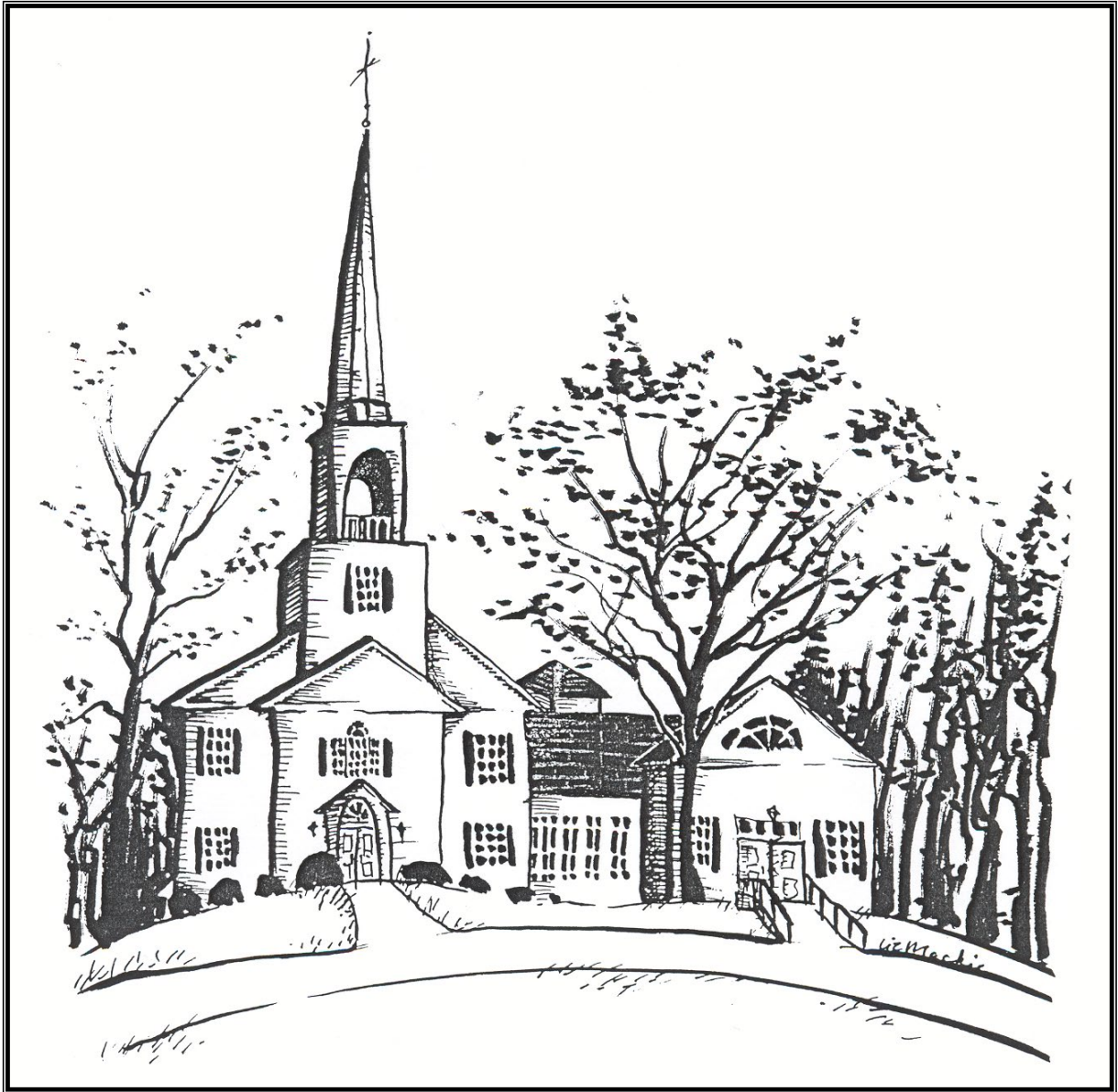




**PILGRIM**  
Congregational Church



## ***2023 ANNUAL REPORT***



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## **Call to Annual Meeting**

To all Pilgrim Church Members and Friends. Pursuant to our Bylaws, Article VII, Paragraph 2, you are invited to a Congregational Meeting of the Church on Sunday, February 11, 2024 at 11:45 am following the Worship Service.

