

# UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF JOHNSTOWN

*Loving God, Neighbor, and Self*



## THE YEAR THAT CHANGED US (AND ALSO DIDN'T)

Written by Pastor Jeremy



As I read over all the various reports you will find in the following pages I am left with only one thought; this past year as a church we certainly found the *some things* we were called by God to do! I urge you to give each report a read and join with me in a prayer of thankfulness for all that has happened this past year.

No, 2020 did not go how any of us would have wished, unless of course your wish was to see the Holy Spirit move among us in new and different ways. Then, I'd say your wish was granted.

Looking back I think what saw us through was the commitment we already had to be a place that is committed first and foremost to loving God, neighbor, and self. That is what did not change this year and my hope is will never change about our amazing church. Here is to a 2020 well navigated and to a new year of possibilities.

### EXPLORE WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

*Taking interior design  
photos - 3*



In March and April, we had many outstanding volunteers donate food to the Medical Center of the Rockies. The cafeteria was closed for the nurses/doctors and rest of the staff, so we organized a drop-off of home-made food about two times/week for six weeks, until we were told we could not risk that anymore.

We, as this committee, did meet once in October to discuss items on the agenda.

This Committee purchased a set of books on grieving, and these were delivered to a few members who had lost family during the year. Our annual turkey dinner, which is not a responsibility of this Committee, was a huge success!

After some debate on whether we should have it or not, the decision was made to go with it. With none of us being sure if we would have customers, we were all very grateful/thankful/blessed that we had an outstanding turnout!!! In fact, it was probably the best turkey dinner ever in terms of having no food left 1 ½ hours after we started! We had to close the dinner one hour early because there was nothing left! It was truly a great ministry to our church members and the community.

## CONGREGATIONAL CARE

*Written by Nicole Hill*

Before COVID, our blood drive was successful, donating in March and providing a service to many. Meal Ministry was delivering meals to members who were needing them at the time. "Heart to Heart" Ministry was visiting shut-ins.

In March, Amy Young, MA, LPC (Licensed Professional Counselor), from Ripples of Change Counseling, LLC, our Care Lecture speaker, came to our church in the evening and spoke to a crowd of about 40 people.

Out of our Congregational Care Fund, we helped a family in our church who was in need financially.

During COVID, we still chose Quiet Disciples for 2020. They were Susan & Dan Jordan, and were recognized in November by presenting them with a poster and videoing it. This video was shown during the following Sunday service.





## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

*Written by Kariann Bandy*

Children's Ministry at the United Methodist Church of Johnstown has had a successful, innovative and actually busy year, despite, or maybe even because of the challenges brought to us by COVID-19. Our year began with an average Sunday School attendance on Sunday mornings of about 15-18 children, with a few teams of two teachers rotating each week. As with everything else in our communities, our in-person Sunday School came to a halt mid-March when everything shut down due to COVID-19. We quickly realized this was not likely to be a short-term thing, and knew the value and impact weekly Sunday School lessons could have for our children during this time of so many unknowns. We began to put together Sunday School kits for children each week. Amy Sassano with her generous heart and incredible talents very graciously offered to do weekly videos for our children, too. As summer approached we knew that this would be a year unlike others and that Sunday School, which normally takes a break over the summer months, should continue. Therefore, even as we prepared for Vacation Bible School, Sunday School kits were still delivered to children at least twice a month during the summer months.



As for Vacation Bible School (VBS), this was definitely a year of innovation. VBS has been an important ministry of this church for so many years and we knew that even if it had to be done differently, we needed to make it happen in some form. After much thought, prayer and yes, a bit of stress, we chose to offer an on-line VBS from July 13th -16th. We had over 80 children and youth take us up on this offer. Together, a team of volunteers (very socially distanced) put together packets, including crafts and snacks and games for each day as well as a t-shirt and CD of the VBS music for each participant that were then picked up by each family and used during VBS week as we presented our Rocky Railway VBS via ZOOM. We are incredibly blessed at our church with an amazing team of people with great technical skills that allowed VBS to happen this year and be successful! In all, we were able to offer our well-loved VBS experience in a new, interactive and innovative way, all because we have an amazing team of people here at UMC Johnstown that are committed to supporting, loving and teaching the children of our church and our local communities. Not only did we have children from our own communities, but from several other churches in other places around the state, too!

