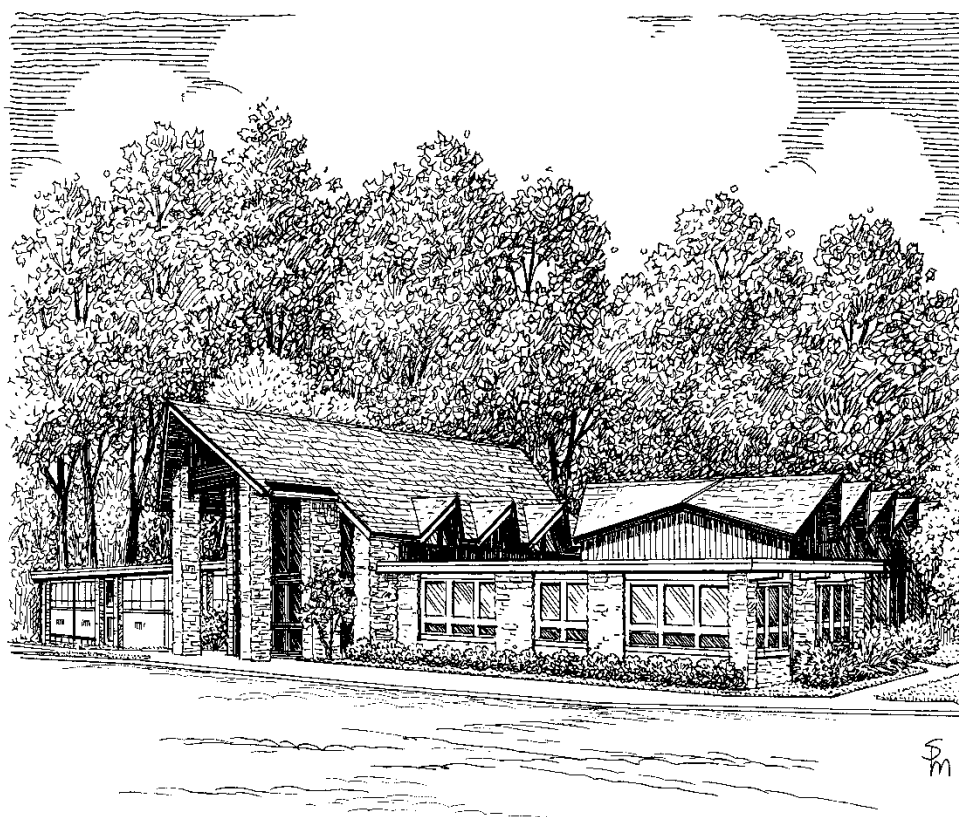




Little River United Church of Christ Annual Report for 2015



February 7, 2016
(Web Version)

Table of Contents

Staff, Officers, and Leaders Serving in 2015	2
Church Clerk	4
Moderator	5
Senior Pastor	7
Transitional Pastor for Faith Formation	9
Office Administrator	11
Communication Coordinator	12
Sexton	13
Membership Clerk	14
Board of Christian Education	18
Board of Deacons	19
Board of Outreach and Social Justice	20
Board of Trustees	24
Nominations and Appointments Committee	26
Stewardship Committee	27
Welcome Center	28
Communications Advisory Team	29
Historians/Archivists	31
Finance Committee	32
Personnel Committee	33
Music Committee	34
The Women's Ministry	36
Endowment Fund Committee	38
Treasurer	39
Officers, Board and Committee Members, and Other Church Leaders	42
Addendum: Stewardship	45



Staff, Officers, and Leaders Serving in 2015

Church Staff

Senior Pastor
Transitional Pastor for Faith Formation
Director of Music
Children and Youth Choirs Director
Office Administrator
Christian Education Administrator, part year
Communications Coordinator
Sexton
Child Care Providers

Rev. Dr. David B. Lindsey
Rev. Henry E. "Hank" Fairman
Craig Stapert
Ashton Streavig
Donna I. Jones
Darlene Lane
Robertta Croll
John Davis
Yris Saenz
Liana "Lia" Berbichashvili

Officers

Moderator
Moderator-Elect; Acting Moderator, part year
Past Moderator
Church Clerk
Membership Clerk
Historian-Archivist
Treasurer
Assistant Treasurer, part year
Comptroller
Receiving Financial Secretary
Recording Financial Secretary

Cici Thompson
Rob Peters
Tom Ross
Ann Lingo
Dee Cardiff
Gwen Crepeau, Florence Deike
Gary Allen
Mary Summers
David Curtis
Office Staff
Office Staff

Board Chairs

Board of Christian Education
Board of Deacons
Board of Outreach and Social Justice
Board of Trustees

Carolyn Yocom
Kathleen Styles
Karen Kleiber, Amy Mireku
Joe Christiansen

Committee Chairs

Arts Committee
Audit Committee
Communications Advisory Team
Endowment Fund Committee
Finance Committee
Flower Committee

In abeyance
Steve Wheelock, George Matthews
Jan Curtis, Hube Beckwith
Rob Peters
David Curtis
Ruth Duncan

Music Committee
Nominations and Appointments Committee
Organizational Renewal Team
Personnel Committee
Stewardship Committee
Vision Team
Welcome Center Committee
Women's Ministry Team

Barbara Lowrey, Steve Wheelock
Roy Brooks
Tom Ross
Jean Wheelock
Jen Beckman
David Lindsey, Convener
Lois Wyatt
Dee Cardiff

Church Clerk

Meetings of the Congregation

At the Annual Meeting on January 25, 2015, the congregation:

Received reports for 2014.

Elected new officers and members of the various boards and committees,

Amended the by-laws to:

- Require that records of meetings of boards and committees be available to members and that policies shall be available on the website.
- Add wording to Article IX , section 6 making the comptroller responsible for monitoring disbursement of funds and deleting more specific wording regarding the comptroller's responsibilities; in sections 9 and 10 replacing Treasurer with Finance Committee and Finance Committee with Board of Trustees.
- Add wording to Article XI, giving the Church Council power to approve and make policies governing administrative aspects of the Church's operation when actions are taken in practical unanimity. Add a statement allowing Council to organize itself to best accomplish its business. Delete the last paragraph requiring a subcommittee to meet quarterly with staff regarding staffing issues and policies.
- In Article XII add a section 8 defining the make-up and duties of the Finance Committee. Adding section 8 required the re-numbering of the sections that follow.

Approved the budget for 2015.

At a Special Meeting on October 11, 2015, the congregation:

Was updated on the Visioning Process, the recommendation of the Church Renewal Committee for restricting church governance and the budget.

Approved honoring the Rev. Dr. Verne Arens by naming him Pastor Emeritus.

The Church Council met on the following dates for regular meetings:

January 14, February 11, May 13, and September 23.

The Governance Board met on the following dates for regular meetings:

March 11, April 8, June 10, August 12, November 11, and December 9.

Minutes of all meetings are available on the church web site. A special thanks to Tom Ross for doing the November minutes in my absence.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Lingo

Moderator

2015 was a year in which Little River UCC was served by two individuals in the Moderator's role. It also was a year in which our new approach to managing the work of the church was carried forward. We continued to develop a trial plan for utilizing two boards, Ministry and Governance, to do our work.

The Ministry Board included the chairs of the Boards of Christian Education, Deacons, Outreach and Social Justice, as well as the chair of the Stewardship Committee, the Music Committee and Membership Clerk. The Historian/Archivist is also included in the Ministry Board. Staff support was provided by the Rev. Hank Fairman, Transitional Pastor for Faith Formation.

The Governance Board included the chair the Board of Trustees, the Moderator and Past Moderator, Three at-large members, the Church Clerk, the chair of Personnel Committee, and three ex-officio members, including the Treasurer, the Comptroller and the Senior Minister. The Board met monthly, either independently or with the Ministry Board acting as the Church Council.

For the first half of the year, Cici Thompson, Moderator, was chair of the Governance Board, and Rob Peters, Moderator-elect, served as the chair of the Ministry Board, with Tom Ross as past Moderator. Visioning meetings were held which offered an opportunity for the congregation to prayerfully consider God's call to us, now and in the years to come. We gathered for sessions after Sunday worship services to focus on three questions: Who are we? What is God calling us to do and be? Who are our neighbors? After Cici became ill, the Church Council asked Rob Peters to become Acting Moderator and chair the Governance Board. Late in the year, he asked David Lindsey to be convener of the Ministry Board and begin to share his vision for how it might guide the church's programs of ministry.

2015 has been a year of very helpful exploration and learning within our church family. The work of the Visioning Team, under David Lindsey's leadership, has brought new insights about how our congregation currently relates to the area from which we draw our members. We are discovering new understandings of the diversity of the area in which we serve.

Our listening sessions early in the year helped us see ways in which we can improve our connections with one another and strengthen our sense of fellowship and mutual support. We have more work to do to fulfill the vision of being a stronger, more connected fellowship.

We continue to nurture and grow our commitment to our heritage of social justice. We are experiencing new interest in strengthening spiritual growth and the life of prayer. Tom Ross has provided excellent leadership is supporting the on-going discussion and planning for completing the development of the Ministry Board/Governance Board approach to guiding our work and ministries.

