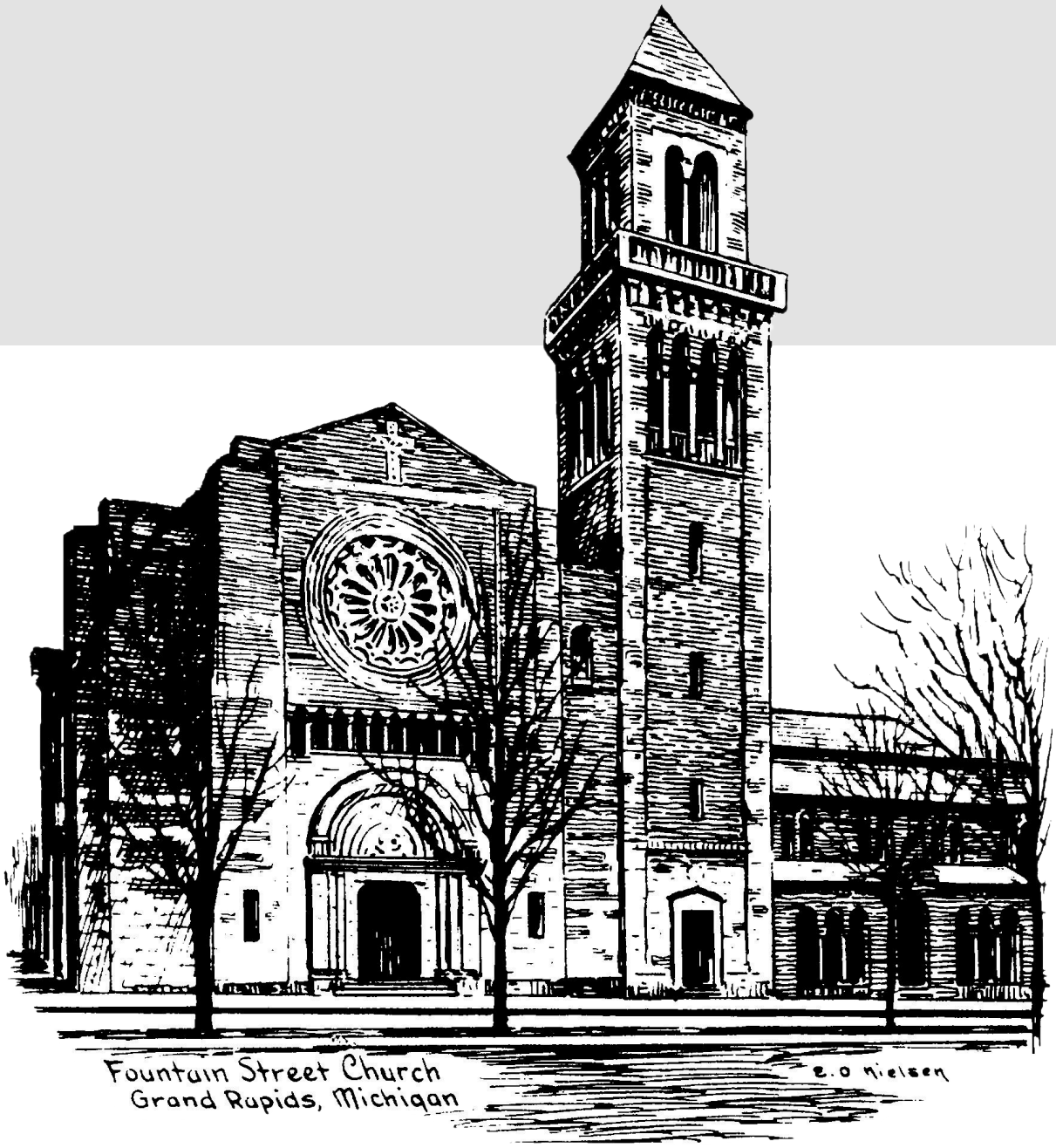
FREE THE MIND. GROW THE SOUL. CHANGE THE WORLD.

FOUNTAIN STREET CHURCH
2024 ANNUAL REPORT





FSC STAFF 2024-25

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Noah Smith, Organist - nsmith@fountainstreet.org

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J. Spalding Wall, Governing Board Chair - chair@fountainstreet.org

FROM THE GOVERNING BOARD CHAIR
J SPALDING WALL

"To the Members and Friends of Fountain Street Church -

In January of this year I was asked to serve as your Governing Board Chair. I was aware of the challenges we faced. At that time, I believed we needed someone who could manage all the issues that were coming our way. Rev. Roe resigning, looking for an Interim Minister, budget constraints, just to name a few. I felt as a congregation we were at a crossroads, it was time to sink or swim! I know that sounds like gloom and doom, but that is where we were in January!

The first half of this year was marked by several challenges and successes. Rev. Roe's departure as our settled Senior Minister was difficult, though we are grateful for the time he invested in our church. Rev. Christopher was able to keep the ship afloat. Many of you have heard me use this metaphor, which I do think is a correct one. Christopher was what we needed at the time he was here. We needed someone to manage the current state (keeping us afloat). He did that, he was able to provide leadership to the staff, to the congregation and to work with the board on all the needs of our church. He brought us Austin, and Todd. He did what he could to keep us afloat. While we were sad to see him leave, we are glad for all he shared with us during his time as our Senior Minister and we all wish him a heartfelt thank you and the best to him and Johnathon!

