

# ANNUAL REPORT

**2017 - 2018**

May 20, 2018



**Devoted to Christ,**

**Committed to each other,**

**Dedicated to sharing God's love with all!**

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# Agenda for Annual Program Meeting

Sunday, May 20, 2018

11:15 am

1. Call to Order
2. Invocation
3. Approval of June 25, 2017 Annual Program Meeting Minutes
4. Acceptance of Annual Reports
5. Previous Business
  - a. Quorum Count
6. New Business
  - a. Election of Officers
  - b. Faith Impact Initiative
  - c. Bell Project
  - d. Other Business
7. Adjournment

**SLATE OF OFFICERS – in addition to the members currently serving, the following are proposed to serve:**

**Moderator – Jim Halverson – 2 Year Term**

**Past Moderator – Lisa Carr – 2 Year Term**

Open – Vice Moderator – 2 Year Term

**Donna Bolz – Member at Large – 3 Year Term**

Open – Member at Large – 3 Year Term

**Bob Hansen – Member at Large – Remaining 2 Year Term**

Open – Member at Large – Remaining 1 Year Term

Open – Member at Large – Remaining 1 Year Term

**Jim Halverson** and his wife Terri have lived in West Dundee over twenty years, where they raised their three children, CJ (26), Tommy (23), and Anna (19). They have been members of the church for three years, enjoying better and deeper community at FCC than at churches they had been at much longer. They became involved with Hilltop Supper almost immediately upon attending. Jim is a professor at Judson University, where he teaches European and Church history. Besides church, on weekends you can find Jim and Terri riding on the Fox River Bike Trail, walking at Jelke Bird Sanctuary, or eating in downtown Dundee.

**Lisa Carr** and her husband Bryant have been together nearly 20 years. They are parents to their sweet and energetic almost-7-year-old daughter, Ellie. Being a part of FCC for the past eight years has been a true blessing for Lisa and her family. She has a heart for service and has volunteered at FCC in many different ways. Lisa also has over 25 years of experience in the credit union industry. For nearly a decade she has been an independent consultant, giving her flexibility to be an at-home mom and active volunteer. She and her family enjoy playing with their lovable lab, Chance, going out for brunch after church, and hitting the road for camping get-aways.

**Donna Bolz** has been a member of the church for over 30 years and has previously served on council as moderator, past moderator, and many other roles on boards and committees. Her two children grew up in the church and her dream of the columbarium became reality this past year. Her son rests there while her daughter and son-in-law reside in Ottawa, IL. Donna has taught elementary grades for almost 30 years and continues teaching in fourth grade contemplating retirement soon. She has a passion for mission and service and has accompanied high school youth groups to Central America for 14 years. She grew up in the east, but the mid-west is home and currently resides in South Barrington, but her suitcase is always at the ready for travel with a good book.

**Bob Hansen** and his wife, Barb, have been members at FCC for about 48 years. Their 3 grown children were confirmed at FCC and their daughter was married in our church as well. Bob was employed by Community Unit School District #300 for 34 years and retired as associate superintendent of schools in 2004. He is currently the chairperson of the Mission Ministry Team and has served on several other committees within the church. He has been a deacon, trustee, member of the music committee as well as a previous mission committee, a member of the pastoral relations committee, and the human resources committee. It was also Bob's pleasure to serve on the search committee for our associate pastor position.

**Currently Serving:**

Carol Adair – Treasurer

Sylvia Pomazak – Clerk

Pat Crowe – Member at Large

# Annual Program Meeting Minutes

June 25, 2017

The initial meeting held May 21, 2017 was not an official meeting as a quorum was not present, although there was some discussion regarding the quorum count amendment Council put forward. After much discussion, it was determined that Council would withdraw its proposal and a task force would be established to consider other options.

We did reach a quorum at the rescheduled meeting, held June 25, 2017 during the 10am worship service.

Pastor Aaron offered an opening prayer and Lisa Carr called the meeting to order.

## **New Business:**

It was motioned, seconded and approved to accept the Annual Reports, which included the 2016 Annual Program Meeting minutes.

Nominations from the floor to fill the open positions were called for and none received. Dirk Fuqua moved to accept the full slate of nominations; the motion was seconded, and the slate was approved.

## **Other Business:**

Lisa Carr reported that Tom Foley was leading the task force to review our members, investigating and researching options regarding to potentially segment our membership into voting and non-voting members to help ensure we establish a fair and representative quorum. In the meantime, Council will take no action to modify or adjust the quorum count method.

Pastor Aaron closed in prayer and the worship service concluded.

Minutes submitted by Lisa Carr

# Rev. Aaron James, Senior Pastor

## 2017-2018 Annual Report

It was about 8:30 on the evening of May 1 – just a few weeks ago. A small group of our members were embracing one another in the sanctuary. Sincerely and gratefully, guards down, embracing one another, in the way we do when we fully trust and appreciate one another. It was the kind of poignant joy tinged with relief, a celebration that also seems to ask, “Why can’t it be like this all the time?”

