



## **2021 ANNUAL REPORT**

*January 2022*

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## Roles

### **Rev. Dr. Stephen M. Cady, Senior Minister**

Last year was my hardest year of pastoral ministry to date.

To be sure, there were many happy moments worthy of celebration: the completion of our fundraising efforts and breaking ground on the new Outreach Center, the safe (though partial) return to in-person worship, Vacation Bible School, Tent Sunday, hiring new ministerial staff that will help us provide spiritual connection in a post-COVID world, the launch of our podcast, the Governing Board, a safe Christmas Eve celebration, the safe return of staff to the office, more people worshipping together virtually and in-person on Sunday mornings than at any other time in our history. In other words, Asbury First has weathered the storm of the last couple of years as well or better than most congregations. God is indeed good!

And yet, we have not been immune to the anxiety of now. The existential unpredictability of the pandemic, combined with the ideological divisions within our society have meant that none of us are at our best. All of us are tired and weary, and it is coming out in sometimes perplexing ways. As a society we are quick to react, slow to listen, and hesitant to give people the benefit of the doubt—and people of faith are as susceptible to this as anyone else. As such, more than at any other time in my pastoral ministry, I have found myself on the receiving end of people’s anger and skepticism. I have had people express “deep concern” about “lack of transparency” and in the same breath tell me that they don’t read anything that we put out or go to any of the meetings that we have about various items. I have had congregants share misinformation in anger to multiple people before picking up the phone to gain simple clarification. I have had someone confront my wife in front of my children about my “political preaching.”

This has been a hard year.

After two years of trying to make the best decisions possible for the health and safety of the congregation, of leading the efforts on the Child Victim Act lawsuit brought against the church in a way that honors the survivor and safeguards our mission and vision, of taking seriously our commitment to racial justice, of trying to respond to insurrections and contested elections and school shooting after school shooting, to not receive the benefit of the doubt when it comes to the relatively small stuff is disheartening to say the least.

I take some comfort in the knowledge that this is not everyone and it is not unique to Asbury First. As I speak to my colleagues around the country, almost everyone is experiencing something similar and it is having a deleterious effect on ministry. At a conference in October, I learned that nearly half of the 400 largest churches in methodism have lost their senior minister in the last two years, with many of those having left the ministry altogether. A recent study from the Barna Group seemed to echo that fact, finding that a startling number of ministers have contemplated throwing in the towel because of the challenges of the last couple years.

To be clear, I am not there. After nearly ten years in Rochester, I still have a heart for ministry in general and for Asbury First in particular. I believe in our mission and vision. I believe that the adjustments we are making now—focusing on small groups as a way to regain faithful connections, embracing our new virtual congregation alongside our traditional in-person one, clarifying our governance and ministry structures—will make us a stronger and more faithful church. I am, however, weary and have spoken with the PPRC about finding some time to recharge my own spiritual batteries. While I don't quite know that that will look like, I ask for your grace and support as we sort it out in the months ahead.

Asbury First is a remarkable congregation with a proud history and a bright future. I continue to be honored to serve it and will do my best to help us, as disciples of Jesus Christ, love God and neighbor, live fully, serve all, and repeat. I pray that you will join me.

Grace and Peace,

Stephen

## **Rev. Kathy Thiel, Minister for Congregational Care**

The year of 2021 brought many more opportunities to adjust to the wave of life in a pandemic. Our first and foremost prayer continues to be for the health and well-being of all people, and for the end of the pandemic.

As we were able to offer the opportunity to worship in-person, we hoped for a continuing trend toward being able to gather again as we once did: more people, less distance. And then we were faced with the return to more restrictions. “We acknowledge our human loss, and we pray that God grant us grace, that in pain we may find comfort; in sorrow, hope; and in death resurrection.” This was so in 2020, and continued in 2021: within our human loss, pain, sorrow and death, we found ways to continue to connect with each other. Our love for each other did not waver, and the presence of God strengthened our community and ourselves.

There was a window of being able to make some in-person hospital calls. In the rest of the year, it was a privilege to pray on the telephone with people before surgery, and to connect with families of those having surgery and being hospitalized. There was opportunity to meet outdoors without masks, and inside with masks. We held many memorial services and funerals, graveside services and committals. There were even a few meals shared. It was good to be in person with you all again, and to look into each other’s eyes without the distance of the screen. It is a hard choice to have: masked and in person or Zoom with our faces seen? The bottom line is that it is good to connect in any way we can. And so we continue to adjust. As usual, I find many blessings and see God everywhere I turn. Within the pain of the worsening results of the pandemic, there is hope. Hope in the form of all who are researching how to end the pandemic, all who are caring for people who have COVID, and all who are tirelessly, and in spite of their fatigue, working within our health care system to take care of all who suffer.

I continue to lead small groups in prayer, in fellowship, and in study. The people in these groups are dedicated to the church, to God, and to each other. Most of the groups for which I am pastoral liaison continued to meet regularly in 2021, and relationships have deepened over the pandemic.

Cards, phone calls, emails and texts are still our ways to stay in touch, remind each other we are not alone, and continue to spread the love of God throughout our community. It is a wonderful joy and treat to have been able to see anyone who was comfortable being in person for worship, those who dropped by the office, and anyone I ran in to at Wegmans.

God’s love was evident and spread in Zoom meetings about praying, closely studying scripture, reading some books on theology together, and enjoying continuing our connection to each other and to God. One of the highlights of 2021 came during a weekly Zoom meeting. Two people whom I have never met in person, yet have come to know well in the weekly Zoom meeting, realized that they were Zooming from the same neighborhood in Pennsylvania. Not being able to be in person led to Zoom, which led to two people meeting in person. God moves in mysterious ways, vast wonders to perform.

We pray now and always that you are well in body, mind and soul, and we still look forward to the day when we can be together in person.

## Mike Mullin, Minister for Youth and Discipleship

For reports on youth and discipleship, please see those particular reports.

In 2021, I was honored by Asbury First United Methodist Church to be recommended to re-enter the process of ordination in The United Methodist Church. In my pastoral report last year, I expressed how this would grant me an audience with the Genesee Valley District Committee on Ordained Ministry (DCOM). Unfortunately, the DCOM has interpreted the Book of Discipline in a way that allows them to refuse my request to come before them. The Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) has supported the DCOM's decision. This means that I have gone another year without any meeting with the DCOM and/or BOM to respond to my abrupt dismissal in 2019, or to help re-instate my process to licensed and ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church.

One positive that has come out of this ordeal in the past year is that I submitted a resolution to the Upper New York Annual Conference in 2021 that asked for fair process for Licensed and Local Pastors. The resolution stated that "the Upper New York Annual Conference implores the Board of Ordained Ministry to ensure that the discontinuance and termination of local pastors are articulated and defensible as called for in ¶¶320.1 and 635.3d."<sup>1</sup> This passed with 69.5% of the vote (486 votes). I have continued to work with the conference leadership team as they create policies to support this passed resolution.

In 2021, I completed my regular meetings the United Methodist Ecumenical and Interfaith Team: Young Adult Network (UMEIT:YAN). This cohort consisted of eight young adult Methodists from around the world. Our cohort was scheduled to end in the fall of 2020, but due to the pandemic, we elected to continue to meet for an additional year. This group was also scheduled to gather in Africa in 2019, and because this was canceled due to the pandemic, we have been invited to join another UMEIT cohort that will be meeting in Europe in July. I look forward to [hopefully] meeting with members of my cohort in person again, and continuing to experience and works towards improved ecumenical and interfaith dialogue in all settings.

Following on the heels of a successful Bicentennial Bible Challenge, we kicked off a Dynamic Disciple Challenge (because what better incentive is there than alliterative appellations ;). We had about 50 people express interest in joining a class, and we have about 20 who have completed the full year study. And while this may seem like a high drop-out rate, it is actually an impressive statistic for the Disciple Bible Study. Those who have completed the study read through most of the Bible, and spent an hour each week not only discussing the context of the texts, but also the ramifications that these texts have in our lives and for our faith in the twenty-first century. And if you are reading this, and feeling like you missed out on an opportunity, don't fret—we will have new Disciple classes beginning in February, and we would love to have you join in!

We never know what a day (or year) may bring; but we know that we have this moment. If nothing else, I hope that 2021 has taught all of us the value of embracing these moments that we have together. As the minister of discipleship, I want everyone to have an opportunity to engage their faith critically in community. For everyone that is looking for a place to fit in and to come together, it is my hope that the

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<sup>1</sup> The complete resolution may be found here:  
[https://issuu.com/uppernewyork/docs/working\\_journal\\_vol.\\_i\\_2021/s/12232559](https://issuu.com/uppernewyork/docs/working_journal_vol._i_2021/s/12232559)

church might help you to connect—be it in-person or online. If you have ideas, hopes, or dreams for what Asbury First might do as we continue to reach out and reach in, we would love to hear from you. From educational opportunities, to fellowship outings, to new connections, we are better together. I am thankful for all of your continued support—both personally and professionally—throughout this past year, and I am looking forward to seeing many of you in person once again in the year ahead 😊!

May there be Peace,

-Mike



## **Rev. Rachel Ann Dupont, Minister for Christian Formation and Director of The Discipleship Project**

This report covers the first six months of my appointment to Asbury First. The first few months of my ministry represents over 400 hours of Christian Formation one-on-one and in small groups, as I have shepherded congregation members and visitors on an intentional discipleship path.

Beginning a new ministry within an existing congregation requires that I get to know the congregation as well as the way the church ministers and staff work together. To that end, I have spent a few months of one-on-one meetings and speaking to ministry teams and their leaders and using my training and experience, assess and navigate steps in building this ministry for effectiveness.

Servant leadership of ordained elders means empowering and equipping the laity to be the church that God is calling them to be. The vision of The Discipleship Project is to 'Reclaim the Method, Renew the Mission, and Reignite the Movement.' One aspect of this project is to build a network of Class Meetings (the Method) for development of discipleship and leadership. I am specifically gearing the first year of this project toward piloting the Classes, development of common language for our context that aligns with our Wesleyan theology, and leadership development. After 4 months, I have commissioned 10 Class Leaders to assist with the leadership of Classes in 2022. Together, we plan to build up the culture around a lay-driven, clergy-resourced movement for discipleship. More leadership development and education is planned for the summer, and an emphasis on evangelism will accompany our September invitations adjacent with 'back to church' themes.

In addition to this work, I have regular pastoral duties: pastoral care, prayer, worship leadership, occasional preaching.

In my connectional work, I serve on the delegation to General Conference, in the Local Churches work group.

Since my last Charge Conference, I have received 3 CEUs by participating in Launchpad for New Faith Community Development. I have worked with Gary Shockley, a well-known coach for new ministry development through most of 2021 as well.

Pastoring during a pandemic has been challenging. After over a year into the pandemic, I moved with my family, purchased a home in a difficult housing market, and began a new appointment to build a new ministry, still during a pandemic, which has been challenging. Since January of 2021 under the guidance of my then S/PPRC, I have committed to working consistently closer to what regular 'full time' means and taking a day or two off each week. This represents significant spiritual growth for me. I have grown over the years through lots of prayer, retreats, spiritual reading, training, etc., but it has been hardest to actually stop working so much. I recently read something that said, "Transformation comes primarily from letting go, not building up." I am finding this to ring true.

## **Rev. Pat Dupont, Director of the Outreach Center**

### **The Asbury First Outreach Center**

The capital campaign to fund the renovation and expansion of 1010 East Avenue was successfully completed and the project began in November 2021. Construction will continue for the next year. During this time, our outreach center ministries will continue to operate.

The biggest goal of the second half of 2021 has been to discover ways for our ministries to better coordinate with one another in an effort to provide our guests with the most holistic care that we can. While we have already improved coordination in many ways, this will be an ongoing process and will remain a primary goal as we move into 2022.

### **Meal Program**

While our laundry, shower, and hair-care ministries have been on hiatus due to the pandemic, our hot meal program continues to offer meals along with basic grocery and hygiene items. During the month of August the program relocated from 1010 East Avenue to Covenant UMC (1124 Culver Rd) for breakfasts and 1040 East Avenue for Sunday lunch. Since reopening in our new locations, the meal program has seen it's numbers steadily rising. As the year comes to a close, we are serving 30-50 meals/day.

Through partnerships with *Person Centered Housing Options*, the *Rochester Homeless Union*, and the campus ministry of *St. John Fisher College*, we have also been able to deliver backpacks and sleeping bags to people living outside. About 10-15 meals are picked up from our kitchens each day and are delivered to *Peace Village*, Rochester's sanctioned homeless encampment.

