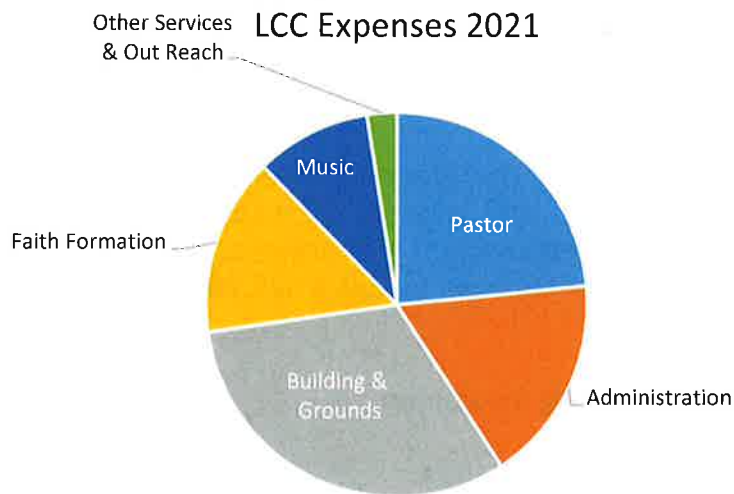
You are amazing! For all the yins and yangs we experienced, remote during Covid, open and welcoming during post-covid, lives full of stress and uncertainties, your continued support of our church was outstanding. Thank you!

The chart below reflects our commitments. Of total revenue, 64% came from our pocketbooks. As alluded to above, we all have different capacities, different obligations, and different expectations. Special and Plate offerings were 5%, Other income, such as rental and facility usage by Trinity Lutheran Church as well as a payroll protection loan received and forgiven by the government, amounted to 13%, and we relied on our endowment for 18%.

LCC 2021 Income



Expenses, totaling \$493,241 exceeded income by \$18,664 and were covered by carryover funds from 2020. The two largest categories of expenses are Salaries and Benefits (\$274,619 or 56%), and Utilities and Insurance (\$47,946 or 10%). The chart below shows the distribution of expenses by budget categories: Buildings & Grounds 32%, Pastor 23%, Administration 17%, Faith Formation 15%, Music 10%, and Other Services & Outreach 3%.



During the year, we encountered the need to paint the southern and western exterior woodwork to preserve the church building at a cost of \$46,000. This investment in the maintenance of our building together with the congregations' agreement to expand our ministry to include a Minister of Health and Wholeness, prompted a revision in the original 2021 budget.

Increases in maintenance to provide for the painting (\$46,000) and salary costs of \$6,600, (Two months) were covered by increased unpledged contributions and endowment withdrawals totaling \$90,000, of which \$83,400 was applied to the Operating Budget, and \$6,600 to Restricted Funds. At the same time, the budget for Pledges was adjusted to reflect the actual pledges made. Due to weather conditions, a portion of the work was postponed to 2022 Other than the increase in expenses, overall expenses were within 2021 budgeted provisions.

In August, we bid farewell to Patti Dobro, who served our church as Financial Secretary for several years, and Office Administrator prior to that. We were very fortunate in appointing Phi Brett, CPA to the Financial Secretary position. Phil comes to us with over 30 years of experience primarily in municipal finance. Wish him well as he adopts Church Windows, which has befuddled me from the get-go.

Respectfully,
Stephen Hotchkiss, Treasurer

BUDGET

There are several changes in the format and presentation of the 2022 budget. The purpose of the changes is to clarify the following:

1. Operating (current) income and expenses received and applied to ongoing services performed.
2. Capital (term) income and expenses relating to equipment and building maintenance and improvement costs of a long-term nature
3. Identification of funds, both restricted and unrestricted designated for specific purposes, and providing more detailed information about our church's outreach efforts and commitments.

Relative to the revised 2021 budget, the proposed Operating Budget for 2022 represents an income increase of \$19,192 or 4%, and expense increase of \$41,523 or 9%. Under Capital Income and Expenses are \$30,000 endowment withdrawals, relating to the incomplete church painting budgeted in 2021. Capital Expense includes \$25,000 for the painting and equipment expense of \$4,000.