These members – a subset of our year-long Confirmation for Adults group – had just offered one another their faith statements. Some were a few words, others a few pages. All were offered with the inevitable caveats: “This isn’t very profound or eloquent . . .” “This isn’t very long . . .” Or my favorite (which I’ve felt and used myself): “I’m not even sure this is true, but . . .”

And then, without exception, your brothers and sisters offered insightful, earnest, poetic renderings of their faith. Each found a way to say what they had given their heart to, the truest things they knew. The style and content was as diverse as the group itself, yet unified by their authenticity and common intention. All was offered in faith and received with grace. Which sounds, to me, a lot like church at its best.

Which is also why they were hugging. We don’t get these moments as much as we would like to, or even as often as we think we ought, being in church. But when they do, they feed us and awaken us. The way, sometimes, we don’t know how hungry we are until we start to eat, or don’t realize we were asleep until we wake up. There is something in us – the Spirit in us – that springs to life in these moments and says, “Yes – this!”

It could be that this just happens to be my wheel house (I love this stuff). Or it could be that this happened most recently, or . . . who knows? Whatever the reason, the memory of that moment will stick with me for some time: the embraces born of trust, affection, and hard work. This moment and others like them – including all those I know nothing about and wasn’t there to witness, which is most of them – I am grateful for all of them.

We don’t always share about these moments. Perhaps we can’t, really, as we can’t just pluck these moments out of their context and pretend they mean as much elsewhere. But I know they happen, and they are the lifeblood of our congregation. Or, to change and reground the metaphor, they are the fruit of God’s Spirit – the stuff our common life produces when we all do our part.

I find this to be true of much of my life: a lot of work, a lot of ordinary, coming together every now and then in these wonderful confluences of goodness. As we end this program year, instead of looking at the big picture – the statistics, the budget, the arc of the whole year – perhaps we take some time to remember only a moment or two. I hope we all have them: moments when we felt we had arrived, or been known and loved, or made a difference. Moments where we caught a flash of grace, a glimpse of the Holy.

I have come to believe that these holy moments may not outnumber the hard moments, but they do, God willing, outweigh them. Much of what we do might remain ordinary: preparing, maintaining, adjusting, reflecting. But these holy moments draw us here, keep us coming back, and sustain us in the meantime. These are the moments I will remember most from this year. They will continue to sustain me and inspire me in the days to come. I hope yours do, too.

Thank you for this year. May God bless us and our congregation in this coming year!

Peace,  
Pastor Aaron

# Rev. Paige Wolfanger, Associate Pastor

## 2017-2018 Annual Report

*Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked,  
or take the path that sinners tread,  
or sit in the seat of scoffers;  
but their delight is in the law of the Lord,  
and on his law they meditate day and night.  
**They are like trees planted by streams of water,  
which yield their fruit in its season,  
and their leaves do not wither.  
In all that they do, they prosper.***

- Psalm 1:1-3

It is apropos that Psalm 1, with its declaration that the faithful “are like trees planted by streams of water,” should come up in the Revised Common Lectionary just as I was sitting down to write my Annual Report, as one of the major goals that Pastor Aaron and I had for this last program year was to intentionally, thoughtfully, and prayerfully create more and varied opportunities for members of this congregation to nurture their spiritual lives. This project for the year sprang from our ongoing engagement with the 2020 Vision Plan, and our growing understanding of who we are as a faith community here at First Congregational Church of Dundee. This intention focus on Faith Formation at all age and maturity levels resulted in a number of exciting programs and opportunities:

- **Expanded Retreats** – this year, besides our annual Middle School and High School Youth Group retreats, we planned and implemented a one-day retreat for families of young children at Hickory Knolls Discovery Center, as well as, for the first time in a long time, men’s retreat and a women’s retreat, both at Holy Wisdom Monastery, in Madison, WI.
- **“Foundations” Fall Sermon Series** – we kicked off our program year with a theological and practical exploration of what it means to be progressive Christians. We explored some of our core values, and followed their roots back to Scripture, the Congregational tradition, and our Still Speaking God, so that we could better articulate and live our faith.
- Our first full year of **Our Whole Lives** - Our Whole Lives is a comprehensive Sexuality Education Program that we have been preparing for two years and taught this year to students 8<sup>th</sup> grade and up. Our teachers Kelly Gentleman and Judy Foley met with our youth every Sunday night for the entire year, as they talked about what their faith means in the context of their relationships and choices.
- Our first full year of **Adult Confirmation** – also for the first time, we offered this year Confirmation for Adults on Tuesday nights, right after our 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation class. Each week between 5-15 adults gathered to study the basics of our Christian heritage and faith, with 5 attending more than 75% of the classes.
- **Racism and Privilege Pub Series** – In the Fall, we also offered a 6-week series after worship on Sundays to discuss our national crisis surrounding race and white privilege, and what we as people of faith can offer towards a solution.