### **Agenda:**

- 1) Congregational approval of minutes of 2023 meeting.
- 2) Presentation of written committee reports, distributed in advance of this meeting.
- 3) Presentation and adoption of the fiscal budget for 2024.
- 4) Any other pertinent matters that may arise.
- 5) Remembering losses in the community, remarks, and a prayer by the pastor.

Everyone is invited to attend; only members may vote. Child care will be provided.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Boehm  
Clerk

## Covenant for Communication

Church Council has recently spent some time in conversation about best practices for communication in our meetings and in other gatherings of the congregation. We propose this guide for Annual Meeting and other congregational meetings. We also hope the congregation will spend time considering this covenant together and will use this in committee teams. We are in a strong place as a congregation, which is the right time to consider our norms as a congregation and to practice a covenant for communication.



In this meeting, we will seek the Spirit's wisdom as we reflect on, and make decisions about, the ministry of Pilgrim Church.

We will

- Look for joy, reinforce our strengths, and recognize the accomplishments of this community
- Listen with care in order to understand
- Practice loving communication
- Work to be transparent, clear, and concise in our words
- Try to walk in one another's shoes
- Pause, breathe, and pray if a moment feels challenging
- Look and listen for God in each other
- Assume good intentions
- Collaborate together to bless our neighbors and community
- And be open to constructive feedback offered for the common good.

Respectfully submitted by the Church Council for inclusion in the Annual Report of 2019 and for use in 2020 and beyond.

## **Minutes from Pilgrim Congregational Church Annual Meeting Sunday February 12, 2023**

This year's Annual Meeting was a hybrid event – held in person as well as over Zoom. The 2022 Annual Report can be accessed here:

[https://mcusercontent.com/a15ca43f2a8281237166ab763/files/f9b0586c-a5a8-989e-45d5-cafc7614ac20/2022\\_Pilgrim\\_Church\\_Annual\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://mcusercontent.com/a15ca43f2a8281237166ab763/files/f9b0586c-a5a8-989e-45d5-cafc7614ac20/2022_Pilgrim_Church_Annual_Report_Final.pdf)

### **Call to order**

- Duncan Todd called the meeting to order at 11:40am.
- Per the bylaws of Pilgrim Church, a quorum was achieved as more than 10% of members were present in person (26) or on zoom (10).
- Duncan opened the meeting by reading a section of the church bylaws on governance, and reminding everyone of the role of this meeting and the obligations of membership.

### **Opening Prayer**

- Reebee led the congregation in an opening prayer.

### **Approval of 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes**

- The congregation unanimously approved the 2022 annual meeting minutes.

### **Committee Reports**

- Duncan led the congregation through the annual report soliciting comments or questions for each section.

Pastor's Report	No comments or questions
Moderator's Report	No comments or questions
Clerk's Report	No comments or questions
Collector's Report	No comments or questions
Treasurer's Report	No comments or questions
Investment Committee	No comments or questions
Forever Pilgrim Fund & Society	No comments or questions

Equipping the Saints	Duncan reminded church members that this fund is here to be used and encouraged members to put forward proposals.
Stewardship	Reebee noted that the original version of the stewardship report was incorrect, but that the version printed for the meeting and linked above is correct.
Care Committee	No comments or questions
Educational Ministries & Youth Committee	No comments or questions
Mission Committee	No comments or questions
Pastoral Relations Committee	No comments or questions
Publicity	No comments or questions
Pumpkin Patch	Chris Reaske offered thanks to Lisa, Susan, and others who worked above and beyond to make our pumpkin patch so successful.
Worship & Music Committee	Stephanie Shore offered thanks to Dot and Max for the wonderful music program.

- Duncan offered thanks to all committee chairs and members represented in these reports for their hard work and valuable contributions during 2022 and going forward.

