

# **CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH / UCC**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015**

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## REPORT OF THE SENIOR MINISTER

*Lift up your eyes upon  
This day breaking for you.  
Give birth again  
To the dream*

~ Maya Angelou, from ***On the Pulse of the Morning***

It is becoming clear that Christian churches face a modern-day exile. In the emerging religious landscape, we cannot imagine living without our church buildings, our denominational structures, our preeminent place in American culture, or our belief that God will favor us and our nation forever. But those assumptions are shifting. Church properties like ours are so expensive that they can compromise our witness, drawing resources away from ministries that serve the community. Denominations are fading away. Christianity is no longer the unofficial state religion. In other words, we are living in a land and a church that is far different from that which many of us grew up in.

We can get so busy funding programs and maintaining traditions. But tradition serves no purpose unless we are also willing to step outside of the tradition, to think about what kind of church we need to be. We are a vibrant family of faith that is daring to dream of new possibilities with God's guidance.

Please know that as I fulfill God's calling at CCC, I am here to help us live into that dream. I am not a CEO; I am not the congregation's director, decision-maker, manager or executor. I am a minister – one of your pastors. While I am very interested in organizational management, good communication, bottom lines and stewardship of our resources, my primary role is to nurture the church as we explore and embrace the spiritual dimensions of our life together. I work with our staff to provide meaningful, inspiring worship, Christian education, and pastoral care. I guide our mission, outreach, and community life. I encourage, support and cooperate with our elected lay leaders to oversee a complex congregation that seeks to live faithfully as a just peace, open & affirming, anti-racist congregation in a time when religious institutions are trying to understand the new terrain. This is all to say, while I serve as CCC's executive staff person, my default position will usually be to make decisions from the perspective of a pastor.

I write this because, as your pastor, it has been a tough year at CCC -- perhaps one of the most difficult experiences in my entire career as a minister. We have coped with pain and sadness, anger and loss. Church leaders and I made difficult decisions when faced with complicated situations about personnel and property. These decisions had painful effects on all of us. Our Congregational Support Team revealed some long-standing, multi-generational issues that have been cycling through our congregation and causing harm to the organization. Altering these patterns will take persistence and wisdom from all of us, along with the ability to tolerate pain and hold one another when it feels like we have lost our way. It will take trust in one another and the realization that time may not completely heal all wounds, but it can make them bearable, even understandable, as we worship and serve together in community.

As hard as it has been for many of us, please know that I believe in CCC. I believe in you. I believe in us.

As we enter into a new year, I believe we are a congregation where all people can experience a love that will never let us go ... a place where we are reminded that God knows us each by name. I believe we are a congregation where the real presence of the Spirit renews and refreshes us.

I believe we are a congregation that does not have all the answers, but asks the right questions.

I believe we are a congregation where worship is joyful, exciting, and expectant, as well as reverent . . . a place where we can come as we are and know we will be accepted and wanted in this place. We are a church that suffers when you are not here with us. We are a church where people gather to encourage and be encouraged, to love and be loved, to forgive and be forgiven.

I believe we are a congregation that is not afraid of change. We have the ability to sense where God is at work and we have the courage to join that holy work, even if it means letting go of some long-established ways of understanding ourselves ... a church where people are encouraged to reflect God's Spirit at school, work, and home ... where we are all sent out to add value to the lives of other people.

I believe we are a congregation that is so vital to the community that it would be missed if it was no longer around . . . a people recognized for our quality of caring and our eagerness to reach out to those in need.

Thanks to each and every one of you who remain on this journey together at CCC. I am looking forward to being your pastor in the year ahead and seeing where this journey of trust and grace takes us.

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Rev. Matt Braddock,  
Senior Minister**

#### **REPORT OF THE MINISTER FOR CARE & COMMUNITY**

What a joy it is to serve with you at Christ Congregational Church!

As I minister to and with you, I am constantly amazed at the many gifts and talents that so many of you possess. Our journey together has allowed me to share in the joys and trials of your lives. I am so blessed to walk beside you as you heal, as you experience disappointments and as you grieve the loss of a loved one and even if you just want to visit and talk.

In my role of providing pastoral care, I, on a weekly basis, spend time with approximately 10-15 of our members, either visiting in their homes, in hospitals, retirement communities and/or nursing homes or also checking in through phone calls.

I meet monthly with the Senior Adult Ministry team where we plan events that will help all of our members to have a healthier and better quality of life. We have sponsored workshops on **Downsizing and Aging in Place, Fall Prevention**, a Christmas tea where we collected toys for children in need. We also sponsored a **Spring Fling** where Pastor Matt delighted us with entertainment. Each month we take turns to bring the devotions and prayer. Because we recognize the importance of continuing to grow in our spirituality, we are working on quarterly spirituality training.

One of the highlights of the Older Adult Ministry is our yearly Silent Retreat at the Dayspring Retreat Center. This fall retreat provides an opportunity to “be still and know God”. Much creativity has come out of this time spent with God in beautiful surroundings. This retreat is not just limited to our older adults, but to the entire church.

I am thankful for Elaine Tiller and Sue Dollins who give leadership to the Caregivers' Support Group. This ministry has provided support to many of our members who are caring for family members – many with Alzheimer's disease. I share with this group various opportunities for training and for information gathering around dementia and caregiving.

Work is underway for a Parish Nursing Ministry. Kerri Hufford and I have been working with the director of Holy Cross Faith Community Nursing Program and plans will be launched this fall to begin this ministry. It is the mission of this ministry to integrate faith and health to provide support for the holistic well-being of parishioners and potentially the surrounding community.

What a joy it is to work with Barbara Thorn who manages our birthday card ministry. Barbara is delighted to still be able to serve even though she is confined to her home. If you would like to be remembered on your birthday, just get your birthdate to me and then watch for your card.

In addition to Barbara Thorn, Tina Lincoln has started a ministry to show support to our members who are in ill health or recovering from surgery. I am so thankful that we care for each other in such a special way.

It is a delight to work with our women as we provide support for each other. It was wonderful to spend a weekend last year with the women of the church at our Women's Retreat at the Retreat House. This event provided a way to connect with the women of all ages in our church. Plans are underway for this year's retreat.

As our church ages, more people are needed to provide care for them. Much thought is being given to how we care for each other and how we can do it better. We are thinking and praying about how we can better involve the laity in providing this care. We are thankful for the Caregiver's Visitation Team, but we need to do more as more is needed. More training is being planned as we try to be proactive in making sure that no one gets lost or forgotten.

Sisters for Sisters is a gathering where the women of the church meet once a month to just "check in" with each other. Many of these women are single or widowed and this time helps us to be sensitive to all of our needs and concerns.

Our yearly Bethany Beach retreat gave me the opportunity last year to spend time with many of you and thus get to know you better. I look forward to this year's retreat.

Each Sunday I participate in worship and all of the special services in the Liturgical year. I have preached four times and done the children's sermon three times. Along with Pastor Matt, I have participated in four funerals and provided pastoral care to loved ones left behind.

I participated in the Central Atlantic Conference Annual Meeting 50<sup>th</sup> and will attend the 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting this month.

I love being your Minister for Care and Community and I thank you for the opportunity to serve you.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Rev. Gloria J. Grant  
Minister for Care and Community**

#### **REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF MUSIC**

As in several years past, this year at CCC we placed an increased emphasis on the instrumental music ministry within the life of the congregation. We continued to develop our ministry for solo instrumentalists and ensembles in worship. The string ensemble and the Intergenerational Orchestra continue to grow in numbers. The cello ensemble, led by Sarah Cotterill, is thriving. This group has led music in worship on a number of occasions and the ensemble continues to increase in size and offers a wonderful array of talent. Lynne Joseloff continues to direct our magnificent flute ensemble and we celebrate Lynne's musical gifts and talents and anticipate the flute ensemble's musical offerings in worship throughout the coming year as well.

Our Christmas music Sunday celebrations featured the *Gloria* of John Rutter. Well over ninety musicians participated in our worship services on the third Sunday of Advent. The Chancel Choir was joined by forty-six of CCC's own instrumentalists of all ages, complemented by an eight piece professional brass ensemble with tympani and percussion. Our Assistant Director of Music, Sam Wack, led the congregation, choirs, and orchestra in many of the soul-stirring arrangements of familiar carols.

The Chancel Choir enjoyed an engaging off-site retreat in February. The Choir travelled to the Turf Valley Retreat Facility in Ellicott City for rehearsals, food, and fellowship. A highlight of the weekend was being led by Dr. Phillip Woods in learning (and memorizing) several gospel music selections which were offered to the congregation in worship throughout the month of February.

The Chancel Choir and several of CCC's instrumentalists were honored and privileged to sing and play for the *Requiem* of John Rutter on Good Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>. The concert was sponsored by Lucy Greene in memory of her father, The Rev. Leonard Ebel, former pastor at CCC. The concert was sung with the choirs from Silver Spring United Methodist Church.

We experienced the return of the popular Days of Simplicity Lenten Concerts and soup luncheons. With your generous weekly contributions, this series was again, self-supporting!

The CCC Brass Ensemble led our Easter Sunday services with festive accompanimental resources and has grown to a total of eight members. Brian Frye served as the director of the ensemble for the services. The Chapel Choir (Children's Choir) offered ***The Land of the Lost and Found*** in an annual celebration of Mothers' Day on Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>.

As I write this article, I am excited to report that we are in the initial stages of planning and auditioning for ***The Sound of Music***. All-church musicals are very much a part of the heritage here at CCC, and I am delighted to be joined by Sam Wack and Mike Weber in producing this wonderful musical next November. I am also thrilled that the Tour Choir of CCC will be embarking on another exquisite venture in the summer of 2016. This will be my third tour with the choir and I look forward to another wonderful season of preparation and to a magnificent journey with the group next year.

I am blessed by my work with all of the staff at CCC. To be in ministry with Pastor Matt Braddock, Pastor Gloria Grant, and Pastor Audrey Wiggins has added new dimensions to my own focus in music ministry. Sam Wack is absolutely the finest church musician, pianist and conductor that I could ever hope to work with. Her abilities and talents are immeasurable and I could not do the work that I do here at CCC without her. My thanks to Dianne Abraham



and Veronica Bailey for carefully paying attention to all the details---all the time! Our custodial staff works tirelessly and I am grateful for their assistance always!

We are also blessed by the work of so many people who give of their time and talents in so many ways to support our ministry. I send a heart-felt thank you to Jackie Walters and the members of the Music Committee for their diligent and impeccable work on behalf of promoting the ministry of music at CCC and assisting me with planning for the future. Please see Jackie Walter's report highlighting many of the important tasks that the committee has undertaken this year. I thank Judy Cox and the Board of Trustees for their support financially in ensuring that we maintain our incredible resources. And finally, I am so grateful for the weekly work of the Chancel Choir librarians, Ann Marshall and Toko Ackerman. Their fastidious work in keeping our extensive music library in order is a gift to this church!

My cup overflows ... with thanks to all of you for your love and support! To God be the glory!