Sunday School resumed it's once a week delivery as school began in September, with an amazing group of volunteers who continued (and still continue) to faithfully drive and deliver Sunday School lessons each week to 28 children! While it has been a challenge to create curriculum each week that can be done at home, this has been an incredible experience for me, and hopefully our children, too. It is truly a blessing for me to learn and grow, share and teach, serve and find hope, here at the United Methodist Church of Johnstown. I definitely look forward to 2021 with hope that we will soon be able to come together for Sunday School and VBS yet again, but I very much appreciate, recognize and am thankful for the opportunities to serve and grow in new ways that 2020 has offered.



## JUMP (PRESCHOOL)

*Written by Kariann Bandy*

The Johnstown United Methodist Preschool is incredibly thankful for an amazing staff who work tirelessly to provide an environment that is safe, healthy and nurturing while encouraging and instilling in our students a love of exploring and learning. In a year where we have faced many challenges and changes to the way we operate, we have risen to the challenge and have met and exceeded expectations. In March, as Covid-19 shut everything down, the preschool did cease in person schooling for the duration of the 2019-2020 school year. At that time, we prepared lessons and made multiple deliveries to student's homes. We also did parent teacher conferences via ZOOM and even shared socially distanced individual graduation ceremonies in the front yards of each of our 32 graduating students.

Over the summer months we wrote Covid policies for our operations that are in line with the church's policies and above and beyond what is required of us by Human Services and the Health Department. We changed the way we do so many things, including drop off and pick up of students, rigorous cleaning and even the way we play and handle everyday preschool supplies. Then, at the end of August, we re-opened our doors and began a new year of Preschool. Our students, their parents and our staff have all faced these new opportunities with a positive spirit and we are thankful for the incredible cooperation and support of all who partner with us to make our Preschool a safe and special place to learn and grow.

We have full enrollment of 60 students, with two of our students choosing to "do Preschool" from home. These two preschool families pick up lesson plans and curriculum supplies each week from the Preschool and have the support of our staff and our resources as they "do Preschool" at home. Holiday parties, like Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas still happened for our students, but due to limitations of adults in the classroom area, we could not have parents join us for parties this school year. Therefore, we have incorporated special things like Trick-or-treating through the parents or performing a song during pick-up time on those special days so parents can still feel a part of special Preschool memories. Our annual Christmas program could not be held as we normally do, as Covid protocols do not allow gatherings the size of our traditional programs. Therefore, we recorded the program pieces during school hours and with Pastor Jeremy's awesome editing skills created a DVD of our Christmas program for families to watch together in their own home.

The Preschool committee provides strong oversight, insight and thoughtful consideration of all things Preschool. The church finance committee provides oversight for J.U.M.P. finances. The Trustees have been supportive of changes and adjustments we have had to make to operate safely and according to state and local guidelines. Overall, we remain so very thankful and blessed to be a part of the mission of the United Methodist Church of Johnstown.





## MEMORIALS

*Written by Karen Ehrlich*

On Memorial Sunday, May 24, 2020, five memorials were dedicated to the church. This was done virtually. Pictures of each member were included in the memorial service done by Jayna.

The memorials dedicated were:

- Paul Nelson-(Audio/Visual Equipment)
- Tommy and Bobbi Kime-(Cameras)
- Sandi Lebsack-(Piano)
- Ruby Lebsack-(Piano)

During this past year memorials were given to the church in memory of:

- Marjorie Kinzer
- Austin Heath
- Sandi Lebsack
- Ruby Lebsack
- Betty Jacoby
- Charline Reichert
- Marti Barker
- Faye Nygren
- Sam Huet
- Mary Knutson

Cheryl Peppler sent thank you notes to the persons who donated to the memorial fund. The committee and Pastor Jeremy help family members choose memorials to honor their loved ones for the church. The memorial church plaque is updated each year.