- **“Pray, Then, This Way” Lenten Sermon Series & Vespers** – Like the Fall “Foundations” series, with this series of Sunday and Wednesday night services, we offered and opportunity to engage in our roots as a praying people and provided practical tools for folks to more fully incorporate prayer into the rhythms of a spiritual life.

These are only a few of the highlights of a year focused on faith formation and spiritual life and growth. It was a vibrant, exciting, and engaging year for me, as one of your clergypersons, and I thank, as always, for inviting me along on this journey, and trusting me with leadership and discipleship alongside you. I feel blessed, like a tree planted beside water.

Peace,  
Rev. Paige Wolfanger

# Moderator's Report

## 2017-2018 Annual Report

As I write this report, I'm shocked at how quickly two years have gone by and my term as Moderator is coming to a conclusion. I started last year's annual report with an expression of gratitude for God's abundant blessings over the prior year. Here we are again and the first words that come to mind again are praise and thanks to God – which, I suppose is as it should be. For it is through Him that all things are possible, and it is for His glory that we serve.

It's hard, though, not to repeat some of the thoughts I had last year – we have an incredible congregation, filled with people who faithfully serve and care for our community with Christ-like love. We are blessed with wonderful pastors, who have devoted their lives to serving God and our congregation with grace and compassion. We have an amazing Council, committed to God and our church, dedicated to working together to make a difference.

Each year, Council develops strategic goals and priorities to help us fulfill the mission of our church. On the surface, it seems we focus only on the business of church, but it truly is a faith journey. By working together, we experience God's grace, joy and wisdom. By confessing our own doubts and fears, we open ourselves to God's strength and comfort. Through prayer and surrender, we turn our hearts and minds to God, becoming reliant on Him in all things.

We were able to accomplish several of our strategic goals – many of them focused on organizational development, as we continue to live into our model of governance. Our major focus, however, remains reducing or eliminating our mortgage. We learned about refinancing options, discussed budget shortfalls, pondered what was possible and prayed about our way forward.

Spiritually we feel called to grow in so many areas and as we began to develop a vision for our future, we became even more certain that our situation is neither spiritually nor financially sustainable. We must get out from under the weight of our mortgage in order to lift us up into our vision of who we believe God is calling us to be.

We started a Faith Impact Task Force to help us determine how best to reach that goal. Much of the task force's work has been behind the scenes, but through conversation with many of our church members and leaders, we feel confident we are moving in the right direction. We are excited to be expanding the conversation over the summer. We are inspired and enlivened by the possibilities.

Therefore, much of what we do in the next few months will be focused on our Faith Impact Initiative, although there is more to accomplish. Each year we review current and set new goals for the year ahead. We evaluate our progress on a regular basis to ensure we stay true to the plans we believe serve our church best. Some of our other goals include completing our policy book and holding a leadership retreat with committee and team leaders.

It has been an honor to serve. I look forward to the new season ahead – all of the planned and unplanned. Whatever comes our way, we are not alone. God is with us. God is for us. We are blessed.

In faithful service,  
Lisa Carr

# Building & Grounds Ministry

## 2017-2018 Annual Report

Building & Grounds Ministry includes the Interiors Team and oversees the proper maintenance of all the property and facilities of the Church, including landscaping. This Ministry is responsible for all safety, security, and structural changes to the building, ordering and upkeep of all the building's mechanical and electrical systems, décor and furnishing of the building.

Projects the B&G Ministry worked on and are currently planning for 2017 – 2018 are:

- ✓ Controlling the current budget for B&G is a constant job. The utilities were being watched carefully to stay within the budget.
- ✓ Repaired lights in the Narthex
- ✓ Taught 6 CPR Classes – 20+ church members and community people certified in CPR.
- ✓ Repaired the roof flashing
- ✓ Repaired pot holes in the parking lot
- ✓ Added more cleaning duties to Service Master throughout the church

Plans for this budget year include:

- Continue to monitor the budget and find ways to improve the church environment.
- Repair the steeple
- Continue improvement to the interior and exterior of the building.
- Sealing the parking lot cracks
- Repair steeple lights on the ground
- Get second AED machine for lower level

Perry Lynch wishes to thank our other hard-working Building & Grounds Ministry Team members and other church members for a job well done. With your help, we will continue to improve our church and make it home for everyone to enjoy.

# Church Clerk's Report

## 2017-2018 Annual Report

Members 873

Confirmands 5

New Members 17

Weddings 2

Baptisms 15

Funerals 3

### Our Dearly Departed Members:

Harley Olson June 2, 2017

Marge Wille June 16, 2017

C. Ann Francis July 12, 2017

# **Endowment Fund**

## **2017-2018 Annual Report**

Members: Gary Dorn, Dirk Fuqua, Clancy McCarthy, and Dick Sisler (chair)

Receipts: \$0

Disbursements: \$0

Since inception (1982), the General Endowment fund has provided \$1,035,739.56 of matching contributions.

Fund Balance as of April 30, 2018: \$562,517.89. Approximately \$152,000 is available for matching funds.