**Respectfully submitted,**  
**Nae Pearson**  
**Minister of Music & Organist**

#### **REPORT OF THE CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR**

2014-2015 has been another busy year for the CCC facility. As the building has aged, we are replacing and repairing more frequently. This past year saw an improvement in the number of "larger" breakdowns and weather-related crises experienced in previous years, but we have had plenty to take care of.

**Plumbing:** We've experienced increased repairs and replacements for the facility plumbing fixtures and pipes. Our commercial plumber repaired a variety of pipe leaks in the building's restrooms, replaced several toilet seats and sink faucets. We also needed help with a leaking grease trap in the social hall kitchen, drain clearances in the same space and snaking of sink drains. Several water fountains needed repair and one needed replacement. The window well drains needed clearance and investigations uncovered broken pipe in this system. Further diagnostic work will be needed to address repair of the compromised pipe section. The diagnostic work will take place this year; repairs and replacement of pipe will wait for this next church year.

**HVAC:** The chiller, needed for air conditioning, has required repair and part replacements on both compressors. We've addressed faulty heating and cooling issues throughout the facility. Most of these were resolved with new parts for compromised fan coil units or the replacement of thermostats. Major pipe work was completed in several daycare rooms along with a flushing of the pipe system, which had become blocked by particulate matter.

Despite the cold winter, we avoided further fan coil unit breakages and subsequent floods in the mechanical room. We reset unoccupied heating set-points higher and reprogrammed system thermostats to keep the heating system going during the extreme cold spells.

**Technology/IT:** We replaced routers with upgraded equipment and strengthened firewalls. Before year's end, we will upgrade internet capability via our Comcast plan. We have additional staff using internet research tools at the same time, and an upgrade is needed to keep the system accessible by all without downtime or interruption. The upgrade will also help alleviate the dropped phone line issues we have experienced with most or all of the staff accessing the phone system sometimes at the same time.

In this new church year we hope to move forward with a planned upgrade of remaining phone consoles. This work was slated for this year, but with facility and equipment repairs we are holding off on this expenditure. An additional projector and screen are contemplated for the new church year. We have found increased and competing needs for the equipment most Sundays and during the week for church meetings and events.

**Fire Alarm System:** With the installation of TVSS last year, we have had fewer power-related issues with the system's control panel. This year the panel needed new batteries, an every five year maintenance issue.

We also covered all the alarm pull stations on the basement level after repeated tampering by several very curious daycare children, which sent the system into full alarm. These covers are acrylic, equipped with alarms and are products approved and specified by Simplex Grinnell, our vendor for the system.

**Office and Meeting Space Reorganization:** Last summer, we undertook a major reorganization and upgrade of ministerial offices, the Nursery and Room 106 (the

former nursery). The reorganization accommodated office space for a Youth Ministry Professional and a move of the Sr. Minister and the Minister for Care and Community offices. Room 106 was returned to a gathering and meeting space and a new nursery with age-appropriate toys and equipment moved to Room 104. This spring we are updating the office for Christian Education.

**Building Use:** Building Use has remained constant this year with the same organizations and individuals using church space. Income remains within the same range as previous years.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Dianne Abraham  
Church Administrator**

## REPORT OF THE CLERK OF THE ROLLS

	<b><u>2013-2014</u></b> <b>July 1- June 30</b>	<b><u>2014-2015</u></b> <b>July 1-May 23</b>
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	July 1 - 726 June 30 - 509	July 1 - 509 May 23 - 521
MEMBERSHIP INCREASES		
By Letter of Transfer	6	4
By Affirmation	8	14
By Confirmation	7	4
Total Increases	21	22
MEMBERSHIP DECREASES		
By Death	6	8
By Request	28	1
By Letter of Transfer	7	1
Moved to Inactive Status by Request	29	0
Moved to Inactive Status by Church	165	0
Members Retired with no Associated Date	3	0
Total Decreases	238	10
ATTENDANCE AT WORSHIP		
Average per Sunday	153	158
weeks	52	46
MONTHLY RECORD		
Highest Month of Attendance	12/2013 – 1640	12/2014 - 1352
Lowest Month of Attendance	2/2014 - 448	7/2014 - 347
Lowest Sunday of Attendance	9/1/2013 - 100	2/16/2014 - 73
Easter	440	430
Christmas Sunday	12/15/2013 – 437	12/14/2014 - 423
Christmas Eve 5:30 pm	375	374
Christmas Eve 9:00 pm	200	275
SERVICES PERFORMED BY MINISTERS		
Baptisms	5	3
Funerals and Memorial Services	3	7

MEMBERSHIP INCREASES

NEW MEMBERS (18)

Danielle Bailey	Lori Maarbjerg
Doug Bailey	Peder Maarbjerg
Bruce Berger	Eleanor Norwood
Carmen Bhattacharya	Albert Papazian
Renee Gamez	Megan Repoley
Brian Holland	David Squires
Leann Keele Holland	Maureen Squires
Tori McElrath	Sheila Walsh
Wayne McElrath	Phillip Woods

COVENANT CLASS (4)

Nate Braddock	Lucas Hirsch
Colin Brown	Nick Michel

MEMBERSHIP DECREASES

DECEASED MEMBERS (8)

Mary Carnahan	Bill Neal
Shirley Coll	Ione O'Connor
John Hildebrandt	Marla Schreck
Jane Martin	Terry Strand

MEMBERS RETIRED BY REQUEST (1)

Steven Williams

MEMBERS TRANSFERRED (1)

Martha Krieger

DECEASED FORMER MEMBERS AND FRIENDS (Not Counted in Membership)

Leland Luft

**Respectfully submitted,  
David Main,  
Clerk of the Rolls**

## REPORT OF THE MODERATOR

As we reach the end of another year in the life of our church, I offer my reflections on what has been a challenging year in many ways. We struggled with the loss of staff members, changes to our programming, and the temporary closing of our retreat house. These events forced us to look more closely at our policies, processes, and procedures in preparation for an intentional time of reflection on how we can all work together to create a better CCC. But along with its challenges, this year has also been one of celebration and accomplishment. I value all the pieces that contributed to my year as CCC's Moderator.

### Highlights

**Our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:** On November 9<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated CCC's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a community service at Veteran's Plaza in downtown Silver Spring. We celebrated with beautiful music from our choir, a bountiful brunch contributed by our members, and fellowship with our church and community family. Many of our historic community partners attended, including friends from the Senior Connection, Progress Place/Shepherd's Table, Impact Silver Spring, Gandhi Brigade, Shaw Community Ministry, and Silver Spring Child Care Center. We also welcomed new community connections, including Hope Restored and Habitat for Humanity.

**Black Lives Matter:** Early in January, CCC placed a "Black Lives Matter" banner on our front lawn to show our commitment to racial justice. On January 16<sup>th</sup>, the sign was defaced to read "ALL Lives Matter." The following Sunday, Pastor Matt hung the banner in the sanctuary and led a discussion about the banner's message as part of his sermon. We then put the sign back outside, along with lawn signs with the original Black Lives Matter message. Many thanks to Jane Osborn for repairing the vandalized banner so we can display it on Colesville Road once again. The lawn signs were sent home with CCC members and friends to give more of us the opportunity to continue having racial justice conversations in our neighborhoods.

**Our New Website:** In January, we launched a new CCC website ([www.cccsilverspring.org](http://www.cccsilverspring.org)). We are grateful for the work done for so many years by our webmaster Barry Johnson and thank Pastor Matt for his work in creating our new site.

**Online Giving Pilot Program:** This spring, CCC conducted a successful online giving pilot program, led by our Financial Secretary Greg Muncill, with assistance from Dan Pence, Tim Carrigan, and David Main. We are planning to offer the online giving option to the congregation sometime in June.

**Transitions:** This has been a year of transitions for our church community and faith family. Two staff members, Sue Wilson, Director of Children's Ministries, and Whitney Kinsey, Director of Cooperative Youth and Young Adult Ministries, left CCC. In March, we welcomed Reverend Audrey Wiggins as our Director of Christian Education. We are currently in the process of identifying candidates to fill the cooperative youth ministry position and hope to hire someone over the summer.

Dan Pence has decided that seventeen years is long enough to serve as our Treasurer. We are very grateful for his faithful stewardship of our finances for so many years and welcome Dean Ripple as our new Treasurer.

After twenty-five years of her amazing gift to the parents and children of our church by leading our Parents Night Out program, Glenda Neal stepped down. PNO parents and the Board for Church Life worked to make sure that the PNO program will continue successfully as part of our ministry to parents of young children.

We are also thankful for the many years of service generously given by Camp Coordinator Stephanie Helsing and Retreat House Committee Chairs Cory Gray and Bruce Strand.

**Retreat House Task Force:** At a Special Congregational Meeting in 2012, the congregation approved a capital campaign, a percentage of which would provide funding to be used to "retool the Retreat House and restore it to its original functionality." Following a successful capital campaign, the current Task Force was authorized by the Executive Council and appointed by Moderator Karen O'Steen in May, 2013 with the assignment to fulfill the intent of the Capital Campaign by developing a Master Plan.

This year, the Retreat House Task Force (RHTF) continued its charge to recommend how best to retool our retreat house property in West Virginia.

Because of their hard work this year, we are well on our way to having a master plan for the congregation to vote on in the fall.

The RHTF thoughtfully and carefully reviewed life/safety reports, interviewed architects, selected Reader & Schwartz, and received approval to hire the firm. In January and March, the RHTF, along with Reader & Schwartz, held two visioning “charrettes” with members of the congregation. The discussions focused on what we wanted to do and how we could accomplish it. In February and April, Jim Brown, RHTF Chair, attended Executive Council meetings and updated CCC’s leadership on the team’s progress. In April and May, the RHTF held informational meetings with the congregation to review their work this year, show the preliminary ideas for the property, solicit feedback, and answer questions.

The original plan was for the RHTF to have enough information to present to the Congregation at our June 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting for a vote. Although, the RHTF will have preliminary cost information, and a final set of schematic drawings, there will not be enough specific information for the congregation to make a well-informed decision. They consulted with me, and we decided that we would wait to have a meeting in the fall instead.

The Task Force asked me to express their gratitude for the support and open, frank dialogue with members of the congregation, and thankfulness for a Capital Campaign that provides a significant source of funding for this project, as well as serving as a reminder that the congregation agreed to make the Retreat House a priority for the future. They are eager to move forward with presenting the final construction costs, budgets, campus plans, accessible structures and calling for a renewed commitment to the Retreat House property, if that is the desire of the congregation this fall.

Many thanks to the members of the RHTF for their dedication and hard work for the past two years and their continued work going forward: Jim Brown (chair), Tom Doggett, Stevan Fisher, Cory Gray, Jim O’Steen, Rick Sniffin, Kathy Stedman, Bruce Strand, Jackie Walters, and Cyndy Wright-Johnson.

More information about the RHTF’s work this year is included as Appendix D to the Annual Report and is also available on CCC’s website



([www.cccsilverspring.org](http://www.cccsilverspring.org)). The RHTF can be contacted at [retreathouse@cccsilverspring.org](mailto:retreathouse@cccsilverspring.org).

