

# *ANNUAL REPORT*

2012 – 2013



The 147<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the  
Community Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
Benicia, California



**Community Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
Benicia, California**

ANNUAL REPORT 2012 – 2013

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**LEADERSHIP TEAM 2012-2013****STAFF**

Pastor	The Rev. Renie Stamm-Kirk
Minister of Music	Dr. Barbara Hamm
Director of Music Ministries	Howard Gill
Church Secretary	Maggie Hart

**OFFICERS**

Moderator	Larry Schaffer
Vice-Moderator	Nancy Gilman
Church Clerk	Shelby Riddle
Financial Secretary	Karen Hanna
Treasurer	Dale Olm

**Committee Chairs**

Building and Grounds Ministry	Jim Lessenger
Christian Education Ministry	Janet Murrell
Congregational Care	Penny Taylor & Jackie Lawrence
Fellowship	Nancy Aldritt & Susan Stofan
Social Outreach Ministry	Sarah Thompson (Leslie Beatson)
Stewardship Ministry	Michelle Cavagnuolo
Welcome and Growth	Debi & Dale Stanley
Worship Ministry	Priscilla Lane

Member-At-Large	Natalie Daffern
Member-At-Large	(Mike Hill)



## Pastor's Report

The Rev. Renie Stamm-Kirk

I was recently reminded of the wonderful quote "God does not call the equipped, he equips the called." This was certainly true for Jeremiah, who was called into God's service as a prophet at the ripe old age of eight years! God came to Jeremiah when he was yet a child and said, "Before you were in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." (Jeremiah 1:4-5)

It is rare indeed that we feel equipped to do God's work, and many of us may still feel we are still but children on the faith journey, yet we are called nonetheless into God's service! Called to teach, preach, and baptize. Called to sing, feed, and weed. Called to cook, play, and praise. Called to share with the world the good news that Christ lives and because Christ lives we have the promise of new life as well. I have been blessed to be in ministry with the people of Community Congregational now for six years, starting in 2007, witness to the amazing growth in the congregation both spiritually and physically. I give thanks to God for our collective response to God's call to each of us and to our community of faith as a whole.

I share the following highlights from each of the areas in which we organize ourselves as church at Community Congregational:



In the area of Worship, we celebrate the continuance of our great and gifted choir, the Rolling Tones, our Women and Girls Chorus and rejoiced with starting the summer off with Pastor Candace Frawley leading worship during my sabbatical with "The Summer of Love." We were blessed by having Larry Schaffer's brother, The Rev. Frank Schaffer preaching this summer as well. We ended the summer with my return in September and Home Coming Sunday, with the theme "Our Cup Runneth Over." This was followed by an Advent

series "Being Different Because We Have So Much." The Epiphany Season was "Blinded by the Light." Lent was "Listen and Learn" and Easter Time was "Go & Tell." The worship services featured Jazz Gorilla, The Benicia Celtic Band, The Rolling Tones and many incredible solos. We were also blessed this year by Bruce Smith filling in as preacher during my vacation.

In the area of Education we celebrate the continuance of our excellent Sunday School ministry, including a phenomenal Christmas pageant. We rejoice at the fruitful efforts of many.

A growing Stewardship ministry illustrates that Stewardship is about responding to God's grace with our whole lives in a way that touches how we care for our bodies and how we spend time with our families, how we share of time, talent and treasure within our congregation and how we serve in the wider community and world.

We celebrate the ongoing work of the Fellowship and Hospitality ministry that supported events such as our Fourth of July Celebration and BBQ, October Halloweenfest, Thanksgiving Feast as well as hosting the Bay Association Fall Meeting.





From our Mission focus Community Congregational was very active in the Founding Event for “Common Ground” (IAF) where 1,300 people from Solano & Napa Counties gathered to plan social actions around social justice issues. Our “Second Saturday’s feeding our friends of the street” with Vallejo Together is a big success, with many members involved and 100’s of people fed. Mission has also been active in filling food barrels for the food bank, and providing backpacks for children returning to school. We continued our annual Christmas Adopt-a-Family program. This spring, instead of Easter Lilies adorning the altar, we once again worked in conjunction with First Place for Youth, adorning our altar with apartment supplies for foster kids moving out on their own.



Our Congregational Care team was active in home & hospital visits, many meal preps for families in need and cards for our home-bound and ill.

Our website was re-launched, with a new host provider and our facebook page has been very successful as well. With over 25 e-newsletters going out this year our social media has been able to reach many we were not able to reach before.

Youth participated in helping as aides in Sunday School, several scavenger hunts, fifth Sundays family fellowship, and Youth Sunday Worship with the theme “God is Still Speaking.”

We are preparing for our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2016 by continuing our efforts to collect and file our historical documents. Through the efforts of Jim Lessenger we have an incredible record of who this church was back in the day.

When I read this partial list of celebrations I can hardly believe it! For a smaller congregation (though, thanks be to God we are part of a growing wave of people and ministries here at Community Congregational) we sure do keep busy with God’s work!

I am deeply grateful to all of you, and especially to our Council, as well as our staff, for the privilege of accompanying you in ministry. Thank you for all you do to make Community Congregational a congregation of faith and love. You and your families are in my prayers. I rely on your prayers as well.

It has been a full year, to be sure, and much more has happened in God’s ministry among us than what I have highlighted for you here. Though we may not always feel equipped and ready, there is no doubt that with God’s help we can be the people God has called us to be. As The Rev. John Robinson prayed with the pilgrims in 1620, the night before they set sail for the New World: “I am very confident the Lord hath more truth and light yet to break forth out of His holy word.”





## Music Ministry

Dr. Barbara Hamm



### *The Power of Music*<sup>1</sup>

Music, says this book, is “used across time and culture to bring people together, to lead them in prayer, to lead them to war, to feed romance, and to ease broken hearts” (50).<sup>1</sup> I personally know in my own body the healing power of music, and we all probably know intuitively to some degree these properties of the power of music individually and corporately. Nevertheless, it is fascinating to read about neuroscientific studies about performers and listeners being hooked up to MRIs while they’re playing or listening to music and about how scientists are devising tests to see what areas of the brain are being activated.

We know the power of music to take us to a different place, almost an altered state of consciousness, whether listening to one of the biblically based or inspired works of classical composers like Handel and Bach or a wonderful congregational hymn that evokes memories of our past and/or important passages in our lives. Music can also reach across boundaries to bring us together. The accomplished musician and conductor Bobby McFerrin says, “As soon as we play or sing together,/we can easily find ways of identifying each other, who we are and what our stories are through music without uttering a single word. You know, music does that” (51-52). Plato in *The Republic* speaks about the necessity of music education for the philosopher-kings, the ones who would rule the state (would that our current school administrators heeded this advice that comes from the springs of Western democracy!).

Music has historically been part of the ritual of the church. The New Testament records that on the night of the last supper, “When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives” (Mat. 26:30, Mar 14:26). “Music, healing, and spirituality have had a connection since the beginning of human history” (204). When Dean and Shelby and I have done Taizé services at the UCC Annual Gathering, people have come up to tell us, sometimes with tears in their eyes, how much the music has moved them; one woman sent us a note telling us she had played our full-length Taizé CD for many hours at the bedside of a dying friend.

Music certainly has an important place in the weekly celebration of worship at CCC. Music moves us in profound ways, serving to heal and restore, to encourage, to express and reflect gratitude, and to inspire. Singers at CCC may offer solos or sing with our vocal groups, including the Sanctuary Choir, the Girls’ Choir, and the Women and Girls’ Chorus, which generally draws on women and girls from the other two choirs, presenting music on special Sundays throughout the year. Our most important choir is formed every Sunday morning by the members of the congregation as they lift their voices in praise to God, singing everything from the traditional hymns of the church to gospel to Taizé to contemporary hymns and praise music.

Our worship life is also greatly enriched by a variety of instrumentalists playing in various configurations, including the first-Sunday instrumental group, the Christmas Orchestra, the Celtic band, The Rolling Tones, and Jazz Gorilla.



The church concert series presented two concerts this year: Fiddle Rising (Celtic music) and CCC's Home-grown Christmas Concert. A new group called Food for the Soul was organized by Shelby Riddle to provide music for our friends on the street in Vallejo, where CCC prepares and serves food on the second Saturday of the month. Different members and friends of the church have contributed their talents to this unique form of musical outreach.