Our music program continues to shine brightly. The Bernstein Mass was a huge success raising over $30,000.00. There were over 100 performers in the production; it was a massive undertaking and one that Austin didn't take lightly. He knew that our amazing choir could pull it off and that they did. To Austin and all that were involved in The Bernstein Mass, I thank you for what was our largest and most difficult oratorio to date.

Our many volunteers and leaders have helped bring us through this season of change. The Summer Speaker series was a fantastic series. I say thank you to the team that pulled this off. If I remember correctly all the speakers were agreed to by the end of February which was a huge task. For that I say thank you to Rev. Christopher Roe, Carol Kooistra and Heather Palmer. They did an amazing job, and the Summer Series was well received.

Many of you know that for over 10 years I have been and continue to sub when needed as an usher on Sunday mornings. I love serving as an usher because it allows me to greet a lot of you every Sunday. I enjoy talking with you and hearing about your week or weekend. It gives me great pleasure to see and welcome every one of you on Sunday.

Today, the state of our church is strong. Our challenges are well understood. The governing board and staff are working with our partners at Hungerford CPAs to complete a full review of our financial procedures. This has been a challenging but helpful process. Your patience and support are appreciated.

(Cont.)

Our staff is strong. We have recently brought many new faces onboard at church. Our new music staff, Noah and Emmanuel and our returning accompanist Todd are doing amazing things. I hear from a lot of you, “Emmanuel does this,” and, “Wow, Noah did that!” and “Todd makes it look easy!” I have never been in a choir; I have never played the organ. Coming from an outside listener who is a music junkie - each one of them are at the top of their games, and we ALL benefit from their shared talents! The sound that I hear on Sunday in the sanctuary is just amazing! Between the Choir and the Organ and the Piano, it cannot be beat! Let me tell you something, there have been a few times that with the choir singing you brought me to tears, it's just a beautiful addition to the Fountain Street experience. I am very appreciative of all three of you. Thank You.

Katie Mitchell is our new Director of Education and is doing amazing work. Katie approached me this past summer expressing an interest in leading our education staff. I was lucky enough to serve on the board with Katie. Katie has an eye for detail, she is a wonderful person to be around, bringing wonderful gifts everywhere she goes. She is always upbeat, and ready to go and will do what it takes to get the job done. I find her to be extremely giving and nurturing. I am very thankful to Katie for stepping up and taking this role to the next level. What a perfect role for her it has turned out to be. Thank You.

Rev. Nathan is doing well carrying us through the interim tasks. His leadership is appreciated, and he is just an amazing person to be around. Nathan and I started to work together before his official start date. We first met for lunch, and he did not have enough to say about Fountain Street Church. As I sat across the table from him, I was watching and listening to what he was saying about our sacred space. It was a great view to watch how excited he became to be talking about our church, our congregation.
He was telling me things that someone who had been going to Fountain Street for many years should be saying, but he hadn’t been here. He did his homework, he did his extra credit, and he aced it! I knew right then and there that we made the right decision and that we were going on a ride to bring life back to Fountain Street Church.
I knew this would not be our normal ride from the past. This is the strongest fastest ride we have been on as Fountain Streeters, and all I can say is I am in awe of him when we talk, and when he gives his sermon. Since that initial lunch meeting a lot has happened. We have made some changes that are really working, one comes to mind that didn’t go over well, but we as Fountain Streeters are not afraid to speak up for things, good and bad. Fountain Street Church is getting stronger, better, faster!
We are learning what we as a congregation, as a board, as church need to do, we are learning how to do it, and it is a wonderful time to be a Fountain Streeter. For this I am thankful to Nathan, I am also grateful to Heather, and his beautiful children, thank you for sharing your husband and your father with us. He is helping us to make this world a better place and we are grateful. Thank You.

(Cont.)