**January 11<sup>th</sup> Congregational Meeting and Congregational Support Team:** In November and December, CCC's Executive Council and Trustees, with input from our Senior Minister and a Past Moderators' Council, made some very difficult decisions about personnel, programming, and property. Some members questioned the reasons for these decisions and felt that important stakeholders were not given the opportunity to participate in the process. Some were upset about the way in which the news was announced.

In response, members of the congregation petitioned to have a Congregational Meeting. The meeting was held on January 11<sup>th</sup> and minutes from the meeting are included in this Annual Report (**see** Appendix B). At that meeting we announced that the Executive Council was forming a Congregational Support Team (CST) to review actions taken by CCC leadership. We are very thankful for the extraordinary work the CST did on our behalf this year: Robert Tiller, Chair; Alison Petersen, Vice Chair; Matt Dinkel, Secretary; David Bell; Rosemarie Kelley; Leslie Weyn.

The CST met with me and Pastor Matt on January 12<sup>th</sup> and immediately started the hard work of listening, reviewing, and discerning. They began by holding listening sessions to hear members' concerns. Forty-two listening sessions were held with members of the congregation and others who participate in our church community but are not members. The CST then spent many, many hours reviewing the information they collected, along with other documents and information.

The result was a thoughtful report of their findings and recommendations for CCC going forward. The CST presented the report to the congregation at an informational meeting on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. On May 11<sup>th</sup>, the Executive Council discussed how best to work on the recommendations in the CST report. Incoming Moderator Tim Carrigan will present the Executive Council's ideas for next steps at the June 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting.

The CST Report is included as an addendum to the print version of the 2014-2015 Annual Report (**see** Appendix E). Print copies and PDFs of the CST report are available from the CCC office at: [cccoffice@cccsilverspring.org](mailto:cccoffice@cccsilverspring.org).

**Looking Forward:** The coming church year will give us the opportunity to start working on the recommendations of the Congregational Support Team, to decide how best to move forward with our Retreat House, and to celebrate new milestones in the life of our beloved church family. I look forward to being with all of you on the journey into CCC's future.

**With gratitude for the opportunity to serve this year,  
Holly Brooks,  
Moderator**

#### **REPORT OF THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER**

Our long-time CCC Webmaster, Barry Johnson, resigned due to illness in October, 2014. We are grateful to Barry for the many years of dedicated service he provided. To address the lapse in technical support the CCC Website, Pastor Matt Braddock redeveloped the website using SquareSpace, a user-friendly platform that permits multiple content managers to make updates to the pages. The new website rolled out in January, 2015. CCC continues to maintain an active presence on FaceBook and Twitter with postings by Pastor Matt.

We publicized CCC's decision to support a boycott of the Washington Football team name through press releases to the media, including the **Washington Post**. This produced some news attention and media contacts.

Anne Weissenborn continued to update and maintain the bulletin boards with information and attractive displays. We thank her for continuing to serve CCC in this way. We also thank Veronica Bailey for her support of CCC's communications work, and for producing the twice-monthly electronic NewsNotes.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Marilyn Hall,  
Communications Officer & Communications Committee Chair**

## **REPORTS OF THE BOARDS**

### **REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

**Membership:** Kristen Brown (co-chair) Ann Keeler (co-chair) Debbie Boger (resigned as chair in January), Geri Brennan, Rebecca Adams-Taylor, Don Collins, Paul Gieser (resigned), Mary Harrill-McClellan, Carly Hufford (youth representative), Lauren Jones, Holly Stephens.

**Our Mission:** The mission of the CE Board is to support the church school teachers and youth leaders in educating our children and youth in their Christian faith journey, as guided by the covenants and community at Christ Congregational Church.

**What We Accomplished this Year:** 2014-15 was a year of abrupt transition for the CE Board and Youth and Children's programs at CCC. After the resignation of Sue Wilson (Director of Children's Ministries), Whitney Kinsey (Director of Youth Ministries), and Debbie Boger (CE Board Chair), our Board rallied and sustained our sixteen volunteer teachers who continued to provide education for an average of fifty-seven students each Sunday. Whitney graciously agreed to stay on through the end of the 2014-15 school year. Our youth group had approximately forty kids total, including both CCC and Takoma Park Presbyterian Church participants.

We were pleased to welcome Rev. Audrey Wiggins as Director of Christian Education who supports our children's ministries for age Nursery through 5<sup>th</sup> grade and our Sunday school programs for all ages. She has brought a high level of expertise in children's ministry to CCC and is sharing her many gifts with the entire congregation.

Since the camping ministry at the Retreat House was cancelled for this year, the CE Board was tasked with finding an alternate camp opportunity for youth. Our Board member Geri Brennon worked hard and proposed three camps for the Board to consider. After reaching out to multiple constituencies, we chose Camp Clagget as the best option. We have ten middle school aged youth attending in July and we look forward to hearing how they liked it.

**Our Plan for the Next Church Year:** We anticipate another year of transition as we support the search for a part-time youth minister whom we will continue to

share with Takoma Park Presbyterian Church. We will assess how Camp Clagget went for the youth and support Rev. Audrey with plans for an evening Vacation Bible School for ages pre-school through 5<sup>th</sup> grade during the summer of 2016. We also will continue to uphold our safe church policies for the nursery, Sunday School and youth group, and continue to work on a reasonable Safe Church policy with other boards and constituencies at CCC. Probably most importantly, we'll work with our Sunday School teachers and youth group volunteers to show appreciation for the work they do by providing the best support possible.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Ann Keeler and Kristen Brown,  
CE Board Co-Chairs**

#### **REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR CHURCH LIFE**

**Board Members:** Deb Anderson, Phyllis Badesch, Melissa Costa, Susan Hill, Nancy Mills, Anne Morris, Susan Thiel, Jane Weber, Mike Weber

**Our Mission:** BCL is charged with coordinating events and activities that enhance the sense of community within CCC. While offering opportunities for members to enjoy each other's company through sharing food, fun and fellowship, BCL promotes new and old connections. In relaxed and informal gatherings which are intergenerational, understanding and appreciation for one another is fostered; friendships are created and strengthened; and community is served as we are able to cherish one another.

**What We Accomplished This Year:** Fundamental to BCL is the weekly Coffee Hour which is served every Sunday -- except for a few special Sundays. Our members have a monthly rotation in which refreshments are served following the service. Over a cup of coffee, members and visitors can share personal conversations and feel welcomed into the CCC community. With their parents present, many children really enjoy the cookies served! Our Board is grateful to CCC's Friends of the Earth for their continued generous donation of coffee and tea.

- The annual **Bethany Beach Weekend** was held August 21<sup>st</sup> through 24<sup>th</sup> and was organized by a former CCC member, Melissa Milkie. Over sixty individuals ranging in age from infants to seniors enjoyed time together at the beach. What could be more delightful!
- The **Fall Kick Off** was hosted with O & E on September 14<sup>th</sup>. BCL provided the ice cream and all the toppings to make ice cream sundaes. The

event was held outside and the weather was ideal so it was a great way to start the year.

- The **70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration** was organized by Kristen Brown who did a tremendous job. Many BCL members served by helping to set-up, clean-up and act as table hosts. BCL also provided funds to help pay for some of the expenses.
- The **Advent Wreath Workshop** was held on December 7<sup>th</sup>. Phyllis Badesch and Connie Okparanta coordinated this event providing all the supplies and greens so that people of all ages could make their own wreath to take home. The Social Hall was filled with people sharing in this creative pursuit. There was also over ten kinds of soup, enough to offer lunch to the whole congregation.
- **Christmas Caroling** was coordinated by the Director of Music, Nae Pearson and the Youth Group. BCL member Lissa Costa volunteered to serve refreshments following the caroling.
- **An Evening Of Jazz** was once again coordinated by Susan Hill. On February 7<sup>th</sup>, the Social Hall was transformed by the music of the Big Band. The Youth Group decorated, served and cleaned up earning money from donations for their summer mission trip. Delicious food, cider and dancing to live music created a very festive evening for everyone.
- **Winter Weekend** was once again held at YMCA Camp Soles in Pennsylvania in February. This is a joint event with the Washington Ethical Society.
- **50 Year Member Recognition** was held on April 26<sup>th</sup>. This is a time when the ministers lead the congregation in honoring those members who have a commitment of 50 years or more with the CCC community. BCL serves to coordinate this celebration. Following the service a light lunch was offered.
- BCL would also like to give special recognition to Glenda Neal who faithfully served as Coordinator for the **Parents' Night Out** program. One Friday evening a month, parents have been able to enjoy an evening out in a cooperative babysitting service which Glenda lead for twenty-five years. Many CCC families have enjoyed this program over the years. With Glenda stepping down, we appreciate Carmen Bhattacharya for acting as the PNO Coordinator for this year. This past year, five CCC families participated in PNO with an average of 14 children each evening.
- In response to the Executive Council request for feedback on committees, our board discussed two Committees that are no longer active but have

had a liaison with BCL: Child Care and Kitchen. Our Board discussed the history of these committees, and our perspective of the current needs and available resources (primarily volunteers). Our recommendations were submitted to Executive Council.

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Nancy Mills, Chair  
Board Of Church Life**

## **REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DEACONS**

**2014–15 Membership:** Jane Anderson, Merlene Bagley, Sue Bratten, Jim Brown, Susan Gray (Chair), Bill Kaupert, Karen Lee, Ann Marshall, Audrey Platt, Neville Platt, Betsy Thomas, Leslie Weyn, Lynn White, Tim White

**Our Mission:** The Board of Deacons seeks to enhance the spiritual life of the congregation. The Board works closely with the ministers planning and assisting in worship services, including serving communion. Deacons assist with the pastoral care of members, especially those who are sick or in crisis. The Board oversees the Covenant Class for young people, and other programs for spiritual growth. The Board also administers the Deacon' Fund for those in need.

The Board considers that the worship experience and ministry to members of the church are particularly important. Deacons also oversee the Lay Visitation Program. The Lay Visitation Ministry of Christ Congregational Church believes that transformation takes place when, as a caring community, we answer God's call to minister to each other. (From the Christ Congregational Church web page.)

**What We Accomplished This Year:** The Deacons supported the ministers during Sunday morning worship services each week, providing readers/liturgists. The Board continues to encourage congregants to take part in services as lay readers.

The sacrament of communion takes place on the first Sunday of each month as well as on Maundy Thursday and Confirmation Sunday. Deacons prepare and serve the communion elements.

Throughout the year Deacons took part in baptisms and in welcoming new members into the congregation, and were present to support bereaved families during memorial services.

During Advent, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week and Easter, the Deacons supported the ministers in the special services for those seasons. Together with the Board for Outreach & Engagement we hosted a Christmas Eve reception to especially welcome returning students and visitors who were home for the holidays.

The Deacons, and particularly Karen Lee, worked closely with Pastor Matt to support the Covenant Class. Four young people took part in the class this year. We welcome them into the life and fellowship of CCC.

**Challenges We Faced This Year:** Again this year the board worked with fewer than the required number of members as established in the church Constitution and By-Laws. Despite fewer numbers we were able to accomplish all of the duties and expectations of the Deacons.

