

Little River
United Church of Christ

**Annual
Reports
2022**



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Moderator

Clark Beil

We bid goodbye to 2022 and I for one feel a sense of relief and hope as 2023 greets us with open arms. It has been a challenging yet joyous and eventful year at Little River UCC. Our church weathered the pandemic and, like much of the wider world, we are gradually returning to our routines with some changes that may never resume in the same manner as before the pandemic. Thankfully in-person services resumed in our Sanctuary on March 13, though with an abundance of caution we continue to mask our faces and bump elbows in greeting. Online participation is now a regular part of our Sunday service with many of our members choosing to worship via Zoom. Coffee teams returned after a pandemic hiatus and are back on a regular schedule. Most committees and boards seem to have adopted the convenience of meeting online and overall the church has resumed pre-pandemic operations.

Our much-appreciated Sexton John Davis left for new opportunities in New Mexico in August. He is greatly missed, but his absence has

been aptly filled by Nicole Renzo who also is leaving for new adventures. Building repairs and improvements included a new fire alarm system, initiating replacement of aging sanctuary curtains, HVAC modifications to control humidity, and, as a result of the pandemic, air filtration units are now distributed throughout the building. A beautiful table and outdoor worship and learning area crafted by Bennett Poplin for his Eagle Scout project was dedicated on October 30, and a donated grand piano is being restored with a special fundraising campaign.

For the past year a pastoral search committee has been diligently working to find a settled senior pastor and will hopefully be prepared to call a settled pastor in the new year. As the search committee continues its assignment, may Jesus grant you peace and with God's guidance answer all your prayers.

The Personnel Committee has been replaced by a Human Resources Committee, and the Safe Community Committee and policy was formally established. Changes to the Bylaws

with respect to membership will be proposed at the annual meeting with the intent to simplify the membership process.

As part of our outreach to greater community, the Board of Deacons initiated a very successful practice of inviting the community to family centered events with food trucks and entertainment at the church. The events had excellent turnout and everyone had a great time. Also along those lines, the Communications Committee continued to expand our Little River presence in social media.

It has been a pleasure and honor to serve as moderator this past year. Pastor Art, thank you for being a great example of living a life of faith and guiding us through this interim period, and, to the staff of LRUC, you are a blessing to our church. Dear friends, please see to it that each day you feed your soul with God's Word. Enjoy and appreciate each day as God's gift of life and may God's presence never leave your heart.

Interim Senior Pastor

The Rev. Dr. Arthur L. Cribbs, Jr.

Serving Little River United Church of Christ for the past two years has been a true gift of grace and an unexpected blessing. Although I was unfamiliar with the congregation before receiving a call from Brother Michael Alt of the interim pastor search committee, I began researching the church's history and was pleasantly surprised and amazed at its commitment to social and racial justice. I soon learned my pastor had attended Little River as a college student in Washington, D.C., with Congressman Charlie Wilson.

As the interim senior pastor, my focus has been on preparing the congregation to call the next settled pastor who will lead the church into the future. From my observation, members of Little River have worked diligently to identify and address areas that required intentional focus and attention.

I am grateful to members of the Interim Pastor Relations Team who forged a course to ease me into the position to serve and encourage members of the congregation. Specifically, Clark Beil, Dan Jimenez, Drew Nettinga, Gail Perry, Janet Parsons Mackey, and Karen Kleiber guided my entry into the congregation and

helped me develop a strategy to assess who we are and the direction we would take moving into the future. Their combined leadership and vision provided the significant ground work to make it possible to call the next pastor.

In fact, every member of Little River who participated in the three intentionally structured all-church listening circles provided significant perspectives and information to help the Senior Pastor Search Committee move forward in the call of the new pastor. Together, we looked at the history of the Little River. Then, we focused on where we are today and how we see our church attending to the spiritual, religious, and socially-conscious needs of the congregation and the wider community. Finally, in the third round of circle conversations, members of the church dared to delve into the future to set a course forward that will be relevant, reverent, and realistic.

This is a continuing journey to meet the personal, spiritual, and social needs of the congregation and the wider community. Little River is a highly blessed congregation with a passion for justice and a yearning to be engaged in the lives of its members

and our neighbors. The strength and future of the church depends on the engagement and full support of all members and friends of Little River.

The past two years ushered in significant challenges, including the COVID-19 virus and the emerging impact of climate change. Fortunately, church leaders stayed abreast of the science and available information about best practices. Protocols were put in place to keep the congregation safe while providing religious, moral, and spiritual support. Most of the heavy labor fell on the staff to execute the strategies to maintain a safe and healthy environment.

Although we lost our dear, dedicated, and faithful sexton John Davis when he relocated to New Mexico, he wisely and carefully helped to prepare and elevate Nicole Renzo to step right into position. Together, the transition was smooth and flawless without any major interruptions or diminished performance.

The daily operation of the church office and wider community outreach is coordinated and executed by Kathy Heyman, the church administrator. Her combined wisdom, experience, and dedication provide the platform for the daily operation and ministries

of the church to go forward with a keen sense of assurance and competence. Kathy has the innate ability to anticipate the need and fill it before the ask is made. She is reliable, present, professional, and courteous. She anticipates needs in advance of their demand. Little River is extremely fortunate to have her on staff.

One of the most significant elements of a high performance congregation is having the right person in place in a critical moment. Craig Stapert is known for his musical genius, but he also brings advanced knowledge and skills to organize and coordinate our communications team. From the hybrid worship experience to the weekly church bulletin to the monthly newsletter, Craig brings together all the necessary elements to ensure the information matrix is operating and producing on time and properly. His total level of experience, commitment, and ability to execute the multiple tasks that require his skill sets cannot be fully appreciated without careful notice of all he does on behalf of Little River.

The quiet and effective member of the church staff who works closely with the children's choir is Ashton Streavig. Members of the congrega-

tion see her directing during worship, but it's all the other ways she interacts with children that enhances her value and quality to the life of the church. Ashton is dedicated and highly skilled, but it is her passion that drives the accelerated level of musical knowledge that provides Little River with faithful, quality presence in the sanctuary during worship.

As the congregation prepares to call and receive its settled senior pastor, I am thankful for the honor and opportunity to serve in the capacity of interim pastor. Although my ministry has included being a pastor of wonderful churches and serving the United Church of Christ on both national and global staff, Little River has been a glorious and unique experience. The excellent leadership and vision of the congregation have been a blessing that cannot be overstated.

The work ahead requires a high level of commitment, a depth of faith in God's leading presence, and unyielding determination to share the blessings of Little River United Church of Christ beyond the sacred grounds on which it stands.

Office Administrator

Kathy Heyman

It will be five years in February working at Little River UCC. Time flies when you are having fun!

We closed the church again in December 2021 due to a rise in COVID numbers. So, we again held virtual worship services and had a remote working church office. We were all glad and ready when we reopened in March 2022.

We were ready and had the technical skills and knowledge from the previous closure to keep the church building and business running smoothly during this second time of closure.

We now know no matter what our world throws at us, Little River will keep on ticking! We are pleased to see many members of the congregation returning to in-person services. Coffee hour has been re-established and many are staying after worship service to connect and a time of fellowship. Attendance is staying steady also for virtual worship service, with a volunteer welcoming folks to stay on Zoom for a virtual coffee hour and fellowship.

We are receiving church building usage requests again from organizations such as LLI who have held

meetings and events here at Little River for several years after taking a hiatus during COVID. A speaker forum was held at Little River in the fall, which was publicized and open to the community.

Little River UCC received a Trinity Trust Grant. The funds from the grant were designated for community outreach. With the grant funds, a Fall Family Fun Festival was planned in October. Little River has not held a large community outreach event in several years. The church staff had such a good time coordinating a food truck (giving away snow cones to all who attended), petting zoo (my favorite event to plan and was able to enjoy the cute farm animals), moon bounce, musician, and magician. The community event could not have happened without the teamwork of the church staff. We all had a “hand” in the planning of the fall festival! We also had many members of the congregation volunteer to greet visitors, answer questions about the church, monitor the moon bounce, and other fun activities. We were thrilled beyond belief to have more than 300 people attend the festival. Seeing all the cars coming down the drive and

having the church grounds filled with families was a sight we will remember for a long time! With the success of the festival, we are hopeful to plan another community outreach event in 2023 for families in the NoVa area.