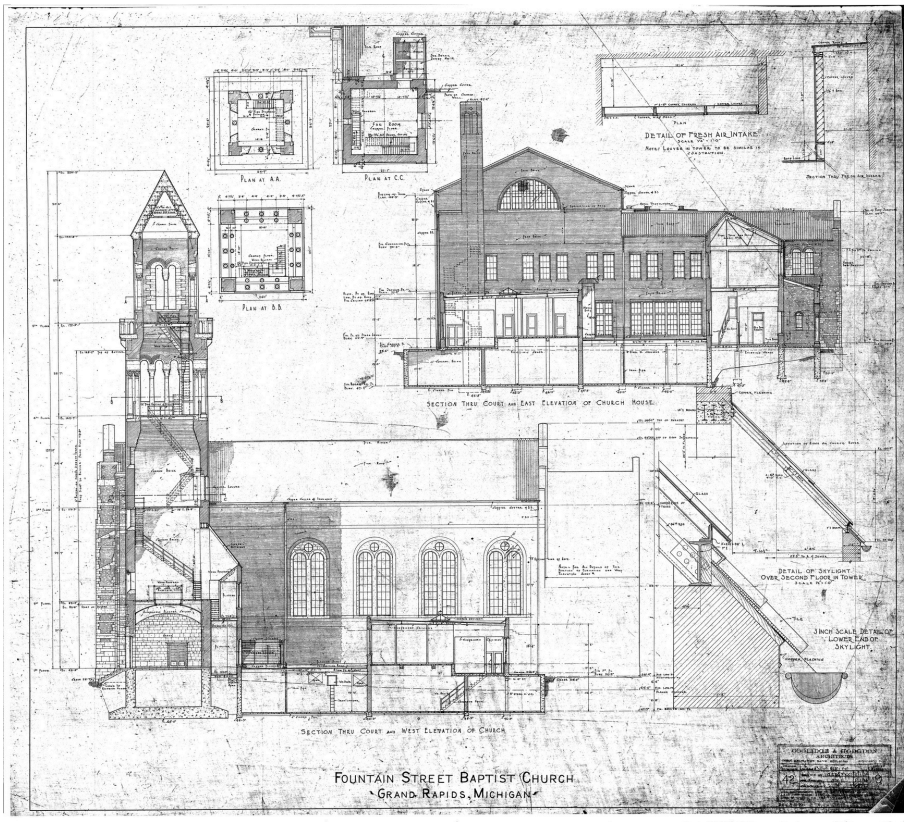
Our newest addition to the staff, Cassie Veach, is rapidly getting up to speed as our new Office Administrator. Cassie really is taking this role to the next level. I have heard from congregants on what a pleasure it is to work with them. Cassie is also not afraid to ask questions. I know we will see a lot more amazing things from Cassie as they learn more - not only about this particular role but about us, the congregation. Cassie really wants to be part of us getting stronger and growing and that is a wonderful thing. Thank you.

Finally, I want to thank our long-time staff members, Kayle. Margie. Jamie and Darius. Together they are helping us stay focused on the hard work we have ahead. All of them have been a stable and strong presence during these changing times. They are also helping our new staff learn the ropes and this is very important and valuable to the success of our church.

We have a slate of strong candidates for our governing board and worship attendance is higher than it has been since before the pandemic.
I am honored to serve as your chair, and I look forward to the coming year and all of the exciting things we have yet to discover together.

Thank you,

J Spalding Wall - FSC Governing Board Chair



A few updates from our programs and committees to share a fraction of the important work happening in our congregation:

From the Choir Board:
"Over the last couple of years, the music program took a big step forward due in part to an energetic, young choral director and two very successful annual Oratorio productions. When our director took a new position out of state, the choir board spent the summer searching for a new choral director as well as a permanent organist that we had not had on staff for a few years. We were so happy to have the very talented Dr. Emmanuel DeLeon join us as the choral director – he is fabulous, and the choir has continued to grow under his direction. We have just under 50 members with new inquires every week! On any given Sunday, we have up to 40 voices participating in the service. We also enthusiastically welcomed the very talented Noah Smith as our permanent organist, and he has brought the WOW factor to our Catherine the Great. He and Emmanual, along with Rev. Nathan, have brought the FSC music program to new heights and we look forward to an exciting year of music at FSC."

From the Organist, Noah Smith: The richness of our congregation's musical worship is beautifully reflected in two key elements: the pipe organ and our hymnal. The organ's tonal versatility and majestic sound inspire a sense of reverence and exuberance within our 11am worship service. Its limitless resources enable me to accompany our lovely choir, lead our hymns, and play any organ solo or improvisation I can imagine. Complementing this is the depth and breadth of our hymnal, which offers scores of tunes and teachings new and old. Together, these resources support our congregation's voice, creating experiences that are both profound and unifying. It has been a joy to collaborate with Nathan, Emmanuel, and the choir to foster experiences that uplift and inspire our congregation each week.

A few updates from our programs and committees to share a fraction of the important work happening in our congregation:

From the Chapel Community -
The 9:30 Chapel Gathering is off to a great start in its third full church season post COVID. In this newest iteration the Chapel Gathering has become a leaderless, horizontally organized effort centered around its central promise. "You can create the life of deeper meaning and greater value your heart desires. Help is available. It will take practice." The group guides itself in a spirit of "radical collaboration" and is growing both in numbers and confidence. More and more members are taking an active role in gatherings. An increasing number of members find a willingness and value in saying a "bigger yes" and taking responsibility for a Sunday. The group has also cultivated an eclectic group of musicians who appreciate our leaderless collaborative approach and bless us with their talents. The budget of $5K per season has been sufficient and should be for the near future. The group is appreciative of Kayle's continuing support and would hope a plan is in place for Sundays when Kayle is not on campus. The office offers excellent support in terms of Chimes submissions, check requests, and printing needs. One area for consideration is to continue to keep the Chapel Gathering team in the loop when other activities necessitate rearranging the chapel.