We face significant challenges and difficult choices made necessary by costly repairs to aging facilities and a serious decline in financial support. All of us are asked to be informed about these issues. As we address them, our belief is we will do so in a spirit of understanding and openness. Those who

have provided financial support have entrusted us to be faithful stewards and wise users of these resources. We are confident that, together, we will continue to serve God faithfully here and in the wider world.

Respectfully,

Cici Thompson, Moderator

Rob Peters, Acting Moderator

Senior Pastor

In every aspect of my ministry this past year at Little River, one thread ran through it all: discerning God's call for our congregation in the years to come. Moderator Cici Thompson and I spent much of the first half of the year setting up curriculum, schedules, and facilitators for small-group conversations based on the book *Holy Conversations* by Alice Mann and Gil Rendle. I then spent a good deal of the summer doing demographic research about our congregation and community through MissionInsite.com, a demography website to which we have free access as part of the United Church of Christ.

In the second half of the year, I led an eight-person Visioning Team whose members were Denny Bloomquist, Carrie Douglas, John Forrest, Saundra Honeysett, Lisa Page, Gail Perry, Marilyn Sailor, and Steve Wheelock. This team sought to discern God's vision for our church through a multi-modal approach: *lectio divina* on the book of Acts, open-ended conversations, and prayerful analysis of the small-group conversations and demographic results.

All of this work led the Visioning Team to conclude three things:

- 1) Our Mission Statement still reflects who we are and thus needs no revision.
- 2) At this time, God is particularly asking Little River to do the following:
 - a. Nurture individual and congregational spirituality
 - b. Serve our community
 - c. Advocate for all God's creatures and creation
- 3) God is asking us to undertake each of the above ministries in our congregation, in our neighborhood(s), and in the wider world.

The Visioning Team's findings will be presented in more depth at the Annual Meeting for a vote. I am grateful to Cici, our facilitators, the Visioning Team members, and Cici's peers on the moderator team (Rob Peters, Tom Ross) for their hard work on this process. In the years to come, I believe that this vision can help us to focus our ministry, name our priorities, and give the Holy Spirit room to form and reform us.

Beyond the visioning process, this past year was quite a rollercoaster for Little River. We hit several high points, to be sure. First, we had a summer sermon series on communication in which Rev. Hank Fairman and I tag-teamed on the subject. I have heard much positive feedback about it, as well as a few helpful suggestions before we do another sermon series. Second, many folks also increased their pledges for 2016 through our fall Stewardship Campaign. For that, I am very grateful. Third, we continued several of our beloved traditions with strong participation in ministries like First Fridays, the White Gift Service, Women's Ministries, and more. Fourth, we began to experience some new and renewed movements of the Holy Spirit in our midst, from a yearning for a deeper spirituality to a reinvigorated concern for refugees (most notably folks from Syria).

We did, however, also experience a number of low points this year. First, we lost several members. Some folks left due to relocations – a natural part of ministry in the Washington, DC metro area.

Sadly, though, several of the pillars of our church died this year, including (but not limited to) folks like Peg Breeden, Nelia McLuckie, and Judy Davidson. Second, we experienced a significant downturn in our financial life as a church in 2015, partly as a result of relocations and deaths. We finished 2015 \$56,000 short of our projected income. Throughout the year, folks across the church tightened their belts – including staff, committees, and more. Still, spending cuts were unable to completely make up for the 7% drop in expected income.

On a personal note, 2015 was also a rollercoaster. On the one hand, I had the joy of being wed to Carrie Dobmeier on June 19 at one of our sister churches (Plymouth Congregational Church) in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Carrie and I are grateful to the incredible number of you who sent us positive wishes on our nuptials, and I want to thank you for some time away from Northern Virginia for the wedding and honeymoon! On the other hand, though, I must once again mark the past year as a time for family medical issues. In September of 2015, my older brother had a stroke at the age of 42. He has recovered well, though he's had to make extraordinary lifestyle changes as a result. Thank you for your continued prayers for him and for our whole family.

In our life as a congregation, we have many reasons to rejoice in all that God did in our midst in 2015. We were once again reminded of our call to proclaim Christ's good news by working toward racial justice and equality for LGBT folks. We also have reason to be concerned about our future, as conflicts emerged due in part to decreased worship attendance, pledging, and committee membership.

In the days to come, we are going to face some difficult challenges about how best to use the resources God has given us in order to live out our call as a church. My prayer for all of us is that we can "speak the truth in love," as St. Paul puts it, that we may be a united church in the midst of a divisive world.

In Christ's peace,
Rev. Dr. David B. Lindsey
Senior Minister, Little River UCC

Transitional Pastor for Faith Formation

The first Sunday of Advent, November 29, 2015, came and went with the excitement of Advent Fun Shops and the expectant joy of Christmas. That day was also the beginning of our fourth year in ministry together.

This third year, 2015, was one that surpassed the dreams of even the most optimistic. We saw moments of great social change in our world and a refocusing on our spiritual life in the church. We graduated a strong group of our beloved high school seniors and welcomed in a large group of infants and toddlers (and we're looking forward to a few more in the next couple of months! We have bonded together in support of initiatives to stem the Racist, Homophobic, and Islamophobic rhetoric that echoes in the politics of today's society.

In our ministry together, we have continued to examine our ministry of Faith Formation, looking at the whole of life's journey—from cradle to beyond—and seek to ensure that there is a welcome, inviting place for everyone. This embraces the bridging of the historic educational ministries with those of outreach and justice. This crosses from our elementary-age children, to our youth, to our adults, and to our seniors. And I will say again, I rejoice often for our willingness to be “Weird” in our thinking, dreaming, and living in faith. There is never a dull moment in our ministry together.

Working with the Board of Christian Education, we continue to evaluate the best practices and most effective means of sharing stories of faith with every generation. Godly Play for our pre-school children remains amazingly engaging. Church School classes—now split between early elementary, older elementary and youth—catch each group right where they are on life's journey. Our Youth Committee continues their time-honored work of stretching our youth's worldviews to new places. Our Adult Formation Committee continues to think of progressive, novel ways to inspire the congregation in their growing faith. I give thanks for each member of the Board, every teacher, and all who have shared in these forming moments.

Alongside this work, our Board of Outreach and Social Justice has joined in our missional education and formation, partnering in topical studies and activities that challenge us to respond with justice and peace. We have discussed hunger, homelessness, LGBT history, and advocacy. Combined with Hands-On Sunday mission projects, we are working together to ponder the question, “Where is God calling Little River to minister right now?” I am excited to see where the Faith in Film series will go in 2016. And *Intersections: Sacred Conversation on Racism* has already charted its course, embracing interfaith dialogue in the new year. Thank you to the Board and all who have shared their sweat and love in our mission work.

Pilgrim Youth Fellowship, truly, is what gets me to church each week. While this year has been focused on a smaller, faithful group of youth than in the last few, their purpose is never more focused. Spending time again discussing anti-Racism efforts, LGBTQ inclusion, and equal marriage rights, they remain faithful to their lived life in faith. Journeying again to White Sulphur Spring, WV, to build a home for a Habitat for Humanity partner family, they shared their hands-on mission with an ever-growing group of youth. Thank you, youth, for pushing us to respond—Keep it up! Thank you,

chaperones, for your ever-present patience and love, and parents for trusting that the Jubilee Room is a safe and nurturing place for your youth on Sunday nights (now afternoons)!

In my first annual report at Little River UCC, I noted the paradigm shift from Christian education to faith formation. This is a change from the question “What We Must Know about God?” to “How We Experience God in our Days?” This is a hard shift to make, because it is not a simple dichotomy. We encounter God in our heart, mind, body, and spirit. To focus on only one part, we do disservice to the others. And if we try to be all things at one time, we get a diminished response to God’s presence. So take some time. Ask what you must know. Ask what you need to think about. Ask what you need to feel, hear, smell, and taste. Ask what your hands and feet can do to encounter God’s realm around us. Embrace the fullness of God’s blessing in our lives, and find out what more you can become!

As we begin this fourth year, let me say again what a blessing it is to be with here with you, sharing in the blossom of new life in ministry together. And for those I spend many hours with each day, I give thanks for the staff team, and our growing relationships—for David, Donna, and John. For Ashton and Craig. For the addition of Roberta, and the departure of Darlene. I give thanks for the church leadership—the official ones and the regular volunteers. We are still in that transitional time of change, and we are still learning what our ministry will look like in years to come. What an adventure!

I give thanks because God is good, always.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Henry E. “Hank” Fairman

Office Administrator

The position of Office Administrator reports to the Senior Pastor and works with the Treasurer. My duties are to ensure a welcoming front desk coverage (provide hospitality to visitors and members), reserve building space usage, answer phone calls, respond to email requests, and basic administrative work. The day and life of an Office Administrator is busy, and each day is different. From outside visitors stopping by the church to gathering church volunteers to work on different projects, work at the church is very rewarding.