Significant items in church operating income are:

Increase in pledges	\$34,948
The loss of the payroll protection loan	\$28,877
Projected Haynes income	\$ 6,900

Significant increases in church operating expenses are:

Salaries & benefits	\$51,300
Administration	\$20,250

Capital (term)

Income (withdrawal from Endowment)	\$30,000
Expenses: Painting & equipment	\$29,000

NEW

Restricted Funds Report

The income in this report comes from two sources:

1. Budgeted commitments in the operating report, such as Youth Musical, Church & Ministry, Greater Cleveland Congregations (GCC), Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) and the Outreach Fund transferred to this report
2. Balances from 2021 forwarded to 2022, new contributions for a total voluntary contribution of funds with specific designations (restricted)
3. Extra-mile Fund withdrawals, which are specifically restricted to outreach programs.
4. Should restricted funds be fully disbursed, an addition withdrawal from the Endowment of up to \$62,000 may be required.

The expenses in this report are the designated funds and programs determined by the congregation.

Stephen Hotchkiss, Treasurer

Lakewood Congregational Church

Operating (current, unrestricted)	Dec-21 Actual	Original Budget 2021	Revised Budget 2021	Difference Budget to Actual	Proposed Budget 2022
Income					
Pledges Current Year	268,514	300,000	265,052	3,462	300,000
Pledges Prior Year	4,219	0	0	4,219	0
Prepaid Pledges	0	0	0	0	0
Payroll Protection	28,877	0			
Unpledged Contributions	33,799	10,000	33,874	-75	30,000
Plate Offerings	7,237	5,500	5,500	1,737	8,000
Special Offerings	16,434	2,000	2,000	14,434	20,000
Endowment Withdrawals	83,400	83,400	130,000	-46,600	106,500
Rental Income	3,105	28,000	0	3,105	10,000
Facility Usage Income	28,992	0	28,000	992	29,700
Haynes Income	0	0	27,482	-27,482	6,900
Total Income	474,577	428,900	491,908	-46,208	511,100
Expenses					
Pastoral					
Salaries & Benefits	114,035	103,700	103,700	-10,335	153,000
Employee Mileage	0	750	750	750	750
Continuing Education	703	1,300	1,300	597	2,600
Other	921	0	0	-921	3,000
Total Pastoral	115,659	105,750	105,750	-9,909	159,350

Administration

Office Salaries & Benefits	48,900	37,350	37,350	-11,550	51,400
Administrative Equipment	27,171	15,200	15,200	-11,971	15,000
Telephones	5,004	4,000	4,000	-1,004	5,000
Postage	527	1,500	1,500	973	700
Printing	774	500	500	-274	1,200
Publicity	1,316	500	500	-816	1,000
Credit Card Processing	1,969	2,000	2,000	31	2,000
Financial Audit/Review	0	0	0	0	3,500
Meeting Expenses		0			500
Total administration	85,661	61,050	61,050	-24,611	80,300

Building & Grounds

Maintenance	18,603	21,000	21,000	2,397	25,000
Custodial Services	35,875	40,000	40,000	4,125	36,000
Supplies & Painting	54,926	12,000	50,000	-4,926	12,000
Insurance	26,781	21,500	21,500	-5,281	28,000
Electricity	7,106	10,000	10,000	2,894	8,000
Gas	9,676	10,000	10,000	324	12,000
Water	4,384	1,500	1,500	-2,884	2,500
Total Building & Grounds	157,351	116,000	154,000	-3,351	123,500

Faith Formation

Salaries & Benefits	67,100	75,200	75,200	8,100	75,000
Continuing Education	0	0	0	0	1,000
Children & Youth	3,949	3,000	1,500	-2,449	4,000
Youth Musical	3,000	3,000	3,000		3,000
Youth Mission Trip	0	1,000	1,500	1,500	1,500
Adult	0	0	0	0	500
Total Faith Formation	74,049	82,200	81,200	7,151	85,000

Music

Salaries & Benefits	44,584	43,800	43,800	-784	46,500
Supplies	2,774	2,500	2,500	-274	2,500
Maintenance	657	1,600	1,600	943	1,000
Total Music	48,015	47,900	47,900	-115	50,000

General

Diaconate	139	0	0	-139	200
Welcoming	523	1,000	2,177	1,654	750
Membership & Growth	0	0	0	0	250
Stewardship	0	0	0	0	250

Church & Ministry^*	1,744	5,000	5,000	3,256	1,000
GCC^*					2,000
OCWM^*	7,500	7,500	7,500	0	7,500
Outreach Fund^*	595	4,000	4,000	3,405	1,000
Transfer Surplus (deficit)	2,005	0			
Total general	12,506	17,500	18,677	8,176	12,950
Total expenses	493,241	430,400	468,577	-22,659	511,100
Current Surplus (deficit)	-18,664	-1,500	23,331	-23,549	

Capital (term, unrestricted)

Income

Designated Funds	
Endowment Withdrawals	30,000
Endowment Borrowings	
Total Income	30,000