Director Leslie Lessenger reports the following of The Rolling Tones Handbell Choir:

The Rolling Tones performed several times during the year, providing gathering music, music for celebration and worship, and accompaniment for choir and congregation. We participated in the Home-grown Christmas concert and offered holiday music to the community outside Baskin Robbins. In the spring 7 members attended the Bay Area Spring Ring in Cupertino. Our finale was a concert at Merrill Gardens in Vallejo. It was exciting to perform some original words by our own Deborah Shanks. Calling upon the talents of Dean and Nancy Gilman and Marlan Shanks for occasional percussion, regular members of The Rolling Tones were Laurie and Keith Read, Kim Webb, Carla Goad, Chol  McGraw, and Deborah Shanks.

Jazz Gorilla [Dean Gilman, bass; Shelby Riddle, clarinet; Barbara Hamm, piano] played for church and numerous community service events: CCC's Christmas concert, the crab feed, the Good Friday Taiz  service, and the UCC Annual Gathering in Redwood City, where they conducted a Taiz  service and performed in a Saturday night jazz concert. They also played at the Winterhawk Winery Social Services summer fundraiser, The Longest Night service at the Presbyterian Church, Merrill Gardens, the Walnut Creek Unitarian Church's Housing for the Homeless, the Contra Costa Interfaith Housing Carnival, a Catholic Charities' Reception honoring volunteers, a Humane Society Reception to honor a member's ten years of service in helping homeless pets, and the Common Ground organizing event. Jazz Gorilla ended the year on the very last day by playing for the UCC Synod in Long Beach several times on June 29-30.

Many other of our musicians also perform outside the church: Dean and Nancy Gilman and Gail Mason with Oakland-based Cantare Con Vivo; Dean Gilman and Heidi Hawthorne with the Vallejo Choral Society; Chol  McGraw with Melody Chorale; Larry Schaffer with the Summerset Singers; Leslie Blackie with a Pleasanton-based Broadway musicals group; Stuart Blackie in the high school concert and jazz bands as well as three honor bands this past year; and Kathleen Kravets in a whole host of venues, including Downtown Theatre Fairfield, Bay Area Stage, the Royal English Opera at the Dickens Christmas Fair, and Old Town Sacramento. Deborah Shanks accompanied a musical group at a concert series during the year at an East Bay church. She also directed a church choir in the summer at Port Ludlow, WA, where she and Marlan go for several months each year. These are all outside of CCC, of course, but oftentimes when I'm performing elsewhere I find myself telling someone about our church and its music program. In this way we sooner or later end up representing the church no matter the venue.

Deborah has also accompanied the worship service in my absence; additionally, she has arranged several choir and handbell pieces specifically for our church, including the lovely "Fairest Lord Jesus," for choir, handbells, flute, and clarinet.

Your Music Minister has been very active musically this past year. I was the musician for a Disciples of Christ Women's Retreat in Palo Alto on April 20. On April 21 one of my hymns was on the program for an American Guild of Organists/Hymn Society Hymn Sing. In addition to carrying out my responsibilities at the church and performing with Jazz Gorilla, I have almost risen to the challenge of my piano and hymn writing teacher, the Rev. Dan Damon, to produce one short chant

or refrain every week this spring. At least six of these (and possibly more) will appear in the new collection *At Your Altars (chants, refrains, and short songs)*, slated for publication in June 2014 by Hope Publishing Company.

All the musicians who have participated in CCC's music program appear below. I have taken pains to be complete and accurate, but my apologies to anyone whom I may have omitted inadvertently. I am grateful for the gifts all of you bring to the music program at CCC; you have my profound gratitude. *Deo Gloria.*

#### **Sanctuary Choir – Barbara Hamm, Director**

Dean Gilman	Priscilla Lane	Deborah Shanks
Nancy Gilman	Cholé McGraw	Marlan Shanks
Heidi Hawthorne	Jackie Sayles	Bruce Smith
Kathleen Kravets	Larry Schaffer	Susan Stofan

#### **Girls' Choir – Barbara Hamm, Director**

Ella Beatson	Sophia Briseño	Holly Thomas
Audrey Benton	Natalie Daffern	Meadow Thomas
Lydia Benton	Katie Stamm-Kirk	
Isabelle Briseño	Autumn Thomas	

#### **Women and Girls' Chorus – Barbara Hamm, Director**

Ella Beatson	Brianna Karigan	Priscilla Lane
Audrey Benton	Kathleen Kravets	Cholé McGraw
Lydia Benton	Karyna Mitchell	Laura Pyles
Isabelle Briseño	Katie Stamm-Kirk	Jackie Sayles
Sophia Briseño	Autumn Thomas	Deborah Shanks
Natalie Daffern	Holly Thomas	Susan Stofan
McKensi Davis-Holcomb	Meadow Thomas	
Heidi Hawthorne	Nancy Gilman	

#### **The Rolling Tones Handbell Choir – Leslie Lessenger, Director**

Carla Goad	Deborah Shanks	<i>Auxiliary Members:</i>
Cholé McGraw	Kim Webb	Dean Gilman
Keith Read		Nancy Gilman
Laurie Read		Marlan Shanks

#### **Jazz Gorilla**

Dean Gilman – bass	Shelby Riddle – clarinet	Barbara Hamm – piano
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#### **Instrumentalists**

Leslie Blackie – violin	Leslie Lessenger – flute	Deborah Shanks – guitar, organ, piano
Stuart Blackie – trumpet, drums	Adam Olm – violin	Bruce Smith – guitar, piano
Dean Gilman – acoustic and electric bass	Dale Olm – mandolin	Katie Stamm-Kirk – flute
Christopher Hanna – piano	Shelby Riddle – clarinet, violin	Barbara Hamm – piano, organ

<sup>1</sup>Mannes, Elena. *The Power of Music: Pioneering Discoveries in the New Science of Song*. New York: Walker & Company, 2011.



## Director of Youth Ministries

Howard Gill

Greetings Community Congregational Church Family, what an amazing year!

As I reflect over this year, I am amazed how God has transformed our Youth Ministries into something so rich and powerful. Our youth have grown spiritually in many ways and continue to breathe new life into our church. With new life, we will continue to grow and prosper; we will change and be transformed into the “New” the God has for us.



Our youth are inspired to continue this “New” journey, as it was evident during the Youth “Pentecost” service this year. I am reminded of how much prayer and work they poured into the planning stages. As they began to write each prayer, poem and faith message, the spirit of God flowed through each one; and as each youth spoke, their voice delivered a powerful word from God. And we were abundantly blessed that day. I too am inspired by our youth to continue in a “New” way. I encourage each Community Congregational family to walk boldly with God and to experience all that God has for us.

As you read this report, you will notice how active our youth department is in several areas of ministry. You will

experience their journey that encompasses our Sunday school, youth group and nursery programs, all of which required the many hands that volunteered their time and talents this year. I am also thankful for our CE Chair Janet Murrell for her outstanding work, blessings to you and for our Co-Chair Veronica Ensminger for her support during this season.



Thank you for an outstanding four years; this has been an amazing journey – Blessings to you all.



## Seminarian In Discernment

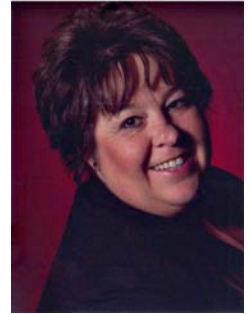
Candace Frawley

As I sit to write this report for the CCC-UCC 2012-2013 Annual Report, I find myself just weeks away from formally completing my ordination process. As this important event draws near I can't help but reflect on all of the many wonderful blessings that I have received over these last several years as your minister in training, your sabbatical supplement minister and, always, as your member in discernment.

The journey to this point has been filled with love and grace beyond imagination. My roles at CCC-UCC have been unique in that not only have I received support and guidance from each of you, I have also had the honor to serve you as your pastor, albeit for a temporary time. Engaging with each of you in all of these roles has been a blessing.