Respectfully submitted,

Dick Sisler  
Chairman

# Fundraising Events

## 2017-2018 Annual Report

<u>Event</u>	<u>Profit</u>
And A Dollar	\$4,882.73
Cookie Walk/Boutique	\$3,482.63
Haeger Bakeware	\$ 385.00
Hoagies	\$3,116.69
It's My Birthday	\$2,297.00
Pews	\$2,000.00
Pickles, Jam, Salsa	\$ 156.00
Vegetable Sales	<u>\$ 26.85</u>
	\$16,346.90

# First Congregational Church of Dundee History

## 2017-2018 Annual Report

### Recurring Events/Activities:

Volunteers from our church provided assistance to the staff at PADS in Elgin from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. the third Wednesday of each month. Susie Fahey is our church coordinator.

Meals and other items are provided to the Community Crisis Center in Elgin the third Tuesday of each month. Co-chairs are Elizabeth Erotas-Rouzer and Ronda Feller.

The Lynn Ministry, named after Lynn Brittain, continued this year. The congregation is provided names and addresses of those who would like to receive cards from members who are travelling to various parts of the world. This ministry effort is coordinated by Pat Steffan.

FCC continues to offer a monthly free dinner program on the second Tuesday of every month called the Hilltop Community Supper. The dinners continue to be a great success. The community is invited to enjoy a sit down, served meal once a month hosted by FCC. Freewill offerings are accepted but not required. The program is under the leadership of Jan Kees.

Three Adult Seminar groups met throughout the year: Seminar West, Pat Storer, coordinator; Promise Seminar, Barbara Keable, coordinator, and Thursday Seminar, Bob Hansen, coordinator.

The Men's Small Group Ministry met each Wednesday morning at 6:30 am at Panera Bread.

Afternoon Circle coordinated by Carolyn Lortz met the third Thursday of the month.

Knit Wits met each Tuesday under the leadership of Pat Crowe.

Confirmation Class with 5 members was held on Tuesdays. Additionally, this program year, an Adult Confirmation Class was held mirroring the youth class. It was attended by approximately 16 adults with five reaching the 75% attendance threshold for recognition of their attendance.

Middle School Youth Group (MSYG) met on Wednesdays.

High School Youth Group (HSYG) met Sundays.

Fourth Grade Bible Study was conducted on Sundays.

### **Confirmation Class of 2017 - 2018:**

Ron Grant  
Evan Harris  
Anna McNicholas  
Emma Schroeder  
Reid Teeple

**Adult Confirmation Class Recognition:**

Anne Hopp  
Barb Keable  
Carolyn Lortz  
Lynda Rundio  
Elisa Tessier

**Weddings:**

Lynn Reuter and Lynda Rundio  
Kassie Kissane and Jeremy Camacho

**Baptisms:**

Emily Lunsford  
Olivia Blanken  
Malakai Gayle  
Delilah Fuqua  
Jonah Albright  
Natalie Maldonado  
Mikayla Hilton  
Walter Ryan  
Austin Moffett  
Lucille Todd  
Quinn Bigelow  
Rory Bigelow  
Jack Lehman  
Benjamin Meyer  
Camille Crisp

**New Members from June 2017 - May 2018:**

Amanda Behrans  
Courtney Behrans  
James Breunlin  
Marcia Breunlin  
Gary Christenson  
Daniel Duda  
Deena Duda  
Diane Lindblom  
John Lindblom  
Meg Maenpaa  
Earl Mark  
Sherry Mark  
Adella Quintenz  
Ana Russell  
Robert Russell  
James Weiss  
Linda Weiss

## Highlights from June 2017 – May 2018:

### June/July/August 2017

- Summer Series 2017 – Sunday Funnies II was the theme for summer.
- July 28<sup>th</sup> – August 5<sup>th</sup>: High School Youth Group Mission Trip to Cayey, Puerto Rico.
- Back to School Supply drive.

### September/ October 2017:

- September 10<sup>th</sup>: Rally Day.
- September 10<sup>th</sup>: “Foundation” series began.
- September 29<sup>th</sup> – October 1<sup>st</sup>: Men’s Retreat at Holy Wisdom Monastery.
- October 6<sup>th</sup> – First Fridays: Get Ready for Halloween.
- October 14<sup>th</sup>: Family Nature Retreat at Hickory Knolls Discovery Center in St. Charles.

### November/December 2017:

- November 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>: Women’s Retreat at Holy Wisdom Monastery.
- 19<sup>th</sup>: Harvest Day Coffee.
- 27<sup>th</sup>: Advent 2017 theme began: “Make Ready”.
- Thanksgiving Food collections for those in need. Many local families were provided meals and extra food was given to the FISH Food Pantry.
- The Mitten Tree was set-up. Congregation members choose names from the tree and provided gifts to families in need in the local school district.

### December 2017:

- 2<sup>nd</sup>: Annual Cookie Walk and Holiday Boutique was held.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>: First Sunday of Advent 2017 theme: “Hope”.
- 10<sup>th</sup>: Second Sunday of Advent 2017 theme: “Peace”.
- 17<sup>th</sup>: Third Sunday of Advent 2017 Theme: “Joy”.
- 17<sup>th</sup>: Christmas “Blue Grass” Cantata.
- 24<sup>th</sup>: Fourth Sunday of Advent 2017 Theme: “Love”.