One of my very favorite parts as the church administrator at Little River is working with each of you. In scheduling meetings and events on the church calendar or when someone stops by the church for classes, meetings or just to say “hi.” It has also been great to have the newsletter volunteer team assembled again to help with the monthly newsletter mailing. We have welcomed a couple of new folks along with our long-time loyal volunteers. It certainly is great to talk about current events, laugh, and have fun while folding and sealing the newsletter at the same time. Thank you to each of you who marks the calendar each month to come in and party with me!

I truly can't imagine being anywhere else but here at Little River UCC.

The staff and church had the bittersweetness of sending off John Davis, Little River's long time Sexton for move out west to their new home in Albuquerque. It was a tough

farewell, but now John and Emily are enjoying their new home and being close to family and friends. We had the blessing of John mentoring Nicole Renzo through the years, and, therefore, Nicole was able to step in and up as the Interim Sexton. And what can I say about my “partner in crime” Craig Stapert? Working on church communications (and many other projects) with Craig makes teamwork a dream-work! And it has also been a true pleasure working with Pastor Art Cribbs. He became a valuable member of staff very quickly. His caring and calm way of listening to the staff and working with us—with boots on the ground! During the time he has been here has been so important in continuing our work and mission as a unified staff team. It was indeed God’s perfect timing that brought Pastor Art to Little River Church.

And now, the staff is eager and ready to welcome a new settled senior pastor in 2023. We are confident in knowing it will again be God’s perfect timing when we welcome them here at Little River.

Blessings to you all! Thank you for your patience, support, kindness, and friendship these past five years!

Sexton

Nicole Renzo

The year of 2022 has definitely been busy with projects, unforeseen issues, group events, and so much more.

A new flower fridge was purchased because the old flower fridge failing. In the church office a component of the HVAC unit failed, and it was a better solution to replace the unit as a whole. A major issue we had was the sprinkler system leak at the main valve area. This issue was supposedly fixed, but then shortly afterwards, it started to fail again. The second time the sprinkler valve was fixed and is functional. A big project that was done this year is the replacement of all lights, converting them to LED. This project started in April and was wrapped up at the end of August. Trees were trimmed and cut down to eliminate hazards. Minor roof leaks were found and fixed in a fast manner. Another project that has been tackled was the humidity issue in the Sanctuary. It was found that the ducts under the sanctuary and chancel were letting in moisture, water, and dirt. This issue was fixed using cement, cinder blocks,

and spray foam. A damper was also installed in addition to a humidity thermostat gauge. Another huge purchase was a new HVAC unit for rooms 7 and 8. This occurred because the furnace failed. Last summer AFA started the upgrade of the fire system. Unfortunately this was put on hold due to back-order of parts. The project continued into the week of December 26. The system is still waiting on the final parts; we will contact the fire marshal to do a final inspection in 2023. In the meantime, we had minor plumbing issues fixed, including sinks, the garbage disposal, and other minor leaks. In the new year, the sanctuary will be in the process of looking more modern. Most of the old draperies were taken down, and we are waiting for possible fundraising for the new motorized window covers. As 2023 rounds the corner, we hope to look into the following projects: parking lot repavement, interior and exterior door numbering, fire- and lock-down-drills, and the unforeseeable projects.

Communications & Music

Craig Stapert

Calendar year 2022 began in a now-familiar place: a virtual church. For two months, Pastor Art and I along with a rotation of liturgists produced virtual worship each Sunday. This dance included pre-recording anthems and hymns with the Sanctuary Choir, record (video and audio) service music and liturgy, and typically incorporating live words from our Interim Senior Pastor on Sunday morning in an empty sanctuary. Lent began with a drive-up Ash Wednesday offering during the afternoon followed by a virtual service in the evening.

By mid-March, hybrid worship had resumed, with a gradual return during the following months of in-person worshippers, a healthy online community, and growing numbers of programmatic offerings.

Maundy Thursday illustrated a creative collaboration with Pastor Art and me (and several members) to use the chancel for an evening of poetry, music, and Sacrament with the inclusion of live, online voices.

With the COVID forecast uncertain as Lent began, we hedged our bets on Easter and prerecorded choir and brass in case the expected next wave would disrupt worship again. Thankfully we were wrong; to bring a “live” musical component to the service, we debuted the new handchimes with the existing handbells in a Gospel procession during the Easter service, which was so well received that applause in-

terrupted the transition to the reading of the Resurrection narrative.

As we continued to lean into hybrid worship, the Media Team has practiced and developed skills that continue to grow. We have reconfigured the sound board to improve online audio while balancing the need for in-room sound (e.g., spoken voice) and online only sound (e.g., the organ doesn't need amplification!). Finally we have continued to tweak lighting and small aesthetic issues to make worship meaningful and embracing for everyone.

Communications during 2022 began a bit slowly with only virtual services and programming. As the year progressed, the Communications Committee and I (with the rest of the staff) continued to build a more solid presence on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, as well as maintaining the church's website. (If you have not subscribed to all three properties, please take a moment to follow/like/subscribe!) The Fall Family Fun Festival provided a perfect occasion to try some online advertising and promotion; a relatively small investment helped fill our campus on that incredible evening. Similar outreach for “Coming through the Pandemic: Community Conversation on Law Enforcement amid the Pandemic” yielded less impressive results, while acknowledging the very different type of event.

With the relatively full return to in-person activities (while maintaining a full hybrid model), children's and youth musical ensembles resumed under Ashton's leadership, handbells resumed, and the church calendar has become full. By Advent, the choir was able to return to its traditional Advent Special Music Sunday with a presentation of Buxtehude's Advent cantata “Kommst du, kommst du, Licht der Heiden” with a string ensemble. Christmas Eve, with a bit of drama in the alternation of reading lessons and singing or hearing carols, featured all of our musical talent in some capacity: children, youth, bells, Sanctuary Choir, organ and piano, and young soloists.

Throughout the year, Kathy and I have produced weekly and special bulletins, weekly e-communications (*Current Tidings*), and a more-or-less monthly printed newsletter (*Current Reflections*, also available online). The Communications Survey that Hutton Easley mentions in his report suggest that we are striking a good balance of communications channels, content, and timeliness, and we will build on those strengths in 2023.

Finally, the Steinway piano that was donated to LRUC during the pandemic is out for restoration as 2022 came to a close; the only remaining work is touching up the finish on the casework, and we will celebrate its return with fanfare in early 2023.

Deacons

Drew Nettinga

There's a familiar expression, supposedly a traditional Chinese curse, but without any actual source confirming that attribution, that says, "May you live in interesting times." Regardless of original source or meaning, 2022 was an "interesting" year for the Little River Board of Deacons.

In January, the Board began discussing the criteria for Little River resuming in-person worship, since we'd ended 2021 worshipping via Zoom exclusively. Anticipating a return to a hybrid style of worship (in-person and online), the Board agreed to avoid as much as possible a first-class/second-class distinction between the congregation in the sanctuary and the one at home. Creating the ability for folks online to participate in worship as lay readers or in other roles, we felt, would increase the feeling of genuine participatory worship for all. That challenge continues.

This conversation was continued in the Board's February meeting. We discussed the recent conversations with medical personnel, using reliable data on COVID cases and the results of an informal survey of the status of other nearby UCC congregations. The Board decided to monitor COVID case

numbers weekly for Fairfax County. Re-opening in-person worship would be contingent on Fairfax County's COVID transmission rate falling below the "high" CDC designation of 100 cases per 100,000 people).

As the revised CDC metrics dropped into the "low" category for Fairfax County in March, the Board decided to re-open the sanctuary for in-person worship, choosing the date of Sunday, March 13. Safety protocols that in-person worshipers were asked to abide by included the wearing of masks during worship, particularly while singing, and practicing social distancing. There would be no indoor fellowship time at that time, but with warmer weather, folks would be invited to gather in the back patio.

Two April highlights were first our Easter week services beginning with Palm Sunday, followed by a Maundy Thursday worship with poetry, music and communion, Good Friday worship that took us to the foot of the cross, Easter Sunrise outdoors in the cold morning air and concluding with a 10 A.M. hybrid celebration of the Resurrection. That service was attended by 95 in-person worshipers in addition to folks worshipping online.

The second April highlight was arranging for a food truck to come to our campus on April 20, thanks to the good work of Carter Wilbur. Volunteers were recruited to help with publicity, set-up, and clean-up. Attendance was good with 4-5 people from outside the church community attending. The food, all agreed, was delicious.

With Pastor Art scheduled to take four weeks vacation during June and July, the Board arranged for people to lead worship in our pastor's absence. Janet Mackey, Al Fuertes, Drew Nettinga, and Chris Weakley led worship on those Sundays Pastor Art was away.