### **Clothing Program**

Our clothing ministry has continued to operate in a modified way due to the pandemic. Due to the new model, and due to increased need caused by the pandemic, we are serving higher numbers of people and families. Taking into account only January through October, our clothing ministry served over 2,000 people. Alongside clothing, this ministry also continues to offer people basic household goods including dishes, blankets, and linens. All of our volunteers miss the days of working with shoppers in person in our space. We pray that it will be safe to reopen in this way in the near future.

### **Grocery Program**

Our Grocery Program continues to partner with a number of other churches around the city to deliver around 80 grocery bags/month in a grassroots and neighborhood-focused way. The program also supplies monthly deliveries of groceries to refugee families through a partnership with *Keeping Our Promise*. Strides have been taken in 2021 to look at how and from where we source our goods in an effort to improve coordination between our grocery and meal programs.

### **Medical Clinic**

During the pandemic, our clinic has made the transition from walk-in to appointment only. This has been found to be a positive change for our medical volunteers, our greeters, and our guests. We are currently able to see 8 patients every Thursday night. Our volunteers are able to offer a number of medical

services, perhaps the most common being physicals that are necessary for employment. As we move towards the completion of the Outreach Center, we are exploring adding dental services to the clinic.

### **Community Garden**

2021 was the first year of our garden ministry and it was a huge success! Over the summer and fall, visitors who entered our campus using the 1010 driveway were greeted by a beautiful garden of fresh produce. In its inaugural year, the garden was able to provide 20 deliveries to our meal program, 14 deliveries to partner food cupboards, and 2 deliveries to our grocery program. The garden also provided picking opportunities for *Keeping Our Promise* refugees, hands-on gardening for participants of our Vacation Bible School, and fresh produce for our Vacation Bible School dinner.

## **Rev. Dr. Robert Allan Hill**

**Boston University, Dean of Marsh Chapel, Professor of New Testament and Pastoral Theology, and Chaplain to the University**

***January 1, 2021—December 31, 2021***

*This COVID year 2021, like last year 2020, was quite a different year, in preaching, teaching, and leading.*

### **1. Dean of Marsh Chapel: Preacher**

1. Regular Sunday\Other Sermons and Services, both Marsh and elsewhere, both virtual (1/1/21—8/15/21) and live in person (8/22/21to 12/26/21): **67**

Marsh Chapel Sunday worship services are broadcast in New England on NPR to 20K-80K; in addition, another 20K (up from 4K five years ago) listen by livestream or podcast, Sunday or midweek; the services are streamed on the BU website, for all 350K living BU alumni and others around the globe (weekly listeners in Dublin, Paris, Beijing, Sao Paulo, Juno); the service is provided for the 43,000 resident BU faculty\students\administration and staff, as well as for the living BU alumni (noted above) around the globe; 263 weekly pre-COVID average *school year* physical attendance (highest in September, December, April, and May).

2. Annual Special BU Services: **26**

ML King Observances (2), This I Believe, BU Baccalaureate\Commencement (8) (This year: Senior Breakfast, ROTC, This I Believe), Marsh and BU Matriculations (4), BU Alumni Weekend Memorial Service, Lessons & Carols (2), Annual Spring Term Prayers\Invocations (10).

3. Guest Speaking Events 2021: **18**

(\*10 live, 8 virtual (compared to **57** live occasions 2019)): Hessler Hebrew Class , College of General Studies Matriculation Prayer, Union MA Episcopal, Senior Breakfast 2021 Prayer, BU Commencement\Baccalaureate 5/21\*, plus 11 sub events, Matriculation 8/21\* 8 Monthly 8am First Sunday Plaza Morning Prayer Services\*, BU Admissions 4/27, UMFNE Prayer, G Floyd Reflection, Union Chapel NH\*, UMC UNYAC, Hill Fourth of July\*, STH Worship Welcome 9/21\*, Service Recognition Luncheon\*, President Jon Westling Funeral\Memorial\*, BU Academy Marsh Plaza Vigil\*, DUPC Coons Funeral\*.

4. Regular Meetings: Weekly, Monthly, other: **19**  
Marsh Staff, Marsh Advisory Board, Marsh Development Group, Faculty BUSTH, Faculty Area A and Area D BUSTH, Dean's Council, University Leadership Council, University Leadership Group, BU Faculty Council, Religious Life Council, BU Chaplains, New England Annual Conference Foundation (and Marketing Committee), Harvard Memorial Church Board of Visitors (*in hiatus*), Learning Project Board of Visitors, BU Hillel Board.
5. Visits: (office, home, hospital, other): **311** (not including daily 45min campus walk, which allows various brief, informal conversations)
6. 2021 New Marsh Chapel Chapter Members Received **0**
7. Seasonal Program Initiatives, largely Staff led: **24**: (*see website*)
8. 2021 Baptisms **0**
9. 2021 Weddings: **2** (Depuy\Hammerl; Thai\Lee)
10. 2021 Care at Death; Funerals, Memorials, (challenging year): **15**  
(*Unlike other years, the names are redacted here, given the variety and circumstances of these losses during COVID (a combination of faculty, staff, student, congregation, community and family deaths)*). (The normal RAH\Staff responses at death include: 1. Prayer. 2. T: Boss\Dean 3. T: Widower\Widow. 4. Flowers sent. 5. Counsel session. 6. Wake\Memorial).

## **2. Tenured Full Professor, New Testament/Pastoral Theology, STH: Professor**

1. STH monthly faculty meeting, annual STH Faculty Retreat
2. 2021 RAH Publications:
  - a. Sunday Sermons, BU website (at 2500 words a sermon, the collection for 2021 would be 125,000 words, or two 200-page books);
  - b. Autumn 2021 Sermon Series: on *One Step in Faith*;
  - c. Lenten Series 2021: *St. Patrick*;
  - d. Dean Hill's Blogs monthly (deanhill.blogspot.com).
  - e. W. Ritter *Nudging the Heart*, Introduction (chapter).
  - f. J. Fanestil, *One Life To Give*, Introduction (chapter). Ongoing work on *Hill, Overture To Liberal Biblical Theology*. No books published in 202. Current RAH book total: **17**.
3. Courses 2021: Pastoral Preaching (virtual), The Gospel of John (live) (since 2006 two courses\year offered *gratis* in STH, part of Hill family tithes).
4. Doctoral\Masters Defense Committees **4**
5. STH Methodism Committee (issues are coming in this area again in 2022)
6. STH Areas A and D Monthly meetings **2**
7. Two completed RAH doctoral students **2** (DMIN, Rev. Greg McGonigle, Dean of Religious Life, Emory University; Rev. Lynn Cooper, Catholic Chaplain, Tufts).
8. Pastoral contacts\calls with fellow clergy\others at Christmas: **27**

## **3. Chaplain to the University and Office of Religious Life: Pastor**

1. Daily 45-minute walks on campus and conversations. In Covid, a goal of 5 phone calls\day. (Also, see regular meetings list, above).

2. BU Today Articles, other Religious Life Articles and Interviews (several): (see Marsh Website, 'In the News' collection).
3. BU Matriculation, Service and Retirement Recognitions, Senior Breakfast, Baccalaureate, Commencement, Multi-faith Dinner, and other spring events: **10**
4. **43** (mostly part-time) paid staff at Marsh Chapel; **41** Religious Life unpaid staff
5. Marsh Board of Advisors (**29**), May and September. \*Giving through Marsh Chapel, excluding weddings, has grown from \$16,000 in 2006 to \$325,000 2020. Our income was down 2021, but so were our expenses. 2020 and 2021 were thus financially fairly solid years for us.
6. Pastoral Counseling: **52** (sacramental and personal moments, part of total visits above).
7. Annual Open Houses\Receptions\Dinners in 96 Bay State Residence: **6**
8. Student Deaths 2021: **5** (Davey, Forbath, Abdella, Pelusi, Delgado)
9. Administration: Oversight *through Chapel Director* of 6 University Chaplains and 25 Campus Ministers, 43 internal Marsh Staff (see sign boards and web site). *New Roman Catholic University Chaplain, 5/20, Fr. Kevin Staley-Joyce*. Marsh Chapel oversight of Religious Life brings **\$3M/year** to BU in self-funded chaplaincies and campus ministries. Also, as an administrative change, on 2/18/20 we instituted an annual required written request for STH use of Marsh Chapel space, with needed signatures of STH dean or designee and Marsh Chapel director.
10. Sampling of authors read in 2021: Fanestil, Obama, Hemingway, Stevenson, Woodward, Loughery, Osborne, McWhorter, Frey.
11. December Christmas\Holiday events: normally **35**, this year **5**.
12. Travel, personal and\or work (very limited): St. Petersburg, Bradley Brook.
13. Tithe (details available on request).
14. **10** Continuing Education Events\Retreats Annually (normally): 2 UMC Annual Conferences (UNYAC, NEAC), 2 AAR\SBL (national, regional), 2 NHTDG (spring, fall), 2 BU retreats (Provost, STH), 2 Marsh staff retreats (August, February).
15. Annual Marsh income target set and met at 1/14 of expenses, 2015, w\Chris Goss, (after discussion, retained at this level, 12/18 w\Pat Obrien).
16. Goals: Two 2021 Foci: *Voice* (1 long term research project on Biblical Theology); *Visitation* (personal visitation goal: pastoral conversation, 2 dozen a week).

## **Administration and Property**

### **Governance Board**

In December 2020, after more than three years in the planning, Asbury First voted to approve a new Governance model designed to help us carry out our mission as disciples of Jesus Christ to love God and neighbor, live fully, serve all, and repeat. We shifted from a Church Council to a Governing Board that, in conversation with the congregation, sets policy and direction and empowers the ministry teams to carry out the work of the congregation. The hope was that in this process we might streamline decision-making, articulate clear lines of authority, and most of all promote agency and action at the ministry team level. In addition to its Disciplinary and fiduciary responsibilities, the Governing Board focuses on several open questions that are vital to Asbury First's mission and ministry. In 2021, the Governing Board has especially focused on how the pandemic has shifted our mission and ministry and how to honor our commitments to inclusion and diversity, both locally and as a denomination. We include monthly GB Summaries, that can be accessed publicly at: [www.asburyfirst.org/governance](http://www.asburyfirst.org/governance)

### **Finance Committee**

#### **Purpose:**

The Finance Committee is charged with providing strategic oversight of congregational finances, including assistance in development and monitoring of the Annual Operating Plan (AOP) for the Governing Board to ensure that the church stays on track in fulfilling its missional goals and vision. Although management authority and participation in day-to-day financial decision-making resides with the Finance Team the Finance Committee may establish annual goals for and provide direction to staff and the Finance Team.

#### **The Year in Review:**

As this is a new role/function within church governance most of the year has been devoted to digesting information and data on the financial operations and current financial policies and procedures from various sources including the Church Administrator and the chair of the Investment Committee. The Committee set the annual goal for the Finance Team to create a finance policy manual to reflect current financial policies and procedures and limits of authority in a centralized and comprehensive but easily referenced document. The Committee supported the addition of an incremental Financial Administrator (FA) to the Finance Team to assist in generating informative monthly and annual financial reports and data analysis for reporting to the Committee and church leadership.

To that end the new FA has researched data across a 5-year period that will help inform fiscal policy during fluctuations in funding levels. Ahead of the full financial audit scheduled for this year the Committee met with a representative of the firm chosen by RFP to review the proposed scope of services and audit approach. As with past results of full audits and yearly informational audits the Committee anticipates this year's audit to confirm that current policies and procedures follow adequate internal controls and financial statements do a good job in representing the financial position of the church.

The remainder of the year was dedicated to monitoring the church's financial position which showed signs of stress due to the later than anticipated return to in-person worship and ever-changing environment due to the pandemic. The committee also provided feedback to the Finance Team in their efforts to develop financial reporting that incorporates restricted and unrestricted revenue and expenses for a more comprehensive view of church operations and outreach activities.