The three months over summer 2013 were amazing for me. During that time we traveled together through a summer of love, exploring how to better love our neighbor, how to better love God and most importantly how to better love ourselves as children of God already loved beyond our understanding. It warms my heart to see some of the fruits of this labor manifested in the many faithful volunteers who now gather regularly to show this love by providing sustenance to those who are most vulnerable and for the dedicated ones who spent countless hours planning and executing one of the largest interfaith gatherings in Vallejo in hopes of reaching out with others to spread God's love even further. Understanding our call to love others continues to move us forward in new ways and with hope will be ever evolving as we always seek to fulfill our mission to live fully, love wastefully and lead courageously.

French novelist, Marcel Proust, once said "The true voyage of discovery is not so much in seeking new landscapes as in having new eyes." My hope is that there has been something over this past year that has resonated with you and inspired you to see things with new eyes. I know that I have new eyes that each of you have helped to form as we have ministered together. As I prepare for my own new adventures, I would be remiss if I did not let you know that our time together has made it even clearer to me that I am called to serve in ministry. Know that you have helped me come alive in the world. You have helped me to go deeper, you have faithfully kept the kindling of love burning in my heart and for that I am ever grateful and offer a heart of praise to you, each and every one of you. Your touch on my life will forever touch others.





## Moderator

Larry Schaffer

It has been an honor to serve you as Moderator this past year and an honor work side by side of so many dedicated and talented Christian Council Members, volunteers, and congregants.

We helped nurture and watched our Minister-in-Training Candace Frawley develop. She will be Ordained in our sanctuary this August. And Jonathan Dodson, our former Youth Minister and also Minister-in-Training will be Ordained in Colorado later this year. Bless them.



We are a congregation that welcomes all. Please read Director of Youth Ministries Howard Gill's report. I applaud what he has accomplished with our youth, and am amazed at what our youth have taken on this year.

We are a congregation of clipboards. More of you are signing up earlier to provide flowers, host or sponsor fellowship, be ushers, July 4th Celebration, etc. Your volunteering makes our services and events so welcoming and refreshing. Thank you.

We are a congregation that is alive and vibrant. Please read Barbara Hamm's Music Report, the various Choirs, Jazz Gorilla, Celtic Band, Solos, the Rolling Tones Bell Choir and so much more. Please read the Building & Grounds Report with Jim Lessenger ably assisted by Greg Cox, organizing monthly Saturday Work Parties, coordinating Adopt-A-Weed Program, the Parking Lot Task Force, daily maintenance and upkeep. I could go on and on with the likes of our active participation in the Founding Convention of Common Ground, Vacation Bible School, Council Committees keeping our church alive and reaching out to our members. The names I could mention are endless; but your commitment is not. Thank you.

We are a congregation of relationships. My monthly meetings with Rev. Renie were so rewarding. We shared, taught, laughed, and guided each other in the service of this church. Rev. Renie, thank you for the countless number of times that you made me look good.

Please read every page of your 2012-2013 Annual Report. You are commended for what we have accomplished collectively with our time, talents and giving.

Proverbs 3:8-9 (New Living Translation) says "Then you will gain renewed health and vitality. Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the best part of everything your land produces."

I leave you with this challenge. Community Congregational Church, UCC of Benicia is changing and committed to new possibilities of vitality and "doing church." Will you join us?

God loves you. And so do I.



## Vice Moderator

Nancy Gilman

As Vice-Moderator this year I was chairperson of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee or the PPRC. We met once a month with Pastor Renie to discuss any congregation- or pastor-related issues that might have arisen.

All conversations were confidential and this committee provided support for the pastor as well as a way to keep her abreast of any “rumblings” that might have been going on in the congregation that needed to be addressed.

I would like to thank all members for their dedication and effort this year.





## Clerk

Shelby Riddle

### Baptisms

November 25, 2012

Tuk Meade Thrower

Avery Grace Koehn

March 13, 2013

Maddie Vlnar

Donovan Vlnar

March 27, 2013

Sione Atuatasi, Jr.

Toa Atuatasi

### Dedications

March 27, 2013

Vaiola Atuatasi

Mayleen Atuatasi



### Dropped Membership

Mike Hill

Jane Robinson

Stephanie Hayes

### Transferred Membership

Sara Johnson – November 13, 2012

### Deceased

Member

Louise Tyree: July 12, 1930-January 11, 2013

Non-member

Elaine Segal: September 28, 2012

Memorial Service- October 7, 2012



**Total Members:** June 30, 2012 129  
June 30, 2013 125



## MEMBER JOIN DATE

Member Name	Join Date
Nelson, Helen .....	4/6/1950
Mortensen, Eleanor .....	11/21/1954
Burns, Karen .....	8/16/1955
Estey, Frances .....	3/25/1956
Updyke, Karen .....	3/25/1958
Estment (Wyatt), Patricia .....	10/9/1959
Stone, Peg .....	10/25/1959
Stephens, Carol .....	11/4/1964
Stofan, Susan .....	2/24/1974
Hammonds, Maryo .....	9/15/1974
Hammonds, Sam .....	9/15/1974
Atkins, Nancy .....	3/28/1976
Atkins, Stephen .....	3/28/1976
Martin, Pam .....	10/22/1978
Osada, Carolyn .....	6/8/1980
Wingert, Hope .....	2/8/1981
Scrutchins, Marilyn .....	6/7/1981
Lane, Priscilla .....	12/5/1982
Cox, Bob .....	6/5/1983
Hutchins, Patricia .....	10/16/1983
Read, Laurie .....	2/17/1985
Read, Keith .....	2/17/1985
Wong, Jan .....	11/10/1985
Cox, Betty .....	3/23/1986
Sayles, Jackie .....	4/5/1987
Oraboni, Larry .....	10/10/1993
Hull, Chuck .....	3/3/1994
Huebner, John .....	3/13/1994
Huebner, Vreni .....	3/13/1994
Kravets, Kathleen .....	4/12/1998
Kravets, Rob .....	4/12/1998
Read, Robyn .....	5/31/1998
Olm, Dale .....	9/27/1998
Francis, Chris .....	2/14/1999
Beeson, Rick .....	2/14/1999
Conway, Debbie .....	4/25/1999
Mason, Carl .....	11/14/1999
Mason, Gail .....	11/14/1999
Murrell, Janet .....	11/14/1999
Taylor, Penny .....	11/14/1999
Thomas, Jett .....	1/16/2000
Thomas, Milly .....	1/16/2000
Blackie, Leslie .....	7/30/2000
Blackie, Jonathan .....	7/30/2000
McGraw, Chol�� .....	2/25/2001

Member Name	Join Date
Cox, Greg .....	2/25/2001
Cox, Daniel .....	5/12/2002
Cox, Regina .....	5/12/2002
Read, Kristen .....	5/12/2002
Sindt, Cassidy .....	5/12/2002
Hamm, Barbara .....	6/30/2002
Gilman, Nancy .....	7/20/2003
Watson, Jim .....	7/20/2003
Benton, Graham .....	1/25/2004
Thompson, Sarah .....	1/25/2004
Hicks, Rhonda .....	3/28/2004
Gilman, Dean .....	12/12/2004
Olm, Sam .....	5/15/2005
Blackie, Lindsay .....	5/15/2005
Mautz, Tim .....	6/26/2005
Schaffer, Larry .....	5/7/2006
Stamm-Kirk, Rev. Renie .....	6/3/2007
Riddle, Shelby .....	6/3/2007
Olm, Adam .....	6/3/2007
Parsons, Natalie .....	6/3/2007
Stamm-Kirk, Allison .....	12/2/2007
Eubank, Eileen .....	12/2/2007
Hanna, Karen .....	12/2/2007
Hanna, John .....	12/2/2007
Garrigues, Jeff .....	12/2/2007
Munnely, Elizabeth .....	12/2/2007
Lawrence, Jackie .....	12/2/2007
Lawrence, Lynn .....	12/2/2007
Stanley, Debi .....	6/1/2008
Stanley, Dale .....	6/1/2008
Lessenger, Jim .....	6/1/2008
Lessenger, Leslie .....	6/1/2008
Scott, Mickey .....	6/1/2008
Robinson, Jane .....	12/21/2008
Schaffer, Nancy .....	12/21/2008
Sirota, Kay .....	12/21/2008
Hanna, Christopher .....	5/17/2009
Hanna, Mathew .....	5/17/2009
Cooper, Brent .....	6/14/2009
McDonald, Reiko .....	6/14/2009
Ensminger, Veronica .....	10/4/2009
Sullivan, Jessica .....	10/4/2009
Watson, Lance .....	10/4/2009
Toney, Lynette .....	10/4/2009
Hartzell, Valerie .....	1/24/2010