From May 27-29, 2015, I attended a three-day “Ideas to Impact” ACS Conference in Dallas, TX. (ACS is the database software that Little River UCC uses.) The ACS Conference was an exciting experience, with two full days of classroom breakout sessions. Little River UCC uses the Classic View for Financial Suite and People Suite over the Workbench view. Lots of new things, tips and tricks in using ACS were helpful. One important tip I brought back from the conference was using short cuts/time savers. Under the Financial Suite we use Vanco for electronic giving processing. After speaking with the Vanco representatives and attending a session, I was able to delete a step and enhance the automated process of Vanco information into our ACS software. At the conference there were many other companies that work with ACS to enhance work flow. Under the Financial Suite, I would like to take on more responsibility in order to create less need for the outside accountant. The other major part of ACS People Suite is the backbone of the software. Entering the people (members, non-members, friends, or visitors) is imperative information for the software, whether you are working on giving statements/contributions, attendance, running query reports and adding/editing pledges.

In June of 2015, my duties changed a little. Pastor David hired a Communications Coordinator—Roberta Croll. She took over the preparation of the Sunday bulletin in September. I still coordinate the counting of the Sunday offering and entering it in ACS software. I work with the church treasurer on accounts payable to ensure timely payments (e.g. reimbursements, paychecks and checks to vendors).

I am most thankful that David and LRUCC sent me to Dallas to learn firsthand and expand my knowledge to enhance my work at LRUCC. I feel thankful to God for sending me to Little River UCC.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna I. Jones

Communication Coordinator

The Communications Coordinator is a new position for Little River UCC as of June 2015, and I'm enjoying my duties very much and still have a lot more to learn. At the beginning I was working 12 hours a week and duties were producing the Current Tidings e-newsletter, Little River's Facebook and Twitter accounts, the Currents online newsletter, and In the Stream section of the website as time allowed.

Since then, I've increased my hours to 15 per week and taken over production of the Sunday Bulletin, in addition to the other duties listed above. There is much to do with Communications at Little River UCC, and I often feel pressed for time, but am glad to have the Communications Advisory Team members as a back up for any tasks that I am not able to finish in my allotted hours.

I look forward to learning more about the role of Communications in the church and my role in that area during the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,
Roberta Croll

Sexton

This was a tough year in terms of maintenance. There were a lot of proverbial fires which kept me busy. Numerous toilets throughout the building wore out their components. The boiler which heats multiple preschool wing units as well as all of the ambient wall convectors had to have a new hydronic sensor installed to help regulate the temperature irregularities it was experiencing. Trademasters performed an annual inspection of the boiler, and we learned that the size of our chimney was insufficient for the amount of exhaust it creates. This is just one example of upgrades we have on our plates to consider.

During the summer we found the FACP (Fire Alarm Control Panel) charging board malfunctioning, causing alarm signals to be sent to our monitoring company. We replaced the board, and it has since functioned properly. During our Fire Marshal inspection, they found a few more deficiencies which we addressed and corrected, including some signage issues and sheathing of critical wiring. During our functionality testing of the fire suppression system in the kitchen, the alarm did not report to the monitoring company so I had the repair company which upgraded the system come in to find what went wrong. They determined the cause and repaired it at no cost to us.

As you are all well aware, the sanctuary heating failed in 2015. Trademasters came in and did a complete overhaul and retooling of the system we had. We went to a dual module boiler set up which greatly improves upon the previous system making it highly efficient. This was done only a short time after the unit in the narthex lost its ability to cool. We still have not addressed the need for its upgrade. Prior to that, the HVAC in the rear hall met the end of its service life. It was replaced. This is indicative of the age of our overall facility heating and cooling condition.

Richard Davidson and I have been upgrading our fire safety systems. I have assisted Richard in adding new smoke detector sensors in the preschool rooms which are tied to the FACP. This allows for fire department notification where we had only audible sensors before. We have also been installing CO monitors in the building which is an ongoing project rolling into 2016.

On a more positive front, I painted the main hallway and performed drywall repair last January and it seems to be holding up well. Ben and I rebuilt the dumpster gates as they had been falling apart for quite some time. I also had the refuse company come out and replace the dumpster lids. Hopefully this will keep the raccoons from getting trapped inside needing my rescuing services (twice last year).

I took a vested interest in our church Green Policy and have worked with Lorri Jones to implement a new program collecting film/wrap-type plastic for recycling. The church has responded extremely well. I also worked with our janitorial crew to train them in the proper collection and distribution to our dumpsters.

Lastly, I performed lots of routine maintenance tasks which I put on documented schedules in order to ensure future perpetuity. For example, the HVAC filters are changed twice a year, I take the shop vac to all window units, and I inspect the fire extinguishers. I also oversee our vendor contracts.

Respectfully submitted,
John Davis

Membership Clerk

Total membership reported as of January 1, 2015	531
Amended membership as of January 1, 2015	573
A. Additions during the year:	
i. Confirmation	5
Savannah Destiny Lascola	
Erin Maltese	
Abigail Page	
Liza M. Renzo	
Nicolas A. Renzo	
ii. Transfer/reaffirmation/other	5
David Roach	
Susan Britton	
Steve Britton	
Lorriane Cheney	
Samantha Tuttle	
Total additions	10
B. Losses during the year:	
iii. Deaths	5
i. Margaret Breeden	
ii. Judy Davidson	
iii. Mary LaMois	
iv. Nelia McLuckie	
v. Harold Wakefield	
iv. Transfers and Removals	80
i. Inactive to Removed 50	
ii. Requested Removals 30	
Total losses:	85
Membership as of December 31, 2015	498
Baptisms/Weddings/Memorial Services	
A. Baptisms	4
B. Weddings at the church	0
C. Memorial Services at the church	3
D. Memorial Services at Greenspring	2

Average weekly worship attendance 2015	177
A. 9:30 service	120
B. 11:00 service	57
C. 10:00 Summer Worship	134

Lists attached are people places on Inactive; Continue Inactive; and remove from membership.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dee Cardiff, Membership Clerk

Recommend to Inactive (First Year)

Recommend to Inactive (Continuing)

The web version of this document has been redacted to remove names for privacy reasons.

Recommend from Inactive to Removal from Membership: 49

Receipt of Notice of Transfer or Removal: 29

The web version of this document has been redacted to remove names for privacy reasons.

Board of Christian Education

2016

Camille Brooks
Saundra Honeysett
Kathy Hunt
Chris Jarvis, Treasurer

2017

Linda Acar
Jane Wallace

2018

Mike Craven, Secretary
Michelle Mitchell
Carolyn Yocom, Chair

We have been a small, mighty, and thrifty board this year! It is amazing what can happen with such a wonderful group of people who are dedicated and willing to do more with less. Here are their stories...

Women's Ministry

This year we offered several social and spiritual opportunities for the women of Little River UCC to participate, grow, and be nurtured. The highlights are the January reflections on the new year breakfast (which we hope to repeat in early 2016), the May "Maypole" Tea and Talk, the September Tea and Talk at Greenspring, the October "Sounds of Silence and Sabbath" retreat at Roslyn, and the Advent Spiral. The book club also met every other month.. Please see the full report of this ministry included in this annual report. Each program was well attended, and we think the schedule was better suited around other events planned for the congregants than last year when we were slightly overbooked.

Sunday School

This year we offered four classes plus infant care each Sunday during the school year. We also offered a summer church school for children ages four to nine. Those classes are Godly Play (pre-K), K-2nd, 3rd-5th, and a Jr/Sr high class. There are over 45 children who attend church school with regularity (two to three weeks per month). As always, we are looking for more volunteers to help teach these classes.

We had hoped to offer an Our Whole Lives (OWL) class sometime this year but have not firmed up for which age group. We'll hope to move on this in 2016.

Youth Group

Pilgrim Youth Fellowship remains an active and vital ministry. We graduated a large group of active seniors in 2015 and are widening our welcome to the large upcoming group of 6th Graders who will soon join PYF. This fall, our meeting time changed from Sunday evenings to Sunday lunch which has offered us a new and different Spirit in our gatherings. This has also allowed the group to more fully participate in the intergenerational activities of the congregation.

PYF again participated in the Potomac Association Youth Summer Mission Experience, which took place in White Sulphur Springs, WV, with Almost Heaven Habitat for Humanity. They are looking forward to participating in the UCC National Youth Event in 2016, joining with UCC youth from all over the nation.

Yours in Faith,
The Board of Christian Education

Board of Deacons

2016

Carrie Douglas
Carolyn Johnson, Secretary
Bruce Summers, Vice Chair
James Taylor
Lois Wyatt

2017

Clark Beil, Treasurer
Dawn Forrest
Daniel Jimenez
Brett Kassabian
Claire Ward

2018

Lorri Jones
Jackie Lascola
Ginny Peters
Kathleen Styles, Chair

Worship Committee: Ginny Peters, Carolyn Johnson, Claire Ward

Evangelism Committee: Bruce Summers, Jackie Lascola, Lorri Jones

Parish Care Committee: Brett Kassabian, Dawn Forrest, Carrie Douglas

Fellowship Committee: Clark Beil, James Taylor, Dan Jimenez, Lois Wyatt

The Board of Deacons is responsible for the spiritual life of the church. With a new chair and new members, the Board dedicated substantial time to ensuring that church functions were planned and staffed adequately. We have prepared a list of the programs for which we believe Deacons is responsible, along with a committee assignment, including “the orphan list.”