**Our Plan for the 2015-2016 Church Year:** In the upcoming year, the board will continue to work for clarification of the role and mission of the Board of Deacons in the life of the church as we support the worship and member care ministries with fewer board members.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Gray, Chair  
Board of Deacons**

#### **REPORT OF THE BOARD OF OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT**

**Members:** Susannah Beals-Simon, Barbara Breads, Bob Brown, Barbara Callander, Patty First, Pete Hotchkiss, Heather Lair, Trisha Lay, Mary Stone and Emily Weigel, Trish Esposito(Chair)

**Our Mission:** The Board of Outreach and Engagement (the O&E Board) organizes and leads a program to inspire interest in Christ Congregational Church (CCC), extends the opportunities of church membership to those persons who may wish to participate in the fellowship of the church, and assists new members in becoming actively involved in church life.

**What We Accomplished This Year:** The O&E Board held three visitor informational meetings, with a total of fourteen persons in attendance. There is

one additional informational meeting planned for June, 2015. These meetings provided information on CCC's theology, structure, finances, programs and membership expectations. Fourteen adults and four youth have joined the church over the course of the year. We anticipate that five additional adults will join on June 28, 2015. The O&E Board provided greeters on Sunday mornings and at special services throughout the year to welcome visitors to the church. Board members reached out to those visitors who provided contact information.

In September, the O&E Board hosted the Fall Program Kick Off Sunday with games and activities for all ages and ice cream provided by the Church Life Board. In October, we hosted the Blessing of Animals event for the church and neighborhood communities. These two events were publicized to neighboring communities as outreach. We hosted a reception with the Board of Deacons following the 9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service to encourage fellowship among our young adult community and for those visiting the church on Christmas Eve.

In March 2015, the O&E Board in conjunction with the Stewardship Board and Nominating Committee, hosted **Taste of Ministry** as part of the yearly Stewardship Board campaign for time, talent and treasure. This event provides information to newer members of the congregation and visitors about all the activities, programs and ministries available at the church.

In April, the O&E Board sponsored a Focus Group meeting and luncheon for members of the church who joined in the last five years. We facilitated small group discussions centered on questions asking for feedback on how the church and the O&E Board can meet their needs and interests. For those who were unable to attend, we followed up with an online survey. The Board is currently in the process of collating all the responses.

**Challenges We Faced This Year:** The church continues to welcome a large number of one-time visitors and returning visitors who require Sunday morning outreach, and follow-up phone calls, e-mails and conversations. The O&E Board encourages all members of the church to welcome attendees, pass the pew register and extend hospitality. With the illness of long-term Sunday morning greeter, Bill Neal, the Board reached out to the congregation to assist with greeting. We now have core of folks rotating Sunday mornings for greeting. A 50% cut in in our budget for 2014-2015 year did impact our ability to replace banners, advertise in the community and support small groups. Small groups are vital to engaging newer members in the church community.



**Our Plan for the Next Church Year:** Over the summer months, the O&E Board will be collating the feedback obtained from the April Focus Group meeting and the online survey. We will share this information with the staff and Executive Council and make some recommendations. We will be participating with the Church Life Board to plan and host the All Church Picnic, Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>. We will also be working with Signs By Tomorrow to replace our rainbow, Advent and Lenten banners throughout the year.

**Respectfully submitted,**  
**Trish Esposito, Chair**  
**Board of Outreach & Engagement**

#### **REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR SOCIAL WITNESS**

**2014-15 Membership:** Jennifer Bunch, Carl Brandt, Jim Conklin (Convener), John Enagonio (Treasurer), Marjorie Hoffman, Chuck Mason (resigned), Jane Osburn (Secretary), Mark Thiel, Ndimyake Mwakalyelye, Rebecca Reviere (Substitute Secretary), Ron Rising (inactive), Scott Wales, Cyndy Wright-Johnson (resigned as Chair).

**Our Mission:** The Board for Social Witness (BSW) "shall be responsible for Christian witness related to missions, service, and advocacy on behalf of the congregation. The board shall identify opportunities for financial and other support of mission activities, evaluate them, and allocate to them funds appropriated for this purpose under the unified budget or received through special offerings. The board shall initiate, lead, and coordinate service activities and advocacy opportunities. The board shall work to educate the congregation on social justice and human service needs and shall advocate positions on legislation, and government and non-government policies and programs." (CCC Bylaws, June 2, 2013)

**What We Accomplished This Year:** During the 2014-15 church year, the Board for Social Witness supported the mission of Christ Congregational Church by encouraging and facilitating efforts by several BSW-affiliated groups in their "laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, and the reign of peace," as we promise each other to do in our Congregational Affirmation of Faith.

We helped educate the CCC congregation through four Lunch and Learn events. We helped promote the four UCC special offerings of our **Five for Five** commitment (the fifth contribution to UCC missions comes from our general

fund), and we distributed BSW mission funds to several organizations that reflect CCC's mission in their work and include CCC members among their volunteers or staff, or otherwise reflect or support the work of CCC members in carrying out CCC's mission in the world. CCC supplemented its financial assistance to Shepherds' Table with volunteer participation, collected food for the food bank operated by St. Luke's Lutheran Church on Colesville Road, and supported the Shaw Community through special collections of supplies and funds, in addition to the financial support provided from the BSW budget.

The Board documented its procedures by creating three documents:

- A proposal for a BSW-sponsored Lunch and Learn session;
- Procedures for supporting the four Special Offerings; and
- A guide to assist those putting on Lunch and Learn sessions.

The Board spent portions of several meetings plus all of one specially called meeting participating in a visioning process suggested by Pastor Matt Braddock and Moderator Holly Brooks. We reviewed the mission of the Board in light of CCC's mission as we understood it and wrestled with the question of how the Board should provide leadership to CCC in fulfilling its mission. In particular, we asked ourselves if we should adopt a primary focus for mission outreach and attempt to lead CCC in that focus or whether it is best to support the interest and activity of a multiplicity of affiliated CCC groups as we are currently doing. We finally decided that we were not ready to try to define a church-wide mission focus for CCC, and were more comfortable continuing our present practice of encouraging and supporting the efforts of multiple affiliated groups to define and implement the mission of the church. We did, however, encourage BSW member Mark Thiel to engage the local **Habitat for Humanity** and to organize members and friends of the CCC congregation to work as volunteers on Habitat projects, as another CCC mission outreach. We also agreed to encourage next year's Board for Social Witness to review the rationale for the distribution of the BSW mission funds, with the specific question of whether to continue the present practice of small amounts being contributed to many organizations, or to provide larger contributions to fewer organizations with the strongest ties to CCC's just peace, open and affirming, and racial justice covenants.

**Lunch and Learn** sessions sponsored by the Board and held after worship during the year included the following:

- **Ukraine**, a presentation by Larry Gipson on his work there with the Peace Corps (to which BSW allocated mission funds during the previous year);
- **Guns and Faith**, a discussion on the relationship between the Christian faith and guns and their use;
- **Israeli-Palestine**, a presentation and discussion about the tensions between Israel and Palestine, and what approaches might bring about reconciliation;
- **Cowspiracy**, a movie and discussion about the effects that cattle farming and the use of animal products in our diet are having on the environment and the future of the climate.

**CCC 2014-15 Mission Spending through BSW (as of 5/22/15)** included allocations from the \$13,400 BSW budget plus the four **Five for Five** Special Offerings, for which the Board is also responsible. This spending is detailed below, as are expenditures from a BSW supplementary memorial fund which includes this year's special collection for the "Black Lives Matter" campaign. The fifth of CCC's **Five for Five** contributions to the broader church (national UCC and Central Atlantic Conference) comes directly from the Unified Budget and is documented in the Treasurer's Report.

<u>Organization Funded</u>	<u>Allocation</u>	<u>CCC Knowledgeable Person</u>
Gandhi Brigade	\$2,050	Holly Brooks
Shaw Community Ministries	2,000	Marjorie Hoffman
Impact Silver Spring	1,830	Jim Henkelman-Bahn
Senior Connection	1,500	Sue Dollins
KRMA women's co-ops, Uganda	1,000	Lois Stovall
CCC 2015 Youth Mission trip	1,000	Pastor Matt Braddock
Montgomery Victory Gardens	500	Rebecca Reviere (Organic Consumers Ass'n)
Project Mala Schools	500	Neville Platt
UCC Open & Affirming Coalition	500	(To support congregations becoming O&A)
Interfaith Power & Light (National)	500	Jim Conklin
Greater Washington IPL	500	Jim Conklin
Habitat for Humanity (local)	500	Mark Theil
Unallocated as of 5/22/15	450	(Possibly aid to Nepal or Baltimore)
Howard U. Pillar of Faith lunch	400	Ndimyake M, Audrey W, Anne W, Jim H-B
Lunch & Learn Lunches	170	Jim Conklin or John Enagonio
<b>Total from BSW budget</b>	<b>\$13,400</b>	

### **CCC Special Offerings**

Neighbors In Need Offering	\$1,774	(UCC)
Christmas Offering: TOTAL	7,136	(Includes \$3,568 to UCC Veterans of the Cross, \$1,784 to Shepherds' Table, and \$1,784 to PG Cty Child Resources Ctr)
One Great Hour of Sharing	4,875	(UCC)
Strengthen the Church Offering		(UCC; collected after this report's writing)
<b>Special Offerings Total, FYTD</b>	<b>\$13,785</b>	(Excludes Strengthen the Church offering)

### **BSW Supplementary Fund Expenditures**

Cost of Israeli-Palestine lunch	\$ 62
"Black Lives Matter" banner	179
"Black Lives Matter" signs	683

**Challenges We Faced This Year:** This year, the BSW chair resigned early in the year for personal reasons and the co-chair was unable to take over the chair's responsibilities because of external responsibilities. Jim Conklin volunteered to convene the Board, and Jackie Walters assumed the responsibility of representing it to the Executive Committee, in addition to her duties there as Church Clerk. We also had some members who resigned early in the year and others who were unable to participate or whose attendance was erratic.

**Our Plan for the Next Church Year:** We recommend that next year's Board continue to support the multiplicity of mission-oriented groups within CCC in their activities and to encourage the formation of new groups as may be appropriate to meet new and ongoing challenges to our Christian faith and mission. We expect to continue encouraging the presentation of educational and motivational "Lunch and Learn" sessions by these groups and by the organizations that are supported by CCC funding. We hope to think creatively about how best to use the Board's resources to fulfill its mission and guide CCC in fulfilling its broader mission.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Conklin, Convener,  
Board for Social Witness**

### **BSW-AFFILIATED GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED BY BSW**

**CCC GUNS & FAITH GROUP: Workshop:** Inspired by an article "A Proposal to Christian Peace Makers about Guns" by Bob Tiller (published by **Baptist Peacemaker**, October-December 2013), a small group of CCC members gathered in July, 2014 to brainstorm how the larger CCC community can be

engaged on this issue. The first initiative was a workshop following worship on Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, on the topic of "Guns and Faith: A Dialogue," sponsored with the support of the Board for Social Witness. The thirty persons who attended the event first participated in small group discussions about their personal experiences with guns, then listened to a panel of three CCC members speak on how their Christian faith influenced their beliefs and attitudes on the ownership of guns, and finally engaged in further small group discussion on the same subject.