Member Name	Join Date
Hartzell, Patricia .....	1/24/2010
Blackie, Stuart .....	1/24/2010
Gauger, Eleanor (Nora) .....	1/24/2010
Gauger, Hal .....	1/24/2010
Esparza, Gina .....	6/27/2010
Esparza, Jill .....	6/27/2010
Frawley, Candace .....	7/20/2010
Bouty, Andree .....	7/20/2010
Aldritt, Nancy .....	3/20/2011
Kidder, Natalie .....	3/20/2011
Stauffer, Cheryle .....	3/20/2011
Goad, Carla .....	3/20/2011
Dolter, Jean .....	3/20/2011
Dolter, Bill .....	3/20/2011
Hawthorne, Heidi .....	3/20/2011
Brisena, Sophia .....	5/15/2011
Brisena, Isabelle .....	5/15/2011
Cooper, Kieran .....	5/15/2011
Herr, Liberty .....	5/15/2011
Stamm-Kirk, Katie .....	5/15/2011
Beatson, Leslie .....	4/8/2012
Cavagnuolo, Michelle .....	4/8/2012
Daffern, Tracy .....	4/8/2012
Green, Jennifer .....	4/8/2012
Hill, Donna .....	4/8/2012
Otero, Dylan .....	4/8/2012
Pyles, Laura .....	4/8/2012
Smith, Roland .....	4/8/2012
Smith, Linda .....	4/8/2012
Vlnar, Eric .....	4/8/2012
Vlnar, Maria .....	4/8/2012
Benton, Audrey .....	6/10/2012
Daffern, Matt .....	6/10/2012
Daffern, Kyle .....	6/10/2012
Daffern, Natalie .....	6/10/2012
Mitchell, Karyna .....	6/10/2012

## Financial Secretary

Karen Hanna

The Financial Secretary job requires work done behind closed doors. On Sundays, after worship, I make my way into the office along with one of my Council-approved counters – thanks to Jett Thomas. Most Sundays Jett meets me in the office, with money in hand, to do our weekly count. When Jett is not available I can always count others to help out.

I send out quarterly statements to all who make a contribution to our church. These statements should be helpful in keeping track of your giving. If you are in need of a statement at any time you can e-mail, call or talk to me on Sunday.

### Community Congregational Church, United Church of Christ - Benicia CA Donations Account Balances (07/01/2012 - 06/30/2013)

Sunday, July 14, 2013		Page 1 of 1
Account	Period Activity	YTD Balance
<i>Giving Accounts</i>		
059 - Previous fiscal year pledges	350.00	350.00
060 - Pledges - Current Year	128,001.02	128,001.02
061 - Pledges - Paid Advance Next FY	10,266.31	10,266.31
065 - Parishioner Contributions	20,317.36	20,317.36
067 - Donation In Kind	2,609.45	2,609.45
070 - Building Use - Preschool (HH)	22,740.00	22,740.00
071 - Building Use - Other	5,020.00	5,020.00
085 - Fundraiser - Stewardship	3,410.00	3,410.00
087 - Fundraiser - Crab Feed	4,105.00	4,105.00
099 - Other Sources of Funding	1,092.00	1,092.00
207 - Families In Transition (F.I.T.	369.85	369.85
409 - Puente de la Costa Sur	232.00	232.00
411 - CAC Xmas Families	216.00	216.00
412 - Xmas Fund (Vets/Cross) (UCC)	810.00	810.00
426 - Care to Share, Vallejo Together	33.00	33.00
600 - Capital Imp/Bldg Fund - Pledge	12,282.68	12,282.68
602 - Parking Lot Renovation Campaign	11,500.00	11,500.00
703 - Concert Series (Music Series)	1,372.00	1,372.00
704 - Music Program Fund (Barbara's)	430.00	430.00
705 - Christian Ed / Sunday School	583.06	583.06
706 - Youth Ministry / Youth Group	1,785.00	1,785.00
708 - Pastor Restricted Fund	1,030.00	1,030.00
710 - Gift Funds	980.00	980.00
711 - Weekend in the Trees	5,870.00	5,870.00
712 - FellowshipFreewillOff - Budget	192.00	192.00
713 - Worship Ministry Committee	125.00	125.00
714 - Xmas & Easter Flower Fund	1,059.00	1,059.00
718 - Handbells	585.00	585.00
720 - Misc Inc - To Be Determined	154.00	154.00
721 - Memorial Funds-Recent Contribu	335.00	335.00
726 - Holiday House	2,554.50	2,554.50
801 - Special Fellowship Events	125.00	125.00
Total Giving Accounts	\$240,534.23	\$240,534.23
Count: 32		
Period: 07/01/2012 - 06/30/2013		
Year: 2012		

## Treasurer

Dale Olm

We ended the 2012 – 2013 fiscal year with a slight deficit of \$537. Although revenues were about 5.5% below budget, expenses and budget restrictions also kept expenses below budget. Due to past, fiscally conservative policy, the church was able to fund the sabbatical leave for the pastor as planned. The specifics are summarized in the YTD SUMMARY BUDGET REVIEW.

The financial condition of the church continues to be strong, with unrestricted net cash reserves of \$34,401. This represents 74% of average expenses for 3 months. Although there is no consensus concerning what is an adequate reserve, 3 to 6 months is a commonly quoted goal for non-profits. A “snapshot” of our financial status is summarized in A CURRENT SNAPSHOT OF CCCUCC FINANCIAL STATUS.

Also of note, actual pledges and “loose offerings” received during this year were higher than that of any previous fiscal year. This is indeed a generous congregation.

We use a hybrid cash and accrual accounting method for the church and we divide revenue and disbursements between a working or operating budget and a restricted fund system for contributions donated for designated purposes (i.e., missions, capital improvements, youth group, etc.). This has led to some confusion as to where the church funds come from and go to. The “Cash Flow Report,” hopefully helps clarify how all these funds are received and distributed. In the 2012-2013 fiscal year, the Mission and Outreach Pool pledges were folded into the operating budget. Ten percent (a tithe) of individual pledges donations were set aside for Mission and Outreach. This was in addition to donations for special missions such as the Christmas Fund.

In June, at the Congregational Meeting, the budget for 2013 – 2014 was approved. We added a new line item, “unexpected expenses/contingency” to account for unpredictable loss of pledges and for unpredictable expenses (such as fallen trees). In order to balance the budget, previous staff positions were eliminated for the part time church secretary and the pastoral assistant, committee budgets were limited where possible, and funding for some programs were cut.

It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve the church as Treasurer for 2012 -2013 and to work with a dedicated group of people on the Stewardship and Budget Committee





## Community Congregational Church UCC, of Benicia

## CCCUCC Cash Flow Report 2012-2013 Fiscal Year

(Or, how did all the money come and go?)