In an effort to devote more in-depth, prayerful attention to the spiritual life of the church, the Board scheduled each committee for monthly meeting, to allow more meaningful discussion. Another area of focus has been communication. Building on the summer sermon series, Deacons have sought ways to bring together all members of the congregation so that they know each other and work together on various projects.

The Board has devoted substantial time and energy to the topic of volunteerism in Little River UCC, experimenting with the use of online “Sign Up Genius” for scheduling worship volunteers, in addition to traditional scheduling. On-board Deacons continue to rely heavily on off-board Deacons for support and assistance. Deacons added a “Welcome to Little River” card in the pews to give our visitors a chance to be contacted by the minister, let us know what questions they have, and give us information on how to contact them.

On the fellowship side, the Deacons hosted two picnics in 2015, along with a wedding celebration for our pastor David Lindsey, and the annual Bereavement Tea. We provided support for our Member in Discernment, Jason Thompson, and discussed several proposed church policies, including the special collections policy and a wedding policy.

While the Board of Deacons no longer has a Pastoral Relations subcommittee, Deacons functioned as the unofficial “home” for pastoral support. Both our Senior Pastor and our Transitional Pastor for Faith Formation met with their pastoral support committees in 2015.

Respectfully submitted,
The Board of Deacons

Board of Outreach and Social Justice

2016	2017	2018
Betty Cox	Nancy Hall	Joy Faunce
Karen Kleiber, Co-chair	Amy Mireku, Co-chair	
Bob Lingo	Gail Perry	
Jason Thompson		

The Board of Outreach and Social Justice oversees Little River UCC'S outreach ministry to the local community, nation, and the world. We allocate benevolences to partner organizations, provide opportunities for "hands-on" mission projects, and foster greater understanding of underlying social justice issues. 2015 has been a year of strengthening the work of the Board of Outreach and Social Justice. The congregation engaged enthusiastically in Hands On Sunday mission projects and our joint series Faith in Film with Christian Education. The Board continues to strengthen our relationship with local organizations and seeks to connect service with justice in all of our work.

This year we placed greater emphasis on the synergy between justice and outreach, focusing on racial justice and sponsoring our own "Freedom Summer." Summer learning opportunities included reading the book *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson, learning about Restorative Justice, and watching the film "The House I Live In." At the January 2015 annual meeting, we adopted the statement about the New Jim Crow. Our Board looks forward to continued engagement in social justice, particularly regarding racial justice and working toward the end of mass incarceration of people of color.

During Advent, our church provided 308 gifts for low-income children served by ACCA, Main Street Child Development Center, and the Shaw Community Ministry as part of our annual White Gift service on December 13th. Church volunteers put up the tree in the atrium for the gift tags and then sorted and delivered these gifts to the three organizations.

Expenditures

The Board receives an allotment directly from the church's budget, but also collects special offerings and makes direct solicitations for monetary and in-kind contributions. This holistic picture of Little River UCC's outreach activities reflects the Board's interpretation of what is outreach.

Item	Amount
Our Church's Wider Mission	\$73,900
Potomac Association dues	\$9,459
Board-designated benevolences	\$24,000
Board-designated Social Justice Programs	\$3,512.18
Board-designated Hands-On Mission Projects	\$5,910.52 (\$4054.75 provided by the Easter Offering for Stop Hunger Now)

Funds contributed to the UCC's Our Church's Wider Mission (National Office) supported domestic and international UCC mission projects and disaster relief efforts. Dues to the Potomac Association (PA) helped support the PA's activities and staff.

In 2015 the Board made grants totaling \$24,000 to the following local and international non-profit organizations: Alternative House, FISH, Food for Others, Homestretch, Thrive DC, Lancaster Theological Seminary, and ARISE! United College Ministries of Northern VA. Internationally, we supported health care services in India through our Global Ministries partnership with Dr. Anil Henry and the Christian Hospital of Mungeli. In addition, we supported the International Justice Mission's work to stop sex-trafficking and provide after care. In 2015, the board reduced the level of benevolence funding to local and international benevolences by \$1,000.

In 2015, the board increased spending on Social Justice Programming, which included the food and programming materials for Freedom Summer, as well as participation in the Capital Pride Parade and the Northern Virginia Pride Festival. Little River UCC also maintained its membership in the National Religious Campaign against Torture and the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy.

The third annual Stop Hunger Now meal preparation was held on September 27th at the church. About 75 LRUCC members and friends participated in the event, and over 20,000 meals were packed. The event was multi-generational and community-building. Funds from both the Easter offering and the Board's hands-on mission budget made this life-giving project possible.

In-kind Donations

Finally, the board makes direct appeals for financial or in-kind donations for select activities, in consultation with the Stewardship Committee. We estimate these activities generated approximately \$17,637 in outreach resources in 2015.

Item	Type	Amount
School Supplies	In-kind (Estimated)	\$1,000
Shaw summer camp	Monetary	\$2,237
Donated food	In-kind (Estimated)	\$2,400
Toiletries for Thrive DC	In-kind (Estimated)	\$250
Coats for Thrive DC	In-kind (Estimated)	\$750
Shaw Thanksgiving baskets	In-kind (Estimated)	\$1,000
White Gifts	In-kind (Estimated)	\$10,000
TOTAL		~ \$17,637

On communion Sundays, the board collects offerings of non-perishable food items. These food items are designated for Fairfax FISH. Little River UCC has FISH duty about every six weeks,

during which our church provides food to local families in need and our volunteers serve as telephone captains and drivers. This year, food that was donated beyond the amount needed by FISH was donated to Heritage UCC in Baltimore to help re-stock their depleted pantry and Food for Others in Fairfax, VA. The board estimates that the congregation donated about 1,000 pounds of food in 2015. Toiletry donations, collected in a basket in the narthex, are donated to Thrive DC's ministry assisting homeless and low-income women in the District. Over the year, Board members made three deliveries of toiletries to Thrive DC. In addition, our church donated six bags of coats to Thrive DC for their November Winter Warmth Coat distribution and an additional 49 coats, 22 sweaters and jackets, 12 scarves, 10 pairs of gloves, eight winter hats, four bras, three pairs of shoes and one bag of clothes for their December distribution.

The Shaw Community Ministry is a Potomac Association-supported organization that assists children and families in the low-income Shaw community in DC. This spring the board collected funds to support Shaw's summer camp program. In the fall, the board collected donations of canned goods for Thanksgiving gift baskets and purchased \$470 in gift certificates to allow families to purchase turkeys. Food collected filled holiday meal baskets for 21 families.

Special Offerings

During the program year the board advertises and supports five special offerings that are not part of the church's budget. Some of these offerings support the national church's outreach activities or other denominational initiatives, while others are used by the board to fund local outreach. Little River UCC is a successful "five for five" church, and has been recognized for its leadership.

The national and international mission offerings collected by the United Church of Christ include "Neighbors in Need" and "One Great Hour of Sharing." The UCC's "Strengthen the Church" offering underwrites new church starts, and the Christmas offering supports in part a fund to assist retired ministers and staff with insufficient resources.

The Easter and Christmas offerings primarily support local mission efforts. The Easter offering this year was used to fund our Stop Hunger Now project. Fifty-percent of the Christmas offering supports local initiatives identified by the Board. In 2015, the Board designated The Legal Aid Justice Center and the Church World Service as recipients of the Christmas offering.

Offering	Use	Amount
One Great Hour of Sharing	UCC outreach	\$5,428.29
Neighbors in Need	UCC outreach	\$4,815.85
Strengthen the Church	UCC – 50% new church starts, 50% New Visions Campaign	\$2,765.00
Christmas offering	50% UCC Christmas fund; 50% Board designated	~\$7,167.10
Easter offering	Board determined – used to help fund Stop Hunger Now	\$4,054.75
TOTAL		~\$24,230.99

Fair Trade

In 2015 fair trade sales of coffee and chocolate continued monthly with the leadership of Bob and Ann Lingo with assistance of Carolyn Labbe. These sales provide small farmer cooperatives in developing countries a fair price for the products of their labor. Coffee offered at church events is also purchased through these farmer coops. In 2015 sales of these products totaled just over \$4800.

Jan and Dave Curtis manage the sales of fair trade, organic Palestinian olive oil, tapenade, and za'atar spice mix, with assistance from Lois Wyatt. In 2015, sales of these products totaled \$2,262. Of this amount, about 70 percent benefited the Palestinian economy, including significant support of Tent of Nations, a peace-building organization in the West Bank. The sale of olive oil products is a collaborative effort in partnership with Westmoreland Congregational UCC and 10 other area congregations.

Beckwith Scholarship

In 2015, the Board of Outreach and Social Justice awarded the Hubert S. Beckwith Scholarship to Jason Thompson in the amount of \$1,000. Jason, a member of Little River UCC, is a seminarian at Wesley Theological Seminary.