**Follow-up:** The planning group has been featuring one-line "gun facts" about the use of guns in our society in CCC's monthly e-NewsNotes.

**Next Step:** The possibility of sponsoring a similar workshop for the youth of the Church is being considered. However, due to recent staff changes for youth programming, the idea of such a workshop has been put on hold until the new programming year (*i.e.*, fall).

**Respectfully submitted,  
Toko Ackerman, for  
Guns & Faith Group**

**CCC MIDDLE EAST WORKING GROUP:** This year the Middle East Working Group focused on information-sharing re issues raised in "A Resolution of Witness Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," which passed at the annual meeting of the Central Atlantic Conference, UCC in June, 2014, and which will be considered at General Synod in July, 2015. The most controversial such issue is that of applying BDS (boycott, disinvestment, and sanctions) to companies doing business in West Bank settlements or otherwise supporting the Israeli occupation. In January, in response to concerns raised about a perceived need for input from the American Jewish community about the I/P conflict, the working group arranged for Michael Durst, a UCC minister in the Potomac Association who grew up as part of the Jewish community in southern New Jersey, to both preach and then meet in a BSW Lunch and Learn session with interested individuals to hear about the importance of Israel for his New Jersey birth community and discuss ways to address the present situation in Israel and Palestine.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Anne Weissenborn, Co-leader,  
Middle East Working Group**

**CCC RACIAL JUSTICE CIRCLE:** CCC's Racial Justice Circle was born at a meeting led by Ronnie Galvin, then Executive Director of Impact Silver Spring, at CCC in late FY2014. Facilitated by Impact Silver Spring's Elizabeth McMeekin, the Racial Justice Circle strives to help CCC fulfill its covenant as an anti-racist church, under the auspices of the Board of Social Witness.

The Circle has 12-15 active members with many more receiving email updates. Although broadly focused on racial justice, in FY2015 the focus has primarily been related to criminal justice reform as it relates to justice for young African American males both due to the interests of our members and the timeliness of the concern.

Since its inception, the Racial Justice Circle has:

- Produced the Black Lives Matter banner which now hangs in front of the church. Immediately after it was hung, the banner was vandalized. This led to prayerful reflection at the next service, with a reverent re-hanging of the banner amidst prayer and song led by the Pastors Matt and Gloria. The banner has now been repaired and reinstated in front of the church.
- Supported legislation such as the "Justice Reinvestment" Act, the "Safer Communities Conciliation Act," and "The Maryland Second Chance Act of 2015."
- Initiated a 6-week book group to discuss ***The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*** by Michelle Alexander with eighteen people participating.
- Arranged a special collection to support West Baltimore's restoration efforts through the Central Atlantic Conference UCC's **Restoring Baltimore Fund**.

Upcoming activities include:

- Some members will be volunteering to tutor or provide job coaching to a corrections resident through the "Pre-Release and Reentry Services" program at the Montgomery County Department of Corrections;
- We will be inviting speakers to CCC on topics of criminal justice reform, possibly representatives of **Just Kids**, a group under the umbrella of Community Law in Action (CLIA) in Baltimore
- Collaborations with other congregations such as Unitarian Universalist of Silver Spring, Grace Episcopal Church, and Silver Spring United Methodist Church.

The Racial Justice Circle welcomes participants, questions, and people who want to stay informed. Please contact Anna DeNicolo.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Anna DeNicolo & Jim Henkelman-Bahn, Co-Chairs  
Racial Justice Circle**

**CCC STEWARDS OF THE EARTH:** The CCC Stewards of the Earth conduct and sponsor CCC activities that promote stewardship of the environment and the welfare of God's creation throughout the world. These include:

- The CCC Fair Trade program
- The renewable energy group purchase program
- Lunch and Learn presentations to educate and involve CCC people in environmental stewardship

The CCC Stewards of the Earth Fair Trade "Equal Exchange" program, now in its fourteenth year at CCC, makes organic fairly-traded coffee, tea, chocolate, and other items available to the congregation for purchase. "Equal Exchange," a UCC-sponsored program, recently congratulated the CCC Fair Trade Program on being in the top 2% of the 8,020 participating faith organizations in terms of sales! In 2014, supporters across the U. S. — including CCC — purchased 763,000 pounds of fair trade products, providing hardworking farmers and their families both a market and a fair price for their goods. In addition, the Equal Exchange Program donated an extra \$110,000 to development and farming projects worldwide.

Our Fair Trade program uses the proceeds of its sales to help CCC become a better steward of the environment and to assist projects that are part of CCC's ministry. In the past twelve months, it has donated \$240 worth of coffee and tea to Shepherd's Table; and \$375 worth of product to the Board of Church Life and other groups for use in CCC functions. This year it has also donated \$1,000 from sales proceeds to help pay for upgrading the track lights in the CCC basement and first floors to LED bulbs, which will cut the energy used for this lighting by about 75% and provide CCC with savings in both its electric bill and the future cost of bulbs.

Stewards of the Earth worked with Groundswell and Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light to encourage CCC families to switch their homes from fossil-fuel-produced electricity to renewable wind-generated power. About twenty CCC families contracted for 100% wind-generated electricity during the

previous campaign, and four or five additional families may join that group this year.

Finally, Stewards of the Earth sponsored a Board for Social Witness Lunch and Learn viewing and discussion of the movie **Cowspiracy**, which documents the environmental damage being caused by cattle and other meat farming and consumption. On Memorial Day Sunday, twenty-one people participated.

**Respectfully submitted,**  
**Jim Conklin, Chair, Stewards of the Earth, and**  
**Winifred Roberts, Founder & Organizer, Fair Trade Program**

**GANDHI BRIGADE:** This has been a year of transition for Gandhi Brigade, a youth-serving social justice organization founded at CCC. In May, 2014, we lost founder, Executive Director, and CCC member, Richard Jaeggi. The Board of Directors spent time reflecting on how best to move forward and honor Richard's legacy. We were able to continue programming and in April, 2015, hired our new Executive Director, Evan Glass.

Gandhi Brigade youth create change through civic engagement and media projects, bringing youth voices and perspectives to the forefront of government and the community. Social justice and community involvement are core values for GB youth. As part of Social Justice Summer each year, they choose a theme and create digital media (**see: *Immigration Stories at Common Ground*: <http://www.gandhibrigade.org/immigration-stories-at-common-ground/>**).

A major project this year is a county-wide project to address the issues of cyber-bullying and cyber-civility. This includes the creation of media focused on creating best practices for engagement on social media among their peers.

In our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, Gandhi Brigade is so very grateful for the long-time support of CCC's Board for Social Witness and CCC members. We look forward to our next visit to showcase the amazing work done by Gandhi Brigade youth.

**Respectfully submitted,**  
**Holly Brooks,**  
**Gandhi Brigade**

**IMPACT SILVER SPRING:** Impact Silver Spring seeks to build and sustain community-based networks that support people who are creating social, economic, and civic momentum that contributes to inclusive local economies and vibrant



communities. Last year, Impact Silver Spring took on the CCC Racial Justice Circle as a joint project, and the two have been actively cooperating during the year.

**(Updated from last year's report by Jim Conklin)**

**INTERFAITH POWER & LIGHT AND GREATER WASHINGTON INTERFAITH POWER & LIGHT: Interfaith Power & Light (IPL)** is a national religious response to global warming. IPL's national programs include:

- The National Preach-in on Global Warming, IPL's annual event to focus on love for creation as our inspiration for stewardship;
- The Cool Congregations program, in which hundreds of congregations learn how to walk the talk and become leaders in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and climate-friendly grounds, inspiring congregants to do the same in their own homes;
- The Cool Harvest program to help congregations make the connection between our food, faith, and climate; and
- The Carbon Covenant program, which links congregations and individuals in the U.S. with those on the front lines of climate change in the developing world.

This year, CCC participated in the National Preach-in on Global Warming on February 15<sup>th</sup>, with Pastor Matt preaching a wonderful sermon on "A Vision for a Transfigured Creation," which far too few people heard because of the snow storm that kept most of the CCC congregation at home that day.

**Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light (GWIPL)** helps hundreds of congregations of all faiths across Maryland, DC, and Northern Virginia to save energy, go green, and respond to climate change. GWIPL helps congregations educate by incorporating environmental concerns into worship, teaching, and preaching. GWIPL helps congregations go green, by supporting them in saving energy, by working with Groundswell to solicit group purchase of renewable electricity and shifting other aspects of their institutional purchasing and practices to minimize environmental impact. GWIPL helps congregations speak out as part of local and national advocacy efforts to protect Creation. It is part of a network of local Interfaith Power & Light groups across the country. Together, we are building a national religious response to the climate crisis.

CCC uses the services of both IPL and GWIPL to facilitate the work of CCC Stewards of the Earth and the CCC Green Team.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Conklin,  
Interfaith Power & Light**

**PRINCE GEORGES CHILD RESOURCE CENTER:** A non-profit organization, the Child Resource Center's mission is "to create healthy and nurturing environments for children by supporting their families and educating their caregivers." Every year, over 1,500 families receive maternal and child health care services, home visits, child development education, adult education including literacy (English for speakers of other languages, Adult Basic Education, General Education Development) and career education, plus referrals to other community services. Over 2,000 child care providers receive professional training. Goals include providing children with a home environment free of abuse and neglect and preparing them for school "ready to learn" while providing their parents with access to high-quality child care, adequate housing, health care and nutrition. These services have touched the lives of nearly half a million children since the Center's founding in 1990.

Thanks to Jackie Walters' Christmas Offering Order of Worship announcement.

**MONTGOMERY VICTORY GARDENS:** Montgomery Victory Gardens (MVG), a non-profit education and advocacy project founded in 2009, works to teach environmental awareness, alleviate hunger and build a more sustainable and resilient food shed in Montgomery County Maryland through a three part mission: 1) teaching more people, both youth and adults, how to grow food; 2) connecting local residents to food events, farmers and other food producers in the county; and 3) advocating for sound food policy on the local, state and federal level. Currently MVG is also working with two other non-profits to develop a vegetable garden-based after school health and wellness program for at-risk youth in the Francis Scott Key Middle School in Silver Spring, a school with one of the highest "educational loads" in the MCPS system - a rating which combines poverty (as indicated by the number of students receiving subsidized meals), and diverse community populations (as indicated by the number of non-English speakers and other factors).

**Respectfully submitted,  
Rebecca Reviere  
Montgomery Victory Gardens**

**PROJECT MALA:** Project Mala remains very grateful for the support received from CCC. Project Mala started with one school for 100 primary school children in 1989 and started out paying a stipend to parents to persuade parents to allow their children to attend. The enrollment day in March each year now attracts some 500 children who attend with their parents to compete for approximately 100 new openings. Currently Project Mala has schools at six locations in this very impoverished carpet weaving belt in Uttar Pradesh, India. There are six primary schools, three middle schools, and one location for secondary education. Moving into secondary education involves much higher expenditure and a recent decision to expand this effort means that we are having to commit to building additional student accommodation and take on higher paid staff. This decision was taken because secondary schools in the region do not provide a level of education that would enable our students to reach their full potential. This is quite remarkable as the majority of the children come from illiterate families living in mud huts with no running water or electricity.