## TRUSTEES

*Written by Richard Bandy*

In a year where so many things have seemingly changed, some things do remain the same. Our church building and parsonage remain the priority of the Trustees and we have worked hard this year to maintain and even improve them, through the efforts of a strong team of Trustees and volunteers (socially distanced, of course!).

We have worked hard to provide normal upkeep and maintenance, doing numerous sprinkler repairs and lawn upkeep, performed plumbing repairs at the parsonage, and managed lawn care, copier and cleaning service contracts. Annual inspections related to the sprinkler and fire protection system have been coordinated.

In addition to the normal maintenance and responsibilities above, the Trustees have coordinated the installation of a new HVAC system in the parsonage, and hung new televisions and speakers for better viewing in the Fellowship Courtyard for when we can return to services and activities in the building. The trustees also helped determine Covid policies and procedures for our church that align with the features and structure of our building, including installing hand sanitizer stations, new doorstops and touchless soap dispensers.

We have a church to be proud of and we look forward to the time when we can all come back together under one roof and worship and fellowship together in this place we call our church home.

## MISSION'S TEAM

*Written by Lee Bellows*

Never would I have imagined that the start of 2020 would bring us to where we are today. In so many ways it has reshaped our lives and every day living. There have been many challenges along the way but in looking past some of those challenges I have seen people willing to come together to help others.

In January \$2740.50 was raised at the Dessert Auction. The money was to help Jeremy and another member of our congregation travel to Angola Africa to work with Ken Koome. We have been helping Ken by supporting him in his agricultural missionary work in Angola. Ken is working closely with the people in the community by teaching them how to grow food for themselves and their neighbors and to become self-sustaining. The pandemic changed this course of direction but opened another door. Jeremy was not able to travel to Angola and we found out that seeds were becoming harder to obtain and the prices increased due to the pandemic. We sent Ken \$3000 to help purchase seeds for the community. The money was received, seeds purchased, and a community is able to grow their own food.

During the height of the pandemic in the spring, the food supply at the Milliken food bank was reaching an all time low. They were in need of monetary and food donations. The committee purchased \$334.86 of food and you, the congregation, has donated over \$1500 to help feed our neighbors. When requests came in for face masks many of our sewers were willing to make face masks. Over 150 face masks were delivered to the food pantry in Milliken.

With the holidays approaching we had to brainstorm how to proceed with the Giving Tree. This is a great opportunity to help support children and their families in our community. With the help of Jayna, an email was sent out via Breeze to the entire congregation. Before I knew it, all 43 ornaments were gone, and I had to add 6 more to fulfill all the requests. There was a total of 49 ornaments taken. The Giving Tree remained a vital part of our Christmas Mission work. We did not let a pandemic stop us.

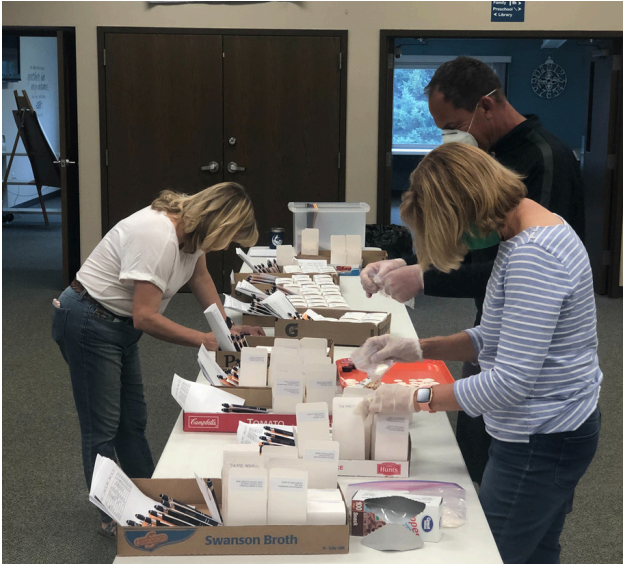
\$500 was donated to Santa Cops.