	July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013	% of total
<b>All Revenues and Deposits</b>		
Pledge Unit Donations to Church Operating Budget	\$128,001	53.2%
Parishioner donations (loose offering)	\$20,317	8.4%
Building use	\$27,345	11.4%
Donations to All Capital Improvement Funds combined	\$23,783	9.9%
Donations to Special Missions	\$1,661	0.7%
Other restricted Donations & Deposits	\$30,906	12.8%
Other revenue	\$8,522	3.5%
<b>Total revenues and donations via Financial Secretary</b>	<b>\$240,534</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Interest payments from mmf & CD's & other deposits	\$921	
<b>Total revenues and donations</b>	<b>\$241,455</b>	
<b>All Disbursements &amp; Payments</b>		
Church Operations and Ministries (exclude M&O)	\$174,073	72.1%
Capital Building Improvements (all funds)	\$15,115	6.3%
Mission and Outreach Disbursements (inc. IAF & OCWM)	\$11,100	4.6%
Other restricted funds disbursements & set-asides	\$41,136	17.0%
<b>Total Disbursements, Payments, &amp; Set-asides</b>	<b>\$241,424</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Change in cash on hand</b>	<b>\$31</b>	

highlighted cells are operating budget line items

**Community Congregational Church, UCC of Benicia - Statement of Financial Position**

A current "snapshot" of CCCUCC financial status (Does not include physical assets)

	06/30/12	06/30/13	
	End of last Fiscal Year	Current Value	Change in Value
<b>Assets (Cash on Hand)</b>			
US Bank (Checking)	4,943	16,955	12,012
Cornerstone 12 mo CD #1	15,408	15,663	255
Cornerstone 12 mo CD #2	15,454	15,692	238
Cornerstone 12 mo CD #3	30,000	30,419	419
Vanguard (Savings)	42,539	41,138	-1,401
Petty Cash & Misc Credits	146	121	-25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$108,490</b>	<b>\$119,988</b>	<b>\$11,498</b>
<b>Liabilities, Restricted and Set asides (Owed or not-available)</b>			
Missions & Outreach	7,591	9,956	2,365
Building & Grounds - restricted			
Capital Improvement Fund	29,425	26,592	-2,832
One Brick at a Time	2,300	200	-2,100
New sound system	50	50	0
Special Renovation Projects	667	667	0
Parking Lot Renovation Campaign	0	13,600	13,600
Sabbatical Leave Set aside	11,154	3,923	-7,231
Payroll Liabilities	1,394	630	-763
Prepaid Pledges - Disbursed monthly	1,000	10,266	9,266
Set-aside funds-anticipated expenses	1,411	-89	-1,500
Other Restricted Accounts & Misc.	19,129	19,791	662
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$74,121</b>	<b>\$85,587</b>	<b>\$11,466</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$34,370</b>	<b>\$34,401</b>	<b>\$31</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES + NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$108,490</b>	<b>\$119,988</b>	<b>\$11,498</b>
Average Quarterly (3 month) Expenses	\$46,895	\$46,665	
<b>NET ASSETS AS % OF 3 MO. EXPENSE</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>0%</b>

matures 8/5/13  
matures 2/5/14  
matures 2/9/14  
money market

Total Cash on Hand

Mission pool &amp; missions waiting for disbursement

Major building &amp; grounds capital improvements

One Brick at a Time Fund (Parking Lot)

For sanctuary sound system

Kitchen renovation + new furniture fund

Capital funds specifically earmarked for Parking Lot

For substitute minister during future sabbatical

Payroll taxes waiting to be paid

Spread out over 12 mo.; includes next year pd. in adv.

WC, Insurance &amp; Prop Taxes set aside

Other ministries, account adj's; rents on deposit

Total Restricted Cash

Unrestricted Net Cash reserves

Average of 3 Months of Expenses for Previous 12 Months  
3-Month Operating Reserve Ratio (Ideal=100%)

Community Congregational Church UCC, of Benicia							
<b>YTD SUMMARY BUDGET REVIEW - by Quarter</b>					<b>Ytd Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Diff. from</b>
<b>FY 7/1/12 to 6/30/13 (excludes Capital Improvement Fund)</b>					<b>2012 to</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Annual</b>
<b>(Revised &amp; Adjusted JUNE 30, 2013)</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<b>Funding (Operations and Ministries)</b>							
Refunds & misc. deposits	0	0	125	0	125	0	125
Loose Offering	3,107	6,501	4,969	5,741	20,317	16,639	3,678
Pledges (+ % of Pre-paid)	31,817	35,655	28,763	31,116	127,351	142,798	-15,447
Use of Building	6,750	8,600	5,155	6,840	27,345	27,155	190
Fundraisers	0	2,843	1,717	415	4,975	6,200	-1,226
Transfer from Mission Fund	2,000	0	0	0	2,000	2,200	-200
Transf fr Reserves/Equity	531	0	0	0	531	0	531
Other funding (interest +)	3,061	495	1	306	3,863	2,445	1,418
Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>47,266</b>	<b>54,094</b>	<b>40,729</b>	<b>44,418</b>	<b>186,507</b>	<b>197,437</b>	<b>-10,930</b>
<b>Expense (Operations and Ministries)</b>			0				
B&G - Utilities	2,470	2,128	2,443	1,596	8,637	8,194	443
B&G - Custodial (contract)	1,290	1,290	1,290	1,290	5,160	5,155	5
B&G - Maint. & Housekeep	828	623	1,555	3,817	6,822	5,200	1,622
B&G - Taxes & Loan Pmts	158	174	182	-228	288	635	-347
Insurance- Property	1,450	1,450	1,450	546	4,896	5,800	-904
Christian Education/Youth	0	143	0	131	273	1,120	-847
Congregational Care	0	0	0	0	0	200	-200
Fellowship	1	-67	63	720	716	1,118	-402
Music, All Choirs	514	263	477	260	1,514	1,198	316
Stewardship	0	0	0	23	23	400	-377
M&O and 10% Pledge Set-aside	4,135	3,489	2,537	2,811	12,971	14,280	-1,309
Welcome	75	0	253	8	336	990	-654
Worship	451	344	154	120	1,070	1,200	-130
Other committees & Ministries	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council & Discretion Funds	0	0	0	499	499	1,575	-1,076
Finance, Admin & IT	1,787	793	916	735	4,231	3,163	1,068
Office/Comp./Copier Supply	1,931	302	834	771	3,837	4,315	-478
MIT Scholarship	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Professional Expenses	200	322	70	235	827	1,100	-273
Sabbatical set aside	500	500	500	500	2,000	2,000	0
Scholarships	531	0	0	0	531		
Staff	31,731	34,021	32,548	34,114	132,413	139,794	-7,381
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>48,052</b>	<b>45,773</b>	<b>45,272</b>	<b>47,948</b>	<b>187,044</b>	<b>197,437</b>	<b>-10,393</b>
<b>Net Revenues</b>	<b>-785</b>	<b>8,321</b>	<b>-4,543</b>	<b>-3,530</b>	<b>-537</b>	<b>0</b>	
NOTES: RED is "bad": expenses exceed revenue							
Green is "good": revenue exceeds expenses							



**COMMUNITY CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC of BENICIA****-APPROVED 2012-2013 BUDGET versus HISTORICAL ACTUALS (2007-2012)**

	2007- 2008	2008- 2009	2009-2010	2010- 2011	2011- 2012	2012-2013	Approved 2012-2013 Budget
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	
<b>Income</b>							
Refunds & misc. deposits	0	0	93	5	303	125	0
Loose Offering - Parish Contrib	13,825	19,928	13,237	21,727	16,679	20,317	16,545
Pledges - Operations & Ministries	103,218	102,005	108,883	110,011	117,126	127,351	135,865
Use of Building	29,133	24,884	25,593	26,215	26,521	27,345	28,811
Directed Extra Contributions	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Fundraisers	4,730	7,862	6,442	5,760	6,243	4,975	6,125
Trans. from Reserves/Net Assets	0	2,000	0	0	0	2,531	2,060
Transfer from M&O to revenue	13,156	13,917	12,419	21,657	14,552	0	1,000
Other sources of funding (int.)	1,835	968	50	6,392	511	3,863	1,116
Grants	0	0	0	0	2,250	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>165,897</b>	<b>171,563</b>	<b>166,716</b>	<b>191,768</b>	<b>184,185</b>	<b>186,507</b>	<b>191,562</b>
<b>Expense</b>							
B & G - Utilities	7,381	7,200	8,289	8,431	7,918	8,637	8,613
B & G Custodial	3,600	3,600	4,125	4,800	4,629	5,160	5,160
B & G- Maintenance & Janitorial	5,837	5,745	3,874	5,022	4,951	6,822	4,625
B& G-Taxes	2,043	-2,631	1,000	635	634	288	691
Insurance- Property set aside	4,961	4,960	5,264	5,264	5,264	4,896	5,300
Loan Payoff	2,123	1,113	0	0	0	0	0
Christian Education / Youth	751	849	1,092	2,166	1,807	273	950
Congregational Care (Diakonnate)	-58	0	0	0	140	0	0
Fellowship	-25	941	998	1,113	1,280	716	1,050
Music, Adult & Youth Choirs	2,654	1,176	1,560	1,261	1,079	1,514	1,253
Stewardship	0	0	0	82	90	23	0
Mission & Outreach-UCC Support	3,530	3,620	3,690	3,690	3,900 merged		merged
Mission/Outreach Fund Expended	13,156	13,917	12,419	21,657	14,551	12,971	13,587
Welcome (Growth)	311	869	1,190	664	590	336	250
Worship	883	2,514	1,836	1,006	1,332	1,070	100
Other Committes & Ministries	836	783	0	0	0	0	0
Council & Discretionary Funds	916	910	1,828	503	927	499	0
Unexpected expenses/contingency							6,793
Other Expenses - Finance&Admin	1,468	2,345	2,868	3,255	3,704	4,231	3,503
Office/Computer/Copier Supplies	4,650	4,979	4,928	4,768	2,883	3,837	4,072
Minister in Training Scholarship	0	0	0	0	4,500	0	0
Professional Expenses	496	919	1,664	2,727	1,167	827	450
Sabbatical budgeted set aside	2,000	2,000	2,000	3,000	2,000	2,000	2,060
Scholarships						531	
Staff	95,309	112,049	106,191	110,977	124,221	132,413	133,105
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>152,820</b>	<b>167,856</b>	<b>164,815</b>	<b>181,021</b>	<b>187,568</b>	<b>187,044</b>	<b>191,562</b>
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>13,076</b>	<b>3,708</b>	<b>1,901</b>	<b>10,747</b>	<b>-3,383</b>	<b>-537</b>	<b>0</b>