Expenses

Equipment	4,000
Building	25,000
Miscellaneous	
Total Expenses	29,000
New Surplus (deficit)	1,000

Total Operating & Capital **1,000**

Lakewood Congregational Church

Restricted Funds Report

	Dec- 21 Actual	Year-end 2021 Funds Carry forward	Transfer from Operating Budget	New Gifts 2022	Total Restricted Funds
Income					
Church & Ministry^*	1,743		3,000		3,000
Extra-Mile Fund Withdrawal	0				0
GCC^*	2,000		2,000		2,000
Hunger Fund	1,920	2,020		1,000	3,020
Memorial Funds	33,782	32,784		2,216	35,000
Mission Trip	6,378	4,782		1,718	6,500
Festival of Arts	11,551	11,551		1,000	12,551
Global Missions^*	6,114	4,758	4,000	1,742	10,500
OCWM^*			7,500		7,500
Shepherding Fund				1,000	1,000

Special Offerings (holidays, etc.)	0			2,000	2,000
Youth Musical^*	4,813	4,813	3,000	1,000	8,813
Miscellaneous	905	7,550			7,550
Total Income	65,463	68,258	19,500	11,676	99,434

Haynes Nursery School

Key Bank	79,706				79,706
Income					
Tuition					65,000
Total Income & Bank Balance					144,706

Expenses

Reimbursement LCC					64,339
Payroll					80,000
Other					2,000
Total Expenses					146,339
Net surplus (deficit)					-1,633

ENDOWMENT FUND 2021 ACTIVITY ANALYSIS

The Endowment realized an increase in market value of 15.7% prior to distributions and fees and 11.2% after distributions and fees. As indicated below, the portfolio is balanced among equities (stocks) fixed income (bonds) REITs (Real Estate Investment Trusts), and money market instruments (cash) in a structure designed to take advantage of market opportunities while simultaneously protecting the endowment against unanticipated risks or market downturns.

LCC budgeted \$130,000 for use of endowment funds and withdrew \$90,000 during 2021.

Below are the financial numbers of the endowment and Extra-Mile Fund:

Balance as of 12-31-2020	\$ 2,222,725
Net gains (losses) including income	<u>347,833</u>
Balance before withdrawals	2,570,558
 2021 withdrawals	 90,000
Management fees	<u>11,520</u>
 Balance as of 12-31-2021	 \$ 2,469,038

Total return on the endowment for 2021 (pre-withdrawals)	15.6%	Extra-Mile	10.2%
Change in endowment for 2021 (post-withdrawals & fees)	11.1%	Extra-Mile	9.4%

Extra-Mile Fund

Balance as of 12-31-2020	\$ 117,644
Net gains (losses)	12,076
Withdrawals	0
Management fees	1,035
Balance as of 12-31-2021	\$ 128,685

LCC establishes investment guidelines within which Winfield Associates exercises discretion regarding specific investment instruments. The portfolio balance at year-end 2021 was:

Equities	70.4%
Fixed income	25.3%
REITs	3.2%
Cash (money markets)	1.1%

In November 2019 the Executive Team approved the establishment of a fund managed by United Church of Christ into which the Extra-Mile Fund. In January 2020, the amount of \$108,056 was transferred. The year-end 2021, the balance of the fund was \$128,685, an increase of \$11,041, or 9.4%, after deduction of management fees.

Stephen Hotchkiss
As of December 31, 2021

BEQUESTS & OTHER GIFTS TO THE ENDOWMENT FUND

As of December 31, 2021

<u>DONOR</u>	<u>ORIGINAL VALUE OF GIFT</u>
Ruth Achor	\$1,380.00
C. S. Albright Family	997,997.00
John Adams	2,645.00
Anne Allen	1,020.00
Harold Baker	10,430.00
Ruth Buckstaff Baker	9,480.00
Virginia Baker	8,389.00
Merle Baker	2,085.00
Richard & Dorothy Braund	3,820.00
Lorraine Cisar	1,000.00
Robert L. Corns	1,000.00
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Aaron Cowles	1,000.00