Reflection on 2015 and Hopes for 2016

The Board feels that 2015 was a successful year, though we struggled with the departure of a few key Board members. In addition to the regular turn over, we mourned the loss of an active board member, Judy Davidson, and still miss her enthusiasm and commitment to social justice. In addition, as we wish Jason Thompson well in his internship at Bethel UCC and continued studies to become a pastor, we miss his leadership on the Board. Funding this year allowed for sufficient support for the church's benevolences as well as our social justice work. The board would like to continue to grow the social justice aspect of our work, specifically human rights for all including marriage equality, as well as racial equality, and an end to mass incarceration. In 2016, we will also begin to explore our role and next steps in supporting refugees in our community as well as develop interfaith outreach to show our solidarity with our Muslim neighbors. The Board believes that outreach and social justice are the lifeblood of Little River UCC's past, present and future and that a covenant to set a goal for outreach and to work toward that goal is appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Kleiber and Amy Mireku

Board of Trustees

2016

Joe Christiansen, Chair
Ben Northrup

2017

Lynn Daft
Betsy Erickson

2018

Mike Nagy
[Robin Petrusak](#)

~~Robin Petrusak~~ Craig Faunce and Amy Clayton resigned in July.

In February, the Trustees appointed Dave Curtis to be Comptroller. The Comptroller and the Treasurer, Gary Allen, attended most Trustees meetings. In December, Mary Summers was appointed Assistant Treasurer.

Ben Northrup represented the Trustees at Church Council meetings.

John Davis continued as Sexton in 2015. Throughout the year, John tackled small and large tasks to keep the building operational. A very small sample includes working on the roof leak, replacing toilets, replacing lights, replacing HVAC filters, routinely testing the emergency generator, preparing for annual fire inspection, and escorting the fire marshal during the inspection.

Some building tasks the Trustees tackled this year:

- Five new computers were purchased for the office using \$3761 from the capital reserve fund. The computers and a server purchased in 2014 were installed using operating funds.
- New timers were installed for the outdoor lights and the boiler. Also installed a new photosensor for the parking lot lights.
- Several contractors provided estimates for installing a handrail up to the chancel. One that seemed able to do the job at a reasonable cost was finally received in November. We expect this work to be done early in 2016.
- The locks on the front doors were repaired. However, we believe the repair is temporary and the doors need to be replaced.
- Repaired the fire alarm control panel in the main utility closet at the back of the church.
- Replaced/repared the HVAC unit above rooms 7 and 8.
- The boiler to heat the sanctuary failed in October. After determining that it could not be repaired, signed a contract to have it replaced in November. Due to the need to fabricate special parts the installation was not completed until December, resulting in some cold mornings in the sanctuary. Note that separate units to heat and cool the Narthex and Social Hall are just as old, and need to be replaced ASAP.

Some administrative tasks the Trustees tackled this year:

- Reviewed the church insurance policy and needs.
- In response to news of income shortfalls, the Trustees worked with the office and Church Council to reduce spending during the year.
- Participated in the Finance Committee meetings.
- Renewed contracts with Pre-school and with Premier Cleaning.

Outside work

- Mowing contract for the summer.
- Church work days in May and November – cleared brush around driveway, cleaned kitchen.
- Brush was cut back along the length of the back driveway.
- Snow removal contract.
- The back (gravel) driveway was regraded, with extra gravel added where it was necessary.
- New downspouts were installed on either side of the front entrance, and a drainage system to carry water to the north side of the building was installed. It is hoped this will alleviate the drainage problems that have caused upheaval around the front entrance doors.

Respectfully submitted,
Joe Christiansen

Nominations and Appointments Committee

2016

Nancy Carey
Ginny Peters
Kathy Richardson

2017

Roy Brooks, Chair
Camille Brooks
Hube Beckwith

Resignations:

Trustees: Elizabeth Arledge, Class of 2017; Amy Clayton, Class of 2017; Craig Faunce, Class of 2018.

Deacons: Gail Perry, Class of 2018; Sue Leathers, Class of 2016

Appointments:

Board of Outreach and Social Justice: Gail Perry, Class of 2017

Nominations and Appointments: Roy Brooks, Class of 2017 (appointed by Church Council);
Camille Brooks, Class of 2017 (appointed by Church Council)

The Nominations and Appointments Committee is responsible for appointing persons to fill mid-term vacancies and securing nominations of persons to serve as officers and on boards and committees who then are voted on at the annual meeting. The Committee evaluates the needs of the whole church in inviting members to serve, while honoring the interests and skills of each nominee. The Committee also maintains the roster of church leaders with the help from the web team. This listing is published on the church website and in the church directory. The class year refers to the year, in January, when a term expires.

The Committee is staffed by vote of Church Council upon recommendations by the Moderator. David Lindsey and the Moderator attended meetings when schedules allowed.

The Committee thanks the congregants who graciously accept the opportunity to serve Little River UCC in elected positions, giving of their time and talents.

Respectfully submitted,
Roy Brooks, Chair

Stewardship Committee

2016

Randy Young

2017

Jennifer Beckman, Chair
Caroline Labbé

2018

Tom Johnson
Ellen Wertman
Non-elected: Al Wilson

In 2015, the Stewardship Committee focused on a long-term goal of increasing the number of pledging households within the congregation. Because over 70 percent of current pledge income comes from households headed by individuals over the age of 55, it is imperative for our future that we start now with a program of education about institutional support of our church.

Towards this goal, we conducted analyses of giving patterns in our church, looking not only at amounts given, but also whether they were given reactively, in response to a specific request, or proactively, in response to our annual call for pledges. We drew heavily from the book *Real Good Church*, by Molly Baskette, in designing a campaign. Splitting our energy between spiritual and practical appeals, we ran our campaign between October and December of 2015. Highlights included:

- A colorful brochure illustrating the way in which our budget is spent
- “Stewardship Testimony” during worship, through which members of the congregation explained in detail how they arrive at their pledge each year
- Targeted letters to each household in the congregation, with differing messages based on past giving practices and demographics
- A community-building potluck after worship on Consecration Sunday
- Grant funds secured from the Central Atlantic Conference to run a Challenge program, incentivizing new pledges

The campaign raised pledges of just over \$600,000 for 2016, and brought in 135 new pledges from families in our congregation.

Respectfully submitted,
Jen Beckman

Welcome Center

Welcome Center, Little River UCC's outreach initiative launched to mark our 50th anniversary, has been meeting for eight years. International students, English language learners from our neighbor, Northern Virginia Community College, have joined Little River hosts in the Jubilee Room on Thursday afternoons of each fall, spring, and summer semester. In small groups, students and hosts have shared conversation, questions, laughter with time to practice speaking skills.

Although we had several sessions of 15 NVCC ESL students attending our Thursday gatherings, the attendance dropped after a few meetings in both the spring and fall semesters. Summer meetings followed a similar pattern with initial interest dropping off as the semester continued. Our faithful crew of Doug and Ellen Wertman, Richard Davidson, Lois Wyatt, and Bill and Kathy Hartzler showed up regularly, prepared to welcome all attendees. Unfortunately, due to a change in schedules, Lois was not able to join us in the fall. We invited several of the students to basketball games, area attractions, and into our homes for special meals with some success.

Thanks to the willingness of Carolyn Johnson, Ann Wertman, and Jean Wheelock to step in as substitute hosts, we were able to remain open on every Thursday while the students were in session. Despite these achievements, in discussions with our ministers, and the regular hosts, we decided to call an end to the Welcome Center. The numbers of available hosts has declined, as has the interest from the students themselves. We have all enjoyed getting to know these international students and hope there might be future possibilities for our church to remain in touch with our NVCC neighbor.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Wertman and Lois Wyatt

Communications Advisory Team

The mission of the Communications Advisory Team (CAT) is to provide Little River United Church of Christ audiences, including members, friends, staff, and the wider community, with consistent and comprehensive information about all aspects of church life. Understanding that diverse audiences require diverse communications, CAT oversees the use of many communication channels while striving to maintain a consistent brand identity for the church.

CAT consists of people who are involved in communications at Little River UCC—volunteers, staff, and a representative from the Evangelism Committee of the Board of Deacons—as well as at-large members who have an interest in communications. Any member of the congregation may participate in CAT meetings. Members participate with no set term of service. CAT participants in 2015 included Hube Beckwith, Roberta Croll, Dave Curtis, Jan Curtis, David Lindsey, Kelly Loss, Judy Jacobs Miller, Heather Shackley, and Bruce Summers. The group meets about once a month, usually during the day to facilitate participation by staff.

Our most significant achievement in 2015 was the hiring of a part-time Communications Coordinator. Roberta Croll began working 12 hours weekly at Little River UCC in June, and this fall her hours were increased to 15 per week. We could not be more delighted with this addition to the communications team. After some 35 years of volunteer editorship, our newsletter is once again produced entirely by staff—both Currents on the Web and our weekly e-mail news brief, Current Tidings. Roberta oversees our social media, including posts three times per week to our official Facebook page. She also assists in keeping our website current, with input from volunteers, and is responsible for producing our weekly worship bulletins.

Currents is always available at www.lrucc.org. To sign up for e-mail delivery of Current Tidings or Alerts (time-sensitive announcements of late-breaking news) please e-mail your request to currents@lrucc.org.

CAT is responsible for coordinating the overall updating and operation of the website, www.lrucc.org. Thanks to in-house expertise, volunteer hours save the church considerable funds. In addition, volunteers upload sermon podcasts to the website, after Craig Stapert prepares the electronic files. Thank you, Craig!