From our Together West Michigan organizers:
Fountain Street Church is one of 18 dues paying member institutions that constitute Together West Michigan (TWM), an affiliation for broad based social organizing. Our participation in TWM engages us in the wider community and enables us to build collective power to create social change for a more just society. We organize around issues that arise from listening to the concerns of our neighbors. Currently we are focusing on access to affordable housing, childcare and mental healthcare, as well as support for immigrants and refugees. Our work together supported the renewal of the Ready by Five millage, shaped policy on affordable housing, and helped secure state funding to train more behavioral health professionals. Through this work we are continually building relationships and fostering the development of civic leaders in the community. TWM member dues, which reflect the values of our church, are 1% of the operating budget and are paid through the Social Justice Team fund.

FROM THE INTERIM MINISTER
REV. NATHAN DANNISON

To the historic Fountain Street Church -

Such is the brevity of my time with you in this role that I strongly considered forgoing an "annual report from the minister." Nevertheless, a great deal has been accomplished since I began my work leading worship on September 8th, and my research beginning in mid-July. I strongly believe now, as I only suspected when we began this journey - this is a very strong church.
I am also keenly aware that these annual reports occupy a place of privilege in the archives of this church and the thought of leaving a gap in the record makes me anxious. We are offering an abbreviated report owing to the challenging circumstances of this year.
I encourage you to read the first six published Interim Reports for more fine-grained information. They are available at fscinterimreview.substack.com.

There is a quote, frequently attributed to Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (though more likely an adaptation from the second epistle of St. Peter) that attests, 'There are decades where nothing happens; and there are weeks where decades happen.' The past year in the life of the Fountain Street Church feels, perhaps, like a decade. There has been a great deal of staff turnover, including the departure of your Senior Minister, Rev. Christopher Roe. I will not catalog, here, the full details of all of the staff changes you have undergone. Much of this has been beyond your control.
Indeed, a tremendous share of the challenges you have faced appear (to me) to be a product of painful happenstance. The pandemic did a number on our communities of faith across the nation. You were dealt multiple changes in leadership during that season and it compounded the stress.
You are likely very tired. I know that your remaining, long-serving staff are tired. I have no desire to rouse you like a boxing coach barking orders at an athlete, driving them into the tenth round. You deserve a moment of peace. And yet, despite being a bastion of free thought and religious liberty and a frontier home for radicals - we are all wrestling with a culture in the midst of another paroxysm of fascist anger and reactionary xenophobia. I am sorry that I cannot carve out an island of calm in the river of time and set you safely in a restful valley till you've caught your breath.
I will do everything in my power to unburden you from any tasks so taxing that they will cost you more than you can afford to spare and bring to light your hidden strengths and talents for such a time as this. I realize I am only your interim minister - but I believe you are presently an interim church. I think this is perhaps a good fit.

Your current church staff is strong, diverse, and talented. The leadership of your church is willing, brave, and creative. Your material and spiritual generosity is evident and breathtaking. You have everything you need to face this current moment and emerge stronger - as a light set upon a hill - to carry on with your mission of creating the people's cathedral of Grand Rapids.

Worship attendance has increased dramatically with 300 in regular attendance. I expect it will continue to rise. Three weeks ago I "opened the book" for new members and 56 individuals have answered the call. Seven new partner organizations have begun working alongside and within our congregation to provide opportunities for all of us to explore together here on campus with another dozen knocking at the doors. We've increased the building's "public hours" from eight per week to over forty hours per week. Our Sunday children's program recently had over forty kids in attendance and is growing rapidly. Several major financial gifts have recently been invested in the church - not only for the critically important work of restoring our bell tower (and unsilencing those miraculous bells) but also fully replacing and updating the audio and lighting systems in our sanctuary. I had next to nothing to do with these investments - they are a result of your spirit and efforts. We have recently attracted the highest caliber professional staff. More victories are on the way. Hold fast. (cont.)

I will work with your current Governing Board and Treasurer to begin the hard work of aligning your values with your budget. I want to be crystal clear about something - you are not in the midst of a "budget crisis." Your history isn't spared a share of these events and you've dealt with them in the past - however this is not so much a crisis of spending as it is a matter of organizational transparency and clarity. We (your staff and financial leadership) are working around the clock with our partners at Hungerford CPAs (as you once did over two decades ago) to bring our financial procedures in line with the highest standards of transparency and accountability. This is hard and complicated work and I refuse to give incomplete answers based on hopeful ideals.
Owing to this I felt it would be most prudent to present the most conservative version of last year's budget as a vision for our 2025 budget. This is not because I believe the financial picture of the church will be dimmer in the coming year - rather it is because I simply need more time to determine with clarity the exact financial picture of the church.

Of the current 160 pledges we have received, giving has increased across the board. Our average increase from year-over-year pledges of record is roughly 18%. This doesn't include 15 new pledges received so far this year. We are yet short of the 244 pledges we received toward last year's budget but this is normal for this point in the calendar year (indeed we are well ahead of where you were in previous years). My indications are that the giving profile of the church is improving.
But I am your Interim Minister, and you are an interim church, and we need to have hard and honest conversations about the ways in which we account for and invest these gifts. Those conversations require a degree of financial control and transparency that we currently don't have - but we have three very talented CPAs working on these matters as we speak.
To this end, I am also resurrecting and strengthening the Financial Committee of the church. Which brings me to my next and perhaps more important point.

