

Barrington Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
Barrington, Rhode Island

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



All church members are encouraged to attend the

**ANNUAL MEETING**

**Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

in the Sanctuary

immediately after the 10 a.m. worship service

*Childcare will be provided*

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# WARRANT

## for the 2024 ANNUAL MEETING

### of the Barrington Congregational Church, UCC Barrington, Rhode Island

The annual meeting of the Barrington Congregational Church, UCC, Barrington RI, is hereby called to take place on Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024 in the sanctuary immediately following worship.

The business to be transacted is as follows:

- ARTICLE I: To call the meeting to order.
- ARTICLE II: To receive the 2024 Annual Report.
- ARTICLE III: To approve the minutes of the Congregational Meetings held over the past year.
- ARTICLE IV: To correct a mistake in the 2024 By-Laws.\*
- ARTICLE V: To review and vote on the Congregation Policy.
- ARTICLE VI: To consider any other business that may properly come before the meeting.
- ARTICLE VII: To adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted: Greg Voigt, Clerk

\* Article 111.C.3.a.ii of the 2024 Church By-laws reads: "The personnel and role of the Deacons are defined in the Ministry Policy." This needs to be corrected to read: "The personnel and role of the Deacons are defined in the Deacons Policy."

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## MINUTES FROM CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

### MINUTES of the 2023 ANNUAL MEETING of the BARRINGTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC held June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023

A quorum was in attendance.

Meeting commenced after worship ended with Tom Strolla presiding as Moderator.

Articles of the meeting were announced as:

- 1) To call the meeting to order;
- 2) To share a discussion from the Governance Ministry Task Force on the work they are doing in regard to a proposed new church structure;
- 3) To ask current officers and team members to stay in their current roles until January 2024;
- 4) To consider any other business that may properly come before the meeting;
- 5) To adjourn the meeting.

## Presentation on “Day of New Beginnings” by the Governance Ministry Task Force (GMTF)

Note: GMTF team is Dale Azevedo, Tom Strolla, Kate Colby, Dick McWhirter, and Vanessa Kiley.

After a challenging start during the pandemic, the team reconvened and made much progress. The presentation and discussion is the focus of the annual meeting.

### Current Health of BCCUCC (presented by Tom Strolla)

- We are rebounding well from the pandemic
- Pledges are up
- Strong financial position
- 10 New members joined in May
- Youth group is growing
- Many active ministries
- Seasoned staff
- Building is in good shape
- Investments in parsonages have these buildings in good shape

### Why are we discussing a re-organization?

- The council and staff are tied up with day-to-day tasks
- No one is focused on long-term planning
- Our current structure of teams with fixed terms, fixed number of members, elected positions, fixed meetings is not working.
- In short, the organization must evolve so we can thrive long-term

### What is needed?

- A structure that is agile, responsive and inclusive
- Leadership that engages the congregation regularly and is focused on strategic planning
- A membership that is highly active and engaged in ways that they feel called and are clearly aligned with our mission and vision

### How do we get there? (presented by Kate Colby)

- Later in the meeting a “preliminary” organizational proposal developed by the GMTF will be reviewed. This proposal is still a work in progress. The GMTF will continue to work on it over the summer, integrating feedback from church members.
- Beginning in September there will be opportunities for discussion one-on-one or in groups for additional feedback to finalize structure.
- As a result, bi-laws will likely have to change to reflect the new structure.
- Mid-to-late September, the congregation will be gathered to vote on the new structure.
- With approval of the new structure, they will look for people to fill these new positions.
- In January 2024 – approval of new leadership and bylaws, followed by implementation

## Proposed Structure

- Create separate but coordinated Governance and Ministry organizations
- Governance: Mission, Vision, Policies, Oversight
  - Small, 5-7 person board that is representative of our congregation
  - Elected by congregation, Accountable to congregation
  - It will be engaging with our congregation, in touch with the pulse of the congregation, its values and priorities
  - Focused on big and long-term picture
  - Articulate vision, determine major goals and strategies of the church, develop policies based on our values
  - Generally, they ensure the congregation is living in harmony with its mission and its values.
  - Big difference - In short, this new Governance body that is charged with thinking about the long-term, bringing our congregation into the future based on our values and mission.
- Ministry: Worship, Community, Service, Church Work (*presented by Rev. Dale Azevedo*)
  - This is the part that you see and involves the people of the congregation
  - In our current model, this would be work done by committees
  - We have 2 levels of ministries: Primary Ministries and Support Ministries

### Primary Ministries

- Primary Ministries drive the mission of our church.
- In streamlining how our church works, the vision is to have a Director of Ministries – one person that oversees all ministries that are taking place within the church. This person is accountable to the Governing board. The Governing board is accountable to the congregation.
- Based on our mission statement, we have divided the Primary Ministries into 5 ministry areas. In addition, Faith Formation is also included because it is a key aspect of who we are as a congregation, including our church school program.
- Each of these 6 areas will have an individual coordinator:



- As we streamline our organization, we are looking to have less people elected into positions.
- In line with looking to be more agile, this is a structure that can evolve and change over time.
- If we change our mission or our purpose, then these areas can change.
- For example, if Barrington as a community evolves into a retirement community with little youth, maybe we would no longer have Faith Formation as its own area but incorporate into one of the other areas.
- Any Coordinator position can be filled by either a lay person or staff.
- At this moment, this is how the Task Force envisions it playing out. Notice that Mission and Justice have been separated into 2 areas to have a separate coordinator focusing on each:

<i>worships God</i>	<i>embraces all people</i>	<i>ministers to one another</i>	<i>works for justice and peace</i>	<i>renders loving service</i>	*
<b>Worship</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	<b>Cong. Care</b>	<b>J &amp; P</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Faith Form.</b>
Sr. Minister	Layperson	Assoc. Minister	Layperson	Layperson	Faith Form. Dir.

- Below is a SAMPLE of ministry teams that is designed to always be evolving based on changes to the needs of our church, community and how we feel called to ministry:

## Sample Ministry Teams

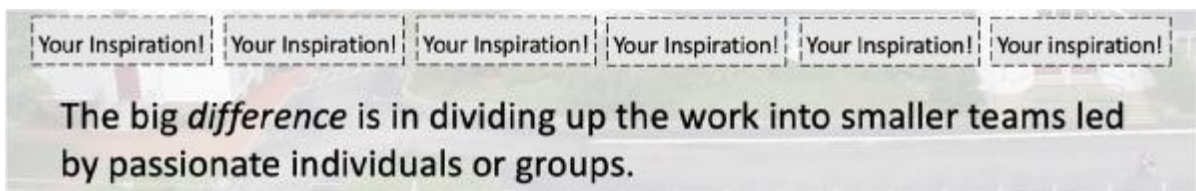
### Always evolving

Senior Minister

Worship	Welcome	Cong. Care	J & P	Service	Faith Form.
Sr. Minister	Layperson	Assoc. Minister	Layperson	Layperson	Faith Form. Dir.
Deacons	Greeters	Lay Visitation	Green Team	Loaves & Fishes	Church School
Sr. Choir	Open Doors Sun.	Coffee Hour	B. I. P.	Knitting for Othrs	Nursery
Sing & Cel. Choir	Elevette Team	Youth Group	Special Offerings	Mission Trip	O.W.L.
Chancel	Easter Egg Hunt	Women of Faith	Negro Spirituals	Mitten Tree	Adult Education
Ushers	Publicity	Pot-Lucks			Jubilation Sun.
Worship Tech					Confirmation

- All of the teams (shown in grey) have a small and narrow focus. They are independent and able to function independently. All have the support of the coordinator (listed above them).
- This is taking many of our current ministries and placing them into this new structure.

- The two areas that will be most impacted by this change in structure is the Mission and Justice Team and our FFaYM team, formerly CEYM. The FFaYM team is currently responsible for the nursery, church school, confirmation, Open Doors Sunday, Jubilation Sunday, Adult Education, and OWL.
- In our new vision, we're saying is each of those areas is a separate and independent ministry. If a lay person is interested in just helping out with church school, they can help with just that one area. The idea is small bite-sized ministries. Wherever lay peoples passions lie, they can enter into just those areas, possibly across the 6 areas of ministry.
- The only ministry team that has elections is The Deacons.
- There are not term limits on these ministry teams. As you are called to minister on a team, you join in. When feel the need to step away, you do so.
- This way, if someone is called by the spirit to be engaged in one ministry team, for example, Church School, they aren't also committing to being involved with nursery, OWL, Adult Ed, Jubilation Sunday and Confirmation.
- The GMTF feels more people will become involved and be more passionate about their ministries vs. saying I signed up for CEYM and I'm stuck here for 3 years, I'll see if I can make it all the meetings.
- We envision many of these teams evolving over time. For example, if a lay person has a passion for prison ministry but we don't currently have a ministry team for that, based on how you would like to minister, you would approach the appropriate coordinator and explain your interest in starting up a new team. The coordinator would then say, "Excellent. How can we support you?" This is similar to how Loaves & Fishes, East Bay Clothing Swap, Green Team, and Barrington Interfaith Partners (BIP) came to be.



- As there is only one Director for all Ministries, at this point in time it makes sense that the Senior Minister be the person to oversee all ministries and work with the coordinators.

#### Support Ministries

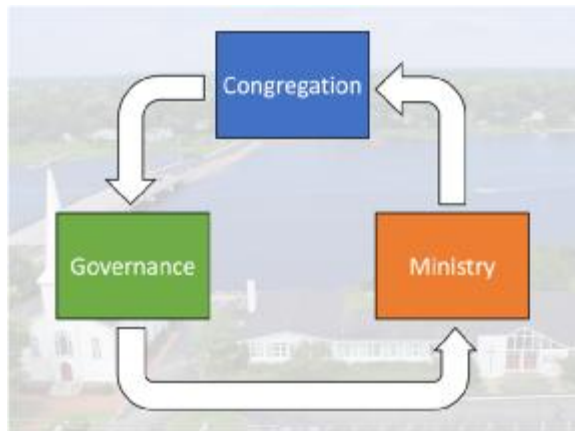
- In addition to the 6 Primary Ministries
- These 3 Ministries: Property, Finance and Administration
- These can all be led by either lay people or a staff member.





○ SPRT is Staff Parish Relations Team

- Dick McWhirter explained the following slide summarizing the new structure as explained in this meeting.



- The role of the Congregation hasn't changed much. It approves bylaws, budget and elects key people, including the Governance.
- Governance is separate and distinct. It thinks long-term, strategy, issue broad polices and oversees what is going on.
- The structure of our multiple Ministries are very similar – worship, Christian education, etc.
- How these ministries work will now be substantially different, using the new team concept described on previous pages.

## The Vision

- An active, engaged, vibrant church that changes peoples' lives.
- With members and friends coming together to share their gifts in ways they are called to serve.
- Ministry leadership committed to excellence in worship, faith formation, community building and facilities and finances.
- A dedicated group articulating the Mission, strategy and goals, delegating power, overseeing operations and keeping money, people and property safe.