Prepared by Angie Burch

# Annual Operating Plan 2022

Asbury First UMC - Proposed Consolidated Annual Operating Plan -2022			
	2021 Actual	Proposed 2022 AOP	NOTES
<b>REVENUE</b>			
<b>Unrestricted</b>			
Current Year Contributions ( <i>Pledges &amp; Offerings</i> )	1,349,463	1,375,000	A
Prior Years Contributions	21,939	15,000	
Radio & Live Streaming	9,563	10,000	
Plate Collections	2,684	5,000	
Holiday Offerings	14,343	15,000	
General Endowment to Operations	269,280	282,744	
Property Usage	82,812	85,000	
Other Income ( <i>Trusts, Online fee donations, etc.</i> )	14,855	15,000	
PPP Funds	183,700	-	B
<b>Sub-total - Unrestricted Revenue</b>	<b>1,948,639</b>	<b>1,802,744</b>	
<b>Restricted</b>			
Donations from Congregation	97,416	105,901	
Donations & Grants from Community	147,129	80,000	C
Memorials	52,657	3,000	
Pastors Discretionary Funds	60,505	20,000	D
Distributions from Restricted Endowment	108,506	121,856	
<b>Sub-total - Restricted Revenue (<i>New Funds</i>)</b>	<b>466,213</b>	<b>330,757</b>	E
<b>Releases from Restriction (<i>See "Restricted Fund Balances"</i>)</b>	<b>23,727</b>	<b>216,468</b>	F
<b>Total Funds Available for Operations</b>	<b>2,438,579</b>	<b>2,349,969</b>	
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<b>Personnel</b>			
Pastoral	471,598	533,937	
Non-pastoral	746,931	834,625	
<b>Sub-total - Personnel Expenses</b>	<b>1,218,529</b>	<b>1,368,562</b>	G
<b>Non-personnel</b>			
Direct	317,278	367,307	
Allocated			
Finance & Administration	131,749	169,500	
Property Care	384,701	359,600	
Pastors Discretionary Funds	81,730	25,000	
Allocation to Escrow from Ministry Shares for Cap. Campaign	60,000	60,000	H
Sub-total - Allocated	658,180	614,100	
<b>Sub-total - Non-personnel Expenses</b>	<b>975,458</b>	<b>981,407</b>	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>2,193,987</b>	<b>2,349,969</b>	
<b>Excess Income/Releases/(Expenses)</b>	<b>244,592</b>	<b>(0)</b>	

Proposed 2022 AOP - Mission-based View					
Sub-total: Church Operations	Worship & Arts	Discipleship & Youth	Congregational Care	Asbury Outreach Ministries	Conference Ministry Shares
1,375,000					
15,000					
10,000					
5,000					
15,000					
282,744					
85,000					
15,000					
-					
<b>1,802,744</b>					
105,901	-	25,000	-	80,901	-
80,000	-	-	-	80,000	-
3,000	-	-	-	3,000	-
20,000	-	-	-	20,000	-
121,856	29,440	-	34,446	57,970	-
<b>330,757</b>	<b>29,440</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>34,446</b>	<b>241,871</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>216,468</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>24,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>191,468</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>2,349,969</b>					
533,937	133,035	182,916	113,815	104,171	-
834,625	347,440	197,134	127,785	162,265	-
<b>1,368,562</b>	<b>480,476</b>	<b>380,050</b>	<b>241,600</b>	<b>266,436</b>	<b>-</b>
367,307	20,000	26,000	11,400	145,175	164,732
169,500	57,630	35,595	40,680	35,595	-
359,600	122,264	75,516	86,304	75,516	-
25,000	-	-	-	25,000	-
60,000	-	-	-	-	60,000
614,100	179,894	111,111	126,984	136,111	60,000
<b>981,407</b>	<b>199,894</b>	<b>137,111</b>	<b>138,384</b>	<b>281,286</b>	<b>224,732</b>
<b>2,349,969</b>	<b>680,370</b>	<b>517,161</b>	<b>379,984</b>	<b>547,722</b>	<b>224,732</b>
<b>(0)</b>					



## Notes to 2022 Annual Operating Plan

### Note A:

Congregational giving has increased about \$60,000/yr for the last two years. In December 2021 we received an unusually large percentage of our total donations (17.8% vs an historical average of 12.6%). Accordingly, we are projecting a somewhat more conservative rate of growth for 2022 and budgeting an increase of only \$26,000, recognizing that the volatility of the last two years of the pandemic could have been an anomaly.

### Note B:

PPP Funds were recognized as unrestricted revenue in 2021 when we received formal forgiveness of the PPP Loan. Because our other giving stayed very strong, they contributed to our year-end surplus of \$244,592 for 2021. The purpose of the PPP funds was to pay wages to employees during the early months of Covid. Accordingly, we do not carry a specific balance of funds called "PPP Funds."

### Note C:

On 12/31/21 we received a \$50,000 donation from an unexpected source, bringing our total restricted revenue from community sources to \$147,129. We are hopeful that this source may continue, but it would be premature to put this into our budget at this time.

### Note D:

We received some special donations for Covid relief that were given to the Pastors Discretionary Fund. We are not expecting these donations to continue into 2022.

### Note E:

We believe that our overall projection for restricted donations is very conservative, and we are very hopeful that the opening of our Outreach Center will help us to attract additional support from the community.

### Note F:

This figure represents what we expect to spend from our existing balances of donor-restricted funds. When we receive funds with donor-restrictions we account for them separately, and we make sure that they are spent according to our donors' wishes. The following schedule shows how our use of these funds is aligned with our donors' designations.

Net Changes in Restricted Fund Balances						
	Total Restricted Funds	Worship & Arts	Discipleship & Youth	Congregational Care	Outreach	Other Restricted Funds
Beginning Balances (1/01/22)	462,749	14,069	61,007	19,508	275,180	92,985
Releases from Restriction	(216,468)	-	(24,000)	(1,000)	(191,468)	-
<b>Projected Ending Balances (12/31/22)</b>	<b>246,281</b>	<b>14,069</b>	<b>37,007</b>	<b>18,508</b>	<b>83,712</b>	<b>92,985</b>

### Note G:

This number reflects a 3% "cost of living" increase for the staff, increased costs of healthcare, as well as an increase of approximately 1.5 FTEs (Full Time Equivalents) as compared to 2020. As we return from the pandemic, the missional need for connection is more important than ever before. The Minister for Christian Formation, with a focus on developing and growing small group initiatives, will be essential in

## Notes to 2022 Annual Operating Plan

our effort to become the church God is calling us to be. Indeed, Rev. Dupont’s work in her first six months has already borne much fruit! This position is funded via a dedicated gift through the first half of 2022 and then through the general AOP thereafter. Last year, we also added an additional three-quarter-time Financial Administrator, John Ormsbee, allowing Dick Moncrief to reduce his hours as well. In addition to these positions, this budget anticipates hiring a part-time skilled communications assistant. Prior to the pandemic, managing the communications of the church was too much for one person. Since the pandemic, it is practically impossible as nearly everything in the church needs to go through the communications office. Adding a part-time skilled person to this office will help us improve the communication to our community. As previously announced, we also plan to fill the vacated Outreach position with an Outreach Coordinator/Social Worker in time for the opening of the Outreach Center.

### Note H:

We allocate certain overhead expenses out to our various missions according to the following schedule:

		<b>Worship &amp; Arts</b>	<b>Discipleship &amp; Youth</b>	<b>Congregational Care</b>	<b>Asbury Outreach Ministries</b>	<b>Conference Ministry Shares</b>
<b>Fin &amp; Admin</b>	\$169,500	34%	21%	24%	21%	0%
<b>Property Care</b>	359,600	34%	21%	24%	21%	0%
<b>Pastors Discretionary</b>	25,000	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
<b>Ministry Shares *</b>	60,000	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$614,100</b>	<b>\$179,894</b>	<b>\$111,111</b>	<b>\$126,984</b>	<b>\$136,111</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>

\* This portion of our Ministry Shares assessment is being shown as current expense in our 2022 Budget (as it was in our 2021 financial statements). However, we are reserving these funds in an interest-bearing escrow account pending the finalization of negotiations between Asbury First and the Conference regarding a credit totaling \$350,000 over six years to assist with the construction costs of the Outreach Center.

Until these negotiations are finalized we will be recognizing the full Ministry Shares Assessment as an expense, and will be recording a corresponding liability on our balance sheet. Upon a successful resolution to our negotiations we will extinguish the liability and recognize these funds as revenue in our Better Together Campaign.

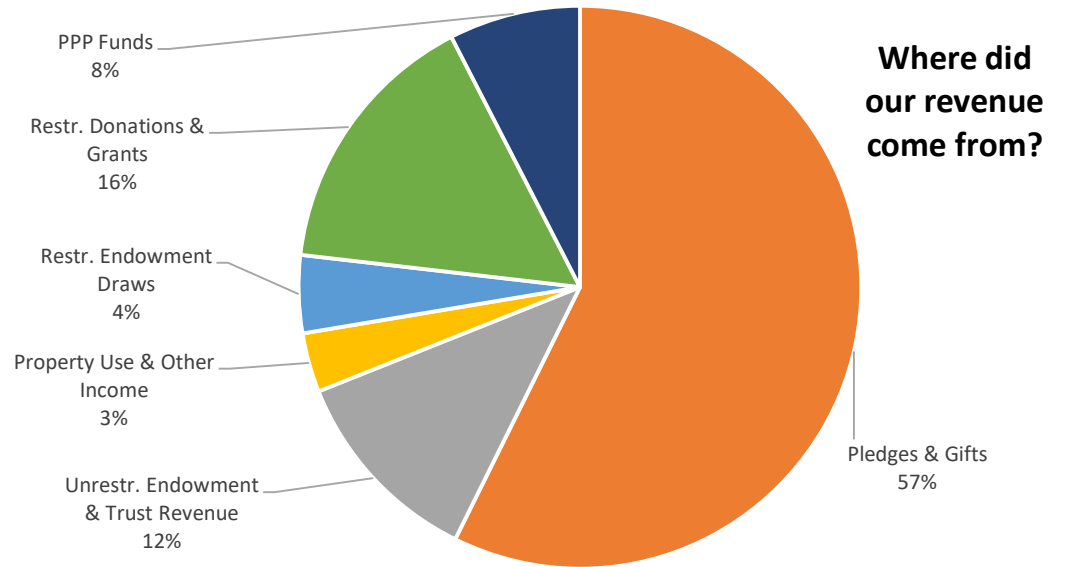
**2021 Results**  
**(Total General Operations plus Designated Funds)**

**2021 Revenue**

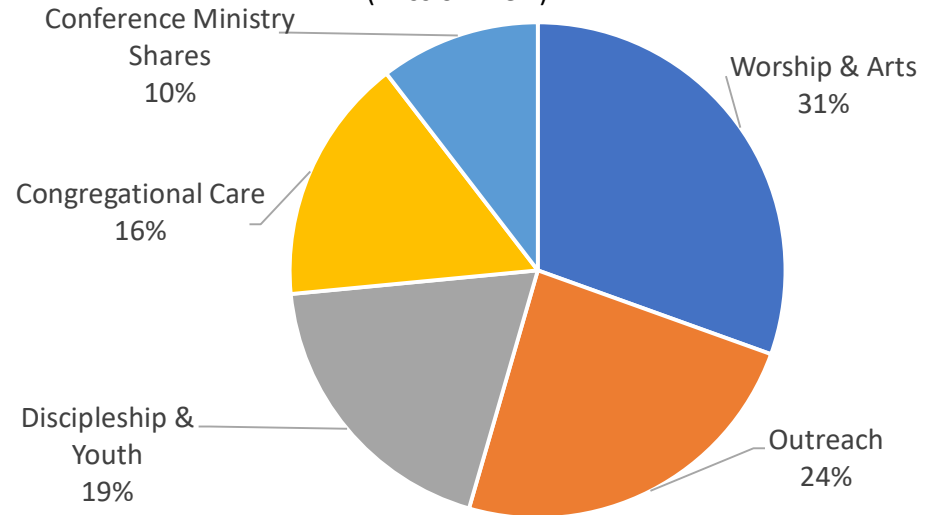
Pledges & Gifts	\$	1,398,000
Unrestr. Endowment & Trust Revenue	\$	284,000
Property Use & Other Income	\$	83,000
Restr. Endowment Draws	\$	109,000
Restr. Donations & Grants	\$	381,000
PPP Funds	\$	184,000
	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,439,000</b>

**2021 Expenses (Mission View)**

Worship & Arts	\$	669,000
Personnel	\$	372,000
Ministry Program	\$	40,000
Administrative & Facilities	\$	257,000
Outreach	\$	526,000
Personnel	\$	134,000
Ministry Program	\$	233,000
Administrative & Facilities	\$	159,000
Discipleship & Youth	\$	417,000
Personnel	\$	239,000
Ministry Program	\$	19,000
Administrative & Facilities	\$	159,000
Congregational Care	\$	353,000
Personnel	\$	168,000
Ministry Program	\$	4,000
Administrative & Facilities	\$	181,000
Conference Ministry Shares	\$	229,000
Direct to Conference	\$	169,000
Escrow for Cap. Campaign	\$	60,000
	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,194,000</b>