To celebrate the end of church school, an after church picnic was held on June 5, featuring an ice cream truck that dispensed more than 50 delicious sundaes. As always, people enjoyed the experience with several stating that the church needs more of this family activity.

In the fall, the Board supported a proposal from the Board of Trustees to remove the ancient sanctuary drapes and replace them with motorized solar shades. As I write this, the draperies have been removed and we

await the arrival and installation of the shades. They will protect worshipers from the sun while helping to reduce cooling and heating costs.

With great thanks for Amy Mireku, her family, and our LRUCC youth, our annual Bereavement Tea was held online December 10 for Little River members and friends who had lost family members and friends during 2022. Amy and the youth also distributed teas and other goodies to those participating, including to all LRUCC members living at Greenspring. Amy also provided cards and care packages to our college students.

With Christmas celebrated on Sunday this year, the Deacons supported Pastor Art, Craig Stapert, choirs, and musicians in a Saturday Christmas Eve service that filled the church with families, familiar hymns and warm candle light. The following day, Christmas, 26 stalwart members came to worship in person, joining others of the church who celebrated at home.

One of the challenges with which the Deacons have struggled this past year was finding people to fill the various worship opportunities that are available each Sunday morning: liturgists, ushers, Ts & Cs reporters

and recorders, etc. In addition, help was needed to find teams to provide coffee, tea, and goodies for our post-worship celebration. Thanks to the help of Kathleen Styles and others, we now have eight coffee teams with a schedule that will cover every 2023 Sunday. The Board hopes this coming year to re-create the usher teams that served the church so well pre-COVID.

The Board began the year with ten members. With some of us moving away, we are currently at seven. Two of those seven are rotating off the Board. Fortunately, Nominations and Appointments have found two new members to join the Board in February bringing us back to seven. The church Bylaws call for a Board of Deacons of 12. We invite others to join us in this important and rewarding work.

As always, my deep appreciation and thanks to the members of the Board. Their presence and support strengthen the fabric of our community.

Outreach and Social Justice

Carol Henning

This congregation strongly believes in helping our neighbors in need as evidenced by their donation early this year to the Ukraine Relief Fund in response to Russia's brutal war on independent Ukraine. The Board of Outreach and Social Justice guides Little River's social justice ministry in the community and beyond via benevolences, bringing speakers and programs to help us understand current issues and programs, leading collections of items for those in need, and bringing opportunities for action in areas of concern.

Items collected for those in need this year included more than 70 backpacks and school supplies for children with Neighbor to Neighbor and Second Story. Monetary donations that came in after the bags were delivered were sent as a check for backpacks to Second Story. Food items were donated and provided for F.I.S.H., Food for Others, and more. Personal care items went to Friends of Guest House and Kennedy Shelter. The Sheriff's Little Library program received 20 boxes of children's books (approximately 50 books in each box). They were unable to take all the boxes, so ACCA child development center, Main Street child development center, Neighbor to Neighbor (support for

Afghan immigrants), Facets (transitional housing), and Alive (transitional housing & food pantry) received books for children in their programs. Giving Tree provided Christmas presents to 150 children of low-income families at ACCA Child Care Center, Main Street Child Care Center, and Shaw Community Center.

For Earth Day Sunday, BOSJ asked Pastor Art to invite his friend to speak to us again about birds in our area, the effects climate change on these birds, and how individuals could help. A poster was displayed about climate change with recommended books and DVDs, handouts on where birds live in the tree canopy, and native plants to this area. Some of the Board members participated in the postcarding of registered non-voters to encourage participation in this year's election. In October Little River and Rise Against Hunger bagged 10,000 meals that were sent to the Philippines after terrible flooding there. BOSJ Board members participated in planning for Little River's November Forum "Coming Through the Pandemic" and some volunteered as circle facilitators. BOSJ and Neighbor to Neighbor joined forces to present a potluck dinner with our Afghan friends—a rewarding and delicious evening. Also,

guest speakers gave a presentation on the Fairfax County Public Schools Restorative Justice Program. A coat drive for Thrive D. C. ended the 2022 year.

Benevolences this year:

- Arise (NOVA & Geo. Mason) campus Christian group
- Black Church Food Security Network
- Center for Common Ground (voting rights activism)
- Centerville Labor Resource Center (Wellspring UCC helping immigrants find work)
- Congregational Action Network (advocacy for immigrants)
- Everytown for Gun Safety
- Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
- F.I.S.H. (for immediate sympathetic help) (food and money re job loss, medical emergencies, etc.)
- Fisher House Foundation (like Ronald MacDonald House for military families)
- Franklinton Center at Bricks (educational center, leadership training, etc.)
- Friends of Guest House (transition housing, training for women just out of prison)

- Facets (transitional housing)
- House of Ruth (shelter & counseling for women & children fleeing domestic abuse)
- Legal Aid Justice Center (all kinds of legal help for low income individuals)
- National Religious Campaign Against Torture
- Neighbor to Neighbor
- Potomac Conservancy
- Sasha Bruce (short term shelter for 11-17 year olds)
- Second Story (transitional housing for kids and family counseling)
- Shaw Ministries (DC community center - a legacy of Little River)
- Thrive D. C. (shelter, resources for homeless, referrals & case management, etc.)
- Transgender Education Association
- UCC Ministers Financial Vitality Initiative (scholarship to support financially struggling ministers)
- Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy (interfaith group working on justice policy)

Christian Education

Joanne Zellers

Carolyn Johnson, Amy Mireku

Sarah Wilbur, Doris Perkett, Gail Perry, ad hoc contributors

This year has been one of renewal for Christian Education. In-person Sunday school was paused at the start of the year, but young children were offered online lessons and the youth class met via Zoom. Once in-person classes resumed, elementary aged children were offered Sunday school using the Godly Play curriculum for the spring. The youth Sunday school class studied the book of Job and recorded a puppet show reflecting on their study.

Seven youth participated in a retreat style OWL (Our Whole Lives) class from February through June. Carolyn Yocom and Rich Dodenhoff met with the youth one Friday evening and Sunday morning/afternoon per month to work through the program. The youth celebrated the end of the program with a visit to an Art Escape Room and pizza and s'mores party in early June.

The Board distributed Bibles to children of the church for the first time since COVID on June 5. One baby Bible, four Stark Story Bibles, and five New Revised Standard Version Bibles were distributed to children.

Our Sunday School program resumed in-person study in September. The elementary aged class is now using the Seasons of the Spirit curriculum. A team of rotating teachers are offering the curriculum to between two and eight children per week. Volunteers are always welcome to join this teaching team. Natalie Stapert has been teaching our youth class each week using the curriculum: *Scary, Gross, and Weird Stories from the Bible*. Four to ten middle and high school aged youth have been participating in the class each week.

Youth activities offered through PYF have resumed. Monthly book clubs and movie nights in the spring have expanded to more activities in the fall. The youth played board games, went bowling, assisted in a church clean up, prepared care packages for college students and Greenspring residents, attended the Safe Church training, and more. More activities are in the planning stage for 2023, and volunteers interested in helping with youth activities are always welcome.

The Monday morning Religious Studies class continued as a hybrid class with a study of the Gospel of Thomas and followed by the Great Courses video lecture series "Mystical Tradition: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam." A new Monday evening Zoom-only Bible Studies class, led by Pastor Art, began to take a "sideways" look at the lectionary scripture passages used in worship the previous day. A new class, "Confronting Whiteness," is under development. In late December an auxiliary childcare/play area was added to the Narthex. There have been many focus groups for church members to discuss what they want from church and what they can do for church.

Trustees

Robin Petrusak

Bruce Douglas, Nancy Hall, Bill Huddleston, Bill Perkett

Board of Trustees Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees portfolio of responsibilities includes: care and management our building and grounds; church office operations including the church computers, network, phone and security systems, office equipment; use of the church building (excluding worship, the purview of Board of Deacons); and church finance and budgeting (in partnership with the LRUCC finance team). The church building and grounds are integral to the ministries and outreach of Little River United Church of Christ and together comprise the largest tangible asset of LRUCC. The Board endeavors to take a strategic approach to building and grounds management.