### January 2018:

- 7<sup>th</sup>: Epiphany 2018 Series began: “Created to Be”.
- 13<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>: Adult Mission Trip to Back Bay Mission, Biloxi Mississippi.

### February/March 2018:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>: Middle School Youth Group Winter Retreat to Camp Edwards.
- 18<sup>th</sup>: Lenten Series 2018 began: “Pray Then in This Way”.

### April 2018:

- 14<sup>th</sup>: HSYG Fundraiser – BINGO night at Emmett’s Brewing Company.
- 21<sup>st</sup>: Confirmation Retreat at Hickory Knolls Discovery Center in St. Charles.

**May 2018:**

- 6<sup>th</sup>: Confirmation Sunday. A total of 5 Confirmands became members.
- 20<sup>th</sup>: Music Appreciation Sunday recognized individuals and groups. Teacher Appreciation Sunday.
- 27<sup>th</sup>: Summer Series 2018 begins: "Practicing Our Faith".

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Skutt, Historian, First Congregational Church of Dundee

# **Littlest Disciples Preschool**

## **2017-2018 Annual Report**

This was the 3rd year of leadership for Sue McNicholas and Jennifer Wagh. We had one 4-year-old class and two 3-year-old classes each meeting three days per week, and two 2/3-year-old classes meeting 2 days per week. Our preschool staff includes 4 lead teachers and 5 assistant teachers that offer engaging, developmentally appropriate activities for the children. Additionally, we planned several community-based field trips to the Dundee Fire Station, Dundee Library, West Dundee Public Works, and the Rakow Center. We also had a dentist and a veterinarian speak to the children. Our mission projects for this year were planting a tree at the Jelke Creek Bird Sanctuary and collecting socks and underwear for at risk children in our community.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sue McNicholas

# Mission Ministry

## 2017-2018 Annual Report

### Mission Ministry Mission Statement

*Reaching out with our actions, resources, and faith to those in urgent need in our local and global communities.*

The primary mission related activities that have been supported by the First Congregational Church this year are PADS, Habitat for Humanity, Community Crisis Center, Kids Hope, and the FISH pantry.

**PADS** is the homeless shelter located in Elgin. The clients are provided with a place to sleep, shower, do laundry, and other services. FCC secures 4 volunteers on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month. The volunteers purchase, prepare, serve and clean up a light meal. They also help check in clients and whatever else is needed. In addition, financial support is provided to PADS through the contributions made by the congregation. Susie Fahey has been the FCC coordinator for this mission activity this past year.

**HABITAT for HUMANITY:** Our New Hope group along with 2 other groups is finishing up a house at 914 Berkley in Carpentersville. Our group will have 2 set aside work days for volunteering on May 19 and June 9, 2018. We are looking for 2-5 volunteers from FCC and from the 4 other churches.

Habitat will be closing on 2 homes in April and May 2018. 3 other homes are in progress. Our New Hope group will be starting a new house build from the ground up in June. The home is in Carpentersville on Chippewa Lane. We will be looking for volunteers with construction and non-construction experience to help out on this new build. There is a group from Maine East High School that will be building the walls off site and shipping them to the site location in late May 2018.

At this time there are 10 new families for 2018 with 5 more applications in process.

A special thank you to FCC for their continued support and to all of the volunteers who gave up their time and talents. Brent Hayes is the contact and coordinator of the Habitat projects for FCC.

**COMMUNITY CRISIS CENTER:** The Crisis Center is a shelter for women who are victims of domestic abuse; they find temporary housing, immediate safety, counseling, support, and personal development for themselves and their young children. The center also provides the community with broader support with counseling, support groups, emergency clothes and food supplies. In addition, they provide shelter for homeless women and their children as space allows after first serving women who suffer at the hands of domestic violence (plus their children).

We continued this year with our (new and long-term) FCC volunteers serving home-cooked meals monthly and leading activities after dinner for the women and children (jewelry making, crafts, songs and more). The monthly meal is set up with warmth and dignity: family-style with our FCC volunteers setting up a colorful dinner table complete with fresh flowers, colorful napkins, and tablecloths and a plentiful buffet of their meal. Children and mothers alike have expressed great joy at these special meals (delicious and welcoming)

The Crisis Center mission work continues to work toward sustainability while providing the home-cooked monthly meals, presented with dignity; we also put a great deal of value on the donations from our church members in regularly providing diapers and infant formula for the littlest ones in dire need of support in our community, through this emergency shelter. **We welcome new volunteers to join us on this local mission.**

Our coordinators are Linda Gosmire, Ronda Feller, and Elizabeth Erotas-Rouzer.