There were many different ideas on where the Christmas Eve offering would go this year. We knew as a committee we wanted to keep it local. During one of Jeremy's sermons, he had Van Duvall speak on the devastating illness that changed his life. He talked about some of the hardships he and his family went through and of the severe depression that he experienced. He now is a support for others who are experiencing life changing events. He spoke of starting a non-profit called Hero Support that will focus on helping first responders, medical professionals and those in our community who are in need of financial, emotional, and mental health support. We knew this is where our Christmas Eve offering needed to go.

There were so many other requests from committees in our church that were focusing on mission work and all of you were so willing to help in so many ways. We helped support our community, helped feed our brothers and sisters in Africa and helped to keep each other sane in a crazy world. Together we made a difference in so many lives and we will continue that work for many years to come.

For me, the words from Matthew 25:35-40 says it all in a year of so many challenges but oh so many gifts. By giving and helping others we are truly seeing the power of God. "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers,[a] you did it to me.







## SPRC

*Written by Beth Oligmueller*

SPRC started with a quite calm. The member's Beth Oligmueller (who became chair), Amy Sassano, Sharon Ross, Chris Hurley, Autumn Maus, Margaret Nelson and Michael Wailes met with our Pastor Jeremy Scott. We heard of bonus money available through Ad Council which we gave to Karianne, Kimberly and Jayna. We also discussed having a "Team Event" and discussed having a couple events, with the first one being in April or May. We were reminded that one of our "jobs" is the caretaking of the staff at UMC Johnstown. We planned on setting up a schedule where each SPRC member would take a month and reach out to the staff and plan something special for them. Also, we planned to assign each staff member two SPRC members so the staff would have a way to reach out.

**BUT THEN MARCH CAME! COVID HIT!**

We had to adjust, re-evaluate and decide how to take care of staff without actually seeing them. SPRC also needed to support the staff as they managed changes in the church services, work hours and weekly changes in the use of technology. SPRC worked to present hour and salary changes for Jayna. The number of hours she worked grew and her job description changed, almost weekly. Not knowing how long we would be in the Pandemic, we initially approved Jayna's change in hours and pay until September 2020, then extended it again through December 2020. Jayna has proven to be very valuable during this time, along with all the staff, thus moving SPRC to talk about raising salaries of all the employees at UMC Johnstown. You know you have amazing employees when a worldwide pandemic hits and they don't miss a beat! And actually work harder than ever to keep our church and preschool going.

Along with rethinking how to care of staff, SPRC still had normal business to handle. Evaluations to be sent in, zoom meetings to be held and outreach to staff.

Notes were sent almost monthly to staff, just so they knew SPRC was there for them. Encouraging emails were sent throughout the summer. As the Fall came into view, talks of preschool reopening and having in person services were discussed. SPRC's job was to support changes that needed to be made.

We began looking into and discussing raises in salary for the entire staff. SPRC realized that most of the staff was underpaid. We looked at comparable jobs in the area, and saw that in some cases UMC Johnstown was underpaying several of the employees by substantial amounts. We chose to raise all hourly salaries to at least \$15.00 hour, and work on raising Pastor Jeremy's salary over the 3-year period, to \$60,000.00 per year. SPRC was successful in obtaining the \$15.00 per hour raise for all hourly employees who were not at that amount and getting a raise for Pastor Jeremy to \$55,000.00 a year for 2021. Jeremy wanted to make sure the staff received their raise first and SPRC will continue to work on raising Pastor Jeremy's salary over the next couple of years. UMC Johnstown was able to increase salaries because our congregation never stopped giving financially. We are very blessed to have such wonderful congregation.