**What ministry did our budget accomplish?**  
**(Mission View)**



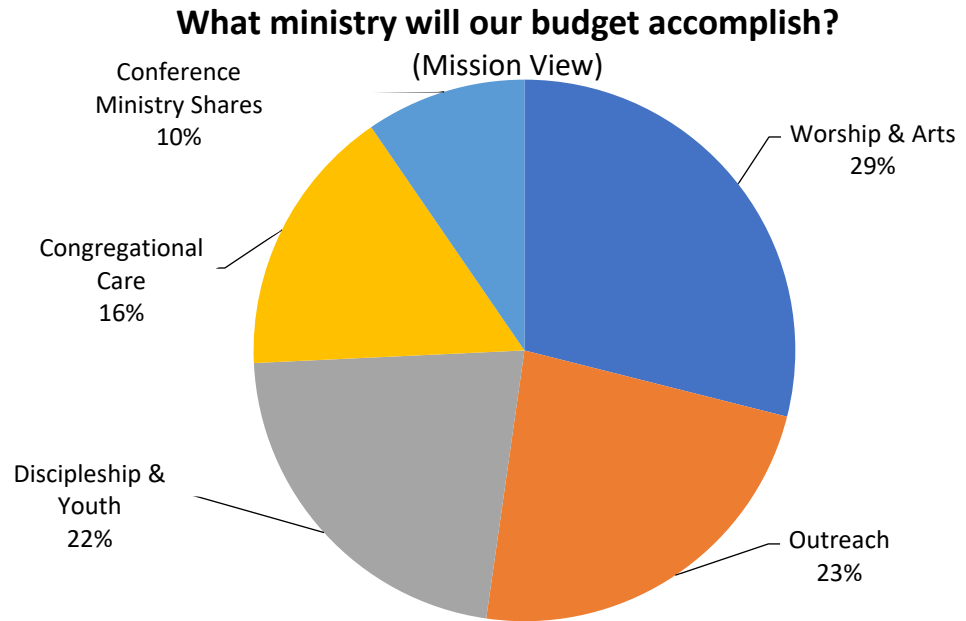
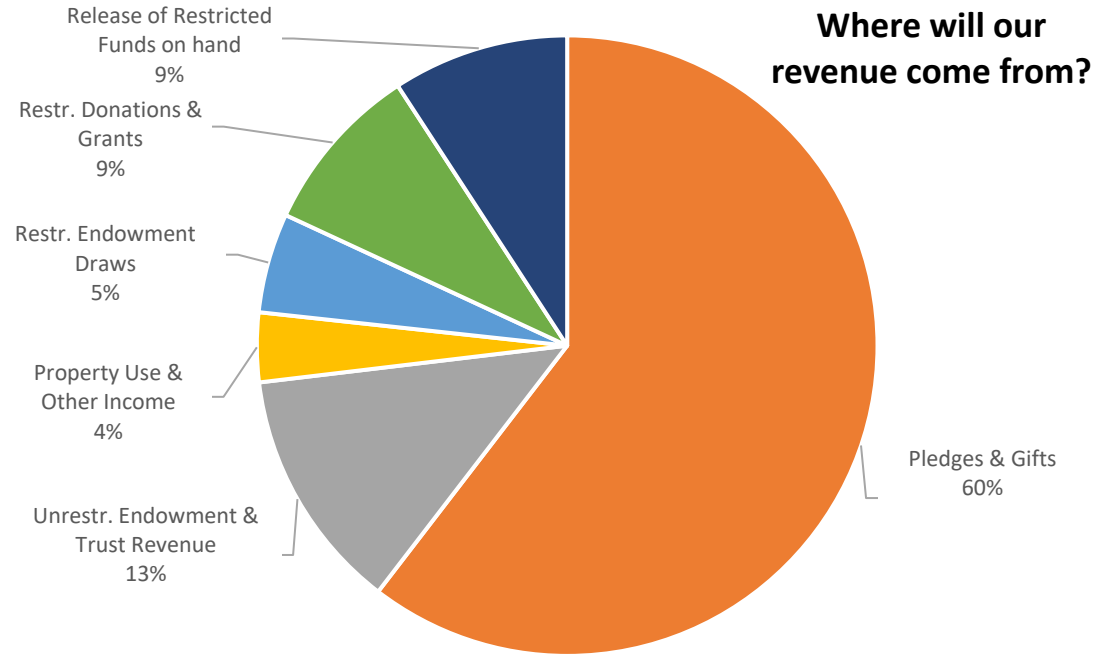
## 2022 Budget (Total General Operations plus Designated Funds)

### 2022 Revenue

Pledges & Gifts	\$	1,420,000
Unrestr. Endowment & Trust Revenue	\$	298,000
Property Use & Other Income	\$	85,000
Restr. Endowment Draws	\$	122,000
Restr. Donations & Grants	\$	209,000
Release of Restricted Funds on hand	\$	216,000
	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,350,000</b>

### 2022 Expenses (Mission View)

Worship & Arts	\$	680,000
Personnel	\$	480,000
Ministry Program	\$	20,000
Administrative & Facilities	\$	180,000
Outreach	\$	548,000
Personnel	\$	266,000
Ministry Program	\$	145,000
Administrative & Facilities	\$	136,000
Discipleship & Youth	\$	517,000
Personnel	\$	380,000
Ministry Program	\$	26,000
Administrative & Facilities	\$	111,000
Congregational Care	\$	380,000
Personnel	\$	242,000
Ministry Program	\$	11,000
Administrative & Facilities	\$	127,000
Conference Ministry Shares	\$	225,000
Direct to Conference	\$	165,000
Escrow for Cap. Campaign	\$	60,000
	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,350,000</b>



## **PPRC (Pastor Parish Relations Committee)**

The Pastor Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) is the successor committee to the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC). As a standing Governance Board committee, the PPRC assists the Board in developing employee policies, liaising with bishops on clergy and pastor evaluations, ensuring compliance with applicable laws, and carrying the staff grievance process as defined by the Governance Board policies. The PPRC has no staff management authority and does not participate in supervision of staff or staff decision-making. The PPRC's role and functions are guided by The Book of Discipline.

### **PPRC Activities During 2021**

The PPRC was asked to provide feedback for each of the AFUMC ministers based upon PPRC members' interactions with each of the ministers, input from congregants who had been known to interface with the ministers through church activities, and observations from church leadership. The PPRC Chair, along with Rev. Dr. Stephen Cady, met with each of the ministers to provide that feedback and to better understand what kind of support each minister felt would enhance his/her abilities to better discharge their duties.

The PPRC explored in depth the opportunity that was presented to AFUMC to pilot Rev Rachel Dupont's Discipleship Project and provided its endorsement to the Governing Board for the project, along with Rev Dupont's appointment. In follow-up, the Governing Board identified the needed resources to support the project and approved the project and hiring of Rev. Dupont.

With Rev. Jackie Nelson's resignation from her full-time role as Minister for Outreach, the PPRC worked closely with Rev. Dr. Stephen Cady and the Governing Board in the development of an appropriate staffing strategy that will meet the needs for the new Outreach Center and other church activities in alignment with AFUMC's stated mission and vision.

The PPRC has continued its wholehearted support of Michael Mullin in his career aspirations for the ministry in the UMC. This has included the PPRC interceding on his behalf with the District Committee on Ministry and the Upstate New York Annual Conference's Board of Ordained Ministry.

Since there have been continual salary/benefits freezes for the ministers over several years as part of the church budgetary process, it appears to be highly unlikely that the salaries and benefits for the current ministers have been comparable to those of other Methodist congregations of similar size to AFUMC. Consequently, the PPRC has developed a benchmarking survey targeting regional and other US Methodist churches of a similar size as AFUMC and also of other Protestant denominations to better gauge what might be a need for future salary/benefits adjustments. This survey will be conducted during the first quarter of 2022.

Since March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted AFUMC and its congregants in many ways that were clearly not foreseen. Worship has incorporated a virtual/remote component that has been embraced by hundreds of households, some regular members and many new viewers/participants from throughout the US and other countries. Public health concerns/requirements have significantly altered how AFUMC conducts its in-person services and other church-related activities. Individuals who previously had little involvement in the use of the internet and other social media platforms have had to learn how to use them, sometimes with some personal frustration. Additionally, from a societal perspective, this pandemic has heightened social isolation across all age groups, especially for many

seniors, in our community. The Rochester Community, along with practically every other community in New York and the US, has experienced a major increase in depression and other behavioral health issues, across all age groups. Such stressors have the unfortunate tendency to impact individuals' behaviors, especially when it comes to interacting and communicating with others, including their interactions with our ministers. What is clear is that the AFUMC ministerial staff has been steadfastly trying to support the many needs of our faith community during these most trying of times. It is the hope of the PPRC, that our fellow congregants recognize this and treat our ministers with the love, respect, and support that they deserve in delivering God's message to our faith community.

## **Outreach Center Committee**

- UR Well Clinic is shut down for January due to Covid surge (as per URM).C).
  - Community Garden – will review last year's activities this month and begin 2022 planning.
  - Grocery Bag Ministries – Will meet this Saturday (1/15/22) to continue to provide bags for churches in community.
  - Dining and Care Center – Re-opened in January (after holiday break). Approx. 30-40 meals/day are being served. Dining room at Covenant UMC has also reopened on a limited basis, allowing ~8 people to stay and eat (vs. takeout). Also, last week had a volunteer who tested positive for Covid; volunteers have begun to use N95 masks for greater protection.
  - Storehouse – Personnel met on Monday (1/10/22) to review 2021 results. Over 3,000 people were served in 2021! Bonnie Watson and Beth Rice are new co-chairs!
  - Pat DuPont and David Strong did a walk-thru of the construction site and all are excited about progress! (Chuck Hanrahan has provided photos of progress).
1. A "wrap" is being constructed for the fence around the construction site to promote the "New Outreach Center" and the aligned programs expected to be in play at launch.
  2. 1H2022 Priorities
    - a. Hiring of social worker
    - b. Grants for Outreach Center
    - c. Teambuilding; Volunteer recruitment

## **Investment Committee**

### **Role in Church Governance:**

The Investment Committee is charged with setting investment policies for the Church's General Endowment and Restricted Funds, subject to approval by the Board of Governors. It also provides oversight as outlined in the policies, including for the General Endowment, thirteen Restricted Funds, and the Better Together capital fund. As of the end of the third quarter of 2021, \$6,974,057 was held in the General Endowment, an aggregate of \$3,350,322 was held in various restricted funds (ranging in size from \$17,246 to \$845,865). Accordingly, total General Endowment/Restricted Funds are valued at \$10,324,379. In addition, \$2,326,282 was held in the Better Together capital improvement fund pending their use during the construction phase.

**Activities to Date** (Updated December 16, 2021):

The Committee uses three investment advisors, Manning & Napier, Alesco, and Canandaigua National Bank. It receives investment reports from the advisors at each quarterly meeting and each advisor meets in person with the Committee at least twice per year. The Committee monitors advisor performance against benchmarks, and performance is near or above our benchmark targets. The portfolio continued to grow over the last 12 month, up \$1,144,079 despite withdrawals of about \$602,000 (which included payment of the \$150,000 Trustee pledge to the Better Together Campaign). Several years ago, the Committee established a Dreamscape Goal of an aggregate of \$10,000,000 for Endowment and Restricted Funds, and that goal has been achieved 18 months before planned. Pursuant to authority provided by the Governing Board, the Committee distributes 4.5% of the 20-quarter average balance of each fund (or the rough equivalent for newer funds) for the Annual Operating Plan, capital funds and restricted fund-designated purposes. Better Together funds are distributed as needed for work approved by the Property Stewardship Committee and Governing Board.

Over the past year the Committee has been considering adding an ESG component to our Investment Policy. ESG stands for investments that are positive from an Environment, Social, and Governance perspective. This positive focus is in addition to investments in a number of areas (such as tobacco, alcohol, and defense) already prohibited by our policy. Although ESG is still an emerging field, heavily nuanced, and without broad market acceptance of standard measurements, the Committee is interested in using our investments in an ESG-positive manner to the extent prudent and has so stated in our Investment Policy. In the second quarter the Committee started requesting our advisors to report on ESG status within our portfolio on a pilot basis, using one available measurement tool. The Committee will monitor progress and performance and if pleased with the way this change is working, will make it a permanent part of our Investment Policy.

## **Giving Team**

The Giving team continues to meet to discuss various ways to encourage giving within the congregation and community as a whole, with an emphasis on the Annual Operating Plan. The team has been discussing the importance of submitting the pledge and the impact on the next year's budget those pledges have.

The Giving Team has also been discussing and creating a new legacy program for Asbury First. Looking into ways to help grow the endowment fund through planned giving. The team has begun to acquire information from various sources that have established programs to see what would be the best fit for Asbury.

## **Better Together Capital Campaign Committee**

The purpose of this report is to document and share what we learned during our almost 5 years of work on the Better Together fund raising campaign. More specifically, what were the elements of the campaign that contributed to its success as well as those items that we consider to be areas of opportunity.

This report does not include the lead up to the campaign, but it should be noted that it was an important part of the campaign's success. In 2016, our new Senior Pastor led an effort to create a church strategy for Asbury First's near/intermediate term future. This strategy was called our Dreamscape, and it included new mission and vision statements, our 7 core values, as well as a number of specific goals for

each value. Many of these goals, when fully internalized, led us to a realization that building improvements were required. Two other committees were also hard at work during this time frame—a Ministry and Space Task Force and our Outreach Committee. Both committees had just completed work efforts in 2017 that were key to the formulation of our capital needs and were consistent with our Dreamscape.