**FISH (Friend I Shall Help)** this is the local food pantry located in Carpentersville. Monthly donations by the congregation of non-perishable food items have helped provide food to the many needy families within our community. The FISH pantry provides food to over 450 families each month. In addition to our food donations, FCC has provided financial support to assist FISH with the purchase of commodities from the Northern Illinois Food Bank. FCC also has volunteers that go to FISH and help with the distribution of food to the needy families. Barb and Bob Hansen have been the FCC contacts with FISH in addition to delivering the FCC donated items.

**KIDS' HOPE USA:** The Mission Ministry implemented the Kids' Hope mentoring program in October 2013. Our Kids' Hope Leadership Team, an oversight and planning team, consists of Nancy Sisler, Mary Jane Pflederer, and Pam Horn. Initially, the Leadership Team trained thirteen FCC mentors in June and September 2013.

FCC Kids Hope Program continues at Perry Elementary School for its fourth year. Two of the FCC Kids Hope Mentors, Rick Gilmore and Diane Fry, have followed their mentees to Lakewood School for the past 2 years and now have continued with both of their mentees at Carpentersville Middle School. Both Rick and Diane have taken the online KH training for mentoring middle school students. We are very excited to continue our mentoring into the middle school, as this is new to KH this year. Mary Jane Pflederer has taken the lead on communication, support and updates for our middle school mentors.

Our Kids' Hope Mentors for 2017-2018 are: George Bryson, Erla Faye Boyle, Carol Adair, Nancy Sisler, and Dick Sisler (@ Perry Elementary), Diane Fry, Rick Gilmore, (@ Carpentersville Middle). Mike Trump will return in the fall of 2018.

New this year is our Sponsor/Prayer Partner initiative. KH National has offered robust ongoing and targeted supports(online) for our mentors. Mary Jane and Pam have met with our mentors regarding this new support and they all agreed it would be most beneficial and certainly enrich their work with fresh and abundant new ideas. The prayer partners are also sponsors (\$15.00/mo.- \$180.00/yr.) and will cover the cost of these new supports/materials etc. for our mentors. The Prayer Partners/Sponsors are: Lisa Carr (Nancy Sisler), John/Julie

Knight (Rick Gilmore), Janet/David Oatman (George Bryson), Rebecca Robery/Lisa McCarthy (Carol Adair), Barb Keable (Dick Sisler), Mary Jane Pflederer (Diane Fry), Pam Horn (Erla Faye Boyle). Our goal is to encourage and support this relationship in an ongoing way – to support our sponsors in better supporting our mentors beyond their very generous financial commitment.

The mentors meet with their one student, once a week for one hour. The mentors fill out a weekly report after meeting with their mentee and these reports are a confidential record kept in the Kids Hope Office. FCC provides the materials and supplies that the mentors need. This year, a late start at Perry, has had rave reviews from our mentors.

The Leadership Team plans an 'End of the Year Kids' Hope Celebration each spring. The celebration is for mentors, mentees, parents, and teachers (none have joined us to date), and the KH FCC Leadership Team. The Mission Ministry supports and funds this very important event, which celebrates our year together, as well as providing closure for the children and mentors. This year's KH Celebration was held on May 10 at Perry Elementary School @ 5:00 PM in the evening with dinner, games and gifts. The change in time is in hopes of making better connections with our mentees families.

The Leadership Team is looking to train additional Kids' Hope Mentors in early fall 2018.

The feedback from the mentors, the children and the staff at Perry Elementary School and Carpentersville Middle School has been very positive.

**BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF DUNDEE TOWNSHIP:** This year FCC has provided some financial assistance to the Boys and Girls Club of Dundee Township. This organization provides after school programs for youth within our community. Services provided include tutoring, sports and recreation activities, character and leadership development to mention a few. This organization works with about 500 students on a daily basis.

**CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate):** The CASA volunteers represent the best interests of abused and neglected children in Juvenile Court; a CASA is appointed by the judge for every child abuse case in Kane County and the CASA has standing in court as a 'guardian ad litem'. A CASA (Advocate/Guardian ad Litem) is appointed by the judge in Probate Court on every guardianship case involving the guardianship of a child.

FCC has supported the training of a CASA child advocate with a financial contribution again this year which assists with recruitment, training and case management of one of the 290+ CASA (advocate) volunteers, who **serve as a child's voice** through all the proceedings, placements, recommended services, visit schedules in the foster care system, while personally visiting the child regularly and frequently; the CASA advocate represents the CASA child (or children) in each and every court hearing, including the writing of a report to the judge detailing findings and recommendations on the best interests of the child and submitting a new report prior to **each** court hearing.

CASA Kane County represents and advocates for over 600 children each year in Kane County with an advocate/guardian ad litem looking out for the best interests of the child (children) and being the voice for the child.

**In addition**, to the above referenced mission activities, the First Congregational Church sponsors several other activities some of which are annual projects: Thanksgiving dinners, Mitten tree, Back to School supplies, and the Heartland blood drives.