Project Mala USA, Inc. was established as a 501(c)(3) to support this effort. As a result of a new US corporate sponsor coming forward and expressing willingness to make a long term commitment, I was able to forward \$90,000 to the schools in 2014.

In supporting this effort CCC is helping to educate of some of the poorest children in India.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Neville Platt,  
Project Mala**

**SHAW COMMUNITY MINISTRY:** Since 1991, the Shaw Community Ministry (SCM) of the Potomac Association, United Church of Christ, has operated as a 501(c) (3) organization devoted to enhancing the lives of children, youth and adults in the Shaw area. The Ministry seeks to increase family stability and encourage residents to become responsible, well-rounded, and productive citizens who are able to sustain and contribute to their community. SCM accomplishes these objectives by providing opportunities that increase knowledge and encourage youth and families to reach their full potential. Its mission is to work together with the children, youth, adults and seniors of the Shaw community to enhance lives and to expand opportunities in the areas of: education, health and wellness, leadership and youth development.

The SCM provides a variety of educational programs that seek to empower the people of community and enable every child or teen in its afterschool and college prep programs to grow up to become a "citizen of the world." Programs include an afterschool program designed to encourage and assist students to reach their full potential academically and to behave responsibly, plus a summer day camp in July and early August that provides a wide range of activities including art, media, field trips, and many others to broaden the participants' perspectives and develop practical skills. Other SCM programs and activities include college scholarships, Thanksgiving baskets, a Christmas party, and other academic training. CCC member Marjorie Hoffman is the current president of the SCM Board.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Conklin for  
Shaw Community Ministry**

**UGANDAN MINISTRY GLOBAL INITIATIVE:** A group of CCC participants organized themselves in 2014-2015 Church Year as the CCC Uganda Ministry Team. Our mission is to work with the non-profit krma-USPartners, Ltd. In helping existing women's cooperatives in rural eastern Uganda to enable women living in poverty to produce adequate income for economically sustainable lives and to pay for educational expenses for their children. This global initiative is currently involved in its first pilot project partnering with KRMA, a village savings group with 20 women affecting more than 100 children, using an agricultural model requiring participants to re-invest from revenues the equivalent level of our investment to move the project towards self-sufficiency over a five-year continuum. In addition to raising awareness at CCC about the needs of women and their families in rural Uganda, the Uganda Ministry Team sponsored a photo art exhibit at CCC which included a photographic history of CCC's involvement with KRMA in Kobulubulu, Uganda.

For more information go to **[www.krma-uspartners.org](http://www.krma-uspartners.org)** or contact CCC member Lois Stovall, president and founder of krma-USPartners, Ltd., a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, at **[lstovall@krma-uspartners.org](mailto:lstovall@krma-uspartners.org)**.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Lois Stovall,  
President and Founder**

## **REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR STEWARDSHIP**

The theme of the 2015-2016 Stewardship campaign is: “Receiving Graciously; Giving Generously” as reflected in our beautiful logo designed by talented Board member Elaine Kim. The campaign included an intergenerational luncheon on March 8<sup>th</sup> which was attended by approximately 100 church members (many of whom were new to the church), and two videos filmed and edited by Elaine Kim which featured testimonials from CCC members of all ages. (If you missed them, they can be viewed on the Stewardship page of the CCC website.)

As of May 25, we have received a total of 160 pledges totaling \$577,740 (compared with 179 pledges totaling \$637,972 last year. We anticipate several more pledges from members who pledged last year but have not yet pledged this year, and the Board will continue to follow up with these folks.

Encouraging numbers are reflected in 52 increased pledges and 19 new pledges this year. We are grateful to everyone who has pledged, but in particular to those who have submitted new pledges or have increased their pledges this year.

Special thanks to outgoing Board member Dick Meyer, who served six years on the Board, and Elaine Kim, who served five years on the Board, and Steve Anderson, who served one year on the Board.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Mary S. Pence, Co-chair  
Board of Stewardship**

## **REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

We’ve had much to celebrate in recent years—with the settling in of our new senior minister, our vibrant worship and music ministries, and our energetic and full staff. In addition, the sale of our 9601 property and the success of our capital campaign move us toward greater financial stability.

This year brought new challenges: Trustees had to address issues that have pulled energy and resources from our staff, and have at times put our church at risk. These issues stemmed from behaviors by several member volunteers who

chose not to honor a written agreement that was put in place to protect our members, and asserted that they were not accountable to our ministerial staff. In response, the actions Trustees took were guided by the Board's mission as described in our constitution and bylaws.

In doing so, we had to weigh confidentiality vs. transparency, which is an inherently polarizing challenge. Among fellow Trustees and within executive session, we were transparent. In our greater circle—in the Special Congregational Meeting and in our recorded meeting minutes—we were committed to preserving confidentiality.

The decisions we made, and the means in which we shared—or didn't share—information, were made with the best intentions to serve the interest of our church.

And I hope we can move forward now, together as a family of faith.

**Board of Trustees Members:** The board welcomed four new members this year, and together we made a crew of eight—a varied group that I feel truly represents our church family. I'll miss serving with them. Chris Bublitz was liaison to Stewardship and assisted us with numbers. Stevan Fisher continued as secretary for our very long meetings; he also served on the Retreat House Task Force. Anne Weissenborn lent us church history and legal expertise. New board members: Larry Duff served as Vice Chair and shared his expertise in finances and strategies. Rosemarie Kelley offered her legal voice to our discussions; she also devoted an incredible effort through her work as a member of the CST team. Doug Redmond served on the Personnel Committee and as liaison to our music programs. Olen Stephens provided sage insights monthly, helped the Green Team get launched, and recruited new board members as Nominations rep. Last, I could not have chaired this year without Treasurer Dan Pence; his reliable guidance has supported me immeasurably.

**Green Team:** In August, with leadership from Senior Minister Matt Braddock, Board of Social Witness member Jim Conklin spearheaded the formation of a CCC group to improve energy use in our church and to work toward eco-friendly practices. Trustee Olen and Treasurer Dan participated on this team, and kept Trustees apprised of the team's progress. (Please see their full report, including their mission, below).

**November Decision:** In early November, our Director of Christian Education resigned, and on her departure shared her observations of ongoing patterns of behaviors that were not in keeping with the best practices of our safety policies. Days later, the Director of Youth Ministries tendered her resignation as well, citing these same behavior and conduct issues as her reason.

In the two weeks that followed, as Chair of Trustees, I learned of the disregard by some Retreat House users of agreements made between our staff and some member volunteers; I heard about reports of some behaviors occurring at the Retreat House property that were not in keeping with our church values; and I learned that some transit to and from the Retreat House was not in keeping with the best practices of our safety policies. These conditions and the lack of accountability in the use of our Retreat House property made the risks uncontainable.

At our November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board of Trustees discussed these risks. We also weighed the fact that, because the property had been recently winterized, the disruption to use would be minimal. In addition, the architects hired to develop renovation plans were under contract and at that point had started site visits and surveys. The Trustees voted to temporarily close the property.

**Decision to Meet:** In the weeks that followed the announcement of the closing, Moderator Holly Brooks and I received a dozen or more emails of protest and questions. At our December board meeting, I shared with fellow trustees some of these messages. We decided to schedule a congregational meeting in January as an opportunity to share and discuss our decision with our congregation.

In the meantime, a group of members drew up a petition to call a meeting, and successfully garnered the signatures to do so. Moderator Holly Brooks set the date of January 11<sup>th</sup>, and on behalf of the petition, Church Clerk Jackie Walters announced a call to meeting.

**January 11<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting:** The Special Congregational Meeting was a chance to review the reasons that factored in to the Trustees vote for closure. During the meeting, I also acknowledged that the relationship between the Board of Trustees and the Retreat House Committee was no longer functioning and that we needed to remedy the situation. The meeting was a two-hour

opportunity for members to speak, to ask questions, and for me to address concerns. (Please see the minutes of this meeting included in this document at Appendix B.)

**Retreat House Committee:** With the need for better communications between the Retreat House Committee and Trustees, and with respect to term limits, the board moved to thank chairs Bruce Strand and Cory Gray and to recommend an interim chair to serve through the fiscal year. Steve Petersen was recommended by Trustees and was voted in to this position by Executive Council. (Please see his report included below.)

**Safety Policies:** In effect at CCC since 2007: All staff and volunteers working with children, youth, and vulnerable adults must have a criminal background check, and participate in the UCC-approved Safe Conduct online courses. This screening process is the responsibility of the Personnel Committee. Our current administrator, Sue Dollins, and our back-up administrator, Senior Minister Matt Braddock, have ably enforced these procedures.

In December, Trustees took action to augment these procedures with the goal of specifying codes of conduct for all members and volunteers. Once in place, these guidelines are meant to help us help each other avoid situations that may be considered unsafe.

A team was established with the hope of presenting a first draft of codes for review the following month. Unfortunately, the task was stalled when several members of the group were pulled to other tasks.

**Personnel Updates:** In February, we welcomed Rev. Audrey Wiggins as Director of Christian Education. During the summer it is our hope to hire a new Director of Youth so that the program can resume in September.

In April, Trustee and Personnel Committee member Doug Redmond presented a revised Human Resources Policy and Procedures manual. The board voted approval to accept this manual, and thanked the committee. Doug indicated that the committee plans to review the manual on a yearly basis, and to update as needed.



In May, the Music Committee and the Board of Deacons submitted a request to the Personnel Committee to officially add the position of Assistant Music Director. The Board voted to approve this request and is pleased to also recognize the ongoing work of Sandra Wack in filling this part-time, salaried position.

Upon review by Personnel Committee, the position of Nursery Coordinator was also added to the upcoming fiscal year budget as a two-hour per week job. This position will ensure that our nursery is covered each Sunday morning by a person certified in child care; it will also allow the church to have ready assistance for child care during congregational meetings.

In the upcoming year, we are looking to improve building and church office management.

**Property:** Our Church Administrator Dianne Abraham continues to work tirelessly on the care and maintenance of our church property, and she does so with thoroughness and with careful view on costs. As in most years, there were numerous repairs, some expected, some not. With tight budgets in recent years, maintenance that could be postponed without serious consequences continued to be deferred. In the coming year, Trustees will need to consider these needs.

Income from building use continues to be steady. At the time of this report, the contract with our childcare tenant (SSCCC) is under negotiation. Our expectation is that it will be signed and in effect by the June 30 deadline.

**Final Note:** In the next year—as clearly expressed in the CST report—as a church we'll need to define our mission and determine how our budget will best support it. In the process, I trust that we'll respect each other, speak frankly, listen carefully, debate fairly, and play by the rules.