The proposed capital plan was reviewed with the congregation in a series of town halls and other communication efforts during 2017. In the fall of that year the congregation voted 94% in favor of proceeding with the proposed plan, with more members present than at any vote in recent history. It was noted at that time that there was 100% financial support from the Capital Campaign Committee, church leadership and the office/pastoral staff. Specifically, the congregation agreed to spend \$6.8M to upgrade our infrastructure, improve our accessibility and provide better space for our outreach ministries.

At that time, the committee made a commitment to the congregation that no individual element of the work would be commenced, and no monies committed or expended until all the funds required for its completion were either in hand or fully pledged.

After nearly 5 years of good work, Asbury First raised over \$7.6M in its Better Together Campaign. This amount was higher than the original \$6.9M goal.

The goal, although aggressive was over achieved with an extraordinary effort expended by the campaign committee and our pastors/staff as well as historic levels of generosity by the congregation. Unfortunately, for many reasons out of our control, the actual cost of the projects were significantly higher than originally planned. Therefore, only two of the three phases—improving the 1040 Infrastructure and renovating 1010 to become an Outreach Center—could be completed. The accessibility and other improvements envisioned for 1050 were postponed.

The Better Together Campaign Committee provided extraordinary service to the church and our community with their work over a 5-year period, from 2017 to 2021. The team members are Fred Aten, Deb Bullock-Smith, the Rev. Dr. Stephen Cady II, Paul Campbell, Morgan Dornsife, Patrick Fulford (Co-Chair), Robyn Gage, Chuck Hanrahan, Carolyn Kourofsky, Paula Kuempel (Co-Chair), Julie Marsiglio, Rev. Jacqueline Nelson, Robert Schuman, David Strong, Dr. Bruce Thompson, Wayne Turnblom, Cory Tylenda and Kathy Young.



Campaign Financial Status and Projection - December 15, 2021					
\$000s	Steps	1040	1010	Total	Comments
<b>Spending</b>					
Construction Spending	\$226	\$2,230	\$4,784	\$7,240	
% Of Total	3.1%	30.8%	66.1%	100.0%	
Campaign Spending (Allocated)	9	90	193	292	
Interest Exp Allocated			0	0	None needed due to interest income on pledges in the bank more than covering it. \$25K of excess interest income included as an income item below.
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>2,320</b>	<b>4,977</b>	<b>7,532</b>	
<b>Income</b>					
Pledges thru 12/31/2020	219	2,069	1,928	4,216	
Bring It Home Campaign			966	966	
Evarts UR Well Campaign			250	250	
Bequests			685	685	Doerrr \$60K, Vevera \$225K & Keenan \$400K.
Gompf Gift & Organ/Elev Endow		31	539	570	Gompf \$500K, Organ Fund \$32K and 1010 Elevator Fund \$38K.
Trustee and Apportionment Gifts	16	154	330	500	Trustee pledge \$150K paid. Apportionment related pledge \$350K, 2021-2026.
Foundations		66	460	526	Latest Gift, Glover-Crask Foundation \$50K per year for 3 years.
Interest Income in Excess of Interest Expense for Construction Loan			25	25	Additional opportunity of \$25K to \$65K depending on actual cash flows.
Doubtful Pledges			(130)	(130)	
<b>Total Income.</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>2,320</b>	<b>5,053</b>	<b>7,608</b>	
<b>Amount Better/(Worse) Than Target</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$0)</b>	<b>\$76</b>	<b>\$76</b>	

## Property Stewardship Committee

### Role in Church Governance

The Property Stewardship Committee (PSC) is charged with managing the physical assets of Asbury First in such a way that these assets are preserved, maintained, and enhanced in support of the total ministry of the church. Physical assets include the buildings and everything in them such as furniture, equipment,

etc. The PSC creates, manages, and maintains a comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) which identifies and prioritizes expected projects. The CIP looks out a minimum of five years and is presented to and approved by the Governing Board annually. All changes to church property must be approved by the PSC.

The PSC manages the Capital Improvement Fund to pay for on-going capital improvement needs and the prioritized items in the Capital Improvement Plan. Each year a small percentage of the church budget goes toward capital improvement and is held in this fund. The PSC also oversees the church's insurance needs and acts as the Building Committee for the Better Together projects.

### **Activities to Date**

Project highlights for 2021 included completion of the Broadcast Booth renovation and upgrade, installation of sanctuary monitors, IT infrastructure upgrade project, rebuilding the Education Wing boilers, and the LED lighting conversion project (installed by the Monday Morning Crew) in the Education Wing, 1050 and exterior security lighting. In addition, we supported the of creation of community garden by identifying its location and presenting to the Rochester Preservation Board. We established a Property Stewardship Google Drive in order to centralize building documents and drawings. In the process, we are pulling together many past projects into one location. We spent a great deal of time creating a capital improvement list which looks out 10 years. This includes many projects that either need to be completed soon, or need to be planned for. Currently we are prioritizing projects for 2022 and establishing funding strategies.

The 1010 Outreach Center construction project continues to be a major focus for the Property Stewardship Committee acting as the Building Team. In 2021 we worked with our architects and engineers to finalize building plans and prepare for construction through relocation of gardens, emptying of the building, and securing a storage container. We managed the bidding process and selected the prime contractor, DGA. We will continue to manage the project throughout 2022.

Our projects range from very large and complex such as repair/replacement of the Education Wing windows, to smaller items such as replacing outdated circuit breaker panels. Just like in your home, things sometimes fail unexpectedly and we are faced with an unplanned repair, causing our priorities to shift. With two buildings over 100 years old, and one approaching 70 years old, there is a great deal of maintenance, repair and modernization needed.

### **Monday Morning Crew**

The Monday Morning Crew (MMC) works quietly behind the scenes on Mondays to maintain Asbury's East Avenue facilities. Consisting of 25 +/- volunteers, the group logged about 900 hours of service in 2021. MMC resumed their work in May following a year of Covid shutdown. Projects and accomplishments for the year included:

1. Converted more than 350 light fixtures in 1040 and 1050 from fluorescent to LED bulbs. Included rewiring 275 fixtures, replacing 7 outdoor roof/pole fixtures, and installing more than 700 new LED lamps (~550 hours). Results will be realized in substantial energy savings in years to come.
2. Repaired water-damaged ceilings in Gathering Space and Welcome Hall.
3. Repaired and tightened loose handrails throughout 1040.

4. Installed batteries in thermostats throughout 1040. Reprogrammed temperature settings for more optimal energy use.
5. Stabilized broken window panes throughout 1040.
6. Repaired pulpit to eliminate squeaky floor.
7. Assembled and installed dolly on upright piano.
8. Assembled and properly disposed of a collection of hazardous waste from across campus.
9. During renovation of the “sound room” we designed and installed a raceway for cables, installed a mounting platform for the video monitors and applied finish to the butcher block work table.
10. Repaired the water-damaged small table to the left of the altar.
11. Adjusted water controls on toilets to prevent excessive water use.
12. Obtained spare parts and repaired roller shades in Library and other 1040 rooms.
13. Cleaned out catch basin adjacent to 1050 to prevent sidewalk flooding.
14. Aided in construction of Community Garden plots.
15. Repaired Welcome Hall sconces by installing replacement ballasts.
16. Recycled more than 300 electronic ballasts and >100 pounds of other scrap metal.
17. Removed one and installed another dryer in the Storehouse.
18. Replaced the hidden roof shielding over the 1010 Red Room to prevent damage from falling icicles.
19. Added finishing touches to the 1040 capital project by repairing stove handles and rehanging signs.
20. Aided new 1010 construction project by disassembling tables and removing curtains and valences.
21. Replaced several covers on roof drains above the Gathering Space.
22. Sorted out obsolete bulbs in lamp inventory for sale or disposal.

Many thanks to everyone who helped with MMC this year including Jim Connell, Brian Donat, Ernie Dankert, Howie Holcomb, Dave Kennedy, Dave Kay, Don DeMarsh, Jim Farrar, Hal Carter, Rick Kuempel, Jim Nolen, Bonnie Nolen, Zane Anderson, Scott Ross, John Foster, Dave Rice, Steve Beamish, James Flack, Kathy Farrar and UMYF (LED lighting helpers) Violet, Mallory, Ellie, QP, and Anne.

Everyone is welcome to join us without regard to skill level. Our group includes a few skilled craftspeople and many others who can follow instructions. Please join us Mondays at 9:00.

Dave Kennedy

## Technology Team

The AFUMC technology committee supports all aspects of technology use at Asbury, including audio-visual, sanctuary & event lighting, the sanctuary sound system, electronic signage, computers, software, security, and networks. We organize the broadcast ministry - streaming and radio – and assist with the church website.

During the pandemic, our efforts have focused primarily on ensuring a stable and reliable livestream of our worship service each Sunday. Weekly Zoom meetings are held to ensure readiness for upcoming service(s) and ensure the details are covered.

For the majority of 2021, the sanctuary was closed to on premise visitors each Sunday. On Sept 15<sup>th</sup>, we resumed in person worship – with social distancing – and supplemented by continued live streaming.

For a total of 77 consecutive weeks (between March of 2020 and September of 2021), Asbury First relied entirely on live streaming for our weekly worship service.

With very rare exceptions, the technology team delivered high quality, stable and well supported service to the congregation weekly, and continues to do so.

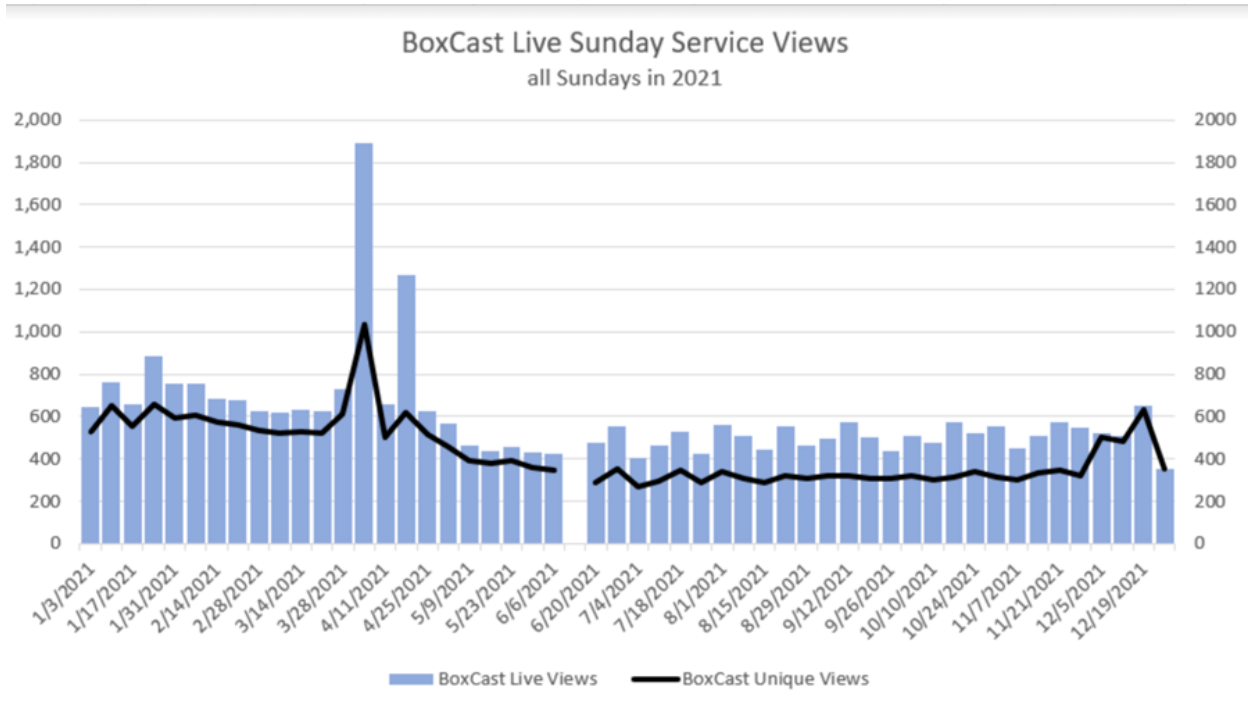
We have averaged 556 devices tuning in weekly.