**Thanksgiving Dinners:** This past year, our congregation provided food and financial donations that permitted FCC to donate complete Thanksgiving turkey dinners to 50 needy families within the community. The Mission Ministry team coordinated this activity that included several volunteers assisting with the packaging of food, the picking up of turkeys and the delivery of the meals to the identified schools for distribution to families.

**Mitten Tree:** Through the congregation's generosity, FCC provided Christmas gifts to 174 children, 87 families attending schools within our community. Some of the children were here after being displaced from the hurricanes in Puerto Rico and Texas. Our neighbors from Active Medical Center (formerly Planet Chiropractic) assisted by providing gifts for 20 children. The middle school youth cut out all of the mittens. The high school youth, and some of the youth group parents, assisted with sorting and bagging the gifts. Tammy Ray worked with the District 300 school social workers to identify the families and students and coordinated this project. The school social workers distributed the gifts to the identified families.

**Blood Drive:** FCC and Heartland Blood Center partner to hold community blood drives at the church. Annually, FCC hosts at least 2 blood drives at the church. Chris Awe has been the church contact and coordinator for the activity.

**Back to School Supply Drive:** Each August a drive is held to assist the families within the community getting their children ready for school. The congregation donated hundreds of dollars of school supplies as well as funds to purchase supplies that were greatly appreciated by the parents of students and by the local schools. Debbie Randle-Hayes coordinated this activity.

Mission Ministry Team Members: Susan Fahey, Elizabeth Erotas-Rouzer, Brent Hayes, Debbie Randle-Hayes, Mary Jane Pflederer, Pam Horn, Barb Hansen, Bob Hansen.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bob Hansen  
Mission Ministry Chair

# Music Ministry

## 2017-2018 Annual Report

### Bell Choirs, Chancel Choir and Vocal Groups K-12 - Denise Caliendo, Director of Music

- ♪ Started rehearsing the two bell choirs (Joy Ringers and FCC Adult Ringers) and the three vocal choirs (Harmony Singers, High School Singers, and Chancel Choir) in August 2017.
- ♪ Beatitunes, (another vocal group that rehearsed sometimes after a Sunday service), and Men of Faith, (a vocal group that rehearsed after Wednesday night choir rehearsal), sang 2 or 3 times throughout the year.
- ♪ Each group, except Chancel Choir, sang or rang at a service on the average of once a month, sometimes more. Every Sunday was a different group- quite a variety of music, traditional to contemporary. All groups rehearsed weekly.
- ♪ The Chancel Choir sang every other Sunday, with rehearsals weekly.
- ♪ The Chancel Choir sang in the Bluegrass Cantata accompanied by a hired professional orchestra. A professional Bluegrass Ensemble also was hired to perform. The FCC Ringers and the High School Singers also took part in the Bluegrass Cantata.
- ♪ All groups performed on Christmas Eve.
- ♪ Chancel Choir continued the Hoagie Sales which had a net sales of \$3,116.69. All of this money is going to the operating fund.
- ♪ The Chancel Choir sang on Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday Services. We hired a cellist for the Ash Wednesday Service.
- ♪ The FCC Ringers and the Chancel Choir each rang and sang their own song on Easter. FCC Adult Ringers rang the Hallelujah Chorus with the Chancel Choir on Easter as well. A Brass Quintet was a part of all the Easter Festivities! Trumpet players were hired.
- ♪ On Mother's Day, all Children's groups (K-12) rang and sang.
- ♪ FCC Ringers and Chancel Choir finish the season on Music Sunday, May 20<sup>th</sup>. Some of the Harmony Singers will perform with the FCC Ringers.

♪ Linda Gilmore and myself played duets this year (piano/organ).

♪ Mark Frystak played guitar at the 10 a.m. Service every Sunday. Throughout the year, he played with some of the musical groups from the elementary groups to the adult groups.

♪ Rehearsals end in May and will resume in August.

♪ Celebrations with all of my groups. ☺

Respectfully submitted,  
Denise Caliendo

### **Assistant Director of Music and Organist, Linda Gilmore**

1. The church's 2 pianos were tuned by Jeff Grosser of Accurate Piano Service in Elgin.
2. I continued to lead music on the organ and piano at the 10:00 worship service, along with Mark Frystak on guitar.
3. I led music on the organ and piano at the 8:15 worship service.
4. I accompanied the Chancel Choir at weekly rehearsals and 2 monthly services, as well as occasionally the children's choir.
5. I co-ordinate special summer music, along with Director of Music, Denise Caliendo.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Gilmore

# Small Groups

## 2017-2018 Annual Report

### The BeatituNes

*Galatians 5:22-23, ...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*

The BeatituNes are continuing their third season by welcoming new members and building meaningful relationships with one another while encouraging each other to bring inspiring music to First Congregational Church of Dundee's worship setting. We first began as a ladies' ensemble, age 14 and up, yet, we now perform with FCC's male vocalists and musicians.