### **2023 Operating Budget**

- Duncan then invited treasurer Dave McClave to field questions or comments about the proposed 2023 operating budget, as presented in the annual report.
- Dave noted that we have a new source of income from the Forever Pilgrim Fund, and thanked Bob Beckwith and others for their initiation and work on this fund. • Reebee offered thanks to Dave for his continued work in managing expectations and tracking all aspects of the church's finances.
- Duncan noted that the string of deficit budgets is taken very seriously in Council. Council has chosen to follow Dave's lead in presenting budgets that are realistic and achievable, and with some grace can be exceeded. In comparison to budgets of prior years, this is a relatively small deficit. Duncan thanked the many very generous members of the congregation and noted that despite the budgetary challenges of recent years the church remains in a healthy financial position.
- Nick asked for confirmation about the steeple rental. Dave confirmed that last year's budget assumed that T-Mobile might not renew the steeple rental, but that they did renew for another five years (until 2027), thus the 2023 budget reflects the full year rental amount.
- Jeff commented, building on Duncan's point about potentially closing the budget deficit,

that in 2022 we ended the year with a surplus budget vs the originally approved deficit budget thanks to grace and hard work from the congregation.

- The congregation unanimously approved the 2023 budget as presented.

### **Other business**

- Duncan provided an update on potentially incorporating solar power into our building. Due to changes in incentive programs, Pilgrim is now eligible to potentially benefit from these incentives. Duncan offered thanks to Dave McClave and Susan Fagerstrom for their hard work on this issue, along with F&A and Council for their review and discernment.
- Duncan noted that we do not have a proposal at this time, but we are hopeful that we may be able to present more information in the near future, and ultimately put a firm proposal before the congregation.

### **Pastor's Closing Remarks and Necrology**

- Reebee noted that the 2022 star word was Rejoice and that we have lots to rejoice about from last year (organ concert, carols & cocoa for a cause, bluegrass & jazz services, the pumpkin patch, the christmas party, and much more).
- Reebee noted that we held steady and stable as a congregation last year which is remarkable at this point in time and compared to other congregations.
- Reebee reminded us that this year's star word is Strengthen - we need to strengthen the congregation to serve God and the world. We are in a liminal season - a time in between; and we need to figure out what is next. Reebee noted that Church Council is working on visioning and ideas for strengthening; and we welcome ideas from the congregation.
- Given all of this, innovation, care, and strengthening are Reebee's watch words for this year.
- Reebee noted that no members or active participants of Pilgrim Church passed away in 2022. There were three funerals held at Pilgrim Church.

### **Closing Prayer**

- Reebee ended the meeting with a prayer.
- Duncan closed the meeting at 12:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Boehm,  
Clerk



## Pastor's Annual Report - 2023

“The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ...” - Mark 1:1

Mark's first verse is a declaration: that this story is only the starting point. It's only the beginning. Readers are invited to wonder, what is the next chapter? Particularly brave readers may ask: are we part of the next chapters? At Mark's conclusion, Jesus makes the connection plain by sending people into the world, into the work of building the kingdom. And so the church in every age writes new chapters. Pilgrim Church wrote another chapter in 2023, and it was filled with good news.

Our members and friends are deeply committed to the Pilgrim community and our ministries outside our walls. We witnessed this commitment in 2023 through strong attendance and enthusiasm - and through consistent responses to invitations to serve our neighbors. In worship we saw children, youth and adults offering leadership. We sang beautifully, as a congregation and as Choir and Pickup Choir. We hosted community events that supported our neighbors in profound ways - from the joy of the Pumpkin Patch to deep conversations about responding to Antisemitism, our neighbors felt our care. And, while I will not repeat what the Mission Committee has said elsewhere, I will repeat gratitude for the generosity of this community as we served the Outdoor Church, Dignity Matters, Cambodian Cocoon, locally sheltered families, and so much more.