Live stream views in 2021 included:

- 28 Countries
- 47 US States
  - Only Alaska, Hawaii and North Dakota were not represented
- 572 Cities worldwide

### **Summary Accomplishments for 2021**

- **Broadcast Ministry**
  - Our '**Digital Ministry**' has stabilized and continually delivered high quality production values, graphics overlay capabilities, multiple broadcast channel capabilities, and issue monitoring in real time each Sunday morning.
  - The current system provides state-of-the-art weekly livestreams viewing experience across the globe.
  - **Streaming Operators** – We have defined a job description and upgraded this role in order to provide consistent delivery of high quality video and audio. Streaming production quality is consistent and excellent. We have dedicated operators for audio, video and graphics each week – ensuring continuity and consistency. We are also expanding our depth of operators to handle the occasions when our dedicated resources cannot attend.
  - **Expanded our Broadcast Channels** – Our Sunday services is broadcast (live and replay on demand) on multiple online platforms, including: the asburyfirst.org church website, multiple Boxcast devices, YouTube, PhoneStream, and rochesterfreeradio.com (WRFZ 106.3 FM)
  - **Livestreaming Knowledge Sharing** – During the pandemic, AFUMC has received numerous requests from other churches for consulting and advice on how to set up / expand their own live stream capabilities. We are held as a high standard of excellence in this technology within the local community, and we have shared our knowledge and experience frequently
  - **Increased Web Attendance** – We track our online viewer analytics weekly, so that we can know how many (and from where) people are tuning in. During the pandemic, we have significantly increased the number of online attendees on Sundays. **The chart below shows the number of 'devices' tuned in each week.** The breadth of the viewership routinely spans multiple countries and states within the US.
    - Note: for reference, prior to the pandemic, our average online viewership was between 50 - 100 devices each week. The number of devices viewing has increased by 6-8-fold, and at times, more than 10x.



- **Computers and Network Accomplishments - 2021**

- **Network Infrastructure Improvements** – New equipment was deployed to provide more network bandwidth, stability and security
- **Sanctuary Monitors** – Installed monitors in the sanctuary, used to integrate the virtual congregation and the in person congregation during selected moments of the worship service, e.g., pre-recorded content.
- **Broadcast Room Upgrade(s)** – Continued to upgrade and build out the Production Suite equipment, with new monitors, additional computing capacity and increased redundancy to ensure uninterrupted service.
- **Upgrade Projection Technology – Fellowship Hall** – As part of the capital improvements made in the church basement, a new projection screen and projector has been wired and installed.

- **Church Management Software**

- **System Implementation** – Successfully transitioned church operations to the Shelby Arena Select platform, keeping financials on PowerChurch due to its more robust system.
  - **Online Giving module** – successfully deployed
- **Streamlined working model** - Tools and processes enabled a smooth transition to allow much of the staff to keep working from home, during the pandemic, without losing effectiveness or productivity

- **Cybersecurity** – Team initiated to address this important topic, and has made strides updating documentation covering a breadth of security related policies, including: password management, policy definition, spam, ransomware, phishing, and integration of security practices across all devices.

- **Website**
  - **Webmaster** – Sarah Brubaker, Communications Coordinator, maintains the website beautifully. An upgraded design of the website was deployed in June of 2021.
- **Technology Service Provider** – We have enlisted the services of Ocello Systems for technical support services. A ticketing system has been established and we are off to a great start with a proven service provider.

Our Dreamscape goals addressed above, tracking favorably, and are on track to be accomplished by 2022.

Thank you to all whose faithful work made these accomplishments possible.

Respectfully submitted,

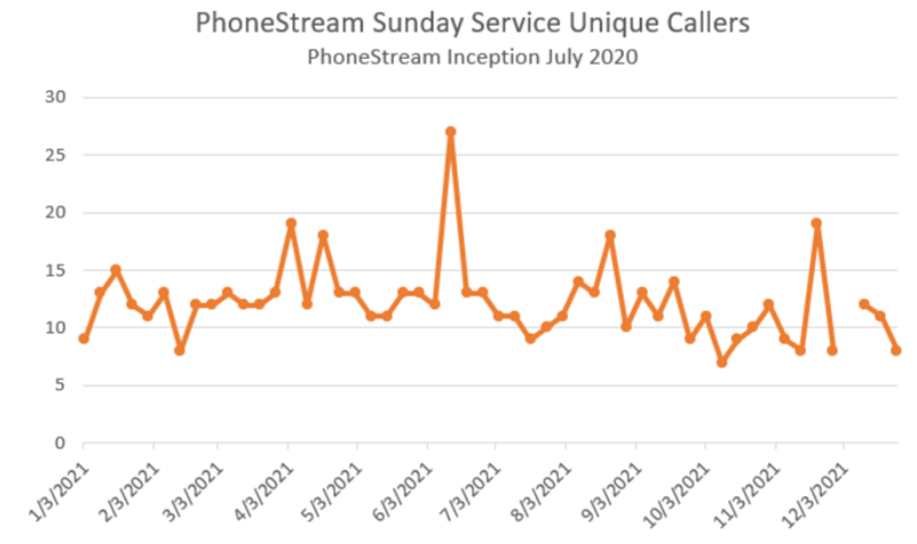
*Dave Rice - AFUMC Technology Team Chair*

**2021 Committee Membership:**

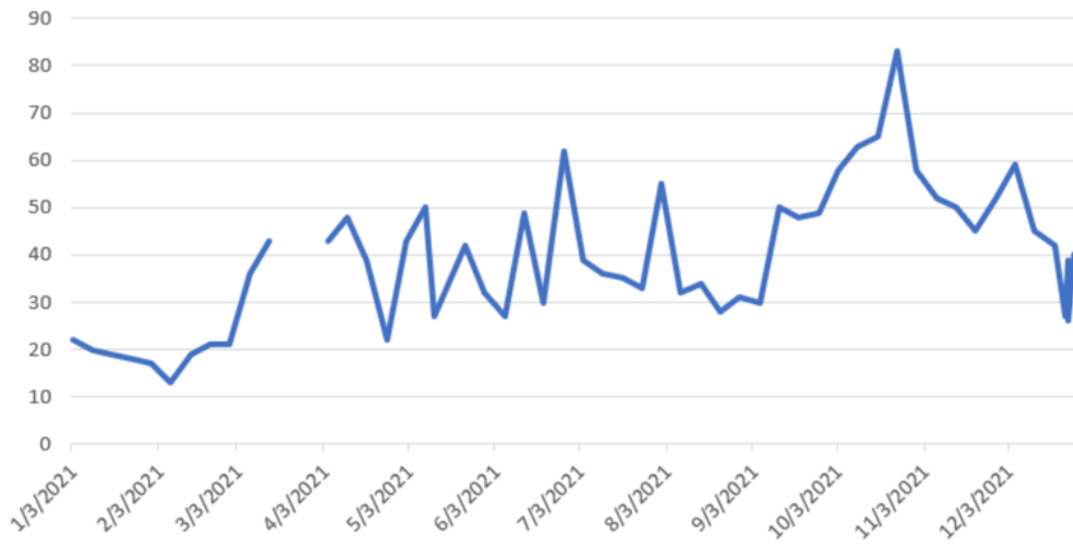
Kenny Bailey	Jake Schwartz (prior to heading off to college)
Sarah Brubaker – Staff Associate	David Strong – Staff Liaison
Deb Bullock-Smith – Staff Associate	Ted Skomsky
Rick Church	Carl Johengen – Staff Associate
Carolyn Curran	Justin Ocello – Technical Consultant
Connor Nelson	Stephen Cady – Senior Minister / Clergy Liaison
Harper Nelson	Dave Rice – Chair

**Additional Year end analytics, 2021:**

PhoneStream: 2021 Sundays only



### 2021 Podcast Downloads



## **Congregational Care**

### **Congregational Care Ministries**

God bless you. We love you and we miss you.

The year of 2021 continued to challenge us to adapt to finding different ways to connect. We continue to adjust. We still mourn the loss of our in-person gatherings. We keep brainstorming ways to recognize and honor our on-going connection. We have adjusted to Zoom and find joy in being able to see each other's faces and hear each other's voices.

Groups write notes and cards, brightening the days of our parishioners. Zoom groups offer the chance to chat, to share, to pray, to study together. Within each and all of these offerings has been the inimitable spirit of Asbury First, our eagerness to share the love of God with each other and with the world.

Though we have not been able to fully return to gathering together in person, we have done some socially distanced deliveries of food, prayer shawls and crosses, by drop-off and by US mail.

We are happy to get to know new people who have found their way to our congregation through the live-streaming and on-line offerings. We have helped people find ways to use their computers to connect to each other and to our worship services, and we have mailed paper copies of information to those unable to access the information on our website.

Our Greeters and Ushers and Receptionists were happy to be able to safely return to welcoming folks into our church community, and it has been a joy to feel a little bit of that "old normal" that we miss so much. In the words of Rev. Lawrence Hargrave, "We hold onto the hope that the best is yet to come."

There is so much that has gone on within our congregational care ministries, and it is heartening to witness to the dedication and love of each and every person who gives their time and heart to these ministries. We look to the future and though we don't know what it will be, we do know we will continue to be a loving, faithful community committed to bringing the Light of God and the Love of God wherever we know there is a need. Please keep in touch with us and let us know how we can best be there for you and for those whom you love. Call Rev. Kathy Thiel at 585-271-1050 ext. 106, or email Rev. Thiel at [kthiel@asburyfirst.org](mailto:kthiel@asburyfirst.org).

God bless you. We love you and we miss you.



## Membership Report

Asbury First Full Members as of 12/31/2021	2273
Includes new members in 2021	6
Deaths during 2021	26

### RE: Members Whose Addresses Are Unknown

In accordance with the United Methodist Book of Discipline, the names of members whose addresses are no longer known are listed below for entering in the minutes of the Annual Charge Conference. The requirements of The Discipline will be followed in that prescribed efforts to locate them will be made for two years.

#### Names Read for the First Time in 2020

Emily Bajenaru  
C. Cary Baldwin  
Aileen Bardwell  
David M. Closson  
Thomas Cook  
Christopher Mergler  
Tracy Mergler  
Carole Mathews  
Katie Smith  
Gail Warner

Barbara Burns Gannon  
Marcia Calos  
Wesley Clawson  
Lydia MacLaughlin  
Lil Mandl  
Jake Meyer  
Thomas Wilferth

#### Names Read for the First Time in 2021

Charles Christie  
Linda Crowther  
Nancy DeWitt  
Debbie Erickson  
Paul Erickson  
David Goethals  
Jon Hansen  
Kenneth Henderson  
Robert Henning  
Donnalee Kudla  
Jack Mahaffey  
Marion Merriman  
Sharon Monaghan  
Stephanie Peter  
Madeleine Reynolds  
Waltraud Siewers  
David Stewart  
Mark Warth  
Anne Welch  
Margaret Young

#### Names Read for the First Time in 2022

Lynne Boehm

## **Worship and Arts**

### **Music Ministry**

**Dr. Carl Johengen, Director of Music Ministry**

It has certainly been a year of ups and downs (or perhaps I should say, in chronological order, downs and ups...) Asbury First's reliance on live stream worship as the pandemic wore on made for a long period of physical absence for our worshipping community, and our Music Ministry staff and ensembles certainly felt this absence. Ultimately we endured fourteen months without in-person worship, before making tentative steps in May and over the summer to welcome the congregation back for worship. All in all, our volunteer music ensembles were on hiatus for nearly *eighteen* months before returning to weekly rehearsals and participation in worship in September 2021.

Fortunately, our organists, soloists, and occasional guest musicians rose to the challenge on a weekly basis. I'm sure I speak for the entire congregation when I express my sincere gratitude to Duane Prill, Principal Organist, our soloists Bess Phillips, Brenda Nitsch, Dan McInerney, and Jordan Bachmann, and Assistant Organist David Strong. We continue to be fortunate beneficiaries of their dedication, professionalism, musicality, grace, and good humor.

### **Volunteer Music Ensembles**

Over the course of summer 2021, we were finally able to invite our volunteer musicians together (masked and socially distanced) to rehearse and record some selections to insert into the Sunday live stream worship. It was wonderful to be in each others' presence again and to make music together after so many months of only seeing each other via Zoom. Weekly Zoom Fellowship for our volunteer singers and ringers continued well into 2021, and we enjoyed the benefits of learning new things about each other and having the opportunity to pray together.

The return to in-person worship in September brought with it a return to in-person rehearsing and singing for Sanctuary Choir, along with some members of the Asbury Singers. While some of our routines had to be adapted to accommodate COVID safety concerns (such as singing while masked, trying to maintain distance between singers, and limiting rehearsal time), I have been very pleased with the dedication and flexibility of our singers, as well as with the quality of their contributions to worship. I'm sure the entire congregation joins me in thanking them. After so many months without seeing our choir stalls full, it was a joy to welcome them back to worship during the last four months of 2021.

I am incredibly grateful to Elizabeth Church, Carol Lamica, and Holly Temming for continuing to maintain strong connections to the members of their musical ensembles despite having to discontinue in-person rehearsals for most of the year. Their reports are below, and they each outline the creative thinking that they have brought to bear in this strangest of years. Like them, I look forward to a safe return to regular music-making with all of our singers and ringers.