## How Do We Get There?

- Next few months –
  - GMTF continues work
  - More opportunities for engaged information sharing and discussion
- September – congregational meeting to vote on the new organizational structure
- January 2024 – approval of new leadership and bylaws, followed by implementation

## Q&A, Concerns – fielded by Dick Mc Whirter and Dale Azevedo

- This meeting is available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiJsbqzCbGU>
- Q: With financial oversight – what is left with the governance side, ensuring money is kept safe as it's under ministry?
  - A: Congregation is the #1 authority. It delegates much of its authority to the governing board when the congregation is not in session. The Governing board is answerable to the congregation. Since the Governance board is focused on vision and setting long-term policies, they delegate much of the ministry to the Ministry side. Finance is a part of Ministry. The Ministry side is still wholly accountable to the Governing Board and ultimately the congregation.
  - Congregation, Governance, Ministry are in regular communications.
  - This cycle of communication is missing from our current structure.
- Q: How are church goers assigned to the various ministry teams?
  - A: It will be shared who the team leader is for each ministry team so church goers know who to contact to become involved in their various areas of passion and calling. We may hold a ministry fair, we may have a resource on the website listing all ministries with the means of indicating interest from that location. This new structure isn't about struggling to fill spots. It's about matching church members with ministries that appeal to them personally. Communication is needed for this engagement to take place.
  - Erik Ela shared that his vision was more technological and 21<sup>st</sup> century than an in-person job fair. Similar to looking at the calendar and seeing what's coming up, and signing up for short-term events and opportunities that you could quickly sign up for.

- Q: How are the Ministry Coordinator positions filled (lay people or staff)? Are these elected positions?
  - A: There was lengthy discussion on this. Coordinators will be elected. Team leaders within each individual ministry team will be chosen by the teams. All Coordinators on Support Ministries will also be elected. Treasurer, officers of governing board and clerk need to be in compliance with state law, elected as well.
- Comment: Gabi Sclafani shared her enthusiasm for this new structure, sees it as a significant improvement. She has steered away from parish ministry for her career because she was not a fan of numerous, time-consuming committees. She feels this model allows for more effective ministry. She sees other churches moving in this direction. She thanked the Governance Ministry Task Force for doing incredible work in pushing us in this direction.

**Article III of the meeting:** The warrant asks current team members and officers to stay in their current roles. It's an ask. After speaking to chairpersons, most agreed they can continue in their capacity with the exception of 2 positions. We need to fill these 2 positions. Elections are needed to elect Greg Voigt to be named Clerk until January 2024– motion was approved, seconded and passed.

Second election is for an Assistant Treasurer to act as a second, approved signer for bank forms, checks when Leo Drury, our Treasurer, is unavailable. If interested in this position, please contact the church.

The target months of September and January may realistically shift. These are target dates the team is working towards.

Meeting was adjourned by Tom Strolla, Moderator.

Minutes taken by *Laurie Dubel*, acting Church Clerk

MINUTES of the SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING  
about a new Governance Structure  
held October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

A quorum was in attendance.

Meeting commenced at 11:06 AM with Tom Strolla presiding as Moderator.

Articles of the Meeting were announced as: 1) To call the meeting to order; 2) To vote on the proposed governance structure presented by the Governance Ministry Task Force 3) To consider any other business that may properly come before the meeting; 4) To adjourn the meeting.

A motion to approve the proposed governance structure was put forth by Tom Strolla and seconded by the Rev. Racquel Ray. The governance structure was unanimously approved by the assembled body.

Seeing as how there was not any other business that properly came before the meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 AM.

Faithfully submitted,  
*Gregory A. Voigt*, Church Clerk

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MINUTES of the CONGREGATIONAL MEETING  
for the Annual Budget and New By-Laws  
held January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024

A quorum was in attendance.

Meeting commenced at 11:05 AM with Tom Strolla presiding as Moderator.

Articles of the Meeting were announced as: 1) To call the meeting to order; 2) To review and vote on the proposed church budget for January 1-December 31, 2024; 3) To review and vote on the proposed By-Laws for the new church structure 4) To review and vote on the slate of nominees for positions in the new structure, 5) To consider any other business that may properly come before the meeting; 6) To adjourn the meeting.

Chair of Finance Reviewed Proposed 2024 BCCUCC Budget: Tom Colby indicated that 2023 results (which have not fully posted) would result in approximately a \$20K surplus driven by pledges which were all paid up and \$10K in gifts along with rental income from the 4 Nathaniel Road parsonage. Payroll expense in 2023 was also lower, providing \$37K more in income than expenditures. Pledges/gifts in 2024 were expected to about the same as in 2023, though capital improvements would be about ½ of 2023 expenditure and potential parsonage sale (which has been recommended) would be net pluses to the overall 2024 budget. The church is expected to run an operating deficit of \$37,416 in 2024. Tom Strolla asked if there were any questions before the assembled body voted in the proposed budget. Steve Fodor asked that since pledge levels at about \$385K had remained relatively the same for the last 12 years while personnel expenditures

have risen by 23%, how long will the church's operating reserve last to continue to fund church operating deficits? Tom responded by saying that the 2023 surplus and the potential sales proceeds for the parsonage sale would cover operating reserve depletion for the foreseeable future. The population of the congregation, Tom added, is not growing and he felt that an operating reserve of \$180K (or roughly 30% of the church's annual budget) should be maintained for any emergency or contingency in the church's future. Steve also endorsed the idea of further contributions to the endowment, which, he felt, was sustaining church operations. Dick McWhirter asked if there was a full year's rental of the parsonage, by how much would the 2024 operating deficit be reduced; and Tom Colby said that \$7K less of a deficit would result. There being no further questions, Tom Strolla asked for a motion to approve the budget, Viki Belmont motioned and Tom seconded; the proceeding vote from the assembled body was unanimously in the affirmative to pass the 2024 church budget.

The Revised By-Laws were presented – The work of GMTF members: Vanessa Kiley, Dick McWhirter, Kate Colby, Tom Strolla and the Rev. Dale Azevedo was acknowledged and questions were solicited from the assembled body by Tom Strolla. Marion Fodor asked about how policies would change with the By-Law revision; and, if, in fact, policies would come from the Southern New England Conference (SNEUCC). Dale said that the new Governing Board would outline a set of prescribed responsibilities and how tasks could be delegated to ad-hoc ministries, and that there would be a separate set of policies to handle issues related to ministry, to deacons, to the congregation, and to church staff employees. Only issues dealing with misconduct and grievances would come down from the Southern New England Conference. Marion asked about how the Governing Board would meet and communicate with the congregation. She wants a system that would keep the congregation informed so that the church membership could vote appropriately and with sufficient knowledge of issues at hand that were affecting the church's life.

There being no further questions, Tom Strolla asked for a motion to approve the By-Laws revision, Viki motioned, Marion seconded and the revision was approved unanimously by the assembled body.

The Governing Board Slate of Nominees was presented. Laura Ward will serve as the Chair of the Governing Board, along with Vanessa Kiley, Kim Fernandez, Charles Antone, and Chris Brady. Leo Drury will continue as Treasurer and Greg Voigt as Clerk. Heather Williamson motioned to approve the slate of nominees, Joanne Ela seconded the motion and the assembled body unanimously approved the slate.

Dale thanked the GMTF members – Dick McWhirter, Kate Colby, Vanessa Kiley and Tom Strolla – and indicated that they had been working since 2019 to update the church's governance structure and that their finished product came from lots of work and was a big plus for the church.

The church meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Faithfully submitted,  
*Gregory A. Voigt*, Church Clerk

MINUTES of the SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING  
about the recommendation to sell the Nathaniel Road Parsonage  
held April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024

A quorum was in attendance.

Meeting commenced at 11:07 AM with Laura Ward presiding as Moderator.

Articles of the Meeting were announced as: 1) To call the meeting to order; 2) To review and vote on the recommendation to sell the parsonage at 4 Nathaniel Road, Barrington; 3) To consider any other business that may properly come before the meeting; 4) To adjourn the meeting.

A motion that the BCCUCC will sell the parsonage at 4 Nathaniel Road for no less than a sales price of \$500,000 with proceeds to be invested in the endowment designated for the Associate Minister's compensation package. Dick McWhirter seconded the motion and Laura asked the assemblage if there were questions or comments prior to the vote.

Trinki Brueckner commented about the irony of the sale in light of the homeless problem in the surrounding community, and Helen Schall amplified Trinki's concern and wondered if there was a corporation to whom the property could be sold who would make use of the property to alleviate the homelessness problem in some way. Dick McWhirter commented that the amount of income to be generated from the principal of the property sale would only put a small dent in the overall expense needed in providing a housing allowance to an Associate Minister as part of as compensation package. Kim Fernandez said that the Governing Board (GB) had a fiduciary duty to protect the church and that proceeds for the sale needed to be used for a specific purpose – that being the compensation package for the Associate Minister; that the congregation could vote on another use for the property proceeds at a later time and that the motion, as presented, should be accepted. Gabi Sclafani indicated she was conflicted, since as a seminarian, she had communications with other potential professional clergy which enforced in her a belief that selling church property to cover financial obligations was a "slippery slope" and could lead to church dissolution. Earl Dunlap asked Laura to expound on the GB's decision to limit proceeds to a compensation package. Chris Brady, in lieu of Laura, indicated that the study group who explored use of the parsonage concluded that the sale was the best option and that the church was not in the property rental business, so that managing the unused parsonage detracted from the church's primary mission. He reiterated that the \$13,000 in investment income to be generated from the parsonage proceeds principal was a good way to monetize parsonage value and that the parsonage had no definitive future benefit in attracting future clergy to our church. Frank Lee, the custodian, discussed some of the church's renovation needs which exceeded \$125,000 and included asbestos removal in Fellowship Hall and heating renovation. Jack Mycroft asked Laura to expound about the study group's recommendation and Laura mentioned the outstanding work of Lory McCoy, Steve Fodor, Paul Dennis and Tom Colby in researching options for the parsonage and recommending the sale. Joe Judge said he wanted clarity as to the use of parsonage proceeds and wondered why proceeds were only being designated for clergy compensation. Tom Colby discussed the fiscal burden of housing allowance for clergy on the church budgeting process and said that additional pressure would be put on future budgets without the parsonage proceeds. Paul Dennis said that managing the parsonage was a huge

responsibility and was “not our mission”. Marion Fodor agreed with Joe Judge and wanted a contingent use for proceeds included in the motion. Amy Barkat also expressed interest in another use for parsonage proceeds. Dick McWhirter reiterated his belief that the potential \$22,000 in investment income from parsonage proceeds to cover the \$70,000 in housing allowance that was budgeted seemed to have no practical effect. Kim Fernandez emphasized the GB’s desire to alleviate congregational worry and that the express purpose of the parsonage proceeds towards a specific end in the motion was designed to counter dissent. Kate Colby presented some clarity on the endowment and how the parsonage proceeds would be used. Laura, in order to be attentive to the time, suggested an alternative motion. Dale interjected and said that Robert’s Rule of Order prevented a new motion before the first motion had been voted on. He also indicated that the church had been running a budget deficit for the last several years and that there should be some level of comfort in knowing that a significant budget deficit in the future could be somewhat mitigated by the parsonage sale. Chric Brady expounded, once again, on the compensation benefit for clergy with the parsonage sale. Trinki asked that the vote be taken on the motion presented. Laura re-read the motion and a vote was taken with 44 affirmative responses, 3 negative responses and 1 abstention.