## Christian Education

Janet Murell & Veronica Ensminger

### Sunday School

Teachers included Marilyn Scrutchins, Greg Cox, Donna Hill, Veronica Ensminger for the fall session only, Jean Dolter, Leslie Lessenger, Jim Lessenger, Janet Murrell, Dale Olm, Susan Stofan, and Howard Gill.

The fall session began 9/16. There were three different Sunday School classes. The primary class children (pre-K to second grade), and the mid-class children (third to fifth grade) were taught using the Gather Round curriculum. That curriculum was based on the Old Testament, Judges and Kings. The youth group- children (fifth grade and older) were taught based on study material provided by Howard Gill, Youth Minister.



The attendance for Sunday school began low with sometimes only 3 kids for the primary and mid classes. These numbers gradually increased to seventeen by the end of the fall session. Most of the increase was in the primary class.

During December an emphasis was on the Christmas carols Silent Night and Away in a Manger. This was done to promote an understanding the Nativity and the Christmas story. The kids also made a foam kit manger and a nativity tree ornament. All the children (and some visitors) were able to participate in the Christmas pageant. Howard Gill returned for this.



Because of the increase in children in the primary class, changes were made for the spring session. The decision was made to create a separate curriculum instead of using the Gather Round material the mid class used. This change was made to make the material more appropriate for the age group. The focus changed to stories of Jesus. A copy of the topics is included. The format was to include: a theme, a song, a story, an activity, a craft. This change was well received by the children and the instructors.

Gather Round curriculum was used by the mid class with the Grow pamphlet to accompany the lesson. In the spring session it was decided to eliminate the junior high/high school class. Part of the reason for this decision was the lack of teachers. Individual youth were invited to aid in Sunday school classes for special projects. This proved a positive experience for all concerned.



### Youth Group

Fall youth group was organized and led with the help of Veronica Ensminger, Janet Murrell, Debi Stanley, and Donna Hill. The last two sessions on family life were offered to the youth by Planned Parenthood. These were led by Leslie Lessenger.

Other activities included participation in the La Puente backpacks project in July. Some of the youth were able to deliver the backpacks and share a meal at the sight. This activity is always a highlight of the year. The kids also decorated cupcakes for a fundraiser for WITT. The money raised went to help alleviate budgetary strain if members would

be unable to attend WITT otherwise.

In October the youth helped create and run a Pumpkin Patch Day. They ran the games, helped the younger kids with activities and decorated the gazebo. It was a family fun day and the youth did a great job.

In November Reverend Renie took over youth group until Howard Gill returned. One activity was taking the kids to see the movie *Lincoln*.

After Howard Gill, Youth Minister returned, changes were made for youth group. It was decided to change the meeting time for YG from the 6-7:30 evening hours to 12-2 directly after church services. This has seemed to have a very positive and energizing effect on YG.

In the spring Youth Director Howard Gill led the youth in a variety of activities: a Mother's Day car wash fundraiser, a Father's Day car wash fundraiser, a scavenger hunt and others.

After Howard returned the YG began a new emphasis on service. They began serving breakfast for our friends of the streets on the second Saturday of the month. Each month they serve, deliver, interact with some of the most needy members of our society. The youth have surpassed all our expectations. This service has had a great impact on our youth.

### Nursery

The nursery got a face lift in August. The room was painted. Murals were placed on one big wall and around the door. New curtains were made by Donna Hill. Cling clouds were placed on the ceiling. The toys were inventoried and some were discarded and others cleaned. The overall effect was a clean, fresh, inviting place. Happy Hearts paid to have the door cut into two half doors.

Kim Osborn and JoJo Descallar continue to work in the nursery every Sunday. The attendance has increased from 0-1 in September to 4-5 in June.

Christian Education has been busy this year. The code word has been change. These changes have had very positive outcomes.

The changes in the hours of YG have infused energy in our youth and mentors. The change in curriculum for the primary class has helped to make Sunday school more relevant to our youngest kids. The elimination of the third class each Sunday has alleviated the pressure on the teaching volunteers. The participation of the youth in feeding the needy has made Christ's message much more relevant. Even the changes in the nursery have been received very positively. This was a changing but very productive year.





## Congregational Care

Penny Taylor

The Congregational Care Team started out the 2012-2013 year assisting Candace Frawley as she stepped in while our Pastor Renie Stamm-Kirk was on sabbatical leave. We reached out to her and helped in any way she needed. Throughout the year we continued to do whatever we could to assist our congregation. We ran errands, picking up groceries and RX for folks when they needed a little assist. We gave folks rides for their come and go surgeries and sometimes we just helped them get to their Dr's appointments. We provided food a few times for folks that needed a little help after their surgeries to allow them to recover.

There are many people in our congregation willing to help, not just the members of our Care Team. Jackie and I have been very proud of how our team responded when we were made aware of needs in our congregation. Our team consisted of Linda Smith, Pam Martin, Marilyn Scrutchins, Trisha Hartzell, Jackie Lawrence and myself. A special thanks also to our unofficial member Gail Mason. Gail was always willing to help the team in anyway she could when called upon.

Please remember to call Pastor Stamm-Kirk when the need arises and she will notify the Care Team if there is anything we can do to temporarily help you out.



## Fellowship

Susan Stofan & Nancy Aldritt

Fellowship begins with hospitality. We aren't just sharing food after church. We are doing much more. We are welcoming visitors to our community. We are connecting with friends. We are networking with members of our committee and checking in with other committees as we work together on the programs of the church. And, yes, sometimes, as we did this past Sunday, we play together.

This year we have hosted potlucks, provided meals for Saturday work parties, hosted the 4th of July barbeque and of course made sure that people were signed up for Sunday fellowship.

There have been wide varieties of tastes and smells and flavors offered for our snacks. The amount doesn't matter. What matters is having time to share together. We share food and ideas. We listen to each other's thoughts and concerns. We reach out to each other as we build a community.



## Holiday House

Kim Osborn

Holiday House continues through 2013 with a small group of women who love to share conversation and crafting. During the summer of 2012, the group expanded its presence by going into the community with a small table at the Benicia Farmer's Market once per month. The monetary proceeds were less than hoped for, but the goodwill was worth enduring the cold, wind, heat, and sun.

The annual November bazaar and the December mini-bazaar were, again, a great success, thanks to the amazing support of the congregation. Items offered for sale included a new book, Cook, Pray, Craft – a collection of recipes, table graces, and crafting tips from members of the congregation. The collection is still available in hard copy or on CD.

Proceeds from the bazaars and Farmers Market table are being used to build a labyrinth and garden on the 2nd Street side of the church – a much slower project than anticipated – and to provide camp scholarships for children in the congregation.