CAT manages the Little River UCC Facebook group page, dubbed the “virtual coffee hour,” where members, friends, and staff are welcome to post items of interest. Search in your Facebook browser for Little River United Church of Christ (closed group) and request to be added to the group. CAT works with the church office staff in proofreading the annual report. And we are currently working with the pastoral staff to update and publish a revised all-church brochure.

This year we began a systematic review of all our communication tools to determine audiences, purposes, guidelines, “ownership,” content generation, and CAT’s role for each piece. This analysis will result in our articulating basic principles and guidelines for communications at Little River UCC. A goal for 2016 is the resumption of a publication to communicate joys, concerns, births, deaths, and address updates, which is dependent on staff support. Such information could be included in a monthly print

newsletter, should staff time and budget permit. We also anticipate reviewing the website's content management system and responsiveness to mobile devices.

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Curtis, for the Team

Historians/Archivists

We continue the work of filing, sorting and organizing materials. We have been concentrating on ridding the files of duplicate items. When the archives are moved to a larger room, we will enjoy more work space and much easier access to all materials.

Respectfully submitted,
Gwen Crepeau
Florence Deike

Finance Committee

Members:

Gary Allen, Treasurer

Jen Beckman, Stewardship Committee representative

Dave Curtis, Comptroller

Barbara Lowrey, at large

Badu Mireku, at large

Ben Northrup*, Trustee representative

Mary Summers*, Assistant Treasurer

* indicates part year

The Finance Committee is responsible for establishing and reviewing the Little River UCC's financial policies and practices and for overseeing implementation of those policies and practices.

The Finance Committee can also serve as a sounding board for financial questions from any of the church Officers, Boards, or Committees. The Finance Committee reports jointly to the Governance Board, for approval of recommended policies, and to the Board of Trustees, for implementation of policies and practices. The amendment to the By-Laws at the 2015 Annual Meeting officially established the Finance Committee and its role.

The Finance Committee met six times during 2015. The Committee proposed a policy on special fund-raising and other appeals that evolved into a policy on "Opportunities for Generosity" that was approved by the Governance Board.

The Finance Committee is currently developing an interim policy on purchase and management of capital equipment that is being reviewed by the Board of Trustees before being submitted to the Governance Board for approval.

The Committee has also updated a document "Roles and Responsibilities for Financial Management" that describes who does what and circulated it to both the Governance Board and the Ministry Board for comment. The plan is for the Governance Board to approve this at their January meeting so that it will be in place for the new church Boards, Committees, and Officers following the Annual Meeting.

The Finance Committee is also attempting to document and disseminate the standard practices for all financial operations and is developing a draft policy on handling and retention of financial records.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Curtis, for the Committee

Personnel Committee

Committee Members:

Kathy McCrea

Don Wallace

Jean Wheelock, Chair

The Little River UCC Employee Handbook was submitted and ultimately approved by the Governance Board in April 2015 and distributed to all employees. After review by Attorney Tiffany Releford at Whiteford, Taylor & Preston LLP, and further review by the Personnel Committee with David Lindsey, an amended version of the handbook was submitted and approved by the Governance Board on November 11, 2015.

In addition to the work on the handbook, the committee determined that a complaint needed to be forwarded to a Complaint Review Committee. The complaint was ultimately withdrawn by the employee.

Work will continue in 2016 in gathering position descriptions for all employees who do not have a call or contract.

I would like to thank the committee members Kathy and Don, and our minister, David, for their work on this effort.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Wheelock

Chair

Music Committee

2016

Ruth Duncan
Steve Wheelock, Co-chair

2017

Kathy Richardson
Erin Taylor

2018

Barbara Lowrey, Co-chair

Music engages people, celebrates God's gifts, lifts our spirits, and challenges our minds. The music program builds community and instructs; it reflects and reforms our beliefs; it cherishes tradition and embraces creativity. As an integral part of worship, Christian education and formation, it reflects commitment from innumerable people of time, talent, and treasure. The Music Committee held all these in mind while stewarding the music program during 2015.

The Music Committee and staff spent 2015 bringing creative options to a challenging year. The program continued to meet our key goals: providing musical leadership in worship; complementing Christian faith formation; and developing musical skills. Staff also increased opportunities for participation across interest areas, age, musical ability, and much more. Innovation brought some notable successes—a 15+ member, multi-generational women's chorus in June, for example—and ongoing room for further accommodation of people's schedules and commitment levels.

The cost of tuning and maintaining four pianos (two of them regularly) and our beloved pipe organ continue to climb, and the cost of music scores for vocal and handbell choirs keep escalating. Guest musicians during Lent and Advent and brass and tympani at Easter, expected by the congregation, come at a significant cost. Facing a projected total budget shortfall in the summer, the Music Committee encouraged creativity during Advent to save money on guest musicians; total spending did come in under budget, but only with difficulty.

The children's and youth music programs flourished, particularly during the spring and early summer. A large corps of high school seniors with long tenures in our church's music program offered a diverse and skilled set of musical gifts both in ensembles and solos. With their graduation in June, the Joyful Noise choir began a season of rebuilding while maintaining its commitment to broad repertoire, musical training, and inclusion of instrumentalists as well as vocalists. The combined Salt of the Earth and Joyful Noise choirs led a new service during Advent that married new songs with traditional carols familiar to most children and youth with minimal rehearsal commitment. The combined choir also contributed significantly to the annual White Gift service and the family Christmas Eve service.

For its Lenten musical offering, the Sanctuary Choir presented Johann Nepomuk Hummel's Mass in B-flat with a chamber ensemble of guest string players. Easter morning resounded with brass quartet and tympani, along with the Sanctuary Choir and every last pipe in the organ. And the intergenerational handbell choir continues to develop basic bell-ringing and music-reading skills while exploring the wide variety of techniques our newest instruments can showcase. Monies in the restricted music fund continued to provide "over-and-above" funding for capital expenses in 2015, especially related to our nascent bell program.

Summer music once again demonstrated the musical depth and commitment of the Little River UCC community. From traditional vocal solos to a rousing Independence Day piano-organ trio, generations, repertoire, and instruments all displayed breadth and variety. For the first time in years, the summer schedule filled completely without any "emergencies"!

During the summer, the Music Committee endorsed a plan to begin exploring a transition from locked-in Thursday rehearsals for Sanctuary Choir to a freer-form adult choral program, creating opportunities for singers to join for a short term, even just a Sunday, with rehearsals flexibly scheduled on Saturdays or early Sundays. This experiment has had some success, a couple last-minute “adaptations,” and some confusion as people adapt and discover what does and doesn’t work. Looking forward, we expect to launch a recurring men’s ensemble similar to the successfully launched women’s ensemble.

The Sanctuary Choir continues to seek new, younger members, and the flexible scheduling has attracted singers. Highlights of the fall include a first-ever Advent Lessons and Carols presentation that received acclaim from both singers and congregation and a full choir on Christmas Eve with several people joining for just that evening.

Equipment issues continue. While the sanctuary piano is in fine musical condition (some cosmetic repair of the legs is necessary), the piano in the choir room has required some attention due to its age and relatively high level of use. The organ has benefited from the talents of our tuner, who has leveraged our limited budget to continue to address tonal-finishing and regulation issues while improving the stability of actual tuning. Work in 2015 notably improved clarity, pitch, blend, and consistency of tone and volume for sections of the instrument. Similar work is needed on the remainder, for which combined cost will be about \$4,000. Higher aspirations for the organ would give the organist superior ability to register music for services, hymns, and choir accompaniment. Alas, that hope comes with a steeper \$7,000 price tag. (For technical details, see our Music Director.)

Little River UCC’s music staff has continued to lead successfully and engage the congregation musically, whether in the pews or as musical leaders in worship. From early elementary students to retirees, from voice and handbells, and all the variety in-between, our congregation again can celebrate its musical talents and its commitment to musical diversity, inclusivity, and excellence. The music program aspires to continue to offer more accessible entry points to the music program in 2016.

Respectfully submitted,
Music Committee
Craig Stapert, Director of Music
Ashton Streavig, Children and Youth Choir Director

The Women's Ministry

Members: Dee Cardiff, Bunny Jones, Pam Binninger, Camille Brooks, Sandra Honeysett, Barbara Lowrey, Janet Parsons-Mackey, and Amy Mireku

Structure/Mission:

The Women's Ministry Team (WM) is a small group of women who gather, generally once a month, to plan activities of interest to women of all ages in order to foster and nurture fellowship and spirituality among Little River UCC women members and friends. Leadership of our ad hoc group is rotated among team members. We report to the Board of Christian Education and sponsor such programs as Tea and Talk, women's retreats, women's book group, and ongoing covenant groups.

Programs of 2015:

January 10: Rest, Reflect, Renew: Rejuvenate in the New Year

- The program began with a breakfast with WM members providing all the entrees. Other participants brought side dishes and bread.
- The final 30 minutes were spent in the sanctuary with two different readings of Psalm 23, hymns, and prayer.
- Amanda Halstead played the piano for this gathering.
- 30 women attended.

May 3: Tea and Talk, May Day

- WM members provided the food, paper products, and tea.
- The program focused on covenant groups: two new groups were tentatively formed.
- 18 women attended.