No other business was brought before the assembled body and the meeting was adjourned at 11:51 AM with the announcement that a subsequent congregational meeting would take place on May 12, 2024 to perform the second vote on the parsonage sale per church by-laws.

Faithfully submitted,  
*Gregory A. Voigt*, Church Clerk

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MINUTES of the 2<sup>nd</sup> SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING  
about the recommendation to sell the Nathaniel Road Parsonage  
held May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024

A quorum was in attendance.

Meeting commenced at 11:04 AM with Laura Ward presiding as Moderator.

Articles of the Meeting were announced as: 1) To call the meeting to order; 2) To review and vote for a second time on the recommendation to sell the parsonage at 4 Nathaniel Road, Barrington. 3) To consider any other business that may properly come before the meeting; 4) To adjourn the meeting.

A motion that the BCCUCC will sell the parsonage at 4 Nathaniel Road for no less than a sales price of \$500,000 with the proceeds to be invested in the endowment designated for the Associate Minister’s compensation package. Dick McWhirter seconded the motion and Laura asked the assemblage if there were questions or comments prior to the vote.

Casundra Amundson asked for a review of the process behind the decision to sell the parsonage. Laura reviewed the findings and recommendations of the task force composed of Lory McCoy,

Steve Fodor, Paul Dennis and Tom Colby in providing the input that informed the parsonage sales decision by the Governing Board.

Susan Rotblat-Walker called that the motion be voted on.

Steve Fodor reviewed the reasons for the decision to recommend the parsonage sale.

Joe Judge discussed the 1<sup>st</sup> affirmative vote which took place on April 28<sup>th</sup> at the special congregational meeting.

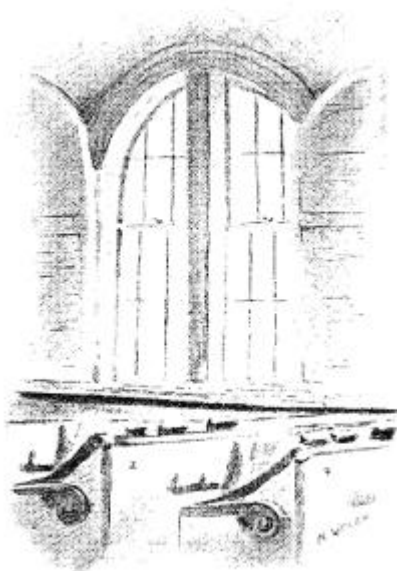
Erik Ela reiterated that the sale of the parsonage used in the past by the Associate Minister does not necessarily infer any future decision on the lack of a need to maintain the Associate Minister position at BCCUCC and to compensate that clergy member appropriately.

Erin Dwyer-Frazier asked what will happen in terms of providing a residence for the Associate Minister in the future if a new settled Associate Minister is hired by BCCUCC who does not maintain a residence of his or her own. Laura explained that the housing allowance as part of the BCCUCC compensation package for an Associate Minister would cover housing expenses.

With no other questions, Laura put the motion to a vote with 59 affirmative votes cast and 1 negative vote cast for the parsonage sale to proceed.

No other business was brought before the assembled body and the meeting was adjourned at 11:14 AM.

Faithfully submitted,  
*Gregory A. Voigt*, Church Clerk





# REPORTS FROM OUR MINISTERS

Senior Minister

Rev. Dr. Dale Azevedo

“I can do all things, through the One who gives me strength.”

(Philippians 4:13)

The 2023-2024 program year has been a good one for the Barrington Congregational Church, UCC. It has not been without its trials. And it has held many blessings.

First among our blessings is our amazing staff and wonderful lay leaders. This year we transitioned from our previous governance structure into a new model of leadership that we hope will spur on more engagement among our participants and open the doors to more creative and impassioned ministries. This transition was made possible through the efforts of our leadership, both lay and staff. To our prior leaders, who envisioned this model and brought it to fruition, thank you! To our new leaders, who have stepped up to take on responsibilities and carry out ministries, we are blessed to have you! I am thrilled to be working with the Governing Board as they explore their new role and begin thinking about how to guide the congregation into exploring their vision and goals for the future. I am equally excited to see new leaders or new ministries coming to the forefront even in the short time we have been living into our new structure. May the Spirit guide us as we walk this road into tomorrow!

It is also wonderful to see so many new faces in worship. Nearly every week we have visitors and fresh smiles as we gather to celebrate our faith. It is a sign of the times that people do not immediately transition from visitor and friend to formal *member*, but our doors and hearts are open for people to join with us and participate at the level to which they are comfortable. We are blessed by their presence and eagerness to share their faith journey with us.

It is also important to raise a big “thank you” to everyone who supports our ministries in so many ways; time, talent, enthusiasm, prayer, and finances to name just a few. If Christ is the spirit of the church, this is its heart. You are not merely *supporters* of the church; you *are the church*. Thank you for the part you have played in bringing hope to the struggling, food to the hungry, faith to the questioning, healing to the broken, and love to the lonely. *This* is the work of the church.

As I mentioned earlier, combined with all these blessings are challenges. It is not easy to be *the church* in American culture in 2024. Long gone are the days when everyone attended church, Sundays were the community’s sabbath, and church was the primary social center for the family. Instead, society resembles the experience of the early church in significant ways. The most important of these ways is the role of the church in the larger culture. Early Christians were the minority. Society in general lived outside the Christian movement and ignored it for the most part unless it was raising their ire. The same can be said of our current culture.

Even among our active membership, regular frequent participation in church events is sparse. Our attendance numbers are noticeably down from eight years ago when I was first called. The largest factor in this is not the drop in membership, but rather the drop in frequency of attendance. Some of this is reflected in the presence of on-line worship. Our worship services get a measurable number of online viewers (either live or watching later in the week). Another reason for this is the shift of the church's "centrality" in the life of our members. Sundays are "family days," or sports events, or a time to rest (of which attending church is seen as contrary). Many of our *active* members now attend once every four to six weeks instead of three out of every four. They are still committed to the church and consider themselves active, but the level of participation has changed.

If this is the reality, then what does it mean to us? Is this a "new normal" to which we need to adapt? Or do we seek to find strategies to reverse this trend? Is it even possible to do so? Do we just "have faith" and carry on believing that "god will provide" a way forward for us? These are important questions we need to address. And hopefully our new structure, beginning with the Governing Board, will help us explore these important questions and chart a path forward.

Life as a follower of Jesus has always been a mixed experience. Jesus told his disciples both, "come to me all of you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and "take up your cross and follow me." Following Christ has always brought with it a tension between blessing and challenge. Now is no different. Perhaps that is why we form a community; so that some of us may rest while others carry the burden only to switch places some time down the road. If that is the case, may we all continue to walk this road together.

Associate Minister of Congregational Life

Rev. Racquel Ray

"All things are permitted, but not all things are beneficial."  
(1Corinthians 10:23)

The 2023-2024 program year has been busy and expansive for Congregational Care and community partnerships at BCCUCC. It has been important to remember that we can do 'All Things' but it is not beneficial to do *ALL THINGS*, All the time!

As BCCUCC transitioned into the new structure, it was clear that caring for the congregation would mean supporting our members and friends with consistent fellowship opportunities, engaging worship, and abundant hospitality. During times of transition, I find that it is important to keep routines and wellness practices consistent.

This year, I offered opportunities to explore wellness beginning with the Women's Wellness Retreat in September and ending with a Clergy Wellness Retreat in May in partnership with the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ. In January, we invited Dr. Sandra Musial from the Plant Docs as a guest speaker and had a cohort of church members join the January Jump Start class to learn more about plant-based nutrition. The softball team and the

Wednesday Walkers gave us options to move our bodies though mine was sidelined with a serious knee injury during a church softball game and subsequent surgery and recovery.

We had ample opportunities to nourish our bodies with excellent hospitality. In the summer, we shared several potluck dinners on the terrace. One of those potluck dinners was vegetarian and not a single meat eater went hungry! Coffee hour each week offered fresh, local, organic, and in season treats and was well supported by many volunteers. The Giving Plate has made it around to 13 households sharing homemade goodies and goodwill among our congregation. We gathered for about 45 Coffee Chats and 25 Youth Group dinners. And we were nourished with food for body, mind, and spirit with our Lenten Soup Lunches, offering homemade soup with bread and hearty conversations.

We extended the hands of Christian friendship and partnered with Crossroads Rhode Island for our Spicy Advent offering of Spice Baskets. We offered monthly chapel services at Atria Senior Living – even providing flute accompaniment from Laura Ward! We partnered with the Town of Barrington and our friends at Atria to organize the Memorial Day Parade and honor four World War II Veterans. And we partnered with the Town of Barrington and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion team to support Barrington PRIDE. As a congregation, our teams reached out to the Women’s Resource Center, Federal Hill House, St. Vincent du Paul, We Share Hope, Good Neighbors Soup Kitchen, TAP-In, the Del Sesto Middle School with Loaves and Fishes, Barrington Land Conservation Trust, and the Barrington Farm School.

In our partnerships with the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ and the Rhode Island Association, we celebrated the Ordination of Gabrielle Sclafani and the Privilege of Call for another clergy colleague adding two more authorized ministers to our UCC rolls. We hosted the RI Association Annual Meeting (and will never forget Elizabeth Azevedo’s Christmas Cookie buffet!). We hosted the RI Association Committee on Church and Ministry and the RI Ministers Association.

We cared for one another through our Lay Visitation ministry and the Bereavement Group which sadly saw an increase in participation as beloved community members passed away.

We maintained a sense of sacred community with engaging worship. We had a summer of Women of the Bible and the hymn ‘God of the Women’. The program year began with guest musicians – Brass and Big Bands! We shared Thanksgiving offerings, Spicy Advent, Brown Bag Christmas Pageant with a tiny lobster and a taller lobster, Lenten Garden, and inquisitive shorter members engaging in the Children’s Messages. We shared Baptisms, a beautiful Christmas Eve service of Lessons and Carols, and a moving Ash Wednesday service. The Youth Group shared weekly prayer and a ‘Silent’ Advent retreat. The church school delighted us with their enthusiasm and story of friendship.

As our congregation transitioned into the governance structure, we cared for ourselves and each other with nourishment, movement, mindfulness, sabbath, laughter, inquiry, collaboration, and dedication to our BCCUCC mission: The Barrington Congregational Church, United Church of

Christ, is a Christian community that worships God, embraces all people, ministers to one another, works for justice and peace, and renders loving service to God's world.

As the year closes, I am reminded that "All things are permitted (and possible), but not all are beneficial (all at once). As we build our community and structure one step at a time, may we all remember to choose what is most beneficial and most helpful to the community. All of it is made possible by the loving hearts, willing spirits, helping hands, and generous souls of all of our staff, volunteers, friends, and volunteers. Thank You for your hearts, spirits, hands, and souls that make our ministry possible!