This year we continued to offer intentional *Outreach and Care* events - from a party for preschoolers in the Pumpkin Patch, to a juggler, to music recitals, to carols and cocoa for a cause. Thank you to our Publicity crew headed by Lisa Boehm for creatively getting the word out through dozens of impactful outlets. We also emphasized Personal Invitation this year through 5 Whys and 6 Ways of Personal Invitation. Each of these outreach efforts will continue in some form in 2024. In 2023 we also added a wonderful internally focused gathering this year, the monthly Men's Coffee. Thank you Rich Edmiston, for starting this group. This isn't the only regular social gathering of Pilgrims but it was a notable new joy this year, and we hope to extend this theme of care for our members and friends and for our neighbors this year.

Six Pilgrims went to an educational forum on Antisemitism in March. This gathering led to the founding of Lexington United Against Antisemitism (LUAA) with Pilgrim Steve Van Evera co-chairing with Temple Emunah's Fran Jacobs. This work is deeply important and all Pilgrims are invited to engage in it in 2024. Watch for our own educational opportunities here at Pilgrim, and for more LUAA gatherings.

I'd like to highlight two more significant projects and their Pilgrim leaders here. First, in early 2023 we upgraded the *sound system* in the sanctuary. This also improved both sound quality on Zoom and our hybrid leadership options. We are still learning the new system. Thank you to Derek Gardiner who devoted a great deal of time to this project, and to Mike Stevens, Bob Beckwith, and others who helped outline our needs and test the new system.

Second, the installation of our **Solar** panels was completed in 2023. The vision for Solar began in 2022 and the date when we turn on the system is still in the future - but 2023 was a big year for this project. In the long run, Solar will reduce our fossil fuel use and our energy spending. Thanks go first to all the Pilgrims who pledged to the fundraising effort to make this installation possible. Deep gratitude also goes to those who visioned and planned and negotiated and coordinated this project: David McClave, Duncan Todd and Susan Fagerstrom. Their passion and commitment to this project can't be overstated. And thanks to those who helped raise the money for this effort: Bob Beckwith, Steve Van Evera, and Deborah Burger. For decades to come, our solar panels will declare our commitment to being stewards of Creation.

Let me share a few words about my work that's less obvious to the congregation - **my Continuing Education, Interfaith Work, and Teaching**. For 2023-2024 I am the vice president for the Lexington Interfaith Community Association. Fall 2023 presented particular challenges to our interfaith work as Lexington welcomed 30 families into temporary shelter in local hotels, and as our community was a microcosm of relationships across religion in a time of war in the Middle East. I traveled to the UCC's General Synod and participated in many workshops. I also renewed my CPR training and took Dementia Friends training. I continue to teach Boundary Awareness Training for clergy. My role at Harvard Divinity School as the Denominational Counselor to UCC students continues. Finally, at the request of the conference I am once again facilitating a new clergy community of practice.

I'm so grateful for our **staff!** What an amazing group - they not only bring knowledge and experience to their individual areas, but also bring compassionate and creative spirits to their ministries.

When she is not raising the roof with an organ fugue, Dot Bowe is raising up the talents of musicians within our congregation, always trying something new. Sarah Jane Fuller lifts up the energy and creativity of our children, youth and volunteers - and in bringing on Izzy Leginsky as a lead teacher and continuing with nursery care from April Chung has helped to balance the needs of volunteers and children this year. Max Evrard continues to bring forth beautiful music from the choir, and this year introduced a low-entry Pick-Up Choir which gives us all a chance to sing. Romeo Alves keeps us spic and span which is always worth noting. And at the quiet center, Kimberly Provo coordinates our administrative work with consistency, creativity, and kindness.

I'm also so grateful for our lay leaders - and I am sorry not to name every one here. **Council** that is thoughtful and generous. Thank you to our Moderator Duncan Todd, who is ready to consider the balcony view as well as pitching in on the ground. Duncan's leadership on Solar and the land sale have been essential. Thank you to our Vice Moderator Lesley Morrison who also led projects big and small this year including organizing our Greening and joyfully leading the Christmas party; our Clerk, Jeff Boehm whose minutes are always accurate and concise, and our Collector Susan Carabbio, who gets the money in the bank! Finally I'll echo what I've said in previous years: our

Treasurer, Dave, has brought thoroughness, dedication, and wisdom to that role for a long time. This year we saw the benefits of his stewardship once again. Thank you Dave!