Thank you for trusting me to chair.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Judy Cox, Chair  
Board of Trustees**

**REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES' GREEN TEAM**

Current Green Team members include Jim and Elizabeth Conklin, Steve Jordan, Dick Meyer, Jane Osburn, Dan Pence, Olen Stephens, Kristin Sundell, Scott Wales, and Jim Walters. Others who would like to become involved should call Jim Conklin.

The Trustees established the CCC Green Team in October, 2014, to explore, evaluate, and, as appropriate, recommend to the Trustees actions that CCC could take to become a better steward of the environment, consistent with our Just Peace Covenant. The Green Team attempts to evaluate the costs and benefits of all recommended actions and assists the Trustees in the implementation of recommended actions.

The Green Team has investigated the possibility of upgrading lighting to LED bulbs throughout the church, with the track lighting in the basement and first-floor hallways as the first step. That proposal has been accepted by the Trustees, with financial assistance from the Stewards of the Earth's Fair Trade sales. Bulbs and mounting fixtures have been obtained for the basement track-light upgrade, which will hopefully have been completed by the time of the Annual Meeting. The first-floor upgrade is awaiting the availability of special full-spectrum LED bulbs to more effectively show off the Tate Gallery artwork. The Green Team has also worked with the CCC Administrator and the Trustees to find relatively inexpensive fixtures and LED bulbs for the post-top lights around the 9601 parking lot, which should be installed in the near future. It is continuing to explore the most energy-efficient, cost-effective way to upgrade the main parking-lot lighting and other outside lighting, and hopefully to obtain PEPCO incentive payments to help with the cost of that upgrade.

The Green Team is currently exploring possibilities for providing solar photovoltaic panels to supply as much as possible of the electricity used by CCC. Issues being investigated include what panels would be most suitable, what company should install them, and what is the best way to cover the cost. In the future, the Green Team also expects to propose other actions to the Trustees to improve CCC's energy efficiency. It will be tracking our energy use to document the effects of the changes that are being made and will keep the congregation informed of actions taken and how they may be emulated by CCC families in their homes to accomplish similar results.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Conklin, Chair**

## **REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES**

### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE ARTS**

**Members:** Stephanie Fitzpatrick (Chair), Laura Boyer, Carl Brandt, Sonja Fisher, John Hildebrandt, Jeanne Young

**Our Mission:** The primary responsibility of the Committee is to plan programs of art (in liaison with the Board of Deacons) and to present exhibitions in the Tate Gallery and elsewhere in the church.

**What We Accomplished:** The following exhibitions were held in the Tate Gallery:

- **Generations of Weddings (June–August, 2014)** *Photographs of ceremonies held at Christ Congregational Church, 1967 – 2013*
- **Paintings by Jackson Berger (September–November, 2014)** Sixteen paintings by an emergent local artist
- **The Women of KRMA and Their Families presented by the Uganda Ministry team of CCC (December, 2014–April, 2015)** Photography by Christine Poulon
- **Exploring Abstracts from the Silver Spring Camera Club (April 20 -June 12, 2015)** Group show of 16 photographers.

The benefits of the art gallery are both direct and indirect. We do not request a donation from the artists who exhibit in the gallery, but we have received support from several of the artists who have sold work during their exhibitions (sales policy detailed below). CCC's outreach to the local community is expanded through art receptions, announcements and listings in local newspapers. A certain amount of enrichment and deeper understanding within the congregation (as well as visitors to the church) is hopefully accomplished through the art committee's programming.

**Plans for the Coming Year:** Expand art programming to other areas within CCC - Sanctuary Committee, Children's exhibit or program, etc. Recruit new members/leadership.

**Sales:** While the Committee for the Arts does not actively encourage the selling of art objects that are on view in the Tate Gallery, we do recognize the desire to do so by some of our exhibitors. It is, therefore, CCC's policy **not** to list sale prices on wall labels, but to allow the listing of purchase prices to be posted on a table

in the gallery. Artist(s) contact information is to be clearly displayed with the full checklist. Negotiations and sales are the responsibility of the individual artist(s) to arrange directly with interested buyers. The CCC office may assist by directing anyone interested in contacting the artist(s) directly. Once an object has been sold, it may be marked accordingly on the wall label, but should remain on view for the entire exhibition period. Special arrangements that deviate from this policy must be requested and agreed to by the Executive Board of CCC.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Stephanie Fitzpatrick, Chair  
Committee for the Arts**

#### **REPORT OF THE MUSIC COMMITTEE**

**Committee members:** Rick Brush, Stuart Kern, Kathie McConnell, Priscilla Peterson, Sharon Rising, Sam Wack, Jackie Walters, Leslie Weyn, and Jeanne Young.

In keeping with its charge in CCC's Bylaws, the Music Committee focused this year on identifying ways to sustain and build the music ministry.

**Operating Budget:** The Committee developed a detailed budget proposal incorporating amounts both for sustaining the current program at a minimum level and for growing the program, specifically in the areas of small instrumental ensembles and improving the choral music library for adults and children. While CCC's budget constraints resulted in no increase in funding, the Committee is pleased to report a very successful year to look back on and an exciting year ahead to plan for. With optimism that members' commitment to the music program will continue to be reflected in pledging that supports financial growth in programming, the Committee continues to look for ways to engage all interested members and friends in supporting music opportunities.

**Instrument Maintenance:** The Minister of Music, Dr. Nae Pearson, with the support of the Committee, successfully petitioned the Board of Trustees for Music Memorial funds to undertake much-needed deferred maintenance and conditioning of CCC's two Steinway grand pianos in the Sanctuary and Choir Room. Looking ahead, the Committee is beginning to consider ways to plan financially for much-needed conditioning and repairs to the organ.

**Music Library Review:** Two Committee members are working with Nae and Assistant Director of Music, Sam Wack, to undertake a comprehensive review of the choral music library. Work has already started on the children's library. Specific parameters will be developed to weed out music that is no longer consistent with CCC's values of inclusivity, both with regard to gender-inclusive language as well as with our covenantal language and worship practices. Pieces of classical music value will be retained; all pieces will be evaluated for their condition, consistent editions, and number of copies. Every effort will be made to identify willing recipients for donations of those pieces we opt to remove from our library.

**Instrumental Ensembles:** The Christmas season saw the return of the hugely successful intergenerational orchestra supporting worship on Christmas Music Sunday and Christmas Eve. Throughout the year, the Flute, Cello and Brass Ensembles participated in worship. A long-term goal is to support the purchase of new music for these ensembles through increased programming funds in the operating budget.

**Engaging the Church and Wider Community:** The Committee supported Nae's plans to:

- accept a generous donation from Lucy Greene to fund a Good Friday concert of the Rutter **Requiem** in cooperation with the choir of Silver Spring United Methodist Church in memory of Lucy's father, the Rev. Leonard Ebel, former Associate Pastor of CCC;
- host a concert by the Illinois Wesleyan Collegiate Chorale, which was well-attended in spite of a rainy evening;
- use gifts to the Music Memorial Fund to purchase new anthems for the Chancel Choir;
- bring back the popular **Days of Simplicity** Lenten Concert series featuring local musicians.

Looking ahead, the Committee agreed to sponsor an all-church musical production of **The Sound of Music** for the fall of 2015. The Board of Trustees and the ministerial and administrative staff are supportive of this endeavor which will be getting underway this summer. Dr. Nae Pearson is the producer, Mike Weber is the director, and Sam Wack is the music director. In the coming months, invitations will be forthcoming for cast auditions and for production support.

The Committee thanks Rev. Dr. Matt Braddock, Rev. Gloria Grant and Dianne Abraham, Church Administrator, for their constant and ongoing support for the music ministry. We also thank the Board of Trustees, in particular Chair Judy Cox, for promptly and carefully considering requests to invest resources in improving and growing CCC's music ministry.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Jackie Walters, Chair  
Music Committee**

#### **REPORT OF THE PASTOR/PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

**2014-2015 MEMBERSHIP:** Tom Ault, Merlene Bagley (Chair), Elaine Kim, G.K. Meier, and Lynn White

**Our Mission:** The purpose of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee is to provide a communication link between Pastor Matt and members of the congregation. The Committee maintains a listening ear for items of joys and concerns from members and provides ministerial support to Pastor Matt. This year the Committee met with some members of the congregation and the staff and heard their concerns. Some of these concerns eventually led to the creation of the Congregational Support Team.

The Committee usually meets the fourth Monday of each month but flexibility is the key because of Pastor Matt's schedule.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Merlene Bagley, Chair  
Pastor-Parish Relations Committee**

#### **REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

I want to begin my report with a tribute to past Personnel Chair, Terry Strand. We miss her leadership, her talent and, now, her presence.

My gratitude to the following members for their faithful attendance and dedication: Ann Marshall (Deacons' rep); Kristen Brown, (CE rep); Doug Redmond (Trustees' rep); and At Large members - Tony Ingram, Bob Tiller and Sue Dollins (chair)

The Personnel Committee, which reports to the Board of Trustees, is responsible for developing and implementing personnel policies for the church;

reviewing/revising staff position descriptions; creating and administering staff evaluations; developing and administering the Safe Church Policy; making recommendations on staff compensation and benefits; and advising the trustees and the Moderator of staff requests and possible implementation.

The committee experimented with the frequency of meeting times this year. Prior to this year the committee met once a month. With all new leadership and committee representation, the meetings felt like we were steering without a rudder (Terry). We decided to meet quarterly, with the intention of carrying out duties between the meetings. Best laid plans oft go awry. The staff resignations this year complicated the intent of that schedule, but upon evaluation the committee intends to proceed with the quarterly schedule for FY16; with commitments to ensure that work is faithfully performed between meetings.

In cooperation with the trustees and the senior minister, the Human Resources Manual was reviewed/revised and the trustees have approved the revision.

Position Descriptions for the Youth Minister position, weekend custodian, and Parents' Night Out Coordinator were reviewed and endorsed for implementation.

A representative from Personnel was present for the following activities:

- Exit Interview for Sue Wilson
- Exit Interview for Whitney Kinsey
- Hiring Interview for Audrey Wiggins
- Personnel member, Bob Tiller, led the Congregational Support Team effort

The administration of the Safe Church policy is an ongoing responsibility of the Personnel Committee. Sue Dollins is the Coordinator. The ministerial staff inform the process by ensuring the volunteers file the forms needed for screening and training. The "Safe Church Policy Manual" is slated for review and possibly revision in the near future.

One of the major goals for this year was to complete evaluations for the following staff members/ministers:

- Nae Pearson - in process
- Dianne Abrahams - preparation stage and rescheduled for FY16
- Matt Braddock - delayed and set as a goal for FY16

Staff salaries were reviewed and a recommendation was made to trustees to consider a cost of living adjustment for all staff and additional hours for the Assistant Director of Music. The committee has set a goal for FY2016 to research the Central Atlantic Conference and the Organist Guild to ensure that salaries are within established guidelines.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Sue Dollins, Chair  
Personnel Committee**

#### **REPORT OF THE RETREAT HOUSE COMMITTEE**

- In accordance with the church's bylaws, the Executive Council, on recommendation of the Board of Trustees, has appointed a new chair whose term began at the completion of the previous co-chairs' terms.
- The committee wishes to thank those co-chairs, Cory Gray and Bruce Strand, for their dedication and leadership in maintaining the house and its property over the past ten years. We look forward to their continued support; their contributions to the Retreat House have been invaluable.
- During the past fiscal year, the Committee has held two productive work retreats.
- Further excursions to the house will be planned to empty it in preparation for the coming restoration.
- The Retreat House Committee looks forward to strengthening its relationship with the Board of Trustees and will work closely with them and our neighbors in West Virginia to ensure that the house and property are well monitored and maintained during this current time of transition.