## REPORT FROM THE GOVERNING BOARD

Governing Board Chair

Laura Ward

"Do not go where the path may lead,  
go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

(Ralph Waldo Emerson)

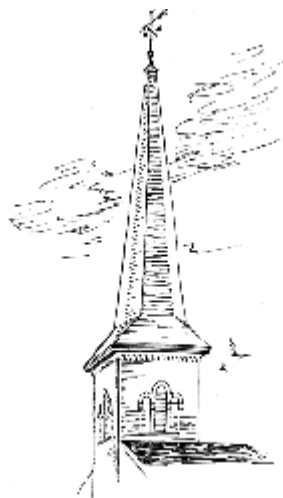
The Governing Board is a new governing body forging a new path for our congregation. Most of us are familiar with our previous governing body, the Church Council. That group led by the Moderator consisted of the chairs of each ministry team. They met monthly throughout with each team presenting a report. The new By-laws as conceived by the Governance Ministry Task Force (GMTF) have charged the five-person Governing Board with looking ahead at long-term goals and strategies for our church to fulfill its mission, rather than becoming immersed in the day-to-day concerns of the church. We work closely with the Director of Ministries, our Senior Minister Reverend Dale Azevedo, who will oversee the Ministry Coordinators.

We were elected to a two-year term at the Congregational Meeting on January 28, 2024. As Chair of the Governing Board, I had an opportunity to meet with Reverend Azevedo and Kate Colby of the GMTF in February. They presented me with a helpful overview of what the Governing Board needs to accomplish over the next year. We have a number of short-term goals we need to accomplish before the Board can work on strategic planning. I think of these as the nuts-and-bolts tasks. These include writing a Congregational Policy that supplements the By-laws and a Governing Board Policy. We are working on the Congregational Policy which we plan to present to the Congregation for a vote at the Annual Meeting on June 9, 2024. We'll start working on our own Governing Board policy in the near future.

The Governing Board and Reverend Azevedo first met in February for an informal dinner meeting where we could get to know each other a bit. We come from a variety of backgrounds and have a variety of skills. Our first official meeting was in early March. We have been meeting 1-2 times per month since.

Of course, there is always an issue that requires immediate attention. A Parsonage Task Force which included Finance Coordinator Tom Colby, Property coordinator Paul Dennis, Steve Fodor, and Lory McCoy had investigated options for what to do with the unoccupied Associate Minister parsonage at 4 Nathaniel Road in Barrington. This group determined that the best option for the parsonage was to sell. The Board invited Finance Coordinator Tom Colby to a meeting in March. He presented the numbers for the sell versus rent option. We all came to the meeting with a healthy skepticism about the sale, but after reviewing numbers and considering the responsibility of caring for the property, the Board voted unanimously to sell. Per our By-laws, any major financial transaction requires a vote at two Congregational meetings. The Congregation voted to sell the parsonage at the Congregational Meetings on April 28, 2024 and May 12, 2024. The Governing Board has appointed a Task Force to work on the sale of the parsonage consisting of Board member Charles Antone, Finance Coordinator Tom Colby, and Property Coordinator Paul Dennis.

Looking ahead to next Fall, the Governing Board plans to elicit ideas for long-term goals and strategies from the Congregation. We consider it of the utmost importance to communicate with the Congregation and to be open to suggestions. The GMTF did a tremendous job of conceiving of this new structure and of writing a clear set of By-laws to help guide our path forward. After working with our new Board and Reverend Dale, I can assure the Congregation that this is a talented, creative, and committed group. I'd like to add thanks to our BCC UCC Clerk Greg Voight who attends all our fast-moving meetings and somehow is able write concise minutes. Finally, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention my counterpart in the former governance structure, our Moderator Tom Strolla, who has dedicated himself to BCC UCC for many years and is masterful at running a meeting. When I asked him if he wanted to add anything to my report, he modestly gave thanks to all those who helped him during his tenure. Thank you, Tom, for all you did over the years.



# REPORTS FROM OUR MINISTRIES

## Worship Ministry

Dale Azevedo, Worship Coordinator

We had a very successful worship experience through the 2023-2024 program year. Two of our highlights were our summer worship series on Women of the Bible and our Lenten series on Building a Space for Prayer. Our women of the Bible series ran 12 weeks, which was wonderful, except some folks (including the pastors) became a little tired of singing “God of the Women” EVERY week. The Lenten series was centered around a prayer garden that we built in the sanctuary. Each week the children added new elements to the garden including soil, seeds, rocks, water, crosses, and tomb. Everyone seemed to appreciate seeing the kids so involved in the project. Sermons were centered around each of the different symbols added to the garden.

Music was a highlight this year. Matthew has continued to grow in his leadership role with the choir and the congregation seems to really enjoy the variety of music he provides. He has even prepared special requests from members during meaningful moments in their lives to include in the prelude and postlude. Additionally, the choir is greatly appreciated. While their numbers have shrunk over the past years, they continue to sing with an enthusiasm and quality that stretches far beyond their numbers. I cannot thank them enough for their leadership in worship.

I also want to offer special thanks to all the teams that make our worship experience so meaningful. Racquel and I, along with Andrea at times, put a lot of time into providing quality worship, but we couldn't do it without all your support. Thank you worship teams.

Chancel Team, Beth Buckley, Team Leader

The Chancel Team had a busy and productive year. We work with the members of the congregation who choose to donate altar flowers. The flowers celebrate or commemorate loved ones and special events. Extra flowers are given for Christmas and Easter while fruits and vegetables decorate the altar for Thanksgiving. The chairs on the altar needed sprucing up, and that was accomplished by 2 members of the Team. Three meetings were held this year, all at the home of Liz Rosenholm. Most communication happens through email and in person at Coffee Hour. Our happiest event was welcoming a new member, Cheryl Muth.

Deacons, Patricia Stoddard, Chair

The Deacons continued our commitment to provide support to our pastors, our congregation and to our community.

We continued our practice of delivering plants to the recently bereaved, sick or homebound folks at Christmas and Easter, including an in-person visit in most cases. We assisted the congregation in making Valentines for college students and the homebound. We assisted the pastors with Communion and provided worship assistance when Rev. Dale or Rev. Racquel were away. We also

put together and participated in a “Laity Sunday” worship service that was well received by the congregation. The Deacons, along with some Emeriti, also led the Tenebrae Service held on Maundy Thursday during Holy Week.

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation through their donations to the Deacons’ Fund Offering taken on every Communion Sunday, we were able to provide financial support to church members as well as to local organizations that provide crucial assistance to the larger community. The Deacons actively research and seek out these organizations and bring their mission to our meetings for discussion and possible financial support. The need in the community continues to be great and we are thankful that we can help in some way.

It has been my honor to lead this highly invested and dedicated group this past year. Two of the Deacons, Carol Strakosch and Steve Fodor, have completed their terms and are moving on to other opportunities. We thank them for their service as Deacons and appreciate their thoughtful contributions to our ministry. There are currently 6 remaining Deacons, which leads me to invite anyone that is a member of our church and is interested in being a part of the spiritual life of this church to contact me or any other Deacon to discuss the possibilities. I believe we get more out of being a Deacon than what we give!

We look forward to continuing our mission of service to this special faith community.

Music Team, Matthew Marion, Music Director, Team Leader

As we wrap up the 2023-24 church year, the BCC Music Team would like to thank the patrons and members of the congregation for their never-ending support. Our team works in great pride to provide music that continues to connect our members and community to the word of God.

We were fortunate to have guest musicians this year for our special events of services. Violinist Greg Ariyian, the Bare Bones Big Band (led by Chris Misch), and Trumpeter Anthony Mazza just to name a few. In addition, new anthems for the Senior Choir and guest soloists continue to bring us a refreshing air through this trying time of growth and renewal.

Our own congregation has always been one full of talent. The BCC Music Ministry team would like to remind our members that our doors are always open to those who would like to join. Also, for soloists interested in providing music for special events. We utilize a host of resources/databases for our music selections as well as modern technology for performance and live streaming. Weekly rehearsals during the church year are held on Wednesday nights from 7pm-8:30pm.

Pageant Team, no current leader

This year’s pageant was led by our staff with help from our old FFaYM Team under the previous church structure. New for 2023, the pageant was held on the morning of Christmas Eve as it was also the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent. Looking ahead to next Christmas, we are anticipating a group of lay people to plan and lead the pageant, the Christmas Story Stroll, or other family activities for the Christmas season. Reach out to Dale or Racquel if you are interested in helping out!

Sing and Celebrate Team, Kate Kolby, Team Leader

Our children's Sing and Celebrate Choir did not meet during the 2023-2024 year. We are looking ahead to see how we can participate in worship next year.

Usher Team, Bethia Rosner, Team Leader

The ushers seat the churchgoers, give out bulletins, collect the offering and present it at the altar. After the service, the ushers restore order to the pews, douse the candles, close the shutters, turn off the lights, lock the offering in the safe, close the doors, and lock the building. We thank our ushers for a successful year.

Worship Tech Team, Tom Colby, Team Leader

This past year has run rather smoothly in terms of streaming our services. We currently have a team of 4 that run the streams on a rotating basis, and we could benefit from one more. This coming year we plan on upgrading the sound system to improve our aging system.

### 3

## Congregational Care Ministry

Rev. Racquel Ray, Congregational Care Coordinator

The Congregational Care Ministry Teams: Lay Visitation, Coffee Hour, Youth Group, Women of Faith, Pot-Luck, Book Club, Softball, Bereavement are concerned with wellness, well-being, community, and connection at BCCUCC. As some of these groups are well established and long running they are successful and well-equipped. Other groups are fairly new, or are different, than they once were and will build success over time.

Lay Visitation, Rev. Racquel Ray, Team Leader

This year, the Lay Visitation Team saw some sad losses in the congregation. Sadly, we said goodbye to some members who moved away or have passed away. And we added some new outreach initiatives that had fallen away during the pandemic. We now include an outreach ministry of sending some cards to members on our list for significant life milestones including bereavement and birthdays. We also send notes just to check in and say hello. Our team is down to four active members and a few others who are terrific at checking in with church members and letting us know how they are doing. Rev. Dale has been able to add several in-person visits to church members this year. Rev. Racquel has added a monthly Chapel Service at Atria Senior Living and a monthly Coffee with Veterans at Atria as well. We can always add a few more team members who feel called to visit, call, or send notes to church members who are not able to join the community in-person on Sunday mornings.



### Coffee Hour, no current leader

The Coffee Hour Team is new this year. The team is comprised of volunteers from the congregation who are willing to set-up tables and supplies, brew coffee, bring snacks, and clean-up after coffee hour. Several families consistently volunteer and several individuals regularly bring snacks and stay to clean-up. After a long hiatus during the pandemic, it is clear that the congregation appreciates coffee hour and would like it to continue. Coffee hour provides a relaxed atmosphere for hospitality where church members can experience radical welcome and fellowship, kids can play with each other and create their own friendships and community, parents can share experiences, visitors are welcomed, and members and milestones are celebrated. Coffee hour volunteering is as easy as signing up on the list and helping out. It was decided that the church would offer Coffee Hour during the program year and Lemonade/Iced Tea during the summer. We all enjoy the fellowship that coffee hour provides.