The excellent staff of LRUCC truly keep things running: Kathy Heyman, office administrator; John Davis and Nicole Renzo, sextons; and LuAnn Bynum, bookkeeper. In August, we bade farewell to John Davis when he and Emily moved to New Mexico. Nicole Renzo has filled in admirably as our interim sexton. However, at the end of February 2023 we will say farewell to Nicole when she departs to pursue new opportunities in Blacksburg, Virginia. Staffing plans under consideration for 2023 include hiring a

part-time sexton to replace Nicole and hiring a part-time bookkeeper/office administrator assistant.

Building

Throughout 2022, LRUCC continued to be challenged by our aging building and infrastructure and the extensive demands of our large, heavily wooded property. Following is a list of major repairs and maintenance projects completed in 2022:

- In January, the blower motor and control board for the furnace for Rooms 7 & 8 failed and was replaced. The boiler-connected heating and cooling unit in Room 6 was replaced in February, as well as the furnace that heats the office area. Finally, the furnace for Rooms 7 & 8 (installed in 1998) was replaced in November. The total cost for all this work was \$25,221 funded from the major repair reserve.
- In late spring and early summer, periods of abnormally high humidity were regularly occurring in the Sanctuary and a dank odor was noticeable. Trademasters worked with us to diagnose the problem and recommend an effective solution, which involved complete sealing of the

deteriorated air vents that run beneath the Sanctuary floor and modification of the air handling system for the Sanctuary to automatically monitor and control the flow of outside air into the Sanctuary. We were able to avoid installing a dehumidification system, which would have been more costly. Total cost to diagnose problem and complete the work was \$10,007 funded from the major repair reserve.

- During September, the entire exterior of the church building was power washed, rust was removed from all the exterior metal doors and railings, wood siding was repaired, and all surfaces were stained or painted as appropriate. The work was performed by Kolas Painting, Inc. Total cost for this work was \$21,553 funded from the major repair reserve.
- In February, the flower fridge in the small kitchen was replaced. Total cost with delivery was \$800. This was funded from the capital expense reserve fund.
- A major capital improvement undertaken was the replacement of all fluorescent bulbs in the church with LED bulbs and fixtures for a total cost of \$2100.

This involved a significant effort by John Davis and Nicole, replacing bulbs in 114 light fixtures throughout the church and installing new fixtures where needed. The work was successfully completed before John departed in August. With the end of the air conditioning season, the church is seeing a noticeable reduction in electricity usage compared to the previous year, indicative of the reduced electricity usage for lighting due to the LEDs. This project was funded from the capital expense reserve fund.

- The Sanctuary drapes were removed in November. The drapes were deteriorating and were not in good enough condition to withstand cleaning. The Board of Trustees is evaluating the installation of motorized sun screens as a suitable window covering alternative to drapes. Replacement window coverings for the Sanctuary are currently unfunded.

Grounds

- Board of Trustees sponsored Outdoor Clean Up days in the March, August, and November. The December Outdoor Clean

Up day was canceled due to rain and could not be rescheduled. Consequently, Solomon Blankson was hired to remove leaves from the parking lot and drainages along the driveway. This work was funded in part by a donation and by the grounds maintenance budget.

- Dead and dying trees continue to be a problem on the church grounds. The Board of Trustees prioritizes tree work based on the threat to the church building, playground and patio, neighboring homes and property, and the driveway/parking lot. During 2022, \$6,000 was spent to remove the highest priority dead trees from the playground area and parking lot perimeter and to trim a very large, dangerous branch overhanging the patio area. In addition, two very large downed trees were cut up and removed from the front entrance to the church property and along the driveway lawn for a total cost of \$1,700.

Fire Alarm Control Panel and Alarm System Upgrade

In April, the Board of Trustees contracted with AFA Protective Services for replacement of the fire alarm

control panel (FACP) and upgrade of the fire alarm system in the church to meet current Fairfax County fire code and ADA compliance. These upgrades include additional smoke detectors, audible and visual alarms, additional heat sensor alarms in the mechanical rooms and attic areas, and relocating the fire alarm pull stations to be wheelchair accessible. The total cost of the contract is \$38,521, of which a \$12,523 down payment was paid in April from an existing balance in the Building Fund and new donations to the fund. A balance of \$25,997 remains to be paid in 2023. This will be paid from the current balance in the Building Fund (\$7,651) and transfer from the General Fund of the church to cover the remainder. The transfer from the General Fund was approved by the Board of Trustees in July 2022.

After numerous unforeseen delays in permitting and procuring parts and equipment, the new fire alarm panel and most of the new system were installed during the week of December 26, 2022. The new alarm system is operating and legal, with greater coverage than the previous system. Unfortunately, not all the upgrades are fully complete. The Fairfax County Fire Marshall permit required the installation of 11 additional peripherals (smoke detectors, audible alarms,

strobes, etc.) that were not in the original system design submitted to the county. Most of the additional requirements are in the Sanctuary and have not yet been connected to the Fire Alarm Control Panel. This work is expected to be completed in the spring, pending a decision to connect via a wireless module (which has been back ordered for months) or to connect via hard wiring to the fire alarm control panel.

Future Considerations

The Board of Trustees invites members of the LRUCC community to share concerns and ideas about stewardship of the church's building and grounds. Following is a list of needs that have been under consideration by the Board of Trustees during the past 12–18 months.

- The pitched, shingled roof is beginning to experience leaks during heavy rains in the areas above the church building attics. These have been addressed with spot repairs to the roof but are indicators that the shingled roof is reaching the end of its life span. The shingled roof was inspected in 2021 by NV Roofing and determined to have about 5 years of life remaining.
- The asphalt driveway and parking lot continue to deteriorate.

The church sought estimates for repaving the driveway and parking lot in late 2021. There is a range of approaches and costs for repaving the parking lot and driveway and improving the side drainages, from approximately \$90,000 to more \$200,000. This would be a substantial investment by the church and likely require external financing.

- Members of Church Council have expressed the need to improve the appearance of the entrance to the church facing Little River Turnpike. There is significant overgrowth of vegetation along the frontage on Little River Turnpike such that the cross and church sign are not visible from the westbound lanes approaching the church. One idea for consideration is to cut back all vegetation from about 5–6 feet behind the cross and current sign and landscape the reclaimed area with a low maintenance, drought-tolerant landscape design.
- Carpet in the office area/conference room is worn, stained, and in need of replacement. The carpet was cleaned in late 2021, and at that time, it was acknowledged that the carpet is overdue for replacement.

Communications

Hutton Easley

Hube Beckwith, Kathy Hartzler

Carolyn Yocom (Deacons), Craig Stapert (Communications Coordinator), the Rev. Dr. Art Cribbs (Pastor, ex officio)

The mission of the Communications Committee is to help provide LRUCC audiences, including members, friends, staff, and the wider community, with consistent and comprehensive information about all aspects of church life.

We tried some new things this year. A communications preference survey was conducted during the summer. More than sixty congregants took part in the survey. Respondents confirmed that we were reaching them in ways that they preferred. Another learning was that we must encourage members to make a conscious effort to include church events in their social media posts. Links from Friday's *Current Tidings* are designed to be easily shared.

To reach the broader community and potential visitors, we made initial limited investments in social media advertising. Advertisements were placed for both the fall "Family Fun Night" and Advent services. Based on interest generated, we will continue to use social media and web-based advertising to reach and invite visitors to worship and other church events in 2023.

We also had the privilege in assisting Kathleen Styles in investigating how the church might use updated signage on Little River Turnpike to create a strong visual impact. The investment required to update to a modern electronic sign exceeds \$60,000. The church council accepted Kathleen's report and agreed that we are not ready to move forward.

In 2022, the Communications Committee benefited from Craig Stapert's entering his first full year as Communications Coordinator. We are grateful for Dave Curtis's provision of transitioning institutional knowledge, process understanding, and general kind spiritedness after serving on the committee for many years. We welcome Carolyn Yocom, joining us as Deacons' representative.

Endowment

Joe Christiansen

Fran DuRocher, Sandy Miller, Brian Payne, Steve Wheelock

The Endowment Fund market value decreased substantially this year: from \$700,612 on January 1 to \$586,859 on December 31. The total donations added to the fund were \$12,020, and expenditures were \$9,900. The net change, down 19%, was in keeping with the stock market performance (Dow Jones down 9%, S&P 500 down 20%, NASDAQ down 33%). The Committee continues to believe that investing endowment monies in the stock market is appropriate for the long term.

In accordance with the Endowment Fund Policy, the Committee had determined in 2021 that \$24,000 would be available for use in 2022. At the 2022 Congregational Meeting in January, the Congregation approved using \$4,800 for the operation budget (to be used by the Trustees), \$9,600 for outreach (to be allocated by BOSJ), \$2,400 to be used for scholarships (also allocated by BOSJ), and \$7,200

to be used for Innovative Ministry or Special Capital projects.