We offer our many thanks to the crafters and the congregation for continuing to support the tradition of Holiday House.





## Mission and Outreach

Leslie Beatson

This has been a busy year in our church as we acted as God's hands and feet through our Mission and Outreach work. We truly lived the mission of loving wastefully as we participated in a variety of events. Some of the year's highlights were:



Nora Gauger worked tirelessly to bring together local non-profits for informal networking meetings. The participants meet at the church and discuss ways they can create a network and support each other. The result of this ongoing work is a more systematic support system for members of our community who utilize these services.

The mission and outreach committee filled 21 backpacks for third graders for the Puente program. There were also backpacks filled with school supplies for children in Benicia. The children of our church wrote messages to include in the filled backpacks and went to deliver these. The fall had a food service theme. We worked with Solano Food Bank and filled food bins on the first Sunday of each month. During those fall months we were blessed to hear from other organizations that were reaching out to help feed our friends in our community. From

these relationships, we were able to offer financial support to the Red Awning Cafe, a local "breakfast spot" for our middle school students to receive free breakfast each school morning. In addition we partnered with Vallejo Together and have teams that serve a hot breakfast to our Friends on the Street on the second Saturday of each month. Through the winter months we collected winter coats, blankets, sleeping bags and donated them to Gateway Community who distributed them to those in need.

As we moved into our holiday season, we once again worked with CAC to provide Christmas gifts and basic clothing to families in need. Instead of decorating our altar with poinsettias, we purchased basic clothing for families in need. We were able to purchase more than \$350 of clothing for those in need. Giving the gift of Christmas is so powerful. Our congregation was able to fulfill the wishes of eight families and seniors through the Adopt A Family program this year.

Shortly after the New Year, the Mission and Outreach Committee worked with the core leaders from our church working with IAF. We planned and implemented "House Meetings" to hear the voices and stories from our members about issues and concerns in our community. These were the building blocks to the work that has become Common Ground.

This spring, instead of Easter Lilies adorning the altar, we once again worked in conjunction with First Place for Lilies. Through generous donations from our congregation we were able to purchase over \$800 in "apartment start up" supplies for youth who have "aged-out" of the foster care system.



Finally, we have many hands and feet in action as we worked toward and celebrated the founding convention of Common Ground, a newly formed organization of diverse non-profit and faith based organizations in Solano and Napa counties. The work of Common Ground will be at the heart of our local mission and outreach work into the coming year.



## Stewardship

Michelle Cavagnuolo

It has been my sincere pleasure to serve as your 2012/2013 Stewardship Chair. Being new to Council and it being my first go at any leadership position, all Council members and especially those serving on the Stewardship Committee, were kind, respectful and patient while I quickly got up to speed as to the responsibilities of the position.

We had a fun start in September and October 2012, as we offered the Sanctuary space to Christopher Hanna's piano teacher Marian Smock for a wonderful recital in which the church received a donation in-kind. We also hosted Member Kathleen Kravets' troupe, the Royal English Opera Company, who regaled us with arranged operettas as part of a group fundraising effort raising \$210 for the church.



The annual fall Stewardship Auction in October 2012 was well-attended and spirited. We sought donations through a sign-up sheet posted in Fellowship Hall and received wonderfully donated services and items. The highlights: an enjoyable bidding war for a day of "big burly boy" help (service: Christopher Hanna) and a beautiful painting from our resident artist Debi Stanley which generated much buzz. Our lovely youth (Audrey and Lydia Benton and friend) volunteered that morning to display the auction items for all to see during the bidding. A thank you to volunteers: Nancy Gilman, Karen Hanna, Dale Olm and Laura Pyles who ensured smoothly recorded bids and final transactions. The fall Auction raised \$2,633.



The Annual Crab Feed was held in March 2013, and this year we had access to the entire Veteran's Hall in Vallejo. This allowed us to have the stage where we were entertained by the wonderful sounds of Jazz Gorrilla before a delicious meal of buttery crab and lively fellowship. We raised \$1,149.50 after expenses. Afterwards, an auction of many fun and beautiful items, again, donated by supremely generous church members, help raise an additional \$567.

Our Stewardship Campaign, *Delight in the Giving* was supported through written and oral testimony, which clearly highlighted why choosing to give through pledging each year versus loose offering is so vital to preparing a budget. Nora Gauger led the campaign and worked with Pastor Renie Stamm-Kirk during my hospitalization to provide a beautifully written and clear Narrative Budget, which outlined the necessary operating expenses for the 2013/2014 coming year and that held the promise and vision of what increased pledging could provide in the missions and outreach of the church. The Narrative Budget and pledge cards were mailed to all Members in May so that the congregation could prayerfully reflect on their pledges. We received confirmed pledges of \$135,865.





While it is common for giving to decrease after Easter, we noticed a significant trend in downward pledging for 2012/2013. The reason was three-fold. The number of pledging units dropped throughout the year from 60 to 49 households, pledged amounts were not fulfilled to term for various reasons such as leaving the church or lack of clarity as to the pledging year running from July to June. Finally, a major pledge for 2012/2013 did not materialize. This required the Budget and Finance Committee to advise the congregation of

the shortfall and to consider increasing their 2013/2014 pledges by \$20.00 a month. My thank-you to the Budget and Finance Committee consisting of Larry Schaffer, Dale Olm, Karen Hanna, Shelby Riddle, Nancy Gilman and Nora Gauger who worked diligently to prepare an email appeal to the congregation, of which we received confirmed 2013/2014 pledge increases totaling \$5,100.

Again, faith, passion and dedication to the church surfaced in ways I could not imagine. The Stewardship Committee is forever grateful to the passionate pledging and generosity of this congregation.

The Budget and Finance Committee met three times for lengthy discussions regarding the budget shortfalls, and how to best to address these in the upcoming 2013/2014 years' budget. After a number of budget considerations and some cuts we are pleased to provide you with a balanced budget for 2013/2014.

There is good news if you seek it in the budget for 2013/2014. In the history of giving, we have received more in loose offering and pledging than in any year previously. This is a testament to who we are, what we believe in and why we choose UCC of Benicia. While we are subject to the economy and, like all, struggling with rising costs, we have chosen to make our church a priority. To be the voice and resource not for just ourselves but for others in need as well. In fostering relationships with other non-profits through IAF, our church and its mission reach will be stronger.

As we step into the 2013/2014 year, many hands will be needed to assist where and whenever needed. We will seek new and innovative ways to do more with less. After all, as reminiscent of Bruce Smith's lovely sermon, God always provides what we need. We can do much through love and generosity that extends the light within to the so desperately needing world outside.

I am so grateful to the Stewardship Committee members who served you, the congregation, with integrity, devotion to their beliefs and who challenged and mentored me throughout the year.

We have a wonderful opportunity in this next year to rediscover why we choose UCC of Benicia as our church. I am certainly looking forward to seeing where the discussion goes.



## Welcome and Growth

Dale Stanley, Deborah Stanley

*"No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, YOU are welcome here!"*

### Members of the Welcome and Growth Committee for the 2012-13 fiscal year have been:

Dale Stanley, Co-Chair	Deborah Stanley, Co-Chair
Bill Dolter	Jean Dolter
Carla Goad	Christopher Hanna
Heidi Hawthorne	Bruce Smith
Cheryle Staffer	



### Thanks for special help and assignments:

- Larry Schaffer who counts attendance and to Christopher Hanna, who was the back-up counter
- Pastor Stamm-Kirk who helped count and track attendance via the name tags and various follow-up activities
- Maggie Hart for maintaining the attendance spreadsheets
- Christopher Hanna for maintaining the large sign
- Debi Stanley for maintaining the small welcome sign outside the front door
- Maggie Hart for maintaining the small sign with the week's bulletin outside the front door
- Jean Dolter for writing and sending personal cards to all new visitors
- Pastor Stamm-Kirk for setting up the welcome table on Saturday nights
- Eleanor Mortensen for being our gracious and reliable greeter