### Youth Group, Rev. Racquel Ray, Team Leader

Youth Group has seen a dramatic increase in participation over the past two years with now up to twenty youth in our program. However, since Christmas 2023, there has been a significant drop in participation as youth explore winter and spring sports, theater, and other extra-curricular activities. Youth Group meets weekly during the public school year on Monday nights from 6-7pm for Youth in Grades 5-10. In the cold weather, we meet in the church kitchen for fellowship and sharing a meal. In the warmer weather, we usually meet outside on the terrace with campfire. Youth are invited to play basketball, a board game, crafts in Room 9, create their own activities, or just visit with each other. Parents are invited to visit with each other as well. Older Youth have been helping lead sports activities and fellowship with the younger members. This year our Youth Group held several campfires in the fall, shared an Advent Silent Retreat in December and a trip to LaSalette shrine for Christmas.

### Women of Faith, Jane Tonn, Team Leader

The Women of Faith Reading Group meets with BCCUCC members and women from other faith communities from October to June. Our sessions are in the church library from 1:30 – 3 pm the first and third Thursdays of the month.

The group was started about 20 years ago by Rev. Delle McCormick, a former associate pastor at BCCUCC. Our Women of Faith group was modeled after a group formed by three New York City women -a Christian, a Jew and a Muslim. They met each other after 9/11 and tried to understand the tenets and strengths of their different faiths and heal after the terror of the World Trade Center bombing. From these three women came the book "The Faith Club" (2006). I believe this was the first book read by our BCCUCC group. Our purpose aligns with that of the Faith Club in the book whose stated purpose is "to maintain an open-minded attitude in order to come through the reading and discussion experience with an enriched personal faith and a deeper understanding of others".

Our year 2023-2024 sadly saw the loss of three long-time members – all in their nineties: Louise MacGillivray of St. Luke's Catholic Church, Janet Morrison of BCCUCC, and Nancy Martin of Holland, MI but formerly of BCCUCC. All were open minded women with deep personal faiths.

We welcome new members to join us at anytime during our reading year. Contact Jane Tonn (860-301-6170) or the church office for more information.

#### Pot-Luck, Rev. Racquel Ray and Sarah Gibb, Co-Leaders

The Pot-Luck team is a new group at BCCUCC. Though historically, the church has long enjoyed gathering for shared meals in many forms. The new team is hoping to offer monthly potlucks with a seasonal theme. We began last summer with several pot-lucks on the terrace including a Vegetarian potluck which was very well attended and the food was really tasty! We enjoyed several varieties of summer fruit pies, excellent salads, piles of brownies, and fresh homemade pizza. More importantly, we shared conversation and companionship with one another on the terrace enjoying the beautiful view with which we are blessed at BCCUCC.

#### Book Club, Helen Schall, Team Leader

The Book Group of the Church meets monthly in the church library. It is made up of church members and members of the community. This past year, we had an average attendance of 6 members and read books that included a memoir, fiction and a non-fiction.

#### Softball Team, Tom Kiley, Team Leader

In the summer of 2023 the softball team played well as a team and added some new members. With several injuries we sometimes had challenges fielding a team and borrowed players from our opponents' teams to keep from forfeiting. With those challenges, we still kept a positive attitude and had a lot of fun throughout the season. We will need to recruit new team players to remain active in the Inter-faith Softball League. Steve Peck and Rob Gonsalves have handed the leadership role to Tom Kiley who will also be actively asking for participation from the congregation.

#### Bereavement, Rev. Racquel Ray, Team Co-Leader

The Bereavement Ministry at BCCUCC has over a decade of history. Bereavement offers a monthly gathering of community members who are experiencing grief of any sort or duration from the loss of a loved one. It is open to the larger community. The group is inter-faith, anonymous, and confidential. Long-time facilitators Betsy Brenner and Aubrey Atwater determined to partner with BCCUCC and Rev. Racquel to formalize the group as part of the church calendar and programming. This past year, the group was added to the BCCUCC calendar and Rev. Racquel assisted the group with pastoral support. As the facilitators both travel extensively for their professional roles, it has been helpful to maintain that consistency. Due to poor weather conditions, the January meeting

was cancelled, and we all learned that that was a mistake. Several members of the group really missed the gathering and could have benefited from the extra support during and just after the holidays.

### 3

## Welcome Ministry

Barbara Lee, Welcome Coordinator

I was elected in January of 2024 to become the Welcome Coordinator under the new "Ministry". My responsibility is for the oversight and development of the ministry area to which I have been elected.

I'm working with each team within my Ministry to welcome all visitors and members of our congregation to a warm and safe place to worship.

Being a new member since May of 2021, I found myself along with my husband Frank, extremely happy with the warm welcome we received. I will continue to work on finding a new team to lead our "New Publicity" towards accessibility with more signage into all of our buildings.

Greeter Team, Trinki Brueckner, Team Leader

The Sunday Morning Greeter Ministry has been successful this year. Seventeen individuals or family units each volunteered at least once during this programming year. In the future, I plan to develop a more organized system of recruitment, and I hope to engage more congregational members in this joyful ministry.

Easter Egg Hunt Team, Jack Mycroft, Team Leader

The 2024 Egg Hunt under the new ministry was fun to prepare for and a joy to watch. All ages seemed to sufficiently engage without any issues and were safe. I had volunteers to help me hide all the eggs my children and I stuffed. Looking forward to being team leader again next year.

Elevette Team, Jay Buckley, Team Leader

The elevette has been running smoothly all year and recently had quarterly maintenance done. Joe Judge kindly stepped in to take Susan Seders spot after she moved to North Carolina.

Open Doors Sunday Team, no current leader

Team is yet to be formed.

Trunk or Treat Team, no current leader  
Team is yet to be formed.

### 3

## Justice and Peace Ministry

Nancy Arena, Justice & Peace Coordinator

The Justice & Peace Ministry Area seeks to promote an awareness of and response to local, national, and world problems. We seek to promote a more peaceful and just society by developing programs and activities focused on such issues as environmental justice and sustainability, food insecurity, income inequality, and the intersectionality of social, racial, economic, and environmental justice. Our ministry tries to bring attention to the needs and struggles of marginalized communities. Our ministry partners with other groups and follows guidance from the United Church of Christ to create educational and advocacy experiences, as well as opportunities for reaching out to others. We hope that members of our church and wider community feel that they are invited to be participants in the Justice and Peace Ministry.

One way that the Justice & Peace Ministry reaches out to others is to participate in events sponsored by other houses of worship and by community groups. Examples of these events include:

- **Passover Seder at Temple Habonim**  
Invitation to a Passover Seder - In light of the tragic circumstances in our world and in particular the Middle East, and in the spirit of friendship and fellowship, Temple Habonim invited members of the Barrington churches to a Passover Seder in their synagogue.
- **United Against Hate Workshop at Temple Habonim**  
Federal and local officials throughout the US are working with community members to discuss effective strategies to prevent and respond to hate crimes and incidents. A United Against Hate Workshop, was organized by the US Attorney's Office, District of RI, in collaboration with Temple Habonim, and took place on Tuesday, March 26 at Temple Habonim. The workshop goals were: 1. Learn how to distinguish between a hate crime, hate incident, discrimination, and free speech. 2. Learn about real-life examples of hate crimes and incidents. 3. Identify the importance and methods of reporting expressions of hate. 4. Share and learn about personal experiences with a diverse, five-member panel. 5. Share thoughts, concerns, and ideas on how we can mitigate hate in our communities.
- **Anti-Semitism at the Barrington Public Library**  
Combating Antisemitism in the East Bay and Beyond Thursday, May 2, from 6:30 – 8 pm at Barrington Public Library. All were invited to this public event, organized by Temple Habonim, to learn about antisemitism, its history and current manifestations,

recent experiences of our neighbors, and how to be supportive allies of East Bay's Jewish population. The event began with a presentation about antisemitism, delivered by guests from the Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center and the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island. The program continued with a moderated discussion and Q&A session. The panel featured institutional and individual leaders, both allies and Jewish. Panelists included Rabbi Howard Voss-Altman (Temple Habonim), Colonel Michael E. Correia (Barrington Chief of Police), a School Committee member from the Bristol Warren Regional School District, and a Barrington High School student.

In some cases, a community member visited BCCUCC to educate and inform the congregation about a particular need. On Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup> Shauna Hyde visited BCCUCC to share a Moment for Mission about the 2023 Thanksgiving food drive and how our ministry helps TAPIN with their work.

In a similar vein, Becky Knight visited BCCUCC to describe the mission of the Women's Resource Center and the many services provided to victims of domestic violence and their families. She made it clear that domestic violence occurs throughout the state of Rhode Island and impacts a variety of socioeconomic groups. The need for assistance is greater than ever due to food insecurity, financial hardship, and the lingering impacts of the pandemic. All proceeds donated to the Giving Tree (see below) support the Women's Resource Center.

The reporting period for this Annual Report is September 2023 through May, 2024. Since the new governance structure did not coalesce into working teams until the first quarter of 2024, there are a few key accomplishments related to the Mission & Justice Team that are documented in this report for the Justice & Peace Ministry Area. These accomplishments are important, both to maintain the historical record of Mission & Justice activities at BCCUCC and to assure that critical initiatives continue to be supported, either by the Justice & Peace or the Service Ministry Areas.

Note: Items included in the team leader reports are not duplicated in this section, to keep the Annual Report as concise and readable as possible.

#### Key Accomplishments – Mission & Justice Local Outreach

##### *Spice Baskets*

Reverend Racquel Ray initiated the collection of spice baskets for clients at Crossroads RI. By Christmas Eve church members and friends collected approximately 50 spice baskets, which were delivered by caravan to Ric Wild at Crossroads RI.

##### *Thanksgiving Food Drive*

Mission and Justice teamed up with the Youth Group to collect nonperishable items for the Thanksgiving Food Drive. With the help of our energetic Youth Group and several adult helpers, volunteers from TAP-IN received 60 bags of food for Thanksgiving meals.

### *Giving Tree*

Throughout the holiday season, donations were collected for the Women's Resource Center. The Mission & Justice Team donated \$500 from its budget at the beginning of December to WRC's 2023 Adopt-A-Family holiday giving program. A further \$2,020 was sent later from the congregation's donations. The Women's Resource Center was able to help 48 families, including 95 children, with gift cards for toys, games, crafts, books, music, clothing, and food.

### *Mitten Tree*

The Mitten Tree was a combined effort. It took many hands to bring the tree into the sanctuary and set it up, to knit scarves, hats, mittens, etc. to place on the tree, to add store-bought items to the tree, and finally to collect and deliver three large and 2 small trash bags of items to Federal Hill House. Many thanks to Reverend Racquel, the office and custodial staff, the Knitting for Others Group, the Mission & Justice Team, and to church members and friends for putting items on the tree. Finally, thank you to Kim Fernandez, Executive Director of Federal Hill House, for distributing items to clients in need of warm clothing at Federal Hill House, the two food pantries FHH supports, and possibly also to Amos House.

One additional event is worth noting.

- On Sunday, September 24, the Mission & Justice Team invited the congregation to join them in making Peace Flags during coffee hour in Fellowship Hall. The International Day of Peace (IDP) is observed around the world on September 21, and the UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing 24 hours of nonviolence and cease-fire. Never has our world needed peace more. The 2023 theme was Actions for Peace: Our Ambition for the #GlobalGoals. It is a call to action that recognizes our individual and collective responsibility to foster peace. Fostering peace contributes to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will create a culture of peace for all. We hope you will join the United Nations' call to take action for peace: fight inequality, drive action on climate change, and promote and protect human rights. The Peace Flags were donated to Temple Habonim and now hang in their front room.