### **New Faces**

During our February 2021 observance of Black History Month, our live stream worship was graced with the presence of then-guest soloist Holden Turner, who performed stirring solo renditions of African-American spirituals each week. Holden's singing and presence brought such a wealth of positive

feedback that, with the encouragement of David Strong and Stephen Cady, I advocated for the expansion of our soloists team to include a new position of Choral Scholar, and invited Holden to sing with us regularly beginning in the fall. In September, Kayla Sconiers, another Eastman School of Music undergraduate voice major, joined Holden as our second Choral Scholar. During 2021, funding for these new positions was available in the operating budget; It is likely that future funding will come from restricted music funds. Contributions to the Music Fund are always welcome; these will help support the continuation of these positions, as well as the purchase of new choral music.

### **Personal Workload**

Many of the work routines that were established in the early days of the pandemic in 2020 have continued throughout 2021. With assistance from our Technology Team, and especially from Deb Bullock-Smith and Sarah Brubaker, we learned many ways to enhance productivity while working remotely; many of these convenient tools continued to serve us well even as we returned to in-person work in the office in September. I have taken an ever-more leading role in worship planning and the creation of the weekly bulletin. In addition I became more involved in the preparation for funerals and memorial services. I continue to meet weekly with the Technology Team via Zoom to evaluate and troubleshoot the Sunday live stream, and to plan ahead for special events like the Thanksgiving In-Gathering and Groundbreaking and Christmas Eve.

Another way that expanding technology opportunities have impacted Asbury First has been the ability to share musical excerpts from our live stream on our Facebook page and YouTube channel. I have endeavored to do this on a semi-regular basis, as a means of engagement with our local and far-flung congregation.

### **Pianos**

In March 2021 we undertook an evaluation and relocation of some of the pianos on campus. With the donation in 2020 of the new Steinway for the Gathering Center, the Young Chang piano moved to Room 201 in the Education Wing where it is used for our Children's Music program; in turn, the upright piano that was in use there replaced an inferior piano in Room 205 (the bell room). That piano was subsequently donated to a family in the congregation. Two pianos were also relocated from 1010 East Avenue to the lower level of 1040, in advance of the impending Outreach Center construction.

2021 saw the untimely passing of Joseph Ross, our long-time piano technician and a much-beloved figure in the Rochester keyboard community. Fortunately we were able to procure the excellent services of Marvin Rus, Chief Concert Technician at the Eastman School of Music, who has stepped in ably to help us maintain our pianos. I'm sincerely grateful to David Strong and Duane Prill for their vigilant care for the pianos throughout our campus.

### **Organ**

#### **Duane Prill, Principal Organist**

2021 was a time to enjoy the fruits of the considerable work that was done on our landmark Austin pipe organ during 2019 and 2020. We spent the year getting used to the differences in sound and behavior that resulted from the replacement of the old curtains with the new decorative grillwork - for example,

changes in how the room temperature affects the organ chambers, and thus the tuning of the instrument. Incorporating the organ's new capabilities into weekly worship has been a regular source of joy. The Zimbelstern (a mechanism of randomly tinkling bells) and the Pedal Bombarde pipes have been heard (and felt) regularly, and never fail to elicit positive reactions.

Due to COVID safety concerns, we have held back from renewing our contract with the Eastman School of Music to allow students to practice on the organ during the week; we will continue to reevaluate this situation as the semester unfolds.

## **Children's Music**

### **Holly Temming, Director of Children's Music**

Children's Music for the first half of 2021 occurred only during Zoom Time with Ms. Paula and Ms. Holly, a virtual offering on Sunday mornings meant to replace Sunday School and music, in which we played musical games and sang songs.

Children's Music returned to in-person activities in August with our Summer VBS titled Be The Seed. Over 60 children participated. In the music portion of this camp children were taught more than 20 songs based on the theme of "being a seed" of change and goodness in this world. A musical playlist was created and shared with participants. Musical games based on bees and butterflies were played. On Thursday night of Tent Week, the children performed songs under the tent and a video of this performance was used in the following Sunday service.

Children's Musical choral groups returned to meeting in-person in the Fall of 2021 with 5 children attending Hallelujah Kids (preK-1st grade) and 7 participating in Wesley Singers and Ringers (2nd-5th grade). These groups met outdoors until November 1 then moved inside to Room 201 where they could spread out. We had plans to perform an introit and anthem for Bible Sunday in October but had a COVID exposure that occurred days before so our performance was canceled. With so few children enrolled in these programs my focus has been more on musical games, music & movement, percussion instruments and handbells and less on choral singing. The children's response to this programming has been very enthusiastic and some of the new games they enjoy most are storytelling through musical composition flashcards and the Octaband, a 16-leg stretchy movement band.

The Christmas Pageant occurred in person with only the families of participants attending and was also live-streamed for others to view. We had 40 children participate and masks were made to coordinate with costumes and more of the chancel was used to socially distance children as much as possible.

In January 2022, Children's Musical groups were canceled due to a surge in COVID cases. We hope to return by February. With only 12 children in these groups, none of which are 5th graders and 9 of the 12 are 2nd grade or younger, I do not plan to do a full musical production in May.

My goals for 2022 are: to maintain connection with our children as much as possible, be it virtual or in-person; to increase children's knowledge of scripture and bible stories through singing traditional

bible songs; to teach music fundamentals; and to share the joy that comes from praising God through music.

## Youth Music

The Youth choir started meeting in person last March, in preparation for Youth Sunday. Youth Sunday was the first time the choir had sung in person in almost 15 months. In September, we held auditions and began rehearsing, in person, on Sundays afternoons and Wednesday evenings for the musical production of *Annie, Jr.* Our performance date was postponed due to a positive covid case among the youth. We successfully produced the musical in December of 2021. We began rehearsing in person in January 2022 but decided it was safest to meet via zoom until after the February break. Our rehearsal time is quite different as we manage to rehearse using the google classroom platform to communicate, post music and post rehearsal tracks. We run parts together on Wednesday evenings as well as share in fellowship time together. I have uploaded rehearsal tracks to google classroom for the singers to rehearse on their own. Looking ahead, I anticipate the youth resuming in person rehearsals after the February break. It's important that when the youth gather to sing that we are doing so in the safest way possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Z. Lamica

## Altar Guild

The Altar Guild is instrumental in preparing the Sanctuary each week for Worship. Linens, flowers and candles are placed on the altars. Chancel bibles and the pastor's hymnals are readied. After the services, the Pastor's study, Sanctuary and Sacristy are cleaned. Altar flowers are wrapped and delivered to those in need.

**Please note:** Due to safety protocols issued by the State of New York and Asbury First United Methodist Church, much of the dedicated work of the Altar Guild continued to be impacted by the pandemic. We embraced a new and simpler aesthetic still honoring our Sanctuary and Worship Services during this season.

### **During 2021, the Altar Guild:**

- Successfully conducted 2 business meetings, one via zoom and one in-person meeting.
- The annual Christmas Celebration and Installation of Altar Guild members was cancelled due to safety concerns: with no new members and an extension of service for the executive committee, the Guild voted to cancel this gathering.

- Coordinated and assisted with 2 Sanctuary weddings. Five weddings were scheduled in 2021, however, one was cancelled, one postponed and one needed no additional assistance. *Due to safety protocols, COVID-19 continued to impact the number of weddings this year.*
- Provided support during 21 memorial services and 2 funerals; *Many services were still live stream only, but required the committee to set up for them.*
- Participated in services for Support and Affirmation, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Taize, The Longest Night, and Christmas Eve as well as a request to light the altar candles at the Highland Hospital Palliative Care Service; *Good Friday was modified and did not require the Altar Guild.*
- Created special altars for World Communion Sunday, Thanksgiving, Christmas (with trees), Easter, and Palm Sunday. *Special thanks to Barb Denigris for coordinating the special altar flowers and the weekly service flowers for months.*
- Filled altar candles with oil as needed during this year. *Special thanks to Ellen Williams and Nancy Adamus for their dedicated service.*
- Washed and pressed altar linens when needed. *Special thanks to Janice Cygan for her dedicated service.*
- The annual spring chancel cleaning day was canceled due to COVID-19 – to be rescheduled when appropriate.
- Provided an opportunity for Asbury members to remember/honor their loved ones through the memorial flowers. Floral solicitations resumed in November 2021. For safety issues, bouquets were not delivered. Congregant members were encouraged to come forth after service to take a bouquet to share with someone in need.
- Devoted approximately 262 volunteer hours to the church and its members; *yearly average is 900+ hours, but safety protocols limited the overall volunteer hours in 2021.*
- New Communion Antependium(s) were created by Rochester Master Weaver, Jan Towsley. These pulpit and lectern banners premiered for World Communion Sunday on October 3, 2021. The works were commissioned by the Altar Guild in loving memory of our former guild member, Elaine Boyd. *Special thanks to Martha Hunt for coordinating this project.*
- Due to COVID-19, the Guild members unanimously voted to continue the 2021 leadership slate for a third and final year. The 2022 Guild co-presidents will continue to be Martha Tuke and Ellen Williams.

Respectfully submitted,  
Martha Tuke and Ellen Williams



## **Discipleship**

### **Discipleship Team**

The “Discipleship Team” is a group that came together in 2019 to begin organizing the discipleship ministries of Asbury First. We began by defining the term discipleship in our context:

- “Discipleship” is the current term for what used to be called “Christian education”.
- Difference between “discipleship” and “outreach”
  - “Outreach” - community with those outside of the congregation.
  - “Discipleship” - community with those in the congregation.

With that in mind, we defined our team mission as follows:

- Generate and manage a portfolio of activities sufficient to engage as many members of the congregation as possible. (Ultimate goal is “all” members.)

To date, the team has developed a draft process flow and begun defining the nature of work for the various process steps in that flow. We anticipated deploying the new process on a trial basis in early 2020, but we took a hiatus when the Pandemic began shutting things down. This group anticipated reconvening in 2021, but it has not yet done so.

### **Youth Ministries**

#### **COVID-19 Update**

Our youth ministries continued to be effected in 2021 due to the impact of COVID. Retreats, mission trips, fundraisers, and myriad other in-person events had to be canceled or shifted to virtual venues. For students already forced to engage with virtual learning throughout the spring, the idea of joining a virtual gathering for youth fellowship was not too alluring. And while we were able to return to in-person gathering in the fall; the impact of masking, social distancing, and the inability to sit down and share a meal has continued to impact our ministries. And yet, we persist. We continue to do our best to make the most of each day and each gathering as we continue to re-create a new vision of youth ministry at Asbury First.

#### **PURPOSE**

*Welcome. Celebrate. Serve. All.*

The youth program at Asbury First is open to all 6<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> graders. We are UMYF; this stands for United Methodist Youth Fellowship. Our mission is to welcome all youth to celebrate a growing relationship with God and each other, while joyfully serving in the example of Christ. We are built on the foundations of Christianity and we take our United Methodist Church slogan seriously:

**Open Hearts.**



We want all youth to feel loved and accepted in our group regardless of age, gender, race, school district, sexual orientation, religion, etc.

### **Open Minds.**

We want our youth programming to be a safe place where all youth feel comfortable with sharing what's in their hearts without being judged.

### **Open Doors.**

We want all youth to know they are welcome— members and non-members alike participate in our programming.

## MAJOR PROGRAMS SUPPORTED

- ✧ Confirmation for youth in grade 8
- ✧ Middle School Youth Group
- ✧ High School Youth Group
- ✧ Youth Vocal Choir
- ✧ Youth Musical
- ✧ College-Age Fellowship
- ✧ Annual Youth Outings

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2020

### **Sunday Morning**

- ✧ Sunday morning in-person offerings returned for youth in the fall of 2021. But with the pandemic continuing to keep some at bay, the return of the youth musical, and all of the normal things that might keep us away, our attendance never exceeded 5 youth.

### **Confirmation Class**

- ✧ Six confirmands were received into fellowship of AFUMC in the spring of 2021.
- ✧ While this was pre-recorded on a Saturday for inclusion in the Sunday service, the rite of passage was still full of reverence and meaning for the families that participated in person.
- ✧ Rev. Dr. Stephen Cady is once again leading the confirmation class in bi-monthly meetings.

### **Sunday Evening Youth Group**

- ✧ Youth Leadership – Our youth gatherings have shifted a bit, but we continue to have a committed and interested team of youth leaders who work with the adult staff and volunteers to provide leadership and direction.
- ✧ Seniors – We honored eleven seniors who graduated high school in 2021.
- ✧ Youth Sunday – Our Youth Sunday service was offered in-person on the front lawn and live-stream in the sanctuary. We had four seniors give sermons, and we had numerous youth participate in other areas of the service.
- ✧ Retreats – All of our retreats were canceled due to the pandemic.
- ✧ Fundraising – All of our fundraisers were canceled due to the pandemic.
- ✧ Senior High Mission Trip – Our senior high mission trip was canceled due to the pandemic.