### Special Activities:

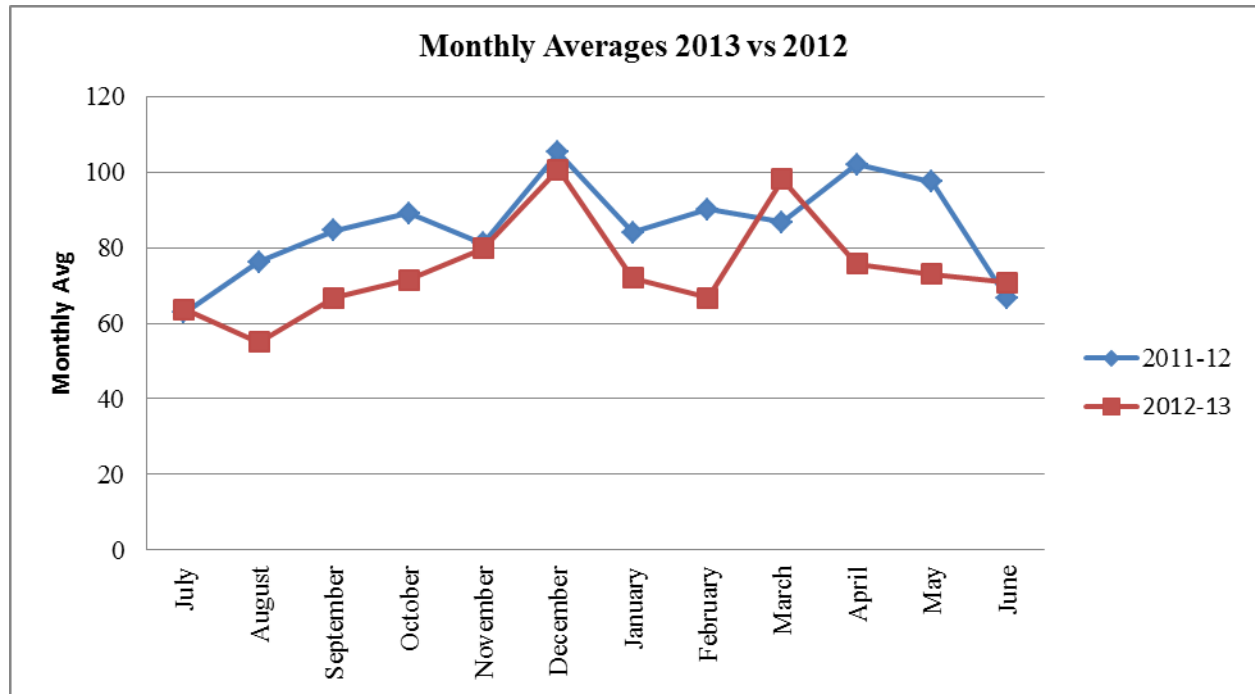
- Added an inspiring and humorous website welcome message, thanks to Pastor Stamm-Kirk
- Accepted a proposal from the Youth (Natalie Daffern) to give them the remaining tee-shirts and also to offer the \$111.36 in tee-shirt funds as needed to print more tee-shirts, if feasible
- Advertised our Christmas events in the Benicia Herald newspaper
- Held a successful "Welcome Workshop" on March 24<sup>th</sup> attended by 19, including 5 youth. Pastor Stamm-Kirk lead an exercise on awareness of welcome and practicing welcoming behaviors. Results included a better awareness and improved greeting, "passing around" of visitors and a change in the placement of the welcome tables in order to alleviate congestion at the front door.



### Visitors:

We welcomed 202 visitors during this fiscal year vs 117 in the previous year, an increase of 73%!



**Sunday Worship Attendance:**

Weekly average for year 2011-12: 86

Weekly average for year 2012-13: 75 (-13%)

To close out the year's monthly reporting for June, Sunday morning worship attendance averaged 70 and ranged from 59 on week 2 to 82 on week 4. June of 2012 averaged 67.

We welcomed 11 visitors for Sunday worship in June vs 17 visitors during the same period in 2012



## Worship

Priscilla Lane



The Worship Ministry's team was comprised of Barbara Hamm, Karen Hanna, Nancy Gilman, Priscilla Lane, Jackie Lawrence, Bruce Smith, and Renie Stamm-Kirk. We met nine times during the year. Though small, this committee gave freely of their time and ideas to create, hopefully meaningful worship experiences.

Our year began with Candace Frawley as our minister. She was hired as Renie's replacement during Renie's sabbatical (June, July, August, 2012). Candace chose "Phoenix Affirmations: A New Vision for the Future of Christianity" as her theme throughout the summer. Each week she spoke on an affirmation and included a brief summary of it on a piece of paper for the congregants to take home. In August, Candace put together a wonderful joint worship service in the park with Heritage Presbyterian Church. Candace was so well organized last summer that this committee did little but routine functions to support her. Candace introduced us last year to Holy Humor Sunday (held the week after Easter) and brought the idea back this year. It was truly fun, fun, fun. Our heartfelt thanks go to Candace for her strong leadership, inspiring messages, and nurturing of our congregation during the summer and throughout this year.

One of the actions this committee likes to do is create a worship environment that enhances all the senses (e.g. visual, auditory, tactile). So beside the obvious visuals such as banners and TV screens and auditory such as music and the spoken word, we tried to enhance the worship service in other ways. This year we placed manna around the sanctuary when Renie spoke of Holy Manna, gave salt as a take away when she spoke about Salty Living and used light in all areas of worship when she spoke of Light of the World. The most talked about (not positively, I might add) environmental change we made was the darkening of the sanctuary during Lent. Each week we covered one of the side windows with black poster board so by Maundy Thursday the sanctuary was quite dark. During Lent Renie spoke about the Seven Deadly Social Sins based on Arun Gandhi's teachings. On the blackened windows we put phrases representing the seven sins. The idea was to demonstrate that Lent is a darkening time and social sins also create darkness in our lives. But then Easter arrives and creates the greatest of all light in our lives.

During Advent we again recreated a crèche scene by gradually adding pieces to the scene each week. Also during Advent, Renie and Marlan Shanks created a clever, ongoing vignette of Tell Me a Story Poppy. Thanks to Audrey and Lydia Benton who played the part of the children. We appreciated the help we received in the greening and "degreening" of the sanctuary. Alison Stamm-Kirk cooked up some yummy pancakes when we took all the "greens" down. Thank you, Alison.

Our congregation was blessed with ministers who stood in for Renie this year. One of course, was Candace Frawley. The others were Tim Mautz, Bruce Smith (6 times and he has a full time other job!), Frank Schaffer (Larry's visiting brother), and all of our youth on Pentecost Sunday. Many, many thanks to all of you for providing such spirit filled messages.

In addition, we were blessed with our super, multi-talented musician, Deborah Shanks, who filled in for Barbara Hamm on several occasions. The Worship Ministry very much appreciated her willingness to step in while Barbara was away.

Last, I want the Worship Ministry team to know how much I appreciated their contributions in time and talents to make worship happen every Sunday. You know, it is the little but big things in the end that make for a smooth-flowing service. Who helps the acolytes go down the aisle? Who cleans up the pews? Who runs the slide show? Who sees that we need new candles? Who makes sure there are flowers and communion elements? Who puts up those banners? Who provides the music without missing a step? Who sees the big picture for worship in 6 month increments? Who brainstorms ideas for worship? All of you did that and so much more. Kudos to you!

**LEADERSHIP TEAM 2013-2014**

## Nominating Committee

Nancy Gilman, "Chair", Michelle Cavagnuolo, Dale Olm

**STAFF**

Pastor

The Rev. Renie Stamm-Kirk

Minister of Music

Dr. Barbara Hamm

Director of Youth Ministries

Howard Gill

**OFFICERS**

Moderator

Nancy Gilman

Vice-Moderator

OPEN

Church Clerk

Dale Olm

Financial Secretary

Karen Hanna

Treasurer

Dale Olm

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Building and Grounds Ministry

Jim Lessenger

Christian Education Ministry

Jennifer Green/Anna Atuatasi

Congregational Care

OPEN

Fellowship

Susan Stofan/Laura Pyles

Mission &amp; Outreach

Sarah Thompson

Stewardship Ministry

Michelle Cavagnuolo

Welcome and Growth

Debi and Dale Stanley

Worship Ministry

Bruce Smith

Member-At-Large

Natalie Daffern

Member-At-Large

OPEN