Contributions for September 2023 through May 2024, include the following. Note: any contributions documented in team reports are not duplicated here.

#### *Holy Joe's Café – \$200*

Supports active-duty service men and women stationed overseas and the clergy who support them through the purchase of coffee.

#### *Good Neighbors Community Kitchen and Food Pantry - \$250*

Supports clients who are experiencing food insecurity.

#### *Sojourner's House - \$175*

Supports victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, and human trafficking

#### *House of Hope - \$175:*

Supports a variety of programs related to the causes and solutions for homelessness.

## Ministry Teams

Since January, 2024 the Justice & Peace Ministry Area has consisted of five (5) teams. These teams are:

- Creation Care Team
- Barrington Interfaith Partners Team
- Royalties for Negro Spirituals Team
- 5 for 5 church/Special Mission Offerings Team
- Open and Affirming (ONA) Team

Recently Gabrielle Sclafani proposed the formation of a sixth team. This team is the Asylum Team.

### *Reports from the Team Leaders under Justice and Peace Ministry*

#### Creation Care Team, Racquel Ray, Team Leader

The Creation Care Team is new this year within the new church structure at BCCUCC. It originally began as the Green Team within the Mission and Justice team and before that it was another team. It is clear that many members of the congregation are in favor of environmental justice ministries and initiatives. As this team continues to grow and change, its mission will also shift. This year, BCCUCC added significant environmental upgrades to the historic church – a new heating and cooling system and insulation. With the failure of the old gas-powered furnace that once heated the historic church building with steam, the Building and Grounds team determined to upgrade the system with a more environmentally friendly system which runs on electricity.

The group is now exploring the possibility of adding solar panels to the education building to power the electricity in both buildings including the heating and cooling system in the church. The green team conducted an environmental study in partnership with the Audubon Society and did significant landscaping work around the church campus as a result. Several native plants were added to the gardens and the Pollinator Garden was added to the front yard of the church building. Moving forward, this team will be exploring options for electric vehicle charging stations, more bicycle parking, and the Green Congregation certification through the Southern New England Conference.

#### Barrington Interfaith Partners, Trinki Brueckner, Team Leader

Barrington Interfaith Partners (BIP) has regained its vitality following the pandemic. We have transitioned from Zoom to holding in-person meetings again. BCCUCC offers our library space for BIP's monthly meetings on the second Monday of each month at 5:00 PM. BIP now includes members from eight houses of worship, and BCCUCC is represented by four of our congregants. BCCUCC has participated in BIP's Royalties for Negro Spirituals initiative and, to date, has sponsored three Sunday services featuring Negro Spirituals and a Moment for Mission; donations were collected for Community Music Works at each service. BIP's first in-person public event since before the pandemic was held May 30, 2024, at BCCUCC. It was Engaging Democracy with Congressman Gabe Amo.

### Royalties for Negro Spirituals Team, Helen Schall, Team Leader

The Royalties for Negro Spirituals Initiative presented a Moment for Mission on Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Helen Schall gave the background for the two spirituals that were being sung on that Sunday. A collection was taken to benefit Community Music Works. The team also presented a Moment for Mission on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and a collection was taken to benefit Community Music Works. As noted in the Barrington Interfaith Partners report, the Royalties for Negro Spirituals was also presented in April, 2023. This initial presentation is technically outside the reporting period, but is still worth noting.

### 5 for 5 Church/Special Mission Offerings Team, Nancy Arena, Team Leader

Barrington Congregational Church, United Church of Christ meets the criteria for a 5 for 5 church. In both the 2023 and 2024 budgets, BCCUCC provided funding in its operational budget for OCWM Basic Support. This funding supports the Southern New England Conference and the national ministries of the United Church of Christ. The national ministries include Wider Church Ministries, Local Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, General Ministries, and Pension Boards.

In addition to the proportional giving, BCCUCC supported the 4 Special Mission Offerings. Each special mission offering was described in the eBridge, as well as in bulletin announcements and bulletin inserts from the UCC. There was also a Moment for Mission presented on the Sunday designated for the collection of each offering. During the reporting period the following special mission offerings were or will be collected:

1. Neighbors in Need
  - a. Collected on World Communion Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023
  - b. Theme was "Behold"
  - c. One-third of the donations supports the American Indian Ministry (CAIM) and two-thirds are used by Justice and Witness Ministries to provide grants to UCC churches and organizations, as well as to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.
2. The Christmas Fund
  - a. Collected on Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023
  - b. Theme was "Grace Upon Grace"
  - c. Provides emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks to lower-income clergy and lay employees.
3. One Great Hour of Sharing
  - a. Collected on Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (Lenten Offering)
  - b. Theme was "Sharing the Light"
  - c. Supports the disaster, refugee/immigration, and development ministries of the UCC within Wider Church Ministries throughout the world.



#### 4. Strengthen the Church

- a. Collection was on Sunday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024
- b. Theme is "On Holy Ground"
- c. Supports the work of the conference and the national UCC to become a multi-racial/multi-cultural church, accessible to all. Funds leadership development, youth and young adult ministries, and new and renewing congregations.

#### Open and Affirming Team, Dale Azevedo, Team Leader

Our Open and Affirming (ONA) Team began anew last summer. This team had been active in the past and was instrumental in guiding the church through the ONA process a decade or two ago. We felt it was important to reconstitute this team due to the increasing hostility toward the LGBTQIA+ community throughout much of the country over the prior year. Anti-LGBTQ and especially anti-Trans legislation has been making inroads in deteriorating the rights of these populations. Our first major program was entitled "Understanding Trans Identity" and was held in the church library after worship late last fall. It was surprisingly well attended and provided space for a wonderful conversation and exploration of what it means to be Trans. We look forward to hosting more events geared toward celebrating and honoring the diversity of ALL of God's children.

#### Asylum Ministry Team, Gabrielle Sclafani, Team Leader

The Asylum Ministry Team is a new ministry shepherded by Gabrielle Sclafani. Its immediate objective is to raise funds for the transit of four surviving members of Khaled Mohammadbek's family, who are currently living as undocumented persons in Iran. The first step is to transport these four family members to Turkey, where they can then obtain their travel documents from the Canadian embassy.

Longer-term this ministry plans to focus on the establishment of a partnership between the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Association of Halifax, Nova Scotia. The UUs have a long-standing ministry of welcoming refugees via Canada's private sponsorship of refugees program.

As of this writing, a ministry plan has been written, some funds have been raised, and potential team members are being identified. The approximate cost of this journey is \$16,000, and Khaled would like them to make the trip by the end of the summer. They have already been approved for asylum in Canada, and Khaled has personally raised their full first year's expenses and more than \$3,000 toward their transit costs. Gabrielle states that "I believe we have enough resources in our church and wider community to support this family in their journey and finally bring them to peace and quiet after being separated and living underground for more than ten years."

## Service Ministry

Sarah Mycroft, Service Coordinator

We have spent the first six months of the year getting our ministries up and running. You will see below a few teams that have not yet submitted a report. The Local Outreach Team will be in next year's report under Service ministries. However, as we transition over to the new structure, those areas of service are being discussed in Nancy Arena's Justice and Peace Report as they were carried out by our former Mission and Justice Team. These ministries include the Mitten Tree, donations to the Women's Resource Center, and donations for Tap-in and Holy Joes Cafe others. The Mission Trip Team is a new team this year. Joanne has been meeting with Dale and Racquel and discussing ways to bring mission trips back to our list of ministries. For now, they are focusing on more local smaller scale trips. Joanne hopes to expand her plans for the upcoming year.

Knitting for Others Team, Nancy Arena, Team Leader

The Knitting for Others Team met monthly during the reporting period. The meetings were conducted as hybrid events, so that team members, both past and present, had the option to meet in-person in the church library or connect through Zoom. Meetings provided an opportunity for congregational fellowship and sharing a love of Knitting.

The Knitting for Others Team continued to participate in the Prayer Shawl Ministry, which was started 26 years ago by 2 women who were graduates of the 1997 Women's Leadership Institute at the Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut. The Prayer Shawl Ministry combines a love of fiber arts, particularly Knitting and crocheting, with a commitment to provide comfort and spiritual support to those in need. The prayer shawls are knitted by team members and then blessed by the Senior or Associate Minister. The prayer shawls are available to give to church members and friends during times of stress, illness, loss, etc. The Knitting for Others Team also continued to knit small pocket prayer shawls, which were available in baskets at the church and at various church-sponsored events.

In addition to the shawls, the Knitting for Others Team knitted a variety of items such as hats, scarves, and mittens, which were placed on the church's Mitten Tree during the holiday season. In December, 2023 the items gathered on the Mitten Tree were given to Federal Hill House.

Loaves and Fishes Team - Jay and Phyllis Buckley, team leaders

This has been a very successful school year. We have had a loyal group of monthly volunteers to fill the bags for the kiddos at DelSesto school. We have been very fortunate to have an anonymous donor donate a large portion of food items monthly. With two drives left for this school year, we are grateful to have been of service the kids. We (Jay and Phyllis) will be stepping away from our role as team leaders after the June backpack drive and hope someone will step forward to continue this mission and outreach.

Local Outreach Team - Nancy Arena, team leader

No report submitted. See Service Coordinator's report above.

Mission Trip Team - JoAnne Waite, team leader

No report submitted. See Service Coordinator's report above.

Refugee Resettlement Team - Lory McCoy, team leader

This team began this year following a request from Temple Habonim to partner with them in their refugee resettlement work with Dorcas International. Our purpose is to aid refugees resettling in Rhode Island from all countries. So far, I have asked the congregation for voluntary donations and have been completing the refugee kits myself. The main limitation is finding volunteers to help. To date, I have received donations from 3 people and have 1-2 others interested in helping with apartment set-up. Hopefully others will join me!

### 3

## Faith Formation Ministry

Andrea Terni Bullard, Faith Formation Coordinator

As you can see from the team reports below, little has changed due to the new structure except for Church School. The team itself remained intact with the addition of 2 members. As I look at our "numbers" there is a hole in the pre-k – 1<sup>st</sup> grade (no new pre-Kers for next year and only 3 in K & 1<sup>st</sup>). I will work with Betsy Restituyo, the primary teacher for that group, to see what we can do to provide a program for them. I will also consult with Fred Rocco about how to make the program for the 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders more robust. The present curriculum may have run its course.

Next year we will be offering a confirmation program for 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> graders and not Our Whole Lives (OWL) which is in keeping with the plan to offer those programs on alternating years.

Many thanks to the team leaders and all of the volunteers who help keep our Faith Formation programs running.

Adult Faith Formation, Dale Azevedo, Team Leader

We had a very successful year offering adult formation classes in '23-'24. During this time we offered three classes and one series of community lunches. Our classes were The Dickenson Series' *Exploring the Old Testament* and *Exploring the New Testament* along with *Stories of Courage, Failure, and New Hope: a study of the disciple Peter*. Classes had a regular attendance of 6 - 10 participants with many new members joining in now along with our regular stalwarts. Our luncheon was a Lenten Luncheon series in which Racquel and I offered soup and

conversation. While it was predominately a social event, we did take time each week to discuss questions of faith and life from the prayer cards placed on the tables. We look forward to continuing to offer short duration (6-8 session) classes on a regular basis.