Since the Staff had worked so hard this year, we made plans to do a small Movie Christmas Celebration. Needless to say, once again, we had to rethink how to thank the employees when the theater was shut and the event was canceled. It was decided to give gift certificates to all employees. We bought them from Black Sheep Restaurant, using the money that had been set aside for "Team Event/Party". Not only is this a way to thank our staff, but a way to support a local business.

SPRC decided the congregation should get involved and asked for Thank You letters, cards and notes to give to the staff. With such a trying year, we wanted to show the staff how much the church appreciated them. The Church received lots of thank you notes, which were passed along to the staff. A suggestion came to SPRC that a special thank you should be sent to Daen and Vivianne Scott for all their help during this strange and trying time. There was a great response and we were able to give each of them special gift certificates.

SPRC is happy that 2020 is almost done, but proud of all we have accomplished. We're ready to tackle 2021, and as always keep supporting UMC Johnstown's staff.





We have been able to maintain having most of the special events throughout the year with the hard work of the worship team and volunteers because God has been there every step of the way. We will wrap up the year with a Christmas concert that will be livestreamed. A drive by living nativity with live animals. There will be a Christmas Eve service as usual. It will be streamed live to both Facebook and YouTube. We can all light our candles together to welcome baby Jesus. So it seems that God has been there throughout this crisis making the year special in just a little bit different way.

## WORSHIP

*Written by Kay Sandberg*

When 2020 began months ago would we ever have imagined how things were going to change? The year was already basically mapped out for the church and then a crisis hit the whole world. The year could not go on as planned. But there is no doubt that God was there for us and challenging us to come up with solutions.

Pastor Jeremy and the worship team took on that challenge head on and we are so blessed to have them. In essence almost everything was able to go on throughout the year but in a different form. The team began livestreaming the Sunday morning worship services right away. Even though we were not there physically together we were there in heart and spirit. For those who hadn't been able to be in church now they could enjoy the service every Sunday. It also was an easy way to invite people to check out our church. Some of these new people have since become members. A number of people volunteered to record a solo. Others volunteered to read the scripture and of course those who do the children's moment. God is working through all of these people.

Then there is all the work that goes into putting everything together for Sunday morning. We have a new addition to the service too, a digital piano we got through using memorial money from the Lebsacks. This piano gives a better quality found for livestreaming.