At the 2022 Annual Meeting, the congregation decided to use \$4,000 of the Innovative Ministries funds to support the Neighbor to Neighbor program's Afghan Ministry. This proposal was submitted by Janet Parsons Mackey. There were no other proposals approved at the Annual Meeting. In April, John Davis submitted a proposal for \$1,100 for a TV cabinet for the sanctuary. This proposal was approved by the Endowment Committee and by Church Council in May. The remaining \$2,100 for this category was not spent.

The funds for the Operating Budget (\$4,800) were used in September.

No proposals were received for the scholarship or outreach funding areas, so these funds remained in the Endowment Fund.

For 2023, the Endowment Fund Committee has determined that

\$26,000 will be available for disbursement. Continuing the distribution formula used previously, the committee recommends \$5,200 for operations and \$7,800 for Innovative Ministries or Special Projects. A proposal to use the Capital Projects funds for sanctuary blinds has been approved by the Endowment Committee and will be presented at the Annual Meeting. As of January 2023, the Endowment Committee has not received proposals for spending the funds available for outreach or scholarship (\$10,400 for outreach, \$2,600 for scholarship funds), and therefore makes no recommendation for spending these funds.

The Endowment Fund of Little River UCC continues to provide a great opportunity for memorial gifts, for recognition of the importance of the church in your life, and for making a lasting contribution to the important ministries of the church.

Membership

Membership

- Starting 479
- Ending 468*

Average weekly attendance

- In-Person 54
- Online (Zoom sign on) 41 (does not represent multiple family members attending for online worship service)
- Online services only were held from January 2 through March 6.
- In-person (hybrid) services were held from March 13 through December 25.

Deaths (8)

- Don Bozarth
- Bob Cattell
- Helen Dewey
- Rachel Lane
- Phil Lau
- Charlie Nettles
- Jerry Surbey
- Al Wilson

Memorials held at the church (2)

- Beth Jones
- Phil Lau

New Members (0)

Transfers/Removals

- Glen Denlinger (requested removal)
- Marilyn Denlinger (requested removal)
- Cindy Huber (transfer to new church)

Other

- No Confirmations
- No Baptisms
- No Weddings
- No Dedications

The Membership Clerk assisted by members of the Pastoral Search Committee, former Membership Clerk, Moderator Elect, Treasurer, and Nominations and Appointments Committee reviewed the list of members of LRUCC. The clerk would like to thank all of these members for their assistance, and continued assistance, in identifying active and inactive members of Little River UCC.

*A significant number of inactive members, more than 135, has been identified. The membership total here includes inactive members identified at this time, with the process on-going. Revised membership numbers will be submitted as inactive members are clarified and certified.

The Membership Clerk thanks Craig Stapert for setting up an email account for membershipclerk@lrucc.org. E-mail letters will be going out to inactive members for whom we have current email addresses asking the members to clarify their relationship with the church. Regular mail will be used for those with no email address listed. As responses are received from inactive members the membership numbers will be revised and reported.

The Chair of Deacons and the Moderator Elect helped to review the letters. They were also helpful in identifying a possible change to the Membership By-laws relating to a 2-year waiting period before a member would be removed from membership. Recommended changes will be brought to the Church Council for discussion.

Music

Darla Carras

The chief responsibilities of the Music Committee are to support the music ministries at Little River and to work with the Worship Committee to plan and conduct worship services throughout the church year. Specific activities in 2022 are described in the respective reports of the Director of Music and Communications and the Deacons, who oversee the Worship Committee, and do not need to be duplicated here.

At the beginning of the year the committee was short staffed, with no members of the class of 2025. During the year Jessica Nilles resigned, reducing the membership to four. Attempts by the Nominations and Appointments Committee to fill these vacancies were unsuccessful.

A goal for 2022 was to hold discussions exploring the desirability of a merger with the Worship Committee. The two committees met together throughout the year, essentially functioning as one body, with two co-chairs. It seemed to the co-chairs that formalizing the union of the two groups would be desirable, especially given the difficulty of recruiting new members to the Music Committee. This proposal was met with resistance, mainly due to the differing structures of the two bodies. The Music Committee is formally established in the church by-laws, is elected by the congregation, and has set, limited terms. The Worship Committee is an informal subgroup of the Deacons, is non-elected, and has open, unlimited

membership. We failed to reach an agreement on the structure of the proposed committee. There was agreement, however, that the two groups should continue to meet and work together. In 2023 both committees will be under new leadership. They may want to revisit this question.

Nominations & Appointments

Carrie Douglas

Karen Flann, Bunny Jones, Dottie Lamb, Ellen Wertman

Appointments in 2022

No appointments were made

Resignations in 2022

- Board of Deacons, Sue Leathers, Class of 2025
- Music Committee, Jessica Nilles, Class of 2024
- Board of Trustees, Bill Perkett, Class of 2025
- Board of Deacons, Doris Perkett, Class of 2025
- Board of Deacons, Carter Wilbur, Class of 2024
- Board of Christian Education, Jill Zabel, Class of 2024

Anticipated Number of Volunteers in Elected Roles for 2023

We anticipate that approximately 57 members will serve in elected roles in 2023:

- 28 people continuing terms and not on the ballot
- 17 candidates for renewed terms on the ballot at the Annual Meeting on 2/5/23
- 12 candidates for their first term on the ballot at the Annual Meeting on 2/5/23

The Nominations and Appointments Committee is responsible for appointing persons to fill mid-term vacancies and securing nominations of individuals to serve as officers and on boards and committees, who are then voted on at the LRUCC Annual Meeting in January. The Committee works throughout the year in consultation with church officers, committee and board chairs and the pastor.

The N&A Committee was fortunate again this year to have a full board of five members. As in 2021, we did not follow the “Draft” process implemented in 2019 and 2020. As in previous years, committee members reached out to prospective candidates for officer and board and committee positions through email and phone calls.

In addition to contacting potential volunteers, committee members were involved with the following efforts:

- Updating the Leadership Roster following the Annual Meeting on January 30, 2022, to reflect the results of the election of candidates on the ballot.
- A series of articles for Current Reflections spotlighting several boards and committees:

- ♦ April/May – Christian Education
- ♦ June/July – Stewardship
- ♦ August/September – Music
- ♦ October – Deacons
- Preparation of an N&A Flyer in October, which was mailed with the November *Current Reflections*. Additional copies were available in the Atrium and at the Boards and Committees Fair on November 20.
- Sponsored a Boards and Committees Fair during Coffee Hour on November 20 and hosted the coffee hour that day.
- Performed a light hearted skit during the worship service on January 8, 2023.
- Prepared the ballot for the Annual Meeting on February 5, 2023.

The Committee is grateful for the many volunteers who devote many hours of service to support and carry out the ministries of our church. The Committee is always open to ideas and suggestions from the congregation and church leaders.

Stewardship

Bruce Summers

Ruth Duncan, Jenny Planert

Ruth was our lead for acknowledgments and recognition of donors who gave memorial gifts or made a special gift, she also gave one of our Moments for Mission for the Stewardship Campaign. Jenny was our lead for tracking the progress and receiving pledges for the 2023 Stewardship Campaign. Bruce was the lead for communications for the Stewardship Campaign and represented the committee on the church council. For a third year we ran primarily a “Virtual Stewardship Campaign” with good results. At the time of writing this annual report we have received 101 Pledges and Vanco Commitments for a total of \$523,932. This is about \$19,000 less than 2021 and 2022. This was 93.9% of our

stretch goal of raising \$560,000. We had quite a few members who did not pledge, do to moving, health, and the economy. There were also a few deaths of longtime members. However, a significant part of our donors significantly increased their giving, this to support 8% cost of living increases for most of our staff, also to mitigate inflation in the costs of maintaining our building and grounds, and the significant uptick of the use of our building. The average Stewardship Gift was over \$5,200. Our members and friends have also given significantly to special offerings, to special building fund appeals, and of course to holiday gifts to children. The Stewardship Committee offers its sincere thanks to our members and friends who have given so generously this past year of their time, talent and financial gifts.