The ways these folks have served this congregation could not possibly be listed in one report, and this list only scratches the surface of our lay volunteer pool.

I noted in my 2022 report that the mainline church as a whole is in a time of profound change, accelerated by the pandemic. Simply put, there is a societal and generational shift away from “institutions of voluntary association” such as church (and Rotary, etc). Comparatively speaking, Pilgrim seems reasonably strong and stable - but we are feeling the lower number of volunteers and we wonder about volunteer and giving trends in the near future. One piece of good news is that we are not alone. One challenge is that the pace of change is so fast that it’s hard to adapt. We keep up with the concrete day to day challenges that keep coming - and keep us from having the ability to get to the balcony view. Yet, three things remain true:

*God is Good - all the time.*

*Our members and our neighbors need the blessing of God’s love and our ministry.*

*And Pilgrim has wonderful resources - human and financial - to draw upon as we navigate these changes.*

So, we keep trying and we keep moving forward together in faith!

Let me close with a word about Christmas Eve. It was simply beautiful. We have changed some of our practices in the last few years but we have also lived in to cherished traditions and built new ones. This year the sanctuary was nearly filled, which was a great joy. I’m so grateful for this annual moment of magic: singing Silent Night by candlelight.

—

*God, we thank You for our people, roots dug deep within the soil,  
Hardy spirits, rich in loving, strong for struggle, bold for toil.  
Faithful Rock of generations, You whom parents’ parents praised:  
Here in hope as we remember may our song to You be raised...  
By Your Spirit of creation keep us bold for risking still,  
Eager in anticipation, ever strong to do Your will.*

- Ruth Duck (New Century Hymnal #376)

As we write the next chapter of the good news of Jesus as lived out here at Pilgrim Congregational Church, United Church of Christ in Lexington, may we indeed be ever strong to do God’s will. Amen.

*-Rev. Reebee Kavich Girash, January 2024*

## Clerk's Annual Report - 2023

The Clerk's report provides information required of the United Church of Christ Local Church Yearbook Report and other statistics. This report covers the calendar year January 1 through December 31, 2023.

The Annual Meeting of the pilgrim Congregational Church of Lexington, Massachusetts was held on Sunday, February 12, 2023. 36 voting members attended onsite (26) or via zoom (10), representing a quorum per the Pilgrim Church by-laws. Minutes for that meeting are included in this annual report.

### Membership Report:

A. Membership as of January 1, 2023	160
B. New Members	3
C. Losses	
a. Transfers, Moving Away, Other Reasons	0
b. Deaths	7
D. Membership as of December 31, 2023	156

### Other Statistics:

A. Baptisms	0
B. Weddings at Pilgrim	0
C. Funerals	3

### Sunday Service Attendance - Month Average (in person and via Zoom)

Average non-summer Sunday attendance	56
Average Summer Services attendance	30

### Special Service Attendance (in person and via Zoom)

Maundy Thursday	25
Palm Sunday	74
Easter	90
Longest Night (2 services)	15
Christmas Eve	175

### Children and Youth Ministries Enrollment

Youth Group	Enrollment	9
	Average attendance	7
Elementary-age	Enrollment	7
	Average attendance	5
Nursery care	Enrollment	2
	Average attendance	1
Total average attendance		13
Teachers / caregivers average attendance		4

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeff Boehm, Clerk

## Collector's Annual Report 2023

The table below shows the amount that was pledged for 2023, and how much of this was collected by the end of the year. We experienced an increase year over year from 2022 in pledge income.

Normally we experience a shortage as a percent of the amount pledged to what has been paid, which usually falls in the 2% to 3% range. For 2023 we did experience an overage (approximately 6.5%) due to donations that occurred later in the year after our stewardship drive. Our congregation is to be congratulated for the wonderful support of Pilgrim. Thanks to everyone who made their pledge payments on time, and special thanks to those who overpaid.