Theodore & Elizabeth Cunningham	1,230.00
Arnold Dobay	3,515.00
Etta G. Ellenberger	5,355.00
Judy Saltz Gannon	1,500.00
Ernest & Helen Goldsack	3,436.82
Katherine M. Grulich	1,000.00
Margaret Newell & Donald L. Harbaugh	2,500.00
Marjorie Haynes & JoAnn Wright	2,000
Mort & Janet Hitchcock	1,294.00
Peter Molin Huffman	1,100.00
Mr. & Mrs. Clair King	1,050.25
Augusta P. Knowlton	1,070.00
Gertrude Kroeder	1,115.00
Richard I. Kuhn	1,550.00
Marie H. Lightbody	1,016.68
Austin & Florence Lloyd	790.00
George S. Love	500.00
Robert S. Maddox	1,000.00
Alfred & Marjorie Merritt	4,000.00
Harold A. Minnich	1,395.00
Jean Montilla	1,050.00
Paul & Wilhelmina Neuber	1,010.00
George S. Paul	3,025.00
John Paustian	2,585.00
William A. Plotz	1,345.00
Alice Walz Poindexter	2,030.00
Mr. & Mrs. J. Elmer Reeb	2,030.00
Mr. & Mrs. Albert K. Rheem	13,870.00
Mabel Rowe	1,030.00
Mr. & Mrs. J. Clifford Rumbarger	1,320.00
Margaret Rupert	5,000.00
Arthur B. Sansom	1,780.00
Mr. & Mrs. Neal Scovil	3,000.00
Albert & Carolyn Shelton	1,000.00
Ruth Simmelink	1,000.00
Joan T. Sinclair	1,000.00
John Page Swing	1,185.00
Ernestine Tedor	1,000.00
Dorothy & Bernard Vixseboxse	1,500.00

Harriet Weddell	1,035.00
Harold B. Wright	1,025.00
William A. Achele	4,502.85
Estate of Miss Harriet Baldwin	2,422.00
Bowling League	954.33
Estate of Bernice Bramley	172.00
Estate of Hattie Broie	1,000.00
Estate of William C. Burrows	2,500.00
Estate of Georgia Case	8,627.97
Estate of Ethelyn B. Connelly	604,071.90
Pauline F. DeKalb	1,000.00
Mr. & Mrs. Trafton M. Dye	20.00
Edward L. Emerson	10,000.00
Estate of Mallard E. Foster	1,358.49
Estate of Eleanor Gaiser	1,000.00
Estate of Marvin D. Girardeau	5,000.00
Estate of Dorothy Ruth Graham	1,000.00
Estate of Elsie Lee Green	1,705.05
Estate of Laura B. Hale	20,100.00
Estate of Norma K. Hammer	3,282.00
Camilla B. Hysell	500.00
Ernest N. Jennison	5,000.00
Estate of Alice M. Keil	2,000.00
Florence B. & Henry H. Kern Living Endowment Fund	9,500.00
Joseph Mitchell Kiss & Helen Reed Kiss Endowment Fund	2,000.00
Estate of Muriel Lehr	1,000.00
Estate of Esther E. Lent	1,050.00
Estate of Edna F. Longcoy	8,414.33
Charles Edward Manville (Marguerite & Margery Ann)	6,000.00
Mark & Myrtle (Moncrief) Meriam Living Endowment	6,000.00
Luther L. & Kate Miller	10,000.00
George & Grace Pleasance	10,000.00
Estate of Ida O. Poe	39,936.93
Estate of Marion S. Powell	5,000.00
David Clifford Reed & Jennie Miller Reed	1,000.00
Mrs. Charles W. Root	500.00
Estate of Hugh Runkle	1,000.00
Flora M. Seibig	1,000.00
Paul E. Simon	1,000.00

Estate of Sheldon R. Tibbott	5,000.00
Thurman Tippy	3,000.00
Estate of Albert T. Zillmer	57,201.02
75 th Anniversary Endowment Gifts - Various Donors	58,052.00
R. V. Allen	2,862.20
Florence Peterson	36,558.19
Kathryn Yenne	1,000.00
Pearl M. Brazee	12,212.12
Gertrude E. Hawkins	61,386.82
Margaret E. John	73,221.15
Walter Greene	10,000.00
Ruth Hange	5,000.00
Elizabeth White	2,000.00
John & Norine Prim	1,000.00
Robert Hotchkiss	1,500.00
Pearl Lee	1,049.52
Hildegarde Dobay	3,000.00
Katherine Waltz	36,959.72
Estate of Anna Moyer	76,386.00
Estate of Bertha Hauck	1,754.00
Estate of Wilma Reynolds	34,745.69
Estate of Leonard Ferman	5,000.00
The Rev. Dr. Lyman G. & Betty W. Farrar Living Endowment Fund	1,000.00
William Huffman, Jr	1,525.00
TOTAL	2,388,415.03