We also look forward to working closely with the Retreat House Task Force, helping to carry out their decisions and vision in restoring the house and returning it as an active and vibrant part of our church life.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Steve Petersen,  
Retreat House Committee Chair**

#### **REPORT OF THE SANCTUARY COMMITTEE**

**Members:** Toko Ackerman, Aldene Ault (Co-Chair), Sue Dollins, Valerie Freeland, Renee Gamez, Ruth Haigh, Cyndy Wright-Johnson, Doris Jordan, Kim Jordan, Ruth Kaupert, Karen O'Steen, Linda Phelps (Co-Chair), Barbara Redmond, Jackie Walters, Lynn White.



**Our Mission:** The mission of the committee is to assure that our sanctuary is ready for worship each Sunday with flowers and candles on the altar, and the worship space is adorned with paraments and banners which are liturgically appropriate. We also see that the lobby of the church, as the entryway to sacred space, is inviting and attractive each week with fresh flower arrangements. The committee especially works hard to prepare the sanctuary, and elsewhere in the church as appropriate, for major celebrative events during the Church Year-- Thanksgiving, Advent season, Christmas Sunday, and Holy Week beginning with Palm Sunday and continuing through Maundy Thursday and Good Friday to Easter. The Committee also supplies "wedding coordinators" whenever a wedding is performed at CCC.

**What We Accomplished This Year:** The committee once again functioned almost completely by e-mail connections this year, with one actual face to face gathering. We met on October 18 for a potluck luncheon/workshop featuring guest speaker Linda Romano from Linda's Passion who gave tips on flower arranging.

At the annual Taste of Ministry we had three new people sign up to work with our committee, Renee Gamez, Doris Jordan and Kim Jordan. We also plan to meet in June (after the deadline for this Report) to organize ourselves for the coming fiscal year.

Our very dedicated and fabulously creative members (!) signed up several times during the year to serve as the "flower duty person", and each one followed through with her work faithfully. The flowers you see every week in the entryway and elsewhere are the generous gifts of our members. Everyone also worked together, as in past years, to decorate inside and outside the church for Advent and Christmas season, and to create strikingly beautiful altar decorations for the major worship services on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter.

**Challenges We Faced This Year:** This year, our committee had several members who faced serious illness including our beloved Terry Strand who lost her brave battle with cancer in April. Several members stepped up to fill in when needed. We realize that we need to increase our membership to be able to fulfill our mission of weekly flower duty and are so glad for the three new members who joined us in April.

**Our Appreciations:** We want to express our gratitude to the members and friends of CCC who generously donate flowers each Sunday to adorn the altar. The flowers are divided by the Committee members into several lovely bouquets after the worship service, and placed near the lobby windows, to be delivered by the members of Home Visit Ministry and others to the sick or grieving friends of the congregation.

The committee again wishes to thank the incomparable CCC staff without whose support the Committee could never function, especially Dianne Abraham who is always there for us and foresees the Committee's every need even before we think of it; Veronica Bailey who proactively takes care of bulletin notices for altar flower donations and who maintains a great database to keep track of the poinsettia and lilies donations; and all the hardworking custodial staff who go out of their way to help the committee get ready for every Sunday and particularly on major holidays. We could never do our work without all of their support! Thank you!

Finally, the committee would like to give a special thank you to our retired Sanctuary Committee members, Randy and Jean Caswell. The Caswells create the artistic bulletin board depicting each Sunday's lectionary focus that is in the CCC entryway to the Sanctuary. The bulletin board is the fruit of tremendous love, talent, and labor of a long-time member of CCC, Jean Caswell and her husband Randy. This dynamic duo have faithfully created this treasure **every Sunday** for fifteen years, except for the year when CCC worshipped at the Marvin United Methodist Church building while our space was being renovated. Thank you Jean and Randy for this labor of love!!

**Respectfully submitted,  
Aldene Ault & Linda Phelps, Co-Chairs  
Sanctuary Committee**

#### **REPORT OF THE SENIOR ADULTS' COMMITTEE**

**2014-15 Membership:** Corine Bloss, Ruth Haigh, Helen Hanes, Ruth & Bill Kaupert, June Leonard, Chuck Mason, Mary Michel, Albert Papazian, Audrey Platt, Neville Platt (Chair), Jeanne Young

The Committee meets monthly, usually on the second Monday of the month to plan senior events.

**Accomplishments:** Monthly afternoon movies preceded by bag lunches continue to be popular. Lunchtime conversation gets everybody caught up; then we laugh and/or cry at the movie, if we're awake.

A word of explanation is in order at this point. I am pinch-hitting for Neville, who is across the pond with Audrey to celebrate significant birthdays for Audrey and their daughter, Beverley. I cannot give Neville's excellently documented descriptions of our activities. Please know we were busy and here are some of the things we were busy at.

I'm sure the group went to Sugartree for Chuck Mason's popular picnic. I expect it was in September because that's when we usually go. It's a great time for food and fellowship in the woods and is now an annual event.

- We have joined some activities sponsored by St. Luke's Lutheran Church a few blocks south of CCC on Colesville Road. On **September 19<sup>th</sup>** they hosted a concert that was supposed to comprise three men playing instruments and singing early American folk songs. As it happened, one man couldn't make it, another got sick that morning, and the third man had to go pick up the music from the sick one. We ate dessert and talked among ourselves until one man showed up with some music and we all joined in the singing.
- We held our long-planned silent retreat at **Dayspring Retreat Center on Tuesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>**. Pastors Matt and Gloria prepared a program to nourish our souls and soup and salad to nourish our bodies. It was a very restorative experience.
- On **Sunday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>** after worship, the Senior Adults sponsored an all-church presentation on Downsizing. Two women who do this work professionally spoke to us about moving to retirement facilities. They also spoke about the growth of the "village" movement that allows people to age in place in their homes and have access to essential services provided by neighbors.
- On **Tuesday, November 4<sup>th</sup>** we carpooled to National Geographic in downtown Washington to tour an exhibit on food. Afterwards, we went to lunch.
- On **Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup>** we hosted a Christmas party and tea in the social hall from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. We played games and sang Christmas carols.

- **February 8<sup>th</sup>** we sponsored another all-church event after worship. The topic was The Dangers of Falling, which was presented by Trish Esposito, Physical Therapist.
- CCC's **Days of Simplicity Lenten series** of music and lunch resumed this year. The format is a musical presentation from noon to 12:30 and soup made by the church ladies, available as long as the soup lasts. This is not a senior event *per se*, but the seniors set up, clean up, make soup, and slice bread. It's an excellent spiritual and social activity.
- **March 31<sup>st</sup> Spring Fling** replaced what was originally planned as a St. Patrick's day lunch. The real draw was our very own Pastor Matt on the guitar punctuated by a number of jokes that made the cut with his kids.

Our other regular activity, not limited to seniors, but most attending would qualify, is **Joey's Restaurant Review**. We go to different restaurants each month for lunch. Fifteen to twenty folks usually turn out.

**Challenges:** Our average age continues to creep up. The boomers are not joiners, so we continue to do the best we can with what we have.

**Plan for 2015-2016:** We hope to hold another silent retreat in the fall. We'll continue the movies and lunch out and enjoy the company of each other.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Jeanne Young (for Neville Platt, Chair)  
Senior Adults Committee**

## **REPORTS OF OTHER COMMITTEES AND CHURCH GROUPS**

### **REPORT OF THE POTOMAC ASSOCIATION**

The Potomac Association encompasses all of the UCC congregations in Maryland, the District of Columbia, and northern Virginia. Delegates from each of these congregations determine the direction of the Association and vote on all proposed actions, from the ordination of clergy to the distribution of mission funds to stands on particular issues via resolutions. The Association meets in full session twice a year (spring and fall), and otherwise operates through its officers and committees (Christian Education, Church and Ministry, Higher Education, and Social Action and Mission). Members of the committees can come from other than the roster of congregational delegates. This year, members of such

committees from CCC included Matt Braddock, Jane von Maltzahn, and Anne Weissenborn.

CCC's representatives to the Association each year are the Senior Pastor, the Associate Pastor, the Moderator, the Moderator-elect, and two delegates elected by the congregation, plus an alternate delegate. Representation includes not only attendance at the two Association meetings per year, but also at special meetings such as those called as part of the ordination process or to formally install clergy at the various member churches.

This year's Association calendar included numerous regular and special meetings, many of the latter related to ordination. The two full meetings included informational presentations on climate change/food sovereignty, the work of the Briggs Center re. mass incarceration, and ecclesial authorization in the UCC, plus formal business meetings. There were also opportunities for the committees to provide printed materials related to their work.

Serving as a delegate is a wonderful way to get to know the wider UCC community. I recommend it!

**Respectfully submitted,  
Anne Weissenborn  
CCC Delegate to the Potomac Association**

#### **REPORT OF THE CENTRAL ATLANTIC CONFERENCE**

The 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ was held in Dover, Delaware from June 13-15, 2014. Under the theme of "Celebrating the Past, Envisioning the Future," much of the conference was devoted to recalling and celebrating the highlights and accomplishments of the CAC's fifty years of existence.

During the weekend, three significant policy resolutions were introduced, debated, and adopted: (1) a "Resolution to Change the Demeaning Name of the Washington National Football League Team"; (2) a "Resolution of Witness Regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict"; and (3) a "Resolution on Dismantling the New Jim Crow."

The first of the three Resolutions was in accord with one that CCC had debated (with some variation in language), and passed at its annual meeting on June 1, 2014 by an overwhelming majority.

CCC's own Board for Social Witness had been one of the key initiators of the Resolution regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and had widely facilitated study and discussion opportunities within the CCC Community. The Resolution, among other actions, calls upon the UCC Pension Boards, United Church Funds, and other related UCC entities to divest any holdings in companies which profit from the occupation of the Palestinian Territories by the state of Israel and to boycott goods identified as produced in or using the facilities of illegal settlements located in Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The final Resolution "Dismantling the New Jim Crow" cited the disproportional incarcerations placed upon African American males, as witnessed by many statistics, including: African American men comprise 14 percent of young men in the US, yet comprise 40 percent of young men in prison. The resolution calls, among other things, for churches to covenant to take action to dismantle the institutional support and insidious effect of the New Jim Crow, and to this end, calls upon local churches to study Michelle Alexander's ***The New Jim Crow, Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness***, and to initiate "the Sacred Conversations."

All of these resolutions will be on the agenda of the 2015 General Synod of the UCC.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Toko & Dave Ackerman (delegates), and Merlene Bagley (alternate)  
Central Atlantic Conference**