Total pledges for 2023	\$181,436
Pledge amount collected during 2022	\$174,890
Pledge Units	37

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Carabbio  
Collector for Pilgrim Church

## **Care Committee Annual Report 2023**

Despite the pandemic crisis, the Care Committee was committed to keeping the congregation connected through various programs.

On a monthly basis, cards and phone calls were sent to numerous Pilgrim congregants, especially those who were homebound. We also sent birthday cards and emails.

The Committee has received very positive feedback from those receiving and participating in these endeavors.

We celebrated the lives of deceased Pilgrims we lost in 2023. This included helping with memorial services by ushering, greeting, and hosting receptions afterwards. This allowed families and friends of the departed to gather, support one another, and share memories.

Care helped set up the Cocoa and Caroling for a Cause when inclement weather forced the event to relocate indoors.

The Committee helped coordinate parking for Max, Elena, and Dot's recital—the first since the pandemic.

Respectfully submitted,

Marge Saradjian

Care Committee Chair

## **Educational Ministries Annual Report - 2023**

Members of the Ed Min team this year were Lesley Morrison (Chair), Sarah Fuller, Director of Educational Ministries, Susan Moffitt, Mary Mackie, and Rev. Reebee Girash.

Once again, I would like to state right at the beginning that we are grateful for Sarah's effort and energy in leading Educational Ministries here at Pilgrim.

Classes continued throughout the spring of 2023. There were several special events including a nature walk and a Lunar New Year celebration with Son-Mey Chiu. Children's Sunday was held in June. We made a note to have Children's Sunday earlier in the spring as attendance becomes more inconsistent in June. There were no graduating HS seniors this year and cards were sent to college graduates.

A new Confirmation group began in September 2023. The class has 4 participants and each has a mentor from the congregation. They meet after church twice a month with Reebee and Sarah.

In the fall classes resumed again for the children. This year we are blessed to have Izzy Leginsky on staff. He is the lead teacher downstairs along with Sarah which has greatly reduced the need for parent volunteers. Some volunteers are still needed so that there are two adults in the nursery and two in Sunday school. We welcome volunteers from the congregation! Izzy is with us twice a month. The children participate in the intergenerational service on communion Sundays and the third Sunday is service project Sunday. On Service Sundays the children and youth make 50 sandwiches for the Outdoor Church. The children also work on other service projects throughout the year. April Chung, continues as our nursery attendant and is a wonderful, consistent, and nurturing presence downstairs.

The Youth had several activities this fall, including going to Cambridge to pass out the sandwiches to the unhoused for Outdoor Church. This is an important service activity that we hope to repeat several times a year. Smores in the pumpkin patch had to be rescheduled but was held in December. The youth and confirmation class joined together to make no-sew blankets for homebound Pilgrims in December.

This year the Committee again proposed holding the pageant on Sunday morning, the 17th of December. Sarah did a wonderful job filling all of the roles and Kim Bond took charge of costumes. There was excellent participation and the live baby Jesus stole the show. Like last year, there was a lunch and carol sing after the service which made for a lovely Sunday.

Respectfully,  
Lesley Morrison (chair)

## **2023 Annual Report of the Director of Educational Ministries**

Every year I am amazed at all the children and youth do here at Pilgrim. Whether they're operating the Zoom cameras, serving as liturgists, playing wonderful music during worship, or serving our local community; our children always show up ready and eager, with strong voices and smiles on their faces. I truly believe that there's nothing our Pilgrim Kids CAN'T do!

The 2022-2023 program year continued smoothly. We had introduced a new structure to the program: The first Sunday of every month is Intergenerational; a time for the children to participate in worship. They often serve as readers, guest musicians, pick-up choir members, and active participants. The second and fourth Sundays are dedicated to traditional Sunday School; learning from the scriptures, building faith, and having fun with lots of games and activities. The third Sunday of each month is Service Project Sunday; the day in which we bag lunches for the Outdoor Church. This model continues to provide variety to children and families, and we have fully embraced it for the 2023-24 program year.