Having examined the full history of your movement and after interviewing 170 people for over 200 hours about the history of this church, I believe that Fountain Street is at its strongest when the authority of the congregation is fully vested in the committees of the church. Today you will elect several candidates to serve on your Governing Board. Those who are not elected will be asked (and several have already agreed) to assist with bringing new life, structure, and transparency to the church committees. Our financial advisors and the Oversight Committee are working to redeploy the powers of these committee efforts in the life of the congregation. You will see these groups at work in the life of the church - with a greater deal of autonomy and authority, reporting to the Governing Board, and investing in the community. This is the way forward. The staff are here to help train and sustain the committees and together we will chart a course of action.
We are roughly halfway through the first developmental task of the Interim process: reviewing and celebrating the full history of Fountain Street Church. These efforts have been broad and multifaceted and will not end with the completion of the task but (hopefully) sustain a culture of historic literacy within the church and the city into the foreseeable future.

Please set aside some time each week to read The Chimes. Please make your pledge toward our 2025 Program Year Budget. And if you haven't already, please download and familiarize yourself with the Church Center app - it is our directory and our calendar and our giving portal. The new website will launch soon - and fast on its heels will follow the online archives - and beyond this will come in rapid succession a number of new tools for "doing Fountain Street Church" far beyond the limits of our Sunday morning imaginations.

All of this is possible because we are all aware - at some level - that this work we are about here, nearing the close of 2024, is setting the stage for something very, very powerful. I am honored beyond words to accompany you on this adventure.

In Gratitude -
Rev. Nathan Dannison

Fountain Street Church Annual Membership Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2023

Amy Preston, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:18pm

Welcome and Final Collection of Ballots
Amy gave the final call for ballots and electors J. Spalding Wall and Tim Creamer collected.

Governing Board Remarks
Amy said this is her last statement as Board Chair. She thanked the ushers and greeters for the work they do every Sunday and week. Many groups were named specifically, as well as Rev. Christopher (RCR).

Remember that a year ago, we didn't have a Senior Minister (SM). Now we've had RCR for most of the year, and we're so fortunate. Other people we're thankful for are: Chaplain Margi, Choir director Austin, Lori and Katie, Jamie and Darius, Kayle, Joe Puscas. So much great energy. Rev. Jody Betten.

Groups we're thankful for: Senior Minister Search Committee, who presented us with RCR as a candidate early this year. Bell Tower and Fundraising Committees. Foundation Board (FB chairs are here today). And thank all of you for being here today–whether it's been a lifetime or two weeks.

We have a new SM, but the Governing Board (GB) is also responsible for supporting him. Sometimes that means changes. We now have a digital directory and other new technology.
You may also recall RCR's sermon for Easter 2023… perhaps for the first time, FSC became the target of a social media campaign. The GB, RCR, and community supporters developed a response. A lot of work is being done that isn't apparent. We want to keep things fun and engaging without pulling everyone into the harder parts.

Two challenges from 2022:
New Senior Minister
Bell Tower

In 2019, Win Irwin established a Bell Tower committee. It wasn't new then–we were aware for at least a decade before that. I don't know why prior boards haven't dealt with it; it's very time consuming. Less than a year ago, the inspection was finally complete. We thought we'd get a quote much earlier in 2023, but we got it at the end of June. We already spent $400K to get that quote, which is $2.3 million. Entire project is going to be close to $3m. We needed to engage the congregation, because this is inherently divisive. 25-30% of congregations leave when it's not what they want, and we didn't want that.

Planned for workshops beginning in Sept. Had 4 town halls this Fall at varying times with different groups. Wildly varying opinions and lots of questions. Are there other avenues? Kids had great ideas and questions. GB and FB went up to actually see it. Also put up a webpage and discuss at GB meetings and in between meetings.

In October, we asked the FB for their input about using the Foundation funds for the project. We all have concerns about preserving those funds, and we are independent, without a larger institution to rely on. We have the benefit of no debt, but have to keep the building running. Have to anticipate what might happen in the future. The FB responded quickly they they don't want to drain the Foundation Trust and we had a Special Meeting later in Oct.

GB authorized Amy to sign the quote. There will be a more specific contract. The project could be expanded, reduced, or delayed. Signing commits us to pay for any work they do, and we will work with THEM going forward.

We also approved quotes for other projects:

A facilities assessment, as the tower is the first of many building needs. People are asking what's after the tower? Quinn Evans will charge $70K and another $23.5K for incidentals over the next three months. Final report in Feb. We will discuss it at the next GB meeting.
A feasibility study to learn about fundraising efforts and goals. Been advised to employ an independent firm. Not sure how long this will take.

Have heard many rumors about the Bell Tower in the last few days. If you have questions, please ask Gov or Found Board members, or check the website. Trying to figure out how to make ppl happy and not lose members. Collective wisdom is better than any one member. We will continue to work together for a solution.