Women's Ministry

Pamela Binninger, Camille Brooks, Nancy Carey, Carrie Douglas, Karen Flann, Marilyn (Bunny) Jones, Barbara Lowrey, Jean Wheelock

Structure/Mission:

The Women's Ministry Team (WM) is a small group of women who gather on the first Thursday morning of each month to plan activities of interest to women of all ages to foster and nurture fellowship and spirituality among Little River women and friends. Leadership of our ad hoc group is rotated among team members. Women's Ministry reports to the Board of Christian Education and sponsors such programs as Tea and Talk, women's retreats, meditative programs, an Advent Spiral walk, and a book group. The book group is open to anyone who is interested in attending, not only women.

The Women's Ministry Team is open to all women of LRUCC who have an interest in our mission. The team welcomes pastoral support for its ministry.

2022 Programs

2022 began with the church having Zoom-only attendance from January to mid-March due to COVID and

CDC guidance; therefore, Women's Ministry began meetings on Zoom. Once in-person worship resumed, WM began moving to hybrid meetings that continued throughout 2022.

February 26: Finish It February, Move into March (13 Attendees)

This was a Zoom program offered to women to be able to reflect on finishing things that we let linger, especially during the pandemic, and then move on. It offered women an opportunity to connect while the church was not meeting in person, and to focus positively on continuing to move forward. There were Zoom break out rooms for small groups for guided and open sharing, as well as music.

July: The Puzzle Project Launched: Celebrating Our Connections and Creating Community

Cut out puzzle pieces were made available at church and online for all members to write on or decorate to share or express their gifts. WM

requested that finished pieces be brought back to church to be displayed on the hall walls.

August: The Puzzle Project Continued

To encourage participation in the puzzle project, WM placed a table outside at the church picnic with puzzle pieces and art materials.

October 30: Time with Children

Carrie Douglas and Karen Flann presented the Time with Children at the service to introduce and explain the Puzzle Project to the children and encourage their participation in the project.

October 30: Celebration of the Puzzle Project: Women's Ministry Coffee and Small Groups

Following the service, Women's Ministry sponsored the coffee hour and set up small tables each with a different conversation topic posted. Members and visitors were asked to find a topic of interest to them and to

sit at that table. LRUCC members led the discussions. Women's Ministry provided special baked goods, fruit, etc. More than 50 people participated in the event.

December 18: Women's Ministry Coffee Hour

Women's Ministry did the regular coffee hour as a team.

Book Group 2022 Organized by Women's Ministry

The book group's regular meeting time is Sunday on the odd months of the year, 11:30 A.M.–1:30 P.M. in Room 8 and is open to all who are interested. The book group rotates leadership of the book discussions among WM members and volunteers from the congregation. The coordinator for soliciting book titles and sending out titles for a vote is Jean Wheelock. The books receiving the highest votes get put on the list for reading and discussion.

Once again, in 2022, the book group changed to Zoom meetings initially, and then hybrid or Zoom-only depending on circumstances.

The following books/topics were read and discussed in 2022; average attendance 5

January 9 – Poetry led by Jennifer Atkinson. Suggestions: Tracy K. Smith's *Anthology of Contemporary Poems*; *American Journal: Fifty Poems for Our Time*; *Deaf Republic* by Ilya Kaminsky

March 13 – *Vesper Flights* by Helen Macdonald led by Jean Wheelock

May 15 – *The Only Woman in the Room* by Marie Benedict led by Ellen Wertman

July 10 – *Benediction* by Kent Haruf led by Jan Curtis

September 11 – *American Rust* by Philip Meyer led by Pam Binninger

November 13 – *The Premonition* by Michael Lewis led by Janet Mackey

2023 Book Group Selections :

To be determined.

Clerk

Rich Dodenhoff

Meetings of the Congregation

Congregational Meetings were held on January 30 and June 6 in 2022.

The January meeting constituted the traditional annual meeting of the congregation and included reports from committees and boards. With the goal of more efficiently and effectively managing the operation of Little River, the congregation approved multiple changes to the bylaws that included:

- reducing the number of people required to serve on boards and committees
- eliminating term limits for the Endowment Committee
- eliminating the Arts Committee
- creating the Safe Community Committee, which actualizes information gathered from the Sacred Listening Circles held during 2021
- replacing the Personnel Committee with the new Human Resources Committee.

The congregation also adopted a Code of Conduct, which was another benefit of information gathered during the Sacred Listening Circles.

All nominees to serve on committees and boards were unanimously approved. The congregation approved disbursements from the General Endowment Fund for 2022, and the 2022 Operating Budget was approved.

During the June Congregational Meeting, Jan Curtis and Gail Perry of behalf of the Senior Pastor Search Committee provided information gathered through a congregational survey developed by the Committee through the expertise of Nancy Carey. Data about the congregation were also presented.

The bylaws were amended to eliminate the Audit Committee, better define the responsibilities of the comptroller, and allow the use of an outside accounting firm to “attest to the accuracy and correctness of the Church’s financial reporting.”

Robin Petrusak on behalf of the Board of Trustees provided an update on the budget, discussed replacement of the fire alarm system, and noted other improvements made to the church’s physical plant.

Meetings of the Church Council

Except for August, the Church Council met monthly during 2022 and held two meetings in July.

Flower Report

Ruth W. Duncan

First, my thanks for the generous congregational support shown to flowers in 2022. Flowers were sponsored in 29 weeks, leaving 23 without direct sponsorship. Please continue with that solid support! I would be very happy to have more weeks directly sponsored, as I enjoy the challenge of trying to make something specifically for an individual or family occasion or non-occasion.

Help wanted! I would love to have help with this delightful chore. Come and see how I do what I do. Come and

play with flowers with me! I usually make the weekly arrangements in the early afternoons on Saturdays. Just call me ahead of time so I will know to expect you (703 944-4874). The process just takes practice for the most part.

Bunny Jones has continued her faithful care of the living indoor plants throughout the atrium, narthex, and sanctuary in 2022, as well as seeing to flowers during the weeks I was away. Her care keeps the place looking very nice. Thank you very much, Bunny!

Historian/Archivist

David Roach

The year 2022 saw the beginning of a return to normalcy at worship. The year saw us reopen the church to in-person services but caution took precedence in the planning. A Media Team was created to help in the production of our services via Zoom as well as in person. After a brief closure due to an uptick in COVID throughout Virginia, we again returned to a hybrid worship service.

The year once again brought several requests for information from the archives and we were able to research and provide the information.

Throughout the year documents were added to the archives but we also began a purging of documents that no longer need to be retained.

Maintaining records of worship bulletins, the *Current Reflections* newsletter, and bulletins of special services continued throughout the year.

If you have any contributions to the history of the church, please email me at droach44@gmail.com.

Scouts

Bill Huddleston

Scout Troop 1532 and Cub Scout Pack 115: Bruce Summers, LRUCC Chartering Organization Representative; Bill Huddleston, Eagle Advisor, Troop 1532; Troop 1532 Scoutmaster: Chris Dudding; Troop Committee Chair: Abe McAllister; Pack 115 Cubmaster: Shannon Novack

Troop 1532 Highlights – 2022 Activities

As a component of the Youth Ministry programs at LRUCC, the church through the Board of Deacons is the Chartering Organization (sponsor) for Scouts USA Troop 1532 and Cub Scout Pack 115. Scout “program years” are equivalent to “school years” with the summer added for Scout Camps, High Adventure Camps, and canoeing, kayaking, bicycling, and other outdoor activities. Troop 1532 is now in its fifth program year at LRUCC: fall 2018–2019, fall 2019/2020 (COVID 1), fall 2020–2021 (COVID 2), and fall 2021–2022 (post pandemic COVID transition), and the current program year of September 2022 to August 2023. The Troop and Pack wish to thank LRUCC for being the Chartering Organization for both Troop 1532 and Pack 115.

2022 was a good year for Troop 1532. We returned to regular in-person meetings at LRUCC as the threat of COVID subsided. Scout participation in camping and service projects grew from the previous year. We welcomed many new scout families to the troop and saw a net gain of 5 scouts from 2021. Two scouts earned their Eagle rank, which was a contrast to 2021 in which no troop 1532 scouts earned

their Eagle rank during the pandemic slowdowns. Lawrence McAllister and his sister (at the Scouts USA Girl Troop 1533G) both earned their Eagle ranks and LRUCC held the first ever joint brother-sister Eagle Court of Honor in March.

The troop ended 2022 with 31 active scouts and 20 active adult leaders. 27 scouts advanced at least one rank level during the year. The troop committee met monthly to support the planning and financing of the troop. A number of older Scouts have transferred from other Troops into Troop 1532 based on school and sports friendships. David Brenningmeyer retired as committee chair in April and was succeeded by Abraham McAllister. Chris Conley retired as Scoutmaster in October and was succeeded by Chris Dudding.