The 2023-24 program year began with one new addition to the staff: Isadore (Izzy) Leginsky became our Lead Sunday School Teacher. I am so grateful to have Izzy, and April Chung, our Nursery Care Provider, to care for, guide, and support our Pilgrim Kids. Izzy now prepares our Sunday School lessons and teaches on the second and fourth Sundays of every month. We began a new Narrative Lectionary curriculum called Living the Word, and will continue to use it throughout the remainder of the 2023-24 program year. We also welcomed a new cohort of confirmands in the fall. They are well into their faith journey, and their confirmation date is set for May 19, 2024. 2023 ended with a beautiful Christmas pageant and Christmas Eve service. The pageant was filled with many familiar faces, and even some special guests! The hand-painted wooden Nativity Scene the children created on Christmas Eve was perfect as well. Such a magical way to end the year.

The Youth Group joined in fellowship over many meetups and outings, including bowling, painting parties, game nights, and more. They also participated in several service projects, including making blankets for housebound Pilgrims, assembling care packages for college students, and, most notably, their work with Outdoor Church. We have continued our commitment to the Outdoor Church, providing 50 meals to homeless and street-involved members of the Cambridge community on the third Sunday of each month (with the exception of July and August.) This means, in 2023, we packed an impressive total of 500 lunches! Our youth joined the Outdoor Church in distributing lunches around Harvard Square twice this year, both in March and October. They have already made their first outreach trip of 2024 as well, braving the freezing cold weather of January to provide meals and supplies to those in need of food and warmth. Thank you to everyone who donates food each month, and all the parents, volunteers, and children who help to prepare and serve these lunches.



Furthering my own education, in the spring of 2023, I took the Facilitator Training Course for Our Whole Lives (OWL). OWL is a sexuality education curricula developed in partnership between the UCC and UUA, which “dismantles stereotypes and assumptions, builds self-acceptance and self-esteem, fosters healthy relationships, improves decision making, and has the potential to save lives.” (for more info on the program, visit: <https://www.ucc.org/our-whole-lives/>). This is a program that I look forward to bringing to the youth of Pilgrim, with the possibility of partnering with other local churches in the future. Please note: this program does require two trained facilitators in order to operate. This means we will be looking for a co-facilitator. Please let me know if you have any interest in the program; I’d love to tell you more about it!

Lastly, as always, a giant “THANK YOU” to all of our teachers, nursery staff, and volunteers who have helped out this past year. It is clear in the faces of the children how special you are to them; you are doing incredible work, and it shows! And, another extra-special “Thank You” to the Educational Ministries committee. I am so appreciative of all of the wonderful ideas you bring to each meeting, the perspectives you bring both as teachers and as parents, and your willingness to step in and help out whenever needed. I am so grateful for you, and I am so excited to see what the future holds for us together as a team!

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sarah Jane Fuller  
Dir. of Educational Ministries

## Equipping the Saints Fund

The project funded this year came from a Pilgrim member who found a need for personal health supplies among the homeless near his college. He led a successful drive for these supplies, triggered by this initial donation.

The ETS committee for the fund always welcomes proposals from Pilgrim members as they find opportunities to personally further Pilgrim's commitment to help the needy.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Scott Morton and Susan Fagerstrom

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### EQUIPPING THE SAINTS FUND 01 January 2023 - 31 December 2023

#### GRANTS

Hygiene Kits	\$ 205.16
<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>\$ 205.16</b>

#### INCOME

Interest	\$ 1,977.64
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 1,977.64</b>

(Note: The amounts shown under "Grants" are the amounts paid out, not the amount of the grants themselves.)

#### HOLDINGS

<u>Description</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Value as of 12/31/23</u>
Fidelity Cash Reserves	\$ 43,376.60	\$ 43,376.60
<b>Total Holdings</b>	<b>\$ 43,376.60</b>	<b>\$ 43,376.60</b>

**The Fund was established on January 1, 2002 with a donation of \$300,000.**

**Since its establishment, the Fund has paid out a total of \$ 341,415.70.**

## **Finance & Administration Committee (F&A)**

### **Annual Report – 2023**

Bob Beckwith, Chair; Susan Carabbio, Collector; Derek Gardiner, Rev. Reebee Girash, Ex-officio; Dave McClave, Treasurer; Jim Munkres, Duncan Todd, Moderator

The Finance and Administration Committee has two main functions, the oversight and care of our properties (the church and the parsonage) and the viability of present and future income streams. Long-term investments and endowment funds are separately managed by the Investment Committee. F&A also prepares the annual operating budget in consultation with the church staff, as well as church committees. This budget is then sent to Council for review and approval and then onto the Annual Meeting for final approval by the congregation. F&A also monitors financial spending and income performance throughout the year in relation to the approved budget, thus enabling the church to remain on a solid financial track.