September 26: Gathering for Tea at Greenspring

- Food and drink were provided by Greenspring.
- Conversation among participants was focused on connections that continue with our Greenspring members although many are unable to attend services at Little River UCC anymore.
- 35 women attended the tea at Greenspring.

October 17 – 18: Women's Retreat at Roslyn Center, Richmond, VA Grace-filled Times—Sounds of Silence and Sabbath

- Kathy Spaar led the retreat that focused on Sabbath.
- The beauty of silence, its practice in meditation and communion with God, and being in fellowship with Little River women were two of the main focuses of this retreat.
- Ginna Minasian Dalton led us in communion on Sunday morning to conclude the retreat.
- 18 women attended.

December 6, 2015: Advent Spiral Walk: A Time to Meditate

- WM co-sponsored this new advent program with Deacons.
- The evening program was focused on a time for meditation and renewal.
- Theme: Watching darkness become filled with lights, commemorative of the anticipation and arrival of the light of the world, the Christ child.
- Accompanied by Amanda Halstead on piano.
- 45 people attended.

Little River Women's Book Group

Judy Davidson enthusiastically led the Women's Book Group over the past five years until her untimely death in September. Thanks to her efforts at providing a variety of choices in books, suggested by various participants, from which the group could choose for each year's selections, Judy succeeded in keeping participants energized and meeting every other month on a regular basis. Her deep-seated love of reading and her connection to Little River women were inspiring to all who participated. The Book Group will continue to meet on a bi-monthly basis with rotating facilitators, inspired by Judy's unwavering leadership and unflagging devotion to fellow readers at Little River UCC.

Respectfully submitted,
The Women's Ministry Team

Endowment Fund Committee

2016

Fran DuRocher
Brian Payne

2017

George Leonard

2018

Jerry Surbey
Rob Peters, Chair

The Endowment Fund Committee has responsibility for oversight of the church's General Endowment Fund. The funds are invested with the United Church Funds (UCF), the United Church of Christ foundation that manages endowment funds for many UCC congregations and UCC related institutions. All funds are invested in the Moderate Growth Fund portfolio. The contributions, income, growth and balances of the fund for 2015 are shown below.

2015 was a significant year in the development of the Endowment Fund. The policy which governs the fund requires that a minimum total of \$250,000 be contributed to it before it is eligible to provide any withdrawals. During 2015, \$48,482 in bequests and contributions were received, bringing the total amount contributed since the inception of the fund to \$232,732.

Dividends earned since inception = \$35,036

Book value as of December 1, 2015 = \$267,768

Market value of the Endowment Fund as of 12/31/15 was \$326,727

One of the Committee's goals for 2016 is to achieve additional contributions totaling \$18,000 to meet the benchmark of \$250,000 in contributed funds and making the fund eligible for modest distributions consistent with the fund's governing policy.

The committee meets quarterly to monitor progress of the fund and promote its growth.

- In October, a representative of United Church Funds met with the Committee to explain various investment options available with the foundation. In addition, the UCF policy regarding socially responsible investing was discussed, including the establishment of an investment option invested only in equities not associated with the development of fossil fuels.
- The Committee prepared proposed changes in administrative aspects of the Endowment Policy for action at the January 2016 annual meeting. These changes will specify the name General Endowment Fund, reflect current financial operations, and clarify unclear language.
- An updated version of the endowment promotion brochure has been prepared and will be available on the church's website and photocopied on an as-needed basis.
- The Committee published periodic reminders about the Endowment Fund. Under current policy, memorial contributions and gifts in honor of individuals are placed in the permanent General Endowment Fund.

Once again, the Committee invites bequests. A bequest to the church should be directed to the General Endowment Fund of Little River UCC, 8410 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, Virginia, 22003-3710.

Respectfully submitted,
Rob Peters, Chair

Treasurer

2015 turned out to be a difficult year for LRUCC financially. As I reported to the Congregation at our Special Congregational meeting in October, we discovered, shortly after the middle of the year, that \$22,000 in prepaid 2015 pledge income had been mistakenly treated as additional pledge income for 2014. The result was to create what appeared to be a budgetary surplus for 2014 of nearly \$18,000, which was then carried over into the 2015 operating budget, when, instead, we would have had a reported deficit for 2014 of just over \$4,000 had this prepaid pledge revenue been correctly treated. This mistake was compounded by the fact that this \$22,000 (which, of course, had already been received) was included in the projected amount of pledge income we expected to receive in 2015. At about this same time it was becoming apparent that, even apart from this mistake, pledge income for the year was not keeping pace with what we had projected for the year, and that this projection appeared to have been overly optimistic. Thus, by that time, a revenue shortfall of around \$50,000 for the year seemed quite likely. In the event, our revenue shortfall for the year actually exceeded \$56,000. Remarkably, however, the budget deficit for the year did not approach that figure, but wound up to be just over \$17,000 (which is, in fact, less than the amount of the erroneous “carryover” to 2015).

That we came out as well as we did is attributable to a number of factors, including the facts that our newly created Communications Coordinator position was not filled until mid-year, and that our Christian Education Administrator left that position in September and was not replaced. The resulting budget savings in those two budget lines alone totaled just over \$16,000. The balance of our overall expense savings for the year (of over \$39,000) was attributable to the fact that our various Boards and Committees took to heart Council’s mid-year request that they do what they could to rein in expenditures over the rest of the budget year in order to minimize our deficit for the year. Thus, while there were small to moderate overruns on a handful of budget lines, the major budget categories (Benevolences & Mission; Pastoral Expenses, Program Expenses, Operations and Reserves) all wound up at, or under budget (and well under it in most instances). This curtailment of programmatic spending no doubt resulted in a substantial negative impact on what our Boards and Committees had hoped to accomplish in their respective program areas during this budget cycle. But it has served to put us on a considerably better financial footing going forward than we might otherwise have found ourselves on at this point.

Even so, the \$17,000 operating deficit necessarily reduces the amount of the General Fund surplus that the church has built up over the course of our nearly 60-year history and which serves as something of a cushion against unanticipated financial setbacks as well as something of a “working capital” fund that allows us to operate normally over periods when our revenues over the course of the year do not keep up with expenditures, which are often bunched into earlier months of the year. (Essentially, the General Fund consists of all of the financial assets held by the church that are not held for other specific purposes), principally the Endowment Fund, our other Designated Funds, our special offering funds, pass-through accounts, and the church’s various reserve funds) .

Fund Balances

The Endowment Fund has grown considerably over the course of the year, with the receipt of over \$50,000 in Memorial Gifts, and other Endowment Fund contributions, including a significant bequest of over \$20,000 from one of our recently deceased members. In addition, I should note that the reported 2014 ending balance for “contributed principal” (which must reach \$250,000 before the Endowment Committee may begin to authorize the disbursement of earnings and appreciation in this Fund), was inadvertently understated by \$1,070. The correct amount is now shown as the beginning balance for 2015 and, of course, this adjustment carries over into the 2015 ending balance, which stands at over \$232,000. This will be increased to over \$234,000 once the Endowment Fund gifts received toward the end of December 2015 are deposited into the Fund’s United

Church Fund account. We will then be less than \$16,000 short of the requisite \$250,000 threshold for disbursements to begin to be made from this fund. Notable, too, is the fact that the year-end market value of this Fund is in excess of \$328,000, as a result of the accumulation of earnings and market appreciation since this Fund was first established and funded.

We also received contributions amounting to nearly \$25,000 over the course of the year to the various special offerings for off-budget benevolence funds. With respect to these off-budget benevolence fund balances, there are small year-end deficits in three of these funds, resulting from the fact that we have identified errors in the original posting of several contributions that had, in fact, been intended as contributions to other funds (including OGHS and regular operating fund pledge giving). Unfortunately, these errors were not discovered in many of these cases until after the balance in the funds in question had been disbursed to the intended recipients. The other point that I should mention in this regard is that the amount in the Deacons and Pastors' Benevolence Fund (which is the recipient of the special Thanksgiving Offering) is now included in the amounts shown as the opening and closing balances of that fund, even after the amounts received in this offering have been transferred from our regular checking account to the separate Deacons and Pastors' Benevolence Fund checking account that is under the control of the Senior Pastor (rather than the Treasurer). This change was necessitated by an expansion of the Fund Balance page in the Treasurer's monthly reports to include all funds of LRUCC (including that fund and the General Fund), so that the total "book" amount of all funds enumerated on that page would equal the total "book" value of the cash and investments reported on the Account Balances page of that report. (Obviously, if there were a discrepancy between these two totals, there would be an accounting problem that we would need to track down and correct.)

On a somewhat less favorable note, our Major Repair and Capital Expense Reserve funds, which received no funding at all out of our Operating Budget for 2015, were reduced over the year by a combined amount in excess of \$54,000, as a result of essential major repairs (principally for a major portion of the heating components of our HVAC system) and equipment acquisitions (principally the replacement of aging computer work stations for our office staff). Thus, the Capital Reserve is now down to just over \$5,000 and the Major Repair Reserve to less than \$64,000 in "book" values. Moreover, the available amounts in both reserves are slightly diminished as a result of unrealized capital losses in the United Church Fund accounts for those reserves (which, of course, would turn into realized losses if those UCF account funds need to be brought back into our checking account before the market values have recovered).