Amy told a story about getting a free drink from another local minister while out in public–ppl are watching us. We, the community and the world need FSC. We can work together, but if we don't, someone else will. Let's be Fountain Street Church.

Review/Approval of 2022 FSC Annual Membership Meeting Minutes
Who motioned to adjourn last year? We don't have the last name. Only unresolved issue.
Geoff Kepter moved to approve the minutes and Nancy Ayers seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Review/Approval of Feb. 12, 2023 Special Member Meeting Minutes
James Taylor moved to approve and Steve Assarian seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Financial Report and Budget Presentation
Tim updated: Through Sept. things are looking good, slightly over budget. Expect to be at budget for income at the end of the year.
If you haven't fulfilled your 2023 pledge, please do so by the end of the year. Thank you for the continued support. It's been fairly strong considering all things. AND please get your 2024 pledge in by the end of the year. Expect to be slightly below budget. Staff is very good at minimizing expenses.

On to the proposed budget:
Income–same giving from 2023 into 2024. We're now calling Stewardship "Annual Giving." We'll also include rentals and the auction. The difference is no wedding rentals because of scaffolding to do with the Bell Tower. Samaritas rentals, as they came back in the late summer. Foundation agreement for 5% (utilities cost, so we can use other money for programming).

Expenses–current staff members and rates of pay. Joe started late summer. Things have shifted from last year. Rev. Jody is in the budget until May/June. Some costs we don't know yet, like snow plowing and health insurance.

Motion to accept budget presentation. James Taylor moved to accept the proposed budget. Brad Miller seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Report of Election Results
Amy said "I've been an officer, but never a treasurer. With system updates, it's been extra complicated. Thank Tim and Cele Badgerow for all their work."

Not too much surprise with elections:
Geoff Kempter for a second term
Jack Petiet for a first term
Cindy Peck for a first term
John Willette for a second term
Todd Fettig for a second term on the FB

Five spaces were available, but we only had only 4 cand. We did get write-in candidates. Is that even allowed? Bylaws say the slate has to come from the Nominating Committee or with 25 signatures. Not equally clear on write ins. Will consult with Buzz and we'll figure it out and talk to the member who got the most write in votes. \

Both amendments passed:

Modification to the board size passed with 92%
Modification for elections to be primarily electronic passed with 79%

Member Comments
Member offered a word of thanks to the board and committees… this is a lot of work and challenges. Also thanked RCR.

Recognition of Board Members
Thank outgoing members. Katie Mitchell, George Zuiderveen and Kristen Loch. George has been a wealth of info as a former chair. Katie spent a lot of time writing the things you've read. Kristen has been Vice Chair and contributed SO MUCH. 10 hours a week, maybe closer to 20 on a good week. 40 on a bad week. She brought experience, and we're gonna miss her.

Adjourn
Motion to adjourn by Steve Assarian, Bill Thompson seconded. Motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 1:08pm.

PROPOSED (DRAFT) BUDGET, 2025

Income/Expense Notes

- We have a budget of $710,000.
- It is based on the 2023 pledges (fulfilled) and is functionally the same as the 2024 budget.
- We have budgeted at our current staffing level.
- We are in the midst of our year-end reconciliation process with Hungerford CPAs.
- A final budget will be based on actual pledges received by January, 2025

Income			
Other Income			
01-42200 Auction	$5,000.00		
01-42500 Miscellaneous			
Transfer from Foundation	$100,000.00		
Plate/Contribution Income			
01-40100 Contributions of Record	$50,000.00		
01-40200 Cash Plate	$25,000.00		
Pledge Income			
01-40000 Pledge Income	$510,000.00		
01-40500 Special Appeals	$0.00		
01-43250 Credit Card Fees	-$4,000.00		
Total Rental Income	$45,000.00		
Total Income			**$731,000.00**
Expenses			
Administration			
Administration Expenses			
01-52105 Office Services & Supplies	$10,000.00		
01-52110 Advertising & Marketing	$1,000.00		
01-52115 Information Services	$1,000.00		
01-52120 Office Equipment	$20,500.00		
01-52125 Postage	$5,000.00		
Total Administration Expenses	**$37,500.00**		
Administration Staffing			
01-52010 General Manager of Operations	$57,000.00		
01-52011 GMO Insurance	$10,455.00		
01-52012 GMO Retirement	$2,850.00		
01-52030 Office Manager	$10,000.00		
01-52031 OM Insurance	$2,400.00		
Admin Asst Retirement	$700.00		
01-52090 Payroll Tax Expense	$25,000.00		
Workers Comp Insurance	$2,200.00		
Total Administration Staffing	**$110,605.00**		
Leadership & Training			
01-50320 Stewardship Committee	$2,000.00		
01-52130 Governing Board Expense	$1,000.00		
01-52210 Professional Services	$20,000.00		
Total Leadership & Training	**$23,000.00**		
Total Adult Education	$2,500.00		
Education Staffing			
01-51600 Director of Children and Youth Programs	$35,000.00		
01-51601 DCYP Insurance	$8,000.00		
	$1,750.00		
Total Education Staffing	$47,250.00		
Youth Education			
01-51300 Youth Ed Supplies	$20,000.00		
Total Youth Education			
Total Education Programs	$20,000.00		
Total Education & Parish	**$67,250.00**		

(CONT.))