Troop 1532 Summer Activities

The troop organized 8 camping events and sent a crew to participate in the Sea Base Coral Reef Sailing high adventure program. The 8 camping events included long-term camping at Goshen Scout reservation, Camp Buck Toms in East Tennessee, and the troop’s 4th annual 50-mile canoe trip on the Upper Potomac River, which is a troop level High Adventure experience.

Troop Service Projects

Troop 1532 scouts logged nearly 300 hours of service. Service activities included Scouting for Food, LRUCC cleanup days, the Annandale Greenway Conservation Project, Eagle project volunteering, and the Wreaths across America Remembrance at Arlington National Cemetery.

Worship Related Activities

Troop 1532 Scouts and Pack 115 Cubs have been an integral part of the LRUCC’s celebration of National Scout Sunday, annually held in February.

Outdoor Worship Area/ River Table Worship Table

Bennet Poplin’s Eagle Project was the creation and building of the LRUCC outdoor worship area, including the creation of a brick patio and the building of the River Table using cherry slabs from a tree that was felled when the building was built. The slabs had been in the ladder closet for the past 70 years awaiting an appropriate project, and Bennett and the Troop did an excellent job creating the outdoor worship area that was dedicated in November 2022.

Cub Scout Pack 115, Shannon Novack, Cubmaster

As everyone emerged from the pandemic, 2022 was a year of post-COVID rebound for Cub Scout Pack 115. We returned to regular in person meetings at homes, schools, and at LRUCC. Pack 115 ended 2022 with 49 active scouts, an increase of 20 scouts from prior year! We graduated 6 Arrow of Light scouts, of which 3 joined Troop 1532, and some of the others moved to other countries as part of their parent's postings. We welcomed many new and returning scout families.

There are dens for each grade level, from kindergarten to fifth grade. Kindergarten – Lions, first grade – Tigers, second grade – Wolves, third grade – Bears, fourth grade – Webelos I (stands for We Will Be Loyal Scouts), and fifth grade (Arrow of Light). Fifth graders transition to the Scout Troop in the spring of their fifth-grade year, and 3 Scouts joined Troop 1532 in April 2022.

Pack 115 Activities

Pack 115 organized two camping events locally, and sent fourth and fifth grade scouts to an overnighter on the USS Torsk submarine in Baltimore Harbor. Four scouts attended long-term camping at Goshen Scout reservation. We held the annual Pinewood Derby car race, Raingutter Regatta boat race, and 3 summer events including fishing, hiking, and a Rocket into Scouting event at Eakin Park. At Pack events, we had the honor of hosting guests from the Falls Church High School JagWires robotics club, Annandale Fire & Rescue, MORE (Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts) for a lesson on trail stewardship, and Food for Others to learn about food insecurity. Scouts took advantage of free scouting days at Mount Vernon, learned new sports, practiced healthy meal planning and cooking, sang silly songs, and tied lots of knots.

Pack 115 Service Projects

In service to their community, Pack 115 scouts held a book drive, collecting more than 300 children's books for RIF (Reading Is Fundamental) Northern Virginia. They participated in Scouting for Food, LRUCC cleanup days, and Accotink Creek clean-up on International Coastal Cleanup month.

As a leadership team, we established a full year budget and transitioned to a new treasurer, Josh Novack, in 2022. Peter Bloom retired as Cubmaster in May and was succeeded by Shannon Novack.

Treasurer's Report

Carolyn L. Yocom

Summary

As of December 31, 2022, Little River had available cash of \$172,268. The total value of investments was \$732,711 (book value), with a market value of \$939,823. Cash liquidity was strong this year; additional grant awards helped our church stay in a strong financial position. *Further strengthening the church were generous contributions from members and friends.*

Little River ended its 2022 operating budget with a surplus of \$100,408, with income \$66,666 more than budgeted and expenses \$33,735 less than budgeted.

- **Income:** The increase in income was primarily due to a grant award of over \$80,000. This award was for non-profit entities who make important contributions to the community; the amount received was more than expected.
- **Expenses:** In terms of reduced expenses,
 - ♦ Program operations were \$12,216 below budget (\$28,100)
 - ♦ Personnel expenses were \$15,397 below budget (\$360,293).

	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	Net Budget-Actual
Income	\$635,100	\$ 701,766	\$66,666 over budget
Expenditures	635,093	601,358	33,735 below budget
Net Revenue/(Loss)	7	\$100,408	

Sources of Income

In terms of the sources of income, over 75% of our income comes from you! Grants and carryover funds were an important secondary support. Absent these funds, which totaled \$113,830, our spending would have been \$13,422 more than what we brought in from pledges, building use, and other income.

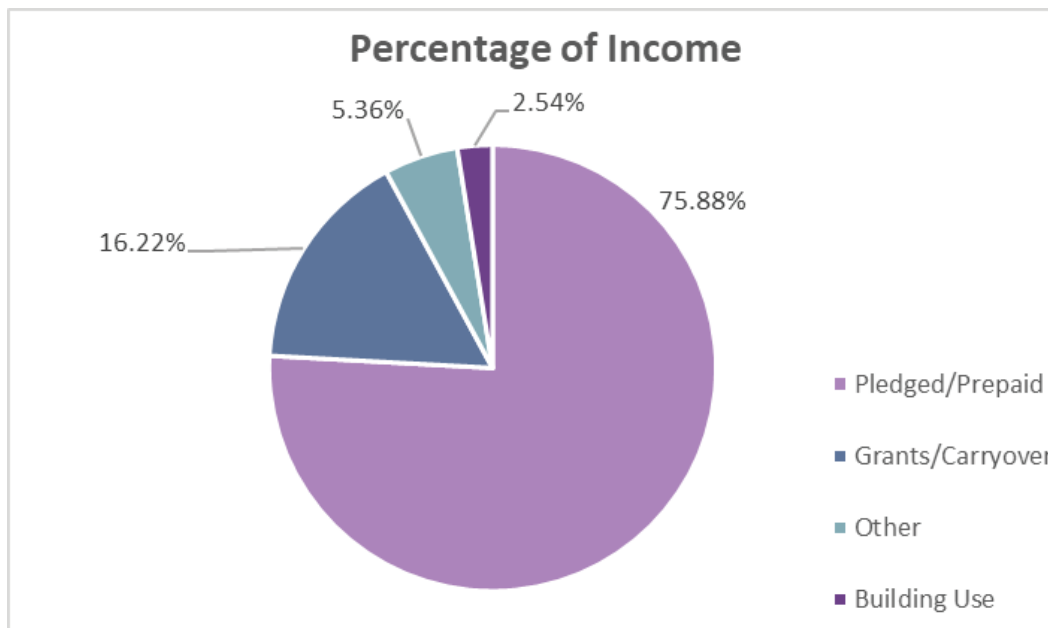
Continuing to pursue grants—as well as growing the church—will be important in order to function at our current operating level.

Source	Amount	Percentage of Income
Pledged and Prepaid Income	\$532,523	75.88%
Other Income and Interest^a	\$37,589	5.36%
Building Use^b	\$17,824	2.54%
Grant and Carryover funds	\$113,830	16.22%
TOTAL	\$701,766	100%

Notes: Income in this table excludes special appeals and fundraising—such as off-budget gifts, as well as gifts to endowed and other funds.

^a Includes non-pledged income, plate offerings, endowment fund transfer (\$4,800) and other miscellaneous gifts; also includes interest earned.

^b Includes rent from the Annandale Preschool and other entities.



Our benevolent giving for 2022 was higher than in previous years, in part due to available grant funds.