- ✧ Middle School Mission Trip – Our middle schoolers volunteered with our VBS program in the mornings, and did a lot of work to help prep Asbury First for the construction project of 1010 in the afternoons. On Friday, we had a “fun day” at Sea Breeze.

### **Youth Music**

- ✧ The Youth Choir continued to meet virtually in the spring, and the youth were able to sing during Youth Sunday.
- ✧ The Youth Musical returned this year with a production of Annie, Jr. The performance weekend had to be postponed due to COVID, but we were still able to present the show a few weeks later.

### **College-Age Fellowship**

- ✧ The youth group put together and sent care packages to our 2021 graduates in November.

### **General**

- ✧ Connectional:
  - ✧ Mike continues to be in conversation with local ministry leaders to think through how we can continue to offer interreligious and intra-methodist offerings. Given the continued state of the pandemic, these opportunities have not yet come to fruition.
  - ✧ Mike has continued to be in contact with the leadership of the District Committee on Youth Ministry and the Conference Committee on Youth Ministry to help continue our connectionalism as a youth group in the work of the conference. We participated in a one-day district outing in the spring, and Mike led games for the event.
- ✧ Outreach:
  - ✧ Instead of caroling this December, our youth sent about 200 Christmas cards to various members of our Asbury First community.

### **Additional Comments:**

- ✧ 2021, like 2020, was certainly not the year that we had planned for. The physical separation continues to be a challenge for our youth ministries. One of the most significant aspects of youth ministry is the ability to come together in fellowship. There is a different experience between gathering on Zoom, gathering in person at church, going on a weekend retreat, and attending a week-long mission trip. Each of these are beneficial in their own right, and their impact only increases with each new offering. A virtual youth group gathering does not provide the same escape or function that an in-person gathering offers. As COVID once again spikes with new variants, we continue to be committed to maintaining in-person opportunities for our youth as long as it is safe to do so. Hopefully, 2022 will be the year when some retreats and other overnight opportunities are able to return for our youth.

Respectfully submitted, Mike Mullin – Minister for Youth and Discipleship

## Library Team

**Our mission is to offer a comfortable space and resources where the Asbury community can learn about God, spirituality, humanity, religion, inspiration and challenge through books and other media.**

### **2021 WORK PROGRESS:**

- The committee continues to write regular summaries of books in our library collection for the Visitor, the bulletin inserts, the web site, and posters.
- The Center for Spiritual Life (CSL) Library has been moved from the 1010 Meditation Room into the Church Resource Library spaces. The books have been labeled as CSL books and incorporated in the Church Library collection in the 1040 building.
- The entire Church Library collection has been inventoried in preparation for updating the online collection of books. This is in preparation for the updating of the notebook collection lists by title and author in notebooks that enable library visitors to find books even when a committee member is not available to help.
- Continuing this year has been the on-line listing of the church library collection enabling on-line access to the collection by the congregation. This effort provides remote access capabilities in order that the library collection information can be accessed from home, office, and other locations.
- Continue to promote knowledge and use of e-mail access to the church library for the purpose of seeking and providing information regarding items in the library collection.
- We continue to weed the collection of older books and those that are in poor repair, replacing them with the same or similar titles. This is a continuing process done on weekly work days.
- We hold monthly committee meetings (by zoom when necessary) to go over suggestions for new materials and plan for work days, book discussions, fundraisers, library usage, and special projects.
- A group from the committee continues to work on Monday mornings—processing books, creating seasonal book displays, shelving returned books, and other projects.
- We continue to reach out to pastors, staff members, and congregants for suggestions for new books to purchase. A Letter goes out to the ministerial staff each year and there are regular meetings and communication with staff.
- The committee continues to plan our work in support of the children's group and the youth group.
- The committee has an emphasis on promoting library usage by the congregation through displays, participation in adult education, special events, use of ministry tables, book fairs, church basement sales, publicity in the church bulletin and newsletters.
- A major effort has been conducted this year to inventory, update, reposition, replace, or dispose of items in the collection with continuing work on organizing the collection for optimal display, use, and function.
- As this has been a year in which access to the library has been limited due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we have concentrated on organizing, updating, and restructuring the library collection in preparation when more in-person use is possible.

## **2021 EVENTS:**

Barnes and Noble Fundraiser – A highly successful day-long book fair was held November 20 at Barnes and Noble. This year's annual event resulted in raising \$894.45 in funds for our library collection development.

Asbury Christmas Sale Fundraiser – This activity was cancelled this year due to the pandemic. Ordinarily, we annually participate by selling library materials that were donated for sale or were duplicates of materials we already have. Proceeds from the sale are to be used for library expenses.

## **2022 GOALS:**

- Promotion of the usage of the library by all members of the congregation will continue to be an emphasis of the committee.
- We signed up for an additional year of service that allows people to search the library catalog online. This will be continued again for 2022 with additional notices placed in the Visitor, web site, and the bulletin to explain to users on how to access the site. This will give users even more access to the library when it is not physically open.
- We plan to continue to refine and upgrade our collection with new and appropriate materials and to promote the usage of library resources through providing programs and information on library resources.
- We will participate and promote any church-wide and church group reads in cooperation with the Outreach Committee and other church groups
- Creation of special displays for seasonal and spiritual holidays in the library with accompanying publicity emphasized for special holidays and events (Advent/lent/ MLK Day/summer).
- We look forward to another year of growth and continue to search for even more ways to be a vital resource for the congregation, youth and children. We invite all to visit the library and share with us any suggestions for new books or ways we can better serve the congregation.

Committee Members: Chris Burton, Elise Carter, Monica Gilligan, Karen Hibbard, Bonnie Kay, Peggy Lyons, Carol Roote, Beth Woolever.

Member Emeritus: Sharon Crouch

Submitted 1/22/22 by Peggy Lyons.

## **Conference Required Reports**

### **Church Conference Minutes - January 24, 2021, via Livestream**

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Cady called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm and began the meeting with a prayer.

Electing a Recording Secretary: Stephen announced that Deb Bullock-Smith was willing to take minutes for the meeting. Those present voted unanimously to elect Deb Bullock-Smith as Recording Secretary.

Meeting Materials and Voting: Stephen directed the congregation to the information about the candidates for the Board, as well as to slido.com (keyword #Asbury), which we will use for questions and answers as well as voting. Since we are all watching via the livestream because of the pandemic, we will ratify these votes when we are able to meet in person again, since there is no provision for this situation in the Discipline.

Recommendation for Candidates for Ministry: Mike Mullin, is currently serving as our Minister for Youth and Discipleship, but was removed from the process of candidacy earlier this year. We are re-recommending him for ministry. The congregation voted to approve candidacy for Mike.

2020 Nominations Report and Vote: Stephen presented the 2020 Nominations Report for approval. This report is virtually the same as last year because we're working to come up with a new more efficient governance structure. There's a group of people who have been working, with the guidance of a consultant, Dan Hotchkiss for the last year and a half, under the co-leadership of Valerie Benjamin and Dawn Riedy, who shared an update from the Governance Task Force.

- Working towards goal 7.3 from the Dreamscape (Our structure and systems are organized in a missionally effective way.)
- Currently have 95 committees, task forces and groups; process to get things done is not always efficient, effective and often takes time to work through
- Group is proposing a smaller governing board, smaller number of committees and would empower the ministers and the staff to make decisions, based on Asbury First's mission, values and goals; we would be doing the same work that we're doing now, but just with fewer meetings!
- Val and Dawn will be meeting with groups in the coming months to provide a more in-depth explanation. In addition, there will be town hall meetings in the spring, followed by a Church Conference when all members will have the opportunity to vote to approve the new structure, with the intent of starting in September 2020.

Those present voted to approve the Nominations Report.

Trustee Ballot: Ballots were distributed to vote on the members of the new Governance Board. After the ballots were collected and tallied, all of the board members presented were elected, with each receiving 90% or more of the total votes.

2021 Budget and Vote: Al Swett, Chair of Finance, presented information about the 2021 budget. First, he thanked David Strong and Dick Moncrief for their time and effort in putting together reports and the final budget, and to Dave Kennedy for his volunteer work in the finance area.

We are essentially carrying over the 2020 Annual Operating Budget to 2021.

- Our campus is still only partially open, because of COVID-19 restrictions
- Ministers and staff continue much of their work remotely
- Sunday services will be via livestream only

In addition, we will implement a 3% wage and salary increase to address equity issues and increased benefit costs. We are also planning a .5 FTE (full-time equivalent) for the financial operations.

Challenges in 2021:

- We have lost a major “tenant” on campus, and other property usage income
- There was an increase in Conference Ministry Share payment
- Creating budget and managing finances during uncertain times

For our reporting purposes again this year, we have aligned our money with the mission/ministry areas, allocating operational expenses to those areas. Our 2021 projected income is \$2,139,000. The projected expenses are \$2,139,000.

Nominations Report: Available for download from our website, includes the nominees for the new Governing Board, the committees of the board, as well as the teams, although the report is not exhaustive. It has been difficult to pull this together this year since we have not been able to see everyone in person, and everything this year is new!

In many cases, for ease in transition, we have asked the previous chair to either remain as the chair for this time, or to remain on the committee for consistency.

Stephen, as the Chair of the Board, formally presented the Nominations Report to the congregation for a vote.

Questions (received via Slido):

- ***Is it likely that the District Committee on Ministry will accept Mike if we recommend him? What about the doctrinal issues he has with them?*** Stephen feels it is unlikely that the DCOM will recommend sending Mike forward, but recommending him again will allow him to meet with the board, which he was not able to do before they discontinued

his candidacy. There are some doctrinal challenges, but they are not unique, and if he was in front of a different DCOM board, he would have been allowed to move forward.

- ***When will we be able to go back to in-person worship?*** The leadership of the church and the COVID-19 task force is continuing to monitor the situation and will communicate changes as we get closer to being able to be in person.
- ***How much of the Conference Ministry Shares are spent on administrative costs?*** Stephen didn't have that information available at the moment but can provide it later.
- ***The finance presentation doesn't tell what we are spending money on. How much of that is for conference facilities and staffing?*** It is divided out into ministry areas (Outreach, Worship and Arts, Youth and Discipleship, Congregational Care). We have provide the numbers to those who are interested – email [dstrong@asburyfirst.org](mailto:dstrong@asburyfirst.org)
- ***In the 2021 budget, have we used up the \$26,000 surplus?*** We had a \$46,000 deficit (cumulative), and that \$26,000 surplus was used to balance the 2021 budget.
- ***How much money came from the Payroll Protection Program?*** We applied in April and it ran through June, and helped cover extra expenses during the beginning of the pandemic and make sure that we could cover payroll during that time. We are waiting to hear if that loan will be forgiven.
- ***When will the General Conference meet?*** It is scheduled for the end of August, 2021 to the beginning of September for 10 days. It is questionable because half of the delegates come from outside of the US. Travel and visas may be more difficult still because of the pandemic. It may be delayed, or it may be changed to a virtual meeting (which could be challenging because of varied access to the internet).
- ***Is a directory available?*** We are hoping to have an online directory soon, but we can provide you with a printed directory, if you request one through the office.
- ***Where are retired clergy in the new governance model?*** They are essentially in the same place. If they are affiliated with Asbury First as their Charge Conference, they will be affiliated with Asbury in the same way under our new governance model. You will see updates from some of them in our Annual Report.

Voting was opened (via Slido):

Governance Board: all candidates were elected with a vote of 98% or more

Mike was approved for candidacy.

The budget was approved with a 98% vote.

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Building Committee Update: Chuck Hanrahan, Chair of the Building Committee, provided an update on the 1040 projects, including sanctuary lighting, HVAC, electrical updates and Fellowship Hall updates. The vast majority of these infrastructure projects have been completed.

Better Together Update: Patrick Fulford, Co-Chair of the Better Together Committee, provided an update on the Capital Campaign. At the beginning of the campaign, the committee promised not to begin a project until we received 100% of the pledges required to complete the project.

The Outreach Center, Phase 2 of the campaign, requires \$4.5M, and we have \$1M left to raise to break ground. Our efforts to raise the last \$1M will be focused on 3 areas: a UR Well campaign, grants, and pledges from the congregation.

Question: ***How do the final total costs for Phase 1 and the Outreach Center compare with the dollar amounts originally budgeted?*** For the Infrastructure part of the project, the costs came in a lot higher, mostly due to increased building costs (pandemic related). The same is true of the Outreach portion of the project. We do have contingencies built in, and we have done our best to estimate the true costs.

The meeting was adjourned by Stephen at 12:56 pm, with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Deb Bullock-Smith

Recording Secretary



**Conference Forms 1 - 10**