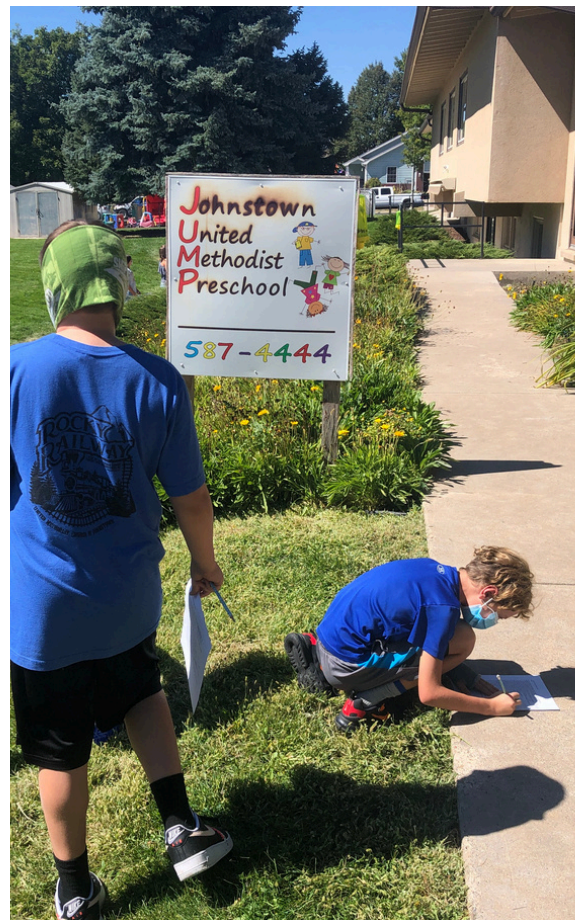


## YOUTH

*Written by Van and Christy Duvall*

We have seen God this year through the amazing faces of our youth that show up week after week on Zoom. Yes, we have had a few meetings in person, including a kickoff in September with a really fun outdoor scavenger hunt around the outside of the church. But mostly we have met online. In the spring when the kids were first quarantined, they wanted to meet twice a week! We did that for most of the spring. Typically in the summer, we do not meet, but again the kids wanted to continue meeting, so we did that for most of the summer. Although we have not been able to do our regular "Lunch and Learns" or much community service, we did have a great group help with both VBS and Turkey Dinner. One of the group's favorite things to do is to discuss their highs and lows of the week, this has been a great way for kids to be able to stay connected with one another. We have also done virtual scavenger hunts, Kahoots!, and many other online games. We have gathered virtually to make mini s'mores and to decorate pumpkins and ugly Christmas sweater cookies. We have done some lessons on stress, mental health, and time management. There are typically between 10 and 16 kids joining on a given Sunday. We have had two friends who are new to the youth group and to our church join us on many occasions. We have even had friends attend from Alabama and Montana. One more place we have seen God is in our faithful volunteer helper, Jenna Hall and in our new volunteer Molly Duvall. These ladies are absolutely amazing!

These youth are such a blessing to us and to our church.





## ADMIN COUNCIL

*Written by Alan Gibson*

The Johnstown United Methodist Church Administrative Council was certainly not immune to the many alterations and changes of direction that 2020 presented. However, through the guidance and support of Pastor Jeremy Scott, the Ad Council continued its monthly meetings via Zoom after missing March and April during the onset of the pandemic. In addition, the December meeting coincided with the annual church conference, also hosted via Zoom, by district superintendent Tezenlo Thong.

Despite being unable to meet in person for most of the year, the committee chairpersons maintained contact and continued to conduct their respective meetings to help keep the congregation connected and the church operating at a very high level. As reported at the remote meetings of the Ad Council, members of the congregation willingly fulfilled their responsibilities on the various committees and participated whenever possible.

The pastor and staff, along with many committee chairs and their members, took on extra duties that were not anticipated as the year began; yet, those extra responsibilities resulted in our church remaining vital and strong. For example, some of the following aspects added to the Johnstown UMC ministry included the following:

- A completely remote livestream worship service, which included all aspects of the service normally enjoyed in person. Most of the service components were recorded throughout the week and required extensive editing by the pastor and staff to put together a livestream service via YouTube each Sunday. Our church even partnered with two Wyoming churches and provided “Ashley and Friends,” and several music pieces to other churches searching for livestream content.
- A new app designed for mobile phones and devices to keep the congregation connected in a variety of ways.
- Over 25 Sunday School packets created and delivered each week by the Education Committee’s chair and delivery volunteers.
- Communion boxes and other items created and delivered each month by the pastor, church staff, communion stewards, education chair and many volunteer drivers.
- A variety of inspirational and classic music performed and posted to be viewed online.
- An outdoor, socially distanced concert organized by the music director and performed by many talented members of the congregation. This event allowed church members to see each other in person for the first time since the pandemic started.
- Health and safety kits were created for distribution at the local food bank, benefiting 70 families in the Johnstown-Milliken area.
- A new outreach program titled “Shepherds and their Flocks” was created to keep the congregation - particularly those who were unable to socialize or venture from home – linked to the church and its members. Many “shepherds” took it upon themselves to make phone calls and organize small-group visits with their “flocks.”