As noted above, the balance in our General Fund (which stood at a "book" amount of \$99,131.28 at the beginning of the year) has been reduced as a result of our operating deficit to a year-end "book" amount of \$73,180.90. Moreover, it bears noting that our Building Fund deficit of \$18,467.31, which remains on our books as of December 31, 2015 (though hopefully not beyond this year's annual Congregational meeting), serves as an additional practical offset to the amount of the General Fund that is actually available to the church. However (as in the case the Endowment fund UCF account), the year-end market value of our General Fund account with the United Church Funds includes a significant amount of unrealized gains (approximately \$23,000 as of December 31), which would be available to the church if necessary (at least to the extent that that year-end market value of this investment account is not reduced by later market fluctuations).

In early 2015, the Council approved the merger of the remaining balance in the Pastoral Transition Fund into the Transition Contingency Fund (\$10,000 of which has previously been designated to pay for an external audit).

Account Balances

The United Church Fund investment accounts include all or significant parts of the Endowment Fund and our other Designated Funds (except the Special Music Fund), the various Reserve Funds, and the General Fund. In the aggregate, they include a substantial amount of unrealized appreciation (mostly attributable to the Endowment Fund and the General Fund, which have been invested with the UCF for significantly longer periods than the other funds have been). These funds are all invested with the UCF's "moderate balanced fund," which invests in both stocks and fixed income securities. As such, the market values of these accounts vary from day to day based on market fluctuations in those securities markets.

The difference between the "book" and "market" values for our brokerage account with Charles Schwab is attributable entirely to a worthless security (with a book value of \$41.02) that had been transferred to that account several years ago and that was not liquidated before it became worthless. (This could be removed from the account, but only at the cost of incurring an additional brokerage fee.) The remaining amount held with Schwab at year-end is in a money-market account, so is essentially the equivalent of cash. The church's Dominion Resources account (which was shown in the 2014 report with a year-end market value of \$786.69) was fully liquidated and closed in early 2015. Thus, it does not appear in this year-end report.

My perspective on my term as Treasurer this past year

I must gratefully acknowledge the support, guidance and assistance provided to me over the course of the year by former Treasurer (and current Comptroller and chair of LRUCC's Finance Committee) Dave Curtis, as well as the support provided by the pastoral and office staff, the Moderators, our contract accountant, Liz Haley and others too numerous to mention by name on our various Boards and Committees. It has become clear to me over the course of the year that the church's financial affairs have become increasingly complex, while the responsibilities assumed by the Treasurer have come to include many areas of oversight that were previously provided by others (such as our formerly elected Financial Secretaries). As a result, I have come to believe that, unless we have the good fortune to find members who are themselves accountants and are willing to serve as Treasurer and to devote a significant amount of their own time and professional skills to that position, we are going to continue to require the assistance of an outside accountant for the foreseeable future. As matters turned out, we required a bit more assistance on this front than we had counted on in our 2015 budget (though the overrun on that line is also attributable, in part, to an increase in the hourly rate charged for such accounting services that occurred after our budget had been adopted). Moreover, I was among those who have lobbied the Trustees for the inclusion of a significantly increased amount in their proposed 2016 budget to allow for considerably more hours for the contract accountant this year than were provided for last year. I believe that without such increased professional assistance, the position of Treasurer may become essentially unmanageable for any one member of the church (at least any one such member who is not an accountant and who does not have substantial amounts of spare time to devote to the job) to perform on a volunteer basis.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Allen, Treasurer

Officers, Board and Committee Members, and Other Church Leaders

Little River United Church of Christ

October 23, 2015

year term end (Jan.) (2) current elected term + plus partial appointed term ° appointed position * = chair

Officers

Moderator	Cici Thompson (2)	Membership Clerk	Dee Cardiff (2)
Moderator-Elect	Rob Peters (1)	Historian-Archivist	Gwen Crepeau, Florence
Past Moderator	Tom Ross	Deike	
Church Clerk	Ann Lingo (2)	Comptroller°	Dave Curtis
Treasurer	Gary Allen (1)	Receiving Financial Secretary°	Staff
		Recording Financial Secretary°	Staff

Church Council Members at Large

2017: John Forrest (2) 2018: Bruce Douglas (1)

Commonwealth Trustees

Willard Griffing Barbara Lowrey Steve Wheelock

Board of Christian Education

2016	2017	2018
Camille Brooks (1)	Linda Acar (1)	Mike Craven (1)
Sandra Honeysett (1)	Jane Wallace (1)	Michelle Mitchell (1)
Kathy Hunt (2)		Carolyn Yocom (2+) *
Chris Jarvis (1)		

Board of Deacons

2016	2017	2018
Carrie Douglas (1)	Clark Beil (1)	Lorri Jones (1)
Carolyn Johnson (1)	Dawn Forrest (1)	Jackie Lascola (1)
Sue Leathers (0+)	Daniel Jimenez (1)	Ginny Peters (1)
Bruce Summers (1)	Brett Kassabian (1)	Kathleen Styles (1) *
James Taylor (1)	Claire Ward (1)	
Lois Wyatt (2)		

Board of Outreach and Social Justice

2016	2017	2018
Betty Cox (1+)	Nancy Hall (1)	Joy Faunce (1)
Karen Kleiber (1+) *	Amy Mireku (1)	
Bob Lingo (2)		
Jason Thompson (1+)		

Board of Trustees

2016	2017	2018
Joe Christiansen (2) *	Amy Clayton (2)	Mike Nagy (1)
Ben Northrup (0+)	Lynn Daft (1)	Robin Petrusak (1)
	Betsy Erickson (1)	

Arts Committee *in abeyance*

Audit Committee

2016	2017
Steve Wheelock (0+)	George Matthews (9)

Endowment Fund Committee

2016	2017	2018
Fran DuRocher (0+)	George Leonard (0+)	Rob Peters (2) *
Brian Payne (0+)		Jerry Surbey (2)

Music Committee

2016	2017	2018
Ruth Duncan (2+)	Kathy Richardson (1)	Barbara Lowrey (2)
Steve Wheelock (2)	Erin Taylor (1)	

Nominations & Appointments Committee

2016	2017
Nancy Carey (1)	Hube Beckwith (1)
Ginny Peters (1)	Camille Brooks (1)
Kathy Richardson (0+)	Roy Brooks (1) *

Safe Church Committee (no fixed terms)

Robin Petrusak	Hank Fairman (ex officio)
----------------	---------------------------

Stewardship Committee

2016	2017	2018
Pat Berry (0+)	Jen Beckman (1+) *	Tom Johnson (1+)
Randy Young (2)	Carolyn Labbé (0+)	Ellen Wertman (1)

Communications Leaders

Communications Advisory Team	Hube Beckwith,* Jan Curtis,* Carrie Douglas, Dave Curtis,
Judy Miller, Bruce Summers, the Pastors, the Moderator, the Office Administrator	
News (Current Tidings, Currents)	Communications Coordinator: Roberta Croll
Publicity	Deacons' Evangelism Committee
Sound System Team	Ellen Wertman
Web Team	Judy Jacobs Miller, Hube Beckwith, Dave Curtis

Community Outreach Leaders

FISH Coordinators	Susan Kennedy & Joe Christiansen
Shaw Community Ministry	Board of Outreach and Social Justice
Thrive DC	Board of Outreach and Social Justice

Other Church Leaders and Contacts

Advent Funshops	Board of Deacons
Called to Care	Senior Pastor
Caring Hands	Carrie Douglas
Communities of Care	Board of Deacons
Finance Committee	Gary Allen (Treasurer), Dave Curtis (Comptroller), Jen Beckman (Stewardship Committee), Badu Mireku (at large)
First Friday	Linda Acar
Flowers	Ruth Duncan, Bunny Jones

Personnel Committee
Multiracial Multicultural Committee
Open & Affirming Committee
Pathfinders Young Adults
Place Setters
Quilters
Ushers
Visioning Team

Welcome Center
Women's Ministry Team

Kathy McCrea, Don Wallace, Jean Wheelock (chair)

Joe Petrusiak, Cameron Lynn Vanore
Deacons' Fellowship Committee
Ruth Duncan
Deacons' Worship Committee
Dennis Bloomquist, Carrie Douglas, John Forrest, Sandra
Honeysett, Lisa Page, Gail Perry, Marilyn Sailor, Steve Wheelock
Lois Wyatt
Dee Cardiff

Addendum: Stewardship

As of February 1, 2016, the church has received \$604,863 in pledges for 2016. We received 136 pledges, down from 157 in 2015. Sixty-three pledges have been increased over the prior year's gift, and over \$10,000 in pledges have been received from members who previously had not pledged.

Total Pledges Received: 136
Average Pledge Amount: \$4,447
New Pledges: 3

Pledges Increased: 63
Pledges Decreased: 26
Pledges Maintained: 44

Addendum: Little River UCC 2015 Operating Budget

Addendum: Proposed: Little River UCC Proposed 2016 Budget

The web version of this document has been redacted to remove pages 46-50 (Operating Budget and Proposed Budget) for privacy reasons.

The financial information that was reported on these pages is available in the church office.