LAKESWOOD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH SENIOR MINISTERS

The Rev. Benjamin Williams	1906-1908
The Rev. Ross W. Sanderson	1908-1909
The Rev. Edgar E. Scovill	1910-1911
The Rev. George LeGrand Smith	1912-1917
The Rev. Roy E. Bowers, D.D.	1918-1939
The Rev. Everett W. McNair, Ph. D.	1939-1948
The Rev. George Drew, D.D.	1949-1970
The Rev. Donald W. Morgan	1971-1978
The Rev. Frederick A. Meyer (Interim)	1978-1979
The Rev. Lyman G. Farrar, D. Min. (Pastor Emeritus)	1979-1994
The Rev. Alexander Campbell (Interim)	1994-1995
The Rev. Rosemary R. Iha (Interim)	1995
The Rev. Dale Stohre	1995-2000
The Rev. Martha Chenault (Interim)	2000-2004
The Rev. Dave Shackle (Interim)	2004
The Rev. Mark Thomas	2004-2018
The Rev. Joanna D'Agostino	2018-



SUPPORT THE MINISTRIES OF LCC IN 2022



IN 2021, GOD CALLED & ENGAGED LCC THROUGH A CHALLENGING YEAR

- Volunteers served Community Meals and engaged our community with Greater Cleveland Congregations, while donors contributed to the UCC in Zimbabwe and local community partners.
- We Celebrated 5 Baptisms, 20 Confirmations, and 14 New Members
- We worshipped God together through pre-recorded videos, outdoors, in our sanctuary, and on livestream
- Youth and children performed *Seussical the Musical* and filmed our first Easter pageant.
- Families enjoyed outdoor VBS, and nurtured our Faith Formation program
- Friendships formed and grew when volunteers took on a huge project digitizing, organizing, and relocating our historical archives
- Creative and talented musicians amplified our Music Ministries. We even hosted our first ever online talent show!
- Staff and members tackled many small and large maintenance projects. From lighting and repairs, to crucial exterior painting, and a beautifully remodeled W. Clifton lobby
- With dedicated teachers, federal funding, and LCC support, Haynes Nursery School adopted a Zoom and outdoor teaching style for its 55th year as our affiliated preschool
- We welcomed a new Financial Secretary and Director of Youth Music, and just offered a call to our new Minister of Health & Wholeness
- Members engaged in safe and adaptive study, prayer, business, and fellowship

AT-HOME DISCERNMENT GUIDE

Together at Lakewood Congregational Church, we support our shared ministry through prayer, presence, gifts, and service. Each fall, we are invited to make a financial pledge for the coming year. Practically, a pledge is **an intention**, which helps us plan and budget.

More importantly, a pledge is **a spiritual practice**.

When we loosen our grip on material possessions, our hands open up to God's abundance.

Our lives are woven together through shared Mission and Covenant.

We're nurtured by the deep roots of tradition and the saints who came before us.

We generate Christ's love in our community and world in new ways.

Overflowing with delight, we give and receive through the church we love.

As you discern your pledge this year, consider these questions as individuals or families:

Questions for Reflection & Discussion:

1. In your life, what have you learned about giving and stewardship?
Who taught you how to manage your resources? Who taught you to give?
What have you learned about money that has been helpful and what has proven unhelpful?
2. Consider your spiritual health like a tree planted by streams of water.
Where are the roots of your faith? What new life is emerging from your branches?
3. What is an experience of giving in your own life that changed or transformed you?

a small increase can make a huge impact!

CURRENT ANNUAL PLEDGE	5% Increase		10% Increase		15% Increase	
	weekly	yearly	weekly	yearly	weekly	yearly
\$500	\$0.48	\$25	\$0.96	\$50	\$1.44	\$75
\$750	\$0.72	\$38	\$1.44	\$75	\$2.16	\$113
\$1,000	\$0.96	\$50	\$1.92	\$100	\$2.88	\$150
\$1,200	\$1.15	\$60	\$2.31	\$120	\$3.46	\$180
\$2,400	\$2.31	\$120	\$4.62	\$240	\$6.92	\$360
\$3,600	\$3.46	\$180	\$6.92	\$360	\$10.38	\$540
\$5,000	\$4.81	\$250	\$9.62	\$500	\$14.42	\$750
\$7,500	\$7.21	\$375	\$14.42	\$750	\$21.63	\$1,125
\$10,000	\$9.62	\$500	\$19.23	\$1,000	\$28.85	\$1,500



Don't know what to pledge?
Connect with a trusted church
friend to reflect together!

Giving records are confidential.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR PLEDGE FORM BY

NOV. 24, 2021

Scan this QR code,
visit our website,
or request a paper form
in the church office.

[LCC-CHURCH.ORG/GIVE](https://lcc-church.org/give)



*Happy are those who delight in God's wisdom. They are like trees
planted by streams of water: Resilient, Resourceful, Generative*

- Psalm 1