Equally impressive was the determination and insistence by the church staff and committees to continue with as many programs and events as possible. Given the isolation status and requirements rendered by the health department, most of the events occurred virtually via Zoom:

- Weekly worship services.
- Memorial services.
- Weekly “Deeper Dive” sessions.
- Midweek podcasts.
- JUMP – The church preschool remained open for in-person learning throughout the first semester of the 2020-21 school year. The pastor, preschool director, preschool staff and preschool committee are to be commended for their adherence to health regulations in keeping the preschool a safe and healthy environment.
- Monthly committee meetings.
- New member classes (resulting in approximately new members for the year).
- Vacation Bible School.
- Donations, organization, work and delivery of UMCOR hub materials.
- Youth group.
- Turkey Dinner.
- Confirmation classes (resulting in approximately 10 young newcomers to membership).

## ADMIN COUNCIL (CONT.)

- Church grounds cleanup and upkeep organized and conducted by the greens committee.
- Numerous projects at both the church and parsonage organized and conducted by the trustees.
- Items ordered and purchased through the memorials committee and its funds.
- A concerted effort from SPRC and Finance committees to provide raises and adequate compensation for the pastor and church staff.
- Through efforts of the pastor and Finance Committee, the church secured funds for the preschool and church staff via the Paycheck Protection Program. In addition, the Endowment Committee saw its funds jump exponentially, allowing a donation to the youth group.
- The congregation's giving remained steady, leaving the church with a surplus at year's end as the Ad Council approved the 2021 budget.
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Following the lead of Pastor Jeremy, the Johnstown UMC thrived during 2020. The tireless work of the pastor and his staff, coupled with the helping hearts and hands of church committees and volunteers, demonstrated the strength of the congregation. In a year that was more unusual than perhaps any other, the church succeeded by displaying its faith and strength by loving God, loving neighbors and loving self.





## 2021 CHURCH BUDGET

Category Description	2021 Budget
<b>Committee Expenses -</b>	
Ad Council	
Annual Conference (RMC)	1,200
Adult Education	1,200
Children's Education	2,000
Vacation Bible School	3,750
Music Program	1,100
Finance	1,500
Online Giving	2,500
Media and Publicity (previously Outreach)	1,700
Staff-Parish Relations	1,800
Worship	2,500
<b>Total Committee Expenses</b>	<b>\$19,250</b>
<b>Pass-through &amp; Special Offerings</b>	
Monthly Tithe	\$24,000
Special Sundays	
<b>Total Pass-Through Expenses</b>	<b>\$24,000</b>
<b>Operational Expenses</b>	
<u>Office Expenses</u>	
Discretionary	\$200
Office Supplies + Postage	1,500
Office Copier & Equip Maintenance	3,000
Tech (Computers & Network)	2,800
Audio/Visual Support & Equipment	500
<b>Total Office Expenses</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>
<u>Buildings &amp; Property Expenses</u>	
<u>Parsonage Expenses</u>	
Parsonage Trustees	\$1,000
Parsonage Utilities	4,500
<u>Church Building</u>	
Church Insurance	12,080
JUMP Insurance Offset	(2,100)
Church Trustees	10,000
Utilities - Church	37,000
<b>Total Buildings &amp; Misc. Expenses</b>	<b>\$62,480</b>
<u>Staff Expenses -</u>	
Pastor -	
Salary	\$55,000
Health Benefits	11,616
CRSP+CPP	11,000
Prof. Expenses/Travel	2,500
Children's Education Director	11,700
Office Manager	24,570
Bell Choir Director	2,340
Financial Secretary	1,170
Music Director	6,240
Nursery Attendant	1,560
Organist	2,570
Media Tech	1,450
Treasurer Salary	8,580
Youth Director	7,800
Substitute Secretary/Misc. Wages	360
Church Staff - FICA Match	5,200
Other Staff Expenses	
<b>Total Staff Expenses</b>	<b>\$153,656</b>
<b>Total All Expenses</b>	<b>\$267,386</b>