Properties Expenses				
Maintenance & Repairs				
01-52172 Trash Removal		$1,650.00		
01-52173 Pest Control		$1,000.00		
01-52175 Parking Fee		$2,200.00		
01-52176 Kitchen Expense		$2,500.00		
01-52178 Landscape Expense		$500.00		
Snow Removal		$2,200.00		
01-52180 Cleaning Expense		$2,500.00		
01-52181 General Maintenance and Repairs		$22,000.00		
01-52182 Lighting Expense		$3,000.00		
Elevator Expense				
01-52188 UnitedWay NP Alliance		$18,360.00		
Total Maintenance & Repairs		**$55,910.00**		
Staffing - Properties				
01-52190 Head Custodian		$47,000.00		
01-52191 Head Custodian Insurance		$11,880.00		
01-52192 Head Custodian Retirement		$2,350.00		
01-52195 Custodian PT1		$10,530.00		
01-52196 Custodian PT2		$10,530.00		
Total Staffing - Properties		$82,290.00		
Utilities				
01-52150 Water/Sewer		$4,400.00		
01-52151 Heat		$38,500.00		
01-52152 Electric		$60,500.00		
01-52154 Telephone		$5,500.00		
Total Utilities		$108,900.00		
Total Properties Expenses		**$191,190.00**		
Worship & Music				
Worship & Music Expenses				
01-50300 Instrument Maintenance & Repair		$6,000.00		
01-50305 Religion and Music Expenses		$7,000.00		
Early Worship		$5,000.00		
Total Worship & Music Expenses		$18,000.00		
Worship Staff				
01-50180 Choir Director		$28,600.00		
01-50185 Music Accompanist		$14,000.00		
		$5,100.00		
Director of AV/IT		$45,000.00		
Director AV Expenses		$2,250.00		
01-50200 Media Technical Support(AV)		$7,800.00		
01-51650 Community Care Coordinator		$6,500.00		
01-51670 Minister		$100,000.00		
01-51675 Prof. Expense		$5,000.00		
01-51679 Insurance		$8,000.00		
01-51680 Retirement		$5,000.00		
Total Worship Staff		$227,250.00		
Total Worship & Music		**$245,250.00**		
Total Expenses		**$0.00**		**$730,705.00**
Net Income		**$0.00**		**$295.00**

MEMORIES FROM A CENTURY OF OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

(curated by rev. dannison)

Now you have seen fit to place a far heavier responsibility upon me; namely, the maintenance of the preaching ministry of Fountain Street Church as well as all the pastoral duties connected with the life of this church, during the present interim. I have accepted this as a further challenge and shall carry on to the best of my ability as long as you see fit, that Fountain Street Church might maintain its ministry to the church and community during these difficult days. One man can carry such a responsibility only if each and every one who is asked to assume work above and beyond anything heretofore required will do so gladly and willingly. Fountain Street Church must go forward.

Respectfully submitted,

This Is Your Church

The story of your Church began over 127 years ago, and almost from the beginning the story has been one of adventure and questing in the realm of the human spirit. The story is filled with struggle and sacrifice, but each generation has contributed to the development of the Fountain Street Church. Each generation has made your Church a little more effective, a bit more significant in the lives of individuals, and a larger beacon to the free spirit of men everywhere. From the very beginning the Church has seen the vision of "a greater community in service to mankind and the God of love," and in turn each generation has provided for each new generation a unique and significant heritage. Today your Church presents this heritage as a gift to you---the heritage of a great Church ready for the responsibilities of the future. To that heritage we have a responsibi

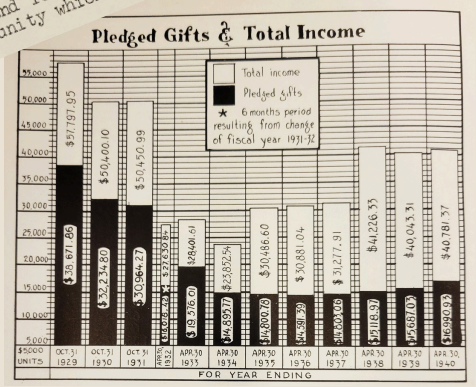
Mr. Merrill read the letter of resignation from Dr. Milton M. McGorrill. We also read a letter of explanation from Dr. McGorrill.

Miss Clara Smallidge read the acceptance resolution. Copy attached. Miss Smallidge moved for adoption of the resolution. Supported by Mrs. J. B. Nicholson. Also supported by Mr. Kurkjian and Mr. Stotz. Unanimously carried by a rising vote.

Character School: The one phase of "your Church in training that touches the most individuals within your Church is the Character School. Last Fall your Church became a participating member of the Union College Character Research Project. Your Church is one of the 31 Churches across the whole nation seriously accepting the challenge of building a greater generation. The total project involves a $100,000 a year budget and the cooperating Churches are the pioneers in this significant area of religious life in America. Since entering the project the effectiveness of our religious education program has increased many fold.