Nursery Team, Andrea Terni Bullard, Team Leader

The nursery is run by two paid staff people (with an occasional sub) who provide consistent, nurturing care to 1 – 3 children on Sunday mornings during the school year. We are always hopeful that more kiddos will join that group.

Church School Team (formerly FFaYM), Fred Rocco, Team Leader

The most salient feature for the past year is the same as last year – a name change from Faith Formation and Youth Ministry (FFaYM) to Church School Team. The name change is the result of the new Church structure. Church School is separate from Nursery, accounting for youth enrolled in Church School from Kindergarten to 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Enrollment/attendance in Church School varied over the year with 41 students registered among all classrooms. Over the past year, Church School attendance varied with less consistency than the past year.

Major activities for the year included: Open Doors Sunday, Advent Arts, Christmas Pageant, assisting The Deacons with making Valentine's Day cards, Lenten Lollapaloosa (25 children attended and decorated bird houses and wooden eggs), and concluding the year with Jubilation Sunday. This All Ages worship was based on the theme of "friendship" with a reading and acting of the book *Farfallina and Marcel* by Holly Keller. (10 kiddos participated in the service.) Activities for the day included make-your-own ice cream sundaes and lawn games.

As with last year, there are just enough teachers for each Sunday class, however, several Church members have consistently stepped in when a class needed to be covered. For the coming 2024-2025 school Adam Grenier will be joining and Carol Strakosch will be returning to the Church School Team.

Several former FFaYM events will no longer be part of Church School:

1. Easter Egg Hunt
2. Open Doors Sunday
3. Christmas Pageant
4. Youth Group

Our Whole Lives Team, Andrea Terni Bullard, Team Leader

O.W.L. was completed by one seventh grader and one eighth grader this year. Although we had to schedule a make-up class the participants showed up and seemed to enjoy the program. We were pleased to have one more person trained to teach O.W.L. this year. Many thanks to the 10 facilitators who volunteered their time to support the program.

## Property Ministry

Paul Dennis, Property Coordinator

A major project for the Property Team this past year was replacing the church heating system after the failure of the steam boiler last Fall. Rather than replace the boiler (again) it was decided to go with a new state-of-the-art Heat Pump/Mini-splits system installed by Pride Heating & Airconditioning and Sunshine Energy Services. This new system provides heating and cooling for the sanctuary and runs on electricity. A new hot air furnace which will run on natural gas will be installed to provide supplemental heat for the Vestry and other ground floor areas. A Clean Heat RI rebate program helped to fund these improvements.

Another major upgrade to the church building was the installation of insulation in the attic and walls. This was a RISE Engineering project which allowed the work to be accomplished with substantial savings to the church.

We continued plumbing and electrical upgrades in both buildings made possible by a generous church member donation. This work included new toilets and lighting in the Education Building. Other improvements included re-grading of the brick pavers at the vestry door entrance and adding a new handrail at the kitchen exterior stairs.

Renovations to the Fellowship Hall stage this past year included a new stage front curtain from Drapery Industries, refinishing the wooden stage floor and painting by Catanzaro and Sons.

My thanks to our dedicated custodians Jay Buckley and Frank and Barbara Lee. They are a pleasure to work with and we are lucky to have them.

Landscape Team, Eileen Dennis, Team Leader

The terrace garden was weeded, pruned, and replanted with several native shrubs over the summer of 2023. Plants were purchased from Prickly Ed's. The garden was checked weekly for weeds and water needs by team members.

The memorial garden, rose garden, and other plantings around the church were maintained by team members for water, weeds, and trimming needs.

In early fall the terrace garden and planters were tidied by team members. Staton's Landscaping was hired to trim trees and shrubs on the grounds.

A plan for renewing the plantings in the front of the education building was created. Staton was hired to purchase the assorted shrubs and 3 large trees, plant, and mulch these beds and the terrace garden.

The team will ensure the beds are weeded and watered with the continuing help of our custodians.

## Finance Ministry

Finance Coordinator, Tom Colby

Much like last year we finished with a surplus, this time of \$7,925. This contrasts with our budgeted deficit of \$17,461. We had this success as a result of \$24,274 income above budget plan, about 1/3 of this came from pledges, 1/3 from gifts, and 1/3 from rentals. Also, contributing to this were total expenses \$1,112 below budget.

For 2024 we are rearranging the financial account structure to align with and support our new governance structure. This will result in team budgets and expenses grouped by ministry area. (See the budget on pages 38 and 39.) Many of the items in this budget existed in prior years. For clarity, some are now split into multiple accounts. As an example, supplies for coffee hour are now separate from the office supplies item. The bottom-line loss of \$37,416 assumes that we continue expenses for our second parsonage, however, taking the sale into account should reduce this loss to \$19,996.

We will also be watching the financial impact of switching the church heating system to heat pumps. Since the system was only in place for part of last winter, we will not be able to have a good understanding until the 2024/2025 winter is concluded. Also related to the heat pumps, we will be cautious about air conditioning this summer. Most certainly we will be able to make the worst days more bearable, but we will need to evaluate the additional costs before determining what level we can afford to cool to. Furthermore, the decision has been made to insulate the church building, which should have positive cost benefits for both heating and cooling. And, given that most of the project cost is covered by support for energy efficiency improvements from RI Energy this was an obvious decision.

One other future looking project is the possible installation of solar panels to enable the church to generate power to offset some or much of our needs. There is a team looking at this and considering the building, finances, and aesthetics.

Auditor, John Loerke

I performed review procedures on the Church's financial records for the twelve months ended December 31, 2023. No material issues in our internal controls or report balances were noted.

Endowment, Kate Colby, Team Leader

Although volatile, overall 2023 investment markets rebounded from 2022. At year end 2023, BCCUCC had a total of \$2,382,102 under management; up from \$2,202,749 at the end of 2022. Included in the 2023 total were \$273,107 designated for specific use. BCCUCC uses 3 investment managers: Rhode Island Foundation, Ocean State Incubator Fund and United Church Funds. Rhode Island Foundation and United Church Funds had respectable returns in 2023 of 14.2% and 14.5% respectively. Ocean State Incubator Fund reported a very healthy 17.5% returns, however,

our internal numbers did not agree. The discrepancy is being investigated and an addendum to this report will be filed when the investigation is concluded.

Distributions from General Endowment funds to support 2023 operations totaled \$91,500. With high inflation and negative returns, purchasing power of the funds eroded in 2022, but it improved in 2023. Given this improvement, the regular formula for determining distributions was used for 2024 and \$94,500 was budgeted. All fund managers had positive returns for the first quarter of 2024.

With the change in BCCUCC's governance structure, Endowment is now a responsibility of the Finance Coordinator. We will be working this year to ensure Endowment policies are reviewed and adjusted appropriately for the new structure.

Treasurer, Leo Drury

### Operations

Better than anticipated revenues to include one-time gift and parsonage rental resulted in income of \$9,400 compared to the budgeted deficit of \$17,500.

### Capital Improvements

#### Sources of capital improvement funding:

Sanctuary Sound System Repair	\$33,400
Contribution from Operations	20,000
Interest Income	<u>1,700</u>
Total	\$55,100

#### Capital improvement expenditures:

Church Heating Pump Replacement	\$16,300
Church Steeple Painting	11,800
Window Replacement	5,500
Terrace Grading	5,000
Fellowship Hall Painting	4,700
Parsonage Interior Painting	4,600
Seawall Repair	3,500
Fellowship Hall Stage Curtain	3,000
Library Steps Repair	3,000
Plumbing Upgrades	2,200
Electrical Upgrades	<u>1,400</u>
Total	\$61,000

## Summary of Financial Activity and Financial Position for 2023

### Statement of Activities for the Year Ended December 31, 2023

	<u>Operations</u>	<u>Capital Improvements</u>	<u>Endowment</u> <sup>Note A</sup>	<u>Total</u>
<b>Revenues</b>				
Pledges, Gifts and Offerings	\$419,641 <sup>Note B</sup>	\$55,133 <sup>Note C</sup>	\$11,275	\$486,049 <sup>Note E</sup>
Investment Income or Loss	94,722 <sup>Note D</sup>	0	269,093	363,815
Rentals	45,375	0	0	45,375
Other	<u>20,550</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>20,550</u>
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$580,288</b>	<b>\$55,133</b>	<b>\$280,368</b>	<b>\$915,789</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Staff	\$381,393	0	0	\$381,393
Office	15,701	0	0	15,701
Church Life/Christian Education	11,107	0	0	11,107
Buildings & Grounds	103,563	0	0	103,563
Capital Improvement	20,000	60,994	0	80,994 <sup>Note E</sup>
Missions, Disbursements & Fees	<u>39,166</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>101,015</u> <sup>Note D</sup>	<u>140,181</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$570,930</b>	<b>\$60,994</b>	<b>\$101,015</b>	<b>\$732,939</b>
Change in Net Assets	9,358	(5,861)	179,353	182,850
Net Assets 12/31/22	<u>195,832</u>	<u>107,344</u>	<u>2,202,749</u>	<u>2,505,925</u>
Net Assets 12/31/23	\$205,190	\$101,483	\$2,382,102	\$2,688,775

### Statement of Financial Position for the Year Ended December 31, 2023

<b>Assets</b>				
Cash and Investments	\$405,591	\$72,224	\$2,382,102	\$2,859,917
Receivables and Other Assets	<u>16,245</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>16,245</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$421,836</b>	<b>\$72,224</b>	<b>\$2,382,102</b>	<b>\$2,876,162</b>
<b>Deferred Income &amp; Liabilities</b>				
Funds for Designated Purposes	217,458 <sup>Note F</sup>	0	0	217,458
Other	<u>(812)</u>	<u>(29,259)</u> <sup>Note G</sup>	<u>0</u>	<u>(30,071)</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b><u>216,646</u></b>	<b><u>(29,259)</u></b>	<b><u>0</u></b>	<b><u>187,387</u></b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$205,190</b>	<b>\$101,483</b>	<b>\$2,382,102</b>	<b>\$2,688,775</b>

#### Notes to the Financial Statements

- A The Endowment account balance is held in various funds some of which are subject to terms significantly restricting the Church's use of the principal balance.
- B Includes one-time gifts of \$41,000. For reference, gifts for 12/31/2022 and 12/31/2021 were \$108,000 and \$38,100, respectively.
- C Includes receipts from Operations of \$20,000.
- D Includes disbursements from Endowment Funds to Operations Investment Income of \$91,500.
- E Total does not eliminate transfer from Operations to Capital Improvement of \$20,000.
- F Includes Flood and Property Damage reserve of \$54,000.
- G Amount is Due from Operations.