Our music has been warmly received in the worship setting on the following Sundays:

June 25, 2017, "Let it Ring," Amy Ray

July 23, 2017, "Lean on Me," DC Talk

October 29, 2017, "Shower the People," James Taylor

December 3, 2017, "Ain't No Man," Avett Brothers

February 4, 2018; "Home," Phillip Phillips

If your heart is willing and you are able, any friend of FCC or member from the age of 14 can join us for our first rehearsal of the summer season, Sunday, June 3, 2018, 11:00 A.M. If you would like more information, please email Gena Grant, [gmgrant1969@icloud.com](mailto:gmgrant1969@icloud.com).

The BeatituNes are grateful for FCC Staff, FCC Music Ministry and A/V Ministry for their guidance, musical talents and support, encouragement, and abiding 'fruits of the Spirit': Pastor Aaron James, Pastor Paige Wolfanger, Chris Awe, Denise Caliendo, Mark Frystak, Diane Fuqua, Linda Gilmore; Mark Boekenhauer, Dirk Fuqua, Rick Gilmore, Sara Tustin; Marty Anderson, Taylor Robery, Dick Storer.

Gratefully Together in Christ -

The BeatituNes (past and present): Zoey Blazier, Sonja Boekenhauer, Donna Bolz, Denise Caliendo, Kathleen Davis, Marcia Dunning, Ronda Feller, Judy Foley, Gena Grant, Kathleen Hinckley-Weber, Kelly Hopp, Barb Keable, Amanda Lynch, Brynn Maxwell, Pernelle Maxwell, Michelle Mays-Paschke, Carol Radovich, Brian Robery, Dylan Robery, Linda Weiss.

Joining us for the upcoming season, Carol Adair and Shari Brousseau. Welcome!

*Psalms 108:1 My heart is steadfast, O God; I will sing and make music with all my soul.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Gena Grant

## **Book Club**

The FCC Book Club meets at 7:00 p.m. in the church library on the fourth Monday of odd numbered months. All are welcome to join us! Books are selected in October by the group as a whole, and members take turns leading the discussion.

This program year we read and discussed the following books:

*The World We Found* by Thrity Umriger

*Our Souls at Night* by Kent Haruf

*The Forger's Spell* by Edward Dolnick

*Eight Hundred Grapes* by Laura Dave

*The Last Christmas in Paris* by Hazel Gaynor and Heather Webb

*Everything I Never Told You* by Celeste Ng

*Dead Wake* by Erik Larson

Respectfully submitted,  
Pat Steffan, Chairperson

## **Women's Afternoon Circle**

This group meets the third Thursday of each month at one o'clock in the narthex of the church. The purpose of the group is both social and philanthropic. We have guest speakers, each on various topics, for programs and refreshments are served by members. The topics this past year ranged from Dick Sisler's presentation on the Civil War, a trip and program at Platt Hill Nursery, Cherie Aschenbrenner from the Elgin Police Dept. on senior scams, and the Literacy Connection to name a few. We make monetary donations each month and the money is sent to the Youth Group for their summer trip, the Salvation Army, or other local organizations. All are welcome!

Respectfully submitted,  
Carolyn Lortz

# Worship Ministry

## 2017-2018 Annual Report

The purpose of the Worship Ministry is to ensure that all worship services and all special services are properly planned, staffed, and executed in order to provide a meaningful spiritual experience for all. The goal is to provide reverent, relevant, well preached, musically varied, spiritually uplifting, properly resourced services that are well integrated with the church liturgical seasons and evaluated on a regular schedule. The Worship Team works closely with the Pastors.

This past year, all but one of our ushers retained their positions, and two new people joined the group. Our new members in 2017-2018 are: Lois Bealmear and Jim Breunlin. Additional volunteers are needed.

Usher volunteers are divided by schedule to cover both services each Sunday (8:15 am and 10:00 am). This coming summer we will continue with the same two service times.

The ushers provide a friendly greeting, seating directions, and collection duties. They also provide services to all attendees who have special needs and perform acolyte (candle lighting) duties. They are the first line safety and security persons, and many have received training in CPR and first aid. The ushers are always willing to fill in when needed to serve communion, or when assistance of any kind is needed. We are blessed to have such a dedicated team of volunteers!

Communion, for both Sunday services, has been by intinction. The pastors have prepared the meals and sought out volunteers to assist with serving.

Barb Hansen and her team have again done an outstanding job with the narthex and altar décor. Special Sundays, holidays, Christmas, Lent and Easter have all been made extra special by Barb and Bob Hansen, Elizabeth Erotas-Rouzer and the other members of the team. The artistry and beauty are greatly appreciated by all!

Janet Oatman has continued to secure greeters for both services. The names of greeters have been printed in the Sunday bulletin. This has contributed to a pleasant overall welcoming environment before, during, and after church services, especially for visitors.

Many thanks to Marty Anderson and our A/V team for their work every week in producing and posting videos of our worship services to our church Website. Their work is certainly appreciated by many. Like other teams serving our church, volunteers are needed to assist on this team.

Volunteers in the area of worship are always welcome and there are no shortages of duties to be performed. We are hoping to gain new members to our teams in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tammy Ray  
Worship Core Team Leader 2017 - 2018