CHURCH NIGHT DINNERS -- Each month on the third Thursday a Church Night Dinner is held with an opportunity for fellowship as well as an outstanding program. This year Dr. Ernest M. Ligon, the founder of our Character School; Dr. Eustace Haydon, one of the leading religious thinkers of our generation; Dr. Norman Peale, minister of the largest Church in America, were some of the speakers. At different times we held Family Night at which we met as families and shared together in a program of fun and fellowship. Increasingly these Church Night dinners are bringing the community which is your Church closer together.

On December 31, 1978 Dr. Littlefair announced his resignation as Senior Minister of Fountain Street Church to a stunned congregation. Early in January Chairman John Cook called the Governing Board to a special meeting to discuss procedure in activating a Pulpit Committee. It was decided, since the Governing Board was an elected body, it would act as the nominating committee. They nominated eighteen people for a committee of twelve. Sixteen members of the congregation circulated petitions and their names were also placed on the Pulpit Committee slate.



After we learned in July that it was necessary to borrow $150,000 to pay operating expenses and to meet payroll, the Board assumed direct control of church finances and delegated the BAC to act as business manager of the church. In this capacity the BAC prepared a "Report on the Financial Condition of the Church" as of October 15, prepared cash flow projections for the last 3 months of 2001, instituted cost control procedures, wrote policies/procedures to guide financial operations, and handled the day to day financial activities.

The BAC retained the CPA firm of Hungerford, Aldrin, Nichols, and Carter to review our accounting system. They are also charged with designing a system for monitoring and controlling finances. This accounting work will be completed in the first quarter of 2002.

REPORT
FEBRUARY 1980
Governing Board

And finally, despite knowledge of my impermanence (every minister is penciled-in, after all), I've still aspired to be fully present and accounted for. Yes, I was pro tem, literally "for the time being"; but, when all is said and done, I will consider our paths to be irrevocably linked. Our mutual embrace has been wholehearted

After much discussion, the committee agreed it would be helpful to invite the top candidates to visit Grand Rapids, meet with the entire committee, the church staff, and preach in our pulpit. To date two men and their wives have come to Grand Rapids. They are Dr. John R. Killinger, Jr., Professor of Preaching, The Divinity School, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee and Dr. William Edelen, Minister of the First Congregational Church, Tacoma, Washington.

Evaluations have been written on all visited candidates. This process continues. When the committee concludes that it has found a person worthy of recommendation to the congregation, it will establish a final procedure to make the recommendation to the Governing Board and congregation.

The Pulpit Committee

Hugh Allen
Vickie Bergers
Charles Bertsch
Gordon Boozer
Kenneth Childs
Jane Goodspeed
Jerry Hazzard
Gwen Hibbard, Vice Chairperson
Dirk Hoffius
Arend Lubbers, Chairperson
B. Margaret Voss
Morley Wilson

Interim Senior Minister's Annual Report

The Rev. Dr. Judith A. Walker-Riggs

It has been both a privilege and a delight to work with you all here at Fountain Street Church during your Interim time.

We should all endeavor to avoid participating in hearsay. I am convinced it is the language of insecure people and serves no useful purpose. It is destructive. Ask questions instead. Gather as many different opinions as you can. Call board members; come to board and or committee meetings. Just as we get out of our family and our homes what we put into them, in the end we get out what *we* put into our church. Nothing more, nothing less.

The struggle *we* face as a congregation is to continue to move beyond *our* trauma. Past the anger and the emotions that fire our behavior in non-productive ways and into promising actions and discussions about our direction as a church in this modern era. We must learn from the mistakes of our past but we should not linger there too long. Our energy, our language, our labor and our vision must be about the present and the future of Fountain Street Church.

That was because the emerging financial issues came into focus in the fall, as we measured the realities of income versus expenses. The ET spent the bulk of its time in the autumn trying to grasp the extent of the financial problem and addressing it, which brought about other staff changes. Only now, much leaner in staff and resources, do I think we have reached an honest level of institutio stability regarding staff and money.

Senior Minister *pro tem*

Last April when I signed on as your senior minister pro tem, I intuitively knew I was in for a magnificent adventure. FSC was precisely the kind of ministerial challenge I coveted at this juncture in my life. My measured hunch proved correct; for my short stay in your company has bred an enduring fondness.

BOARD OF DEACONS

Seventeen meetings held. Deacons assisted in Baptismal and Communion services, visitation work, welcoming new members, and aiding ushers in extending friendly greetings to all at our services. A special benevolence treasury has provided aid to those found to be in need and shows a balance of $64.38.

Clark L. Brown, *Chairman.*
L. DeCamp Averill, *Secretary.*

MEMBERSHIP OF BOARD OF DEACONS
1935-1936

L. DeCamp Averill
Clark L. Brown
Ben Dean
Henry C. Fiebig
Glenwood C. Fuller
Clyde C. James
J. B. Nicholson
Walter A. Robson
Byron O. Smith
Gerald I. Stotz
Claude F. Switzer
C. W. A. Woodburne
Dilman Witmer, *Life Member*
Robert L. Yeomans, *Life Member*