Areas of Spending by Calendar Year (CY)

Benevolence	CY 2020	CY 2021	CY 2022
Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$ 24,000
Potomac Association	8,500	7,322	7,301
One Great Hour of Sharing ^a	4,010	7,135	4,655
Neighbors in Need ^a	3,285	7,230	3,835
Strengthen the Church ^a	1,270	1,345	2,491
Christmas Offering ^a	3,573	4,040	2,845
Easter Offering ^a	6,000	3,807	795
Deacons/Pastors' Fund ^a	16,785	8,350	6,328
Board of Outreach and Social Justice ^b	10,086	9,349	20,033
Total	\$71,203	\$68,578	\$72,283

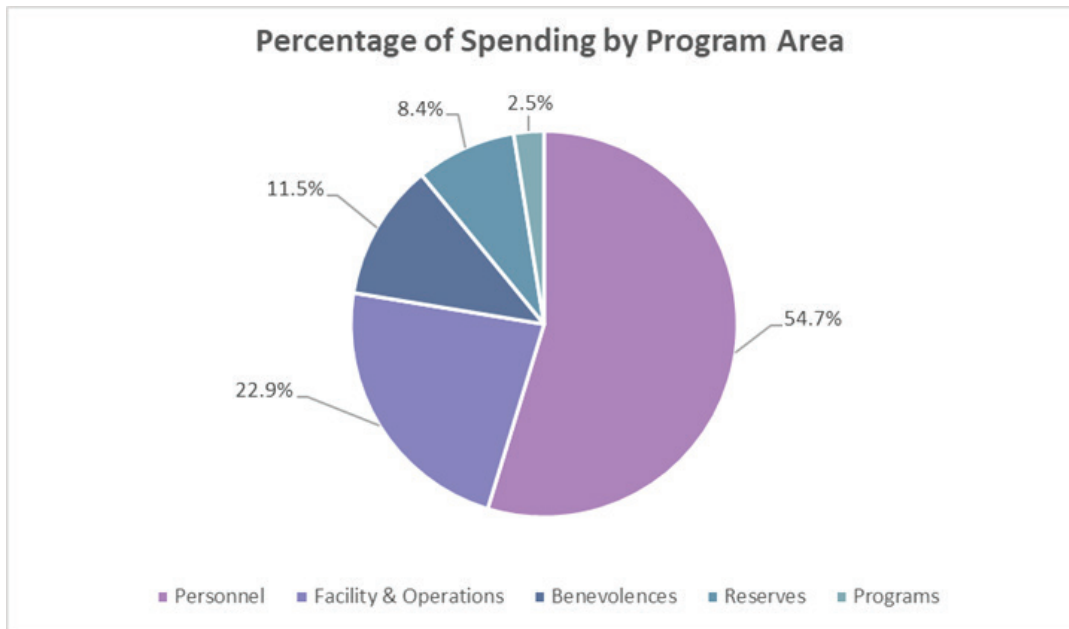
^a These benevolences are not included in our operating budget. Instead, the funds are recorded and then distributed based on contributions received.

^b The Board of Outreach and Social Justice expenditures for 2022 included \$8,000 in designated funds.

A Programmatic View of Our Spending for 2019 through 2022

Program Area	Percentage of Spending			
	2019	2020	2021	2022
Benevolences ^a	9.60%	11.20%	10%	11.47%
Personnel	66.80%	66.40%	61%	54.72%
Facility & Operations	19.60%	19.40%	18%	22.88%
Programs	4.00%	2.80%	2%	2.52%
Reserves	0.00%	0.20%	8%	8.41%

^a Includes \$8,000 in designated funds from the Board of Outreach and Social Justice.



Endowed and Designated Funds

The following LRUCC's invested funds are held in the UCC Fund's Moderate Balanced Fund. The market value of all invested funds declined over the course of the year. However, continued donations to the endowment fund, and limited use of many of the funds allows our church the opportunity to regain this value as the market changes.

Endowed & Designated Funds	Book Value		Market Value			
	1/1/2022 Balance	12/31/2022 Balance	1/1/22 Value	YTD Net Transactions	YTD Growth in Value	Current Value
Endowment	\$450,260	463,996	700,762	13,735	(127,428)	587,069
Thelma Morris	13,606	13,912	24,046	306	(4,298)	20,054
Music Trust	16,970	17,322	27,587	351	(4,931)	23,008
Ralph Wands	32,020	32,744	56,791	724	(10,158)	47,357
Beckwith Scholarship	1,260	1,327	5,328	68	(952)	4,443
Polly Spaar Memorial	3,269	3,377	8,476	108	(1,515)	7,069
Memorial Garden	1,981	2,032	4,020	51	(719)	3,353
GINNA M. DALTON	17,905	18,163	20,752	258	(3,620)	17,390
Special Music	8,674	2,047				
Building	7,124	7,691				
Total Endowed and Designated Funds	545,944	554,919				

Reserve Funds

Reserve funds are also invested in the UCC Fund's Moderate Balanced Fund. As noted in the Board of Trustees report, significant amounts of spending for repair and capital expense funds show the reduction in reserves.

Reserve Funds	Book Value		Market Value			
	1/1/2022 Balance	12/31/2022 Balance	1/1/2022 Value	YTD Net Transactions	YTD Growth in Value	Current Value
Major Repair	27,016	3,291	30,336	(23,726)	(2,876)	3,735
Organ Repair	10,493	12,659	13,468	2,166	(2,332)	13,136
Capital Expense	7,208	1,141	1,353	(6,067)	(299)	1,383
Choir Robe	1,139	1,160	1,692	22	(303)	1,411
Website	10,797	11,971	14,144	1,174	(2,439)	12,879

Pastoral and transition contingency funds are also in the UCC Moderate Balanced Fund. These are separated from the other tables as they may be of interest, given our pastoral search.

Pastoral Funds	Book Value		Market Value	
	1/1/2022 Balance	12/31/2022 Balance	1/1/2022 Balance	12/31/2022 Balance
Parsonage Reserve	24,776	25,145	24,316	24,114
Transition Contingency	19,562	35,918	19,801	32,826

In closing, please know that we do our best to ensure that every dollar, dime, penny (!) is tracked and reported. The community of support has been a gift to me personally. Volunteering is a chore—but it is one that bestows great gifts of community, faith, and friendship.

I would like to acknowledge the exceptional support of our finance team—

- Joe Christiansen has been a steady voice of history, support, and context.
- Robin Petrusak has demonstrated commitment and a work ethic that is truly beyond compare.
- Lois Wyatt will say she hasn't done much, but I would point to her willingness to help and learn these difficult tasks.
- LuAnn Bynum, who is just amazing in her efficiency and skill—she saves us money weekly by speed and accuracy.

Other thanks belong to our Cash Counters

- Badu Mireku is patient, skilled, and has been a constant presence helping with these tasks.
- Other individuals who have volunteered or been pulled in at a last minute's notice include:
 - ♦ Clark Beil
 - ♦ Jan Curtis
 - ♦ Carrie Douglas
 - ♦ Bruce Douglas
 - ♦ Sallyanne Harper
 - ♦ Mary Summers
 - ♦ And if I forgot someone, apologies!

Lastly—thanks to

- Kathy Heyman for helping schedule meetings and gently reminding us of the need to submit minutes of our meetings.
- Craig for his ability to scramble at the last minute and get us into newsletters, bulletins, and other documents.
- Nicole—for stopping by, checking in and being a warm and wonderful person.
- Pastor Art for his unfailing gratitude and support.

Search Committee

Jan Curtis and Gail Perry

January 2022

- Settled Senior Pastor Search Committee installed
- Jan Curtis and Gail Perry, Co-Chairs; Darla Carras, Fran DuRocher, Sallyanne Harper, Bill Huddleston, Dan Jimenez, Sofia El Khamlichi, and Amy Mireku

February–March 2022

- Organized and implemented Visioning Circles
- Ten circles convened, including Greenspring residents/LRUCC members, and youth.
- Trained facilitators provided by professional
- Analyzed and reported results to the congregation
- Total number of participants: 60-70

February–June 2022

- Assigned parts of the LRUCC Church Profile to committee members to draft and edit per UCC framework
- Reviewed the Church Profile for internal consistency and accuracy

February 2022 and throughout the year

- Convened every Tuesday at 7 P.M.; on occasion twice a week.
- Stored all files, including meeting minutes, in Dropbox; Sallyanne Harper served as committee recorder and Dropbox administrator
- Co-chairs met monthly with the Rev. Marvin Silver, Associate Conference Minister, or as frequently as needed
- Submitted periodic Search Committee updates to weekly LRUCC email newsletters

March–May 2022

- Created, distributed, and analyzed congregational survey, including demographic data
- Solicited input from boards and committees

June 2022

- Reported to congregation on survey results and committee progress

August 2022

- Updated congregation on Search Committee progress; shared Church Profile with congregation
- Opened application period on UCC website to receive ministerial profiles via Rev. Marvin Silver
- Submitted employment ads to *Sojourners* and *Christian Century* magazines
- Began confidential committee review of ministerial profiles; committee developed two sets of questions for first and second interviews
- Committee developed an informal rating form for review of candidates' profiles

September–January 2023

- Accepted the resignation of Amy Mireku with regret
- Interviewed candidates
- Prayed for discernment

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