## 2024 Budget

### Income

Unrestricted Income	
Total Pledges (2024 anticipated)	369,250
Total Offerings and Gifts	34,900
Total Investments	99,500
Total Rentals	20,731
Total Other Income	<u>1,000</u>
Total Unrestricted Income	525,381
Restricted Income	
Total Missions Income	5,750
Total Non-Missions Income	<u>12,500</u>
Total Restricted Income	<u>18,250</u>
Total Income	<u>543,631</u>

### Expense

Total Personnel	399,717
Operations	
Buildings & Grounds	
Capital	10,000
Total Church and Education Building	51,950
Total Parsonage - Fireside	8,450
Total Parsonage - Nathaniel	<u>7,850</u>
Total Insurance	<u>36,801</u>
Total Buildings & Grounds	115,051
Total Office	14,951
Total Admin	5,450
Worship	
Deacons	100
Search Committee	-
Music	2,000
Chancel	4,500
Ushers	-
Worship Tech	-
Hybrid worship project	100
Pageant	<u>-</u>
Total Worship	6,700
Welcome	
Greeters	-
Open Doors Sunday	750
Elevette	-
Easter Egg Hunt	200
Publicity	-
Trunk or treat	<u>-</u>
Total Welcome	950

Congregational Care	
Lay Visitation	-
Coffee hour	600
Youth Group	1,500
Women of faith	-
Pot luck	-
Book Club	-
Softball	200
Bereavement Group	-
Total Congregational Care	<u>2,300</u>
Justice and Peace	
Green/Environmental team	-
B.I.P. Team	-
Negro Spirituals team	-
Five for Five Team	-
ONA Team	250
Total Justice and Peace	<u>250</u>
Service	
Local Outreach	1,900
Refugee Resettlement	-
Loaves & Fishes	-
Knitting for others	-
Mission Trip	-
Total Service	<u>1,900</u>
Faith Formation	
Church School team	2,100
Nursery	1,200
OWL Team	-
Adults	400
Confirmation	500
Total Faith Formation	<u>4,200</u>
Total Missions-General Funds	23,827
Total Missions	5,750
Total Other Expenses	-
Total Operations	<u>181,330</u>
Total Expense	<u>581,047</u>
Total Income (Loss)	<u>(37,416)</u>
After sale of parsonage	(19,966)

## Administration Ministry

Dale Azevedo, Administration Coordinator

The administrative area Ministry Teams will primarily focus on nominations, personnel, and historical records. Since our new structure is so new, only the Historical Team is up and running. Our Nominating and Personnel Teams are scheduled to become active in the second half of 2024 or the first half of 2025. These teams will be crucial to the long-term success of our church. However, getting the Governing Board and primary ministry areas up and running was of greater importance for the first six months of the new structure.

I will be working on building these teams soon and would appreciate anyone who has a background or interest in either nominating or personnel reaching out to me. Of particular interest are folks who have a background in human resources and could lend their expertise as we get our Personnel Team up and running.

Historical Team, Dianne Wilkin, Team Leader

This year saw a great deal of progress in the storage of the historical documents for the Church. Much needed materials, such as archival boxes, envelopes and folders have helped to preserve especially the oldest of the materials we have. The addition of several new shelves in the left cabinet also was a welcomed addition. Items are now categorized primarily by decades. We have been most fortunate to have had funds from the Dr. Richard Browning memorial fund to cover these expenses and are now awaiting the arrival of a new bronze plaque describing the earliest beginnings of our Church soon to be mounted on the south side of the building.

Nominating Team, no current leader

No report submitted, please see coordinator's report.

Personnel Team, no current leader

No report submitted, please see coordinator's report.

# LIST OF ELECTED LEADERS AND MINISTRY TEAMS

## Church Officers and Elected Leaders

Those designated with an \* were elected at the special meeting held on January 28, 2024, and will serve until June, 2025, with the exception of the Governing Board members who will serve until June, 2026.

### Governing Board

- \*Laura Ward, Chair
- \*Charles Antone
- \*Chris Brady
- \*Kim Fernandez
- \*Vanessa Kiley

### Officers

- \*Laura Ward, Gov. Board Chair
- \*Greg Voigt, Clerk
- \*Leo Drury, Treasurer

### Director of Ministries

- \*Rev. Dale Azevedo, Sr. Minister

### Ministry Coordinators

- \*Rev. Dale Azevedo, Worship
- \*Barbara Lee, Welcome
- \*Rev. Racquel Ray, Congregational Care
- \*Nancy Arena, Justice and Peace
- \*Sarah Mycroft, Service
- \*Andrea Bullard, Faith Formation
- \*Paul Dennis, Property
- \*Tom Colby, Finance
- \*Rev. Dale Azevedo, Administration

## Ministry Areas and Teams

Team leaders are listed

Worship Coord.	*Dale Azevedo	Welcome Coord.	*Barbara Lee
Chancel Team	Beth Buckley	Easter Egg Hunt Team	Jack Mycroft
Deacons	Pat Stoddard	Elevette Team	Jay Buckley
Music Team	Matthew Marion	Greeters Team	Trinki Brueckner
Pageant Team		Open Door Sunday Tm.	
Sing & Celebrate Team	Kate Colby	Publicity Team	
Ushers Team	Bethia Rosner	Trunk or Treat Team	
Worship Tech Team	Tom Colby		

Congregational Care Coord.	*Racquel Ray	Finance Coord.	*Tom Colby
Bereavement Group	Racquel Ray	Stewardship Team	
Book Club	Helen Schall	Endowment Team	Kate Colby
Coffee Hour Team		Treasurer	Leo Drury
Lay Visitation Team	Racquel Ray	Budget Monitoring	
Pot-Luck Team	Sarah Gibb	Accounting	
Softball Team	Tom Kiley		
Women of Faith Team	Jane Tonn	Property Coord.	*Paul Dennis
Youth Group Team	Racquel Ray	Church Buildings Team	
		Landscaping Team	Eileen Dennis
Justice & Peace Coord.	*Nancy Arena	Parsonage Team	
5 for 5 Team	Nancy Arena	Building Rental Team	Sam Sylvester
Asylum Team	Gab. Sclafani		
B.I.P. Team	Trinki Brueckner	Administration Coord.	*Dale Azevedo
Creation Care Team	Racquel Ray	Personnel Team	
Negro Spirituals Team	Helen Schall	Nominating Team	
ONA Team	Dale Azevedo	Historical Team	Dianne Wilkin
Service Coord.	*Sarah Mycroft		
Knitting for Others	Nancy Arena		
Loaves & Fishes Team	Jay Buckley		
Local Outreach Team			
Mission Trip Team	JoAnne Waite		
Refugee Resettlement Tm.	Lory McCoy		
Faith Formation Coord.	*Andrea Bullard		
Adult Formation Team	Dale Azevedo		
Church School Team	Fred Rocco		
Confirmation Team	Racquel Ray		
Nursery Team	Andrea Bullard		
O.W.L. Team	Andrea Bullard		

## FROM THE CHURCH RECORDS

June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024

This report covers the 12 month period from early June 2023 through early June 2024. The categories shown are also requested each December for the United Church of Christ Yearbook Report (see page 45).

### NEW MEMBERS (3)

10/22/23

Christian Capizzo  
Lauren Capizzo

11/26/23

Bradley Nourse (Adult Baptism)

### CONFIRMATIONS (4)

6/18/23

Caroline Steger  
Jibril Diakite  
Beckett Capizzo  
Lauren Silva

### MARRIAGES (1)

Abigail Canto and Kevin Lippe, Jr.

### BAPTISMS (3)

Infants and Children (2)

Maeve Claire Killian  
Grace Patricia Almeida

Adult (1)

C. Bradley Nourse

### DEATHS (8)

Active Members (2)

William Rooks  
Janet Morrison

Inactive Members (5)

Bonnie Britland  
Louise Hawkins  
Ann Wood  
Marion Willey  
Nancy Martin

Others (1)

Richard Frary

### TRANSFER OUT (2)

Peggy Matteson  
William Matteson

## Membership Statistics

Changes in membership since the 2023 Annual Report:

Between June 7, 2023 and June 3, 2024 the following changes occurred:

Additions to Active Membership (9)	Losses to Active Membership (38)
2 - New Members	2 - Death
1 - Adult Baptism	36 – Other reasons (moved away, were inactive, etc)
4 - Confirmation	
2 - Return to Active Membership	

Active Membership as of Jun 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 was 248 *(Number reported in 2023 Annual Report)*

Active Membership as of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 is  $248 + 9 - 38 = 219$

Changes in membership from January 1 to December 31, 2023:

The membership statistics are collected at the end of each calendar year and reflect the changes that took place during that year. They are then submitted to the National Office of the United Church of Christ in the form of the Yearbook Report and appear in the UCC Yearbook.

Active Membership as of 12/31/2023 was 221 (see following table for breakdown).

<i>From the UCC Yearbook Report Form:</i>	
Statistics for January 1 – December 31, 2023	
Active Membership as of 12/31/2022	239
Additions during year:	
Confirmation	4
Confession of Faith	1
Letters of Transfer	0
Reaffirmation of Faith	12
Losses during year:	
Death	3
Transfer	2
Other removals	30
Active Membership as of 12/31/2023	221

Changes in membership from January 1 to June 3, 2024:

The following changes in ACTIVE membership took place in 2024 thru June 3:

- 0 New Member
- 0 New Members (by Confirmation)
- 0 Return to Active Membership
- 0 Death of Active Members
- 2 Removals (moved away)

Active Membership as of 12/31/2023 was 221 (see earlier).

Active Membership as of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 is  $221 - 2 = 219$

Note: All of these membership statistics only include those who officially joined our church and become a 'member' and are also still active. If you'd like to become an official member, please reach out to Rev. Dale Azevedo or the church office to find out about the next New Member Class. Regardless of membership status, all are welcome to fully participate in the life of our church.

**3**

### **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

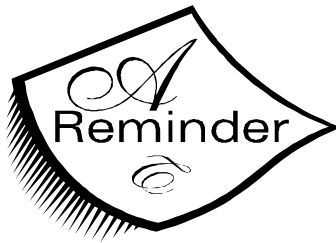
The Barrington Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, is a Christian community that worships God, embraces all people, ministers to one another, works for justice and peace, and renders loving service to God's world.

**3**

### **AFFIRMATION OF WELCOME**

We believe that all people are blessed and loved equally by God. Following the teachings of Jesus we heartily welcome everyone into God's covenantal community. Whatever your race, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic or marital status, variety of thoughts and beliefs, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression - whoever you are and wherever you come from you are welcome into the full life and ministry of our church.





All are invited to attend the  
**Annual Meeting**

of the Barrington Congregational Church, UCC on  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2024**

in the Sanctuary immediately following worship.

As always, church members are encouraged to make every effort to attend this important church meeting.

*Child care will be provided.*

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**Barrington Congregational Church**

**United Church of Christ**

**461 County Road,**

**Barrington, RI 02806**

**Telephone: (401) 246-0111**

**e-mail address: [office@bccucc.org](mailto:office@bccucc.org)**

**website: [www.bccucc.org](http://www.bccucc.org)**

**Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/bccucc](http://www.facebook.com/bccucc)**

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**Senior Minister: The Rev. Dr. Dale Azevedo**

**Associate Minister for Congregational Life: The Rev. Racquel Ray**

**Faith Formation Director: Andrea Terni Bullard**

**Music Director: Matthew Marion**

**Office Administrator: Christine Wallis**

**Financial Secretary: Patricia Stoddard**

**Custodians: Jay Buckley, Frank Lee, Barbara Lee**