It is my pleasure to work with a great team that is called upon throughout the year to fix things that either need updating or are malfunctioning. We come together as a group to discuss these issues and then someone or a team of people get to work to rectify the situation.

Below are major issues that F&A was involved with this year:

- A new sound system was installed in the sanctuary.
- Two heat pumps with gas backup furnaces were installed to heat and air condition the Sun Room and Pilgrim Hall, as well as that same area on the lower floor.
- New illuminated EXIT signs were installed in the sanctuary and stairwell from the sanctuary to the rear of the church.
- The roofs of the church and addition were re-shingled.
- Solar panels and a snow fence were installed on the church roof. We are now waiting for Eversource to install a new transformer on Coolidge Avenue before we can turn on the system.
- The exterior of the parsonage has been vinyl sided.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert E. Beckwith

## **Treasurer's Annual Reports 2023**

The Treasurer prepares two annual financial reports: the operating statement and the account balances report. The operating statement looks at how our income and expenses fared in comparison to the budget figures that were approved at Annual Meeting. The account balances report shows a picture of our cash flow in relation to the various restricted funds.

### Operating Statement

The year just ended brought good news via the operating report: We ended the year with a \$7K+ surplus compared to the budgeted \$5K+ deficit. This was due primarily to better than expected results in most of our income streams, particularly Pledge, Loose, Facilities Donation, and Pumpkin Patch.

### Account Balances Report

Our liquid assets remained nearly unchanged the past twelve months, which is remarkable given that we spent \$70K on a new roof for the church, \$107K on solar panels, and \$25K on residing the parsonage.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have regarding these reports.

Respectfully submitted,

*David McClave, Treasurer*

David McClave, Treasurer

Home Phone: (781) 861-7466

Email: dramccl@hotmail.com

## Pilgrim Congregational Church Operating Budget 2023

	Budget	Actual	Percent
	2023	2023	Actual to Budget
<b>INCOME</b>			
Current Year Pledges	170,890	171,967	101%
Less: Anticipated uncollected	(3,418)		0%
Prior Year Pledges	2,800	3,455	123%
Non-pledge	250	480	192%
Loose	1,200	2,804	234%
Mission	9,000	6,292	70%
Solar Panel - Income			
Designated to Mission			
Facilities Donation	16,000	18,160	114%
Fellowship Hall Rental	58,344	58,733	101%
Steeple Rental	22,680	22,680	100%
Pumpkin Patch	8,000	10,190	127%
Other Fundraising			
Miscellaneous	15,357	16,058	105%
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>301,103</b>	<b>310,820</b>	<b>103%</b>

## Pilgrim Congregational Church Operating Budget 2023

	Budget	Actual	Percent
	2023	2023	Actual to Budget
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<u>People</u>			
Pastor - Salary	84,563	88,061	104%
Pastor - Benefits	12,117	12,737	105%
Pastor - Travel+Prof Exp	5,000	3,730	75%
Directors of Music	25,800	25,746	100%
Director of Christian Ed	31,343	32,640	104%
Sunday School Teacher		861	
Secretary	24,131	23,769	99%
Sexton	17,667	18,398	104%
Childcare Provider	1,776	1,615	91%
Guest Preachers	500	250	50%
Salary Pool	6,860		0%
<u>Programs</u>			
Church School	500	756	151%
Youth Groups	300	68	23%
Confirmation		38	
Adult Education	35		0%
Care	100	150	150%
Mission	24,000	21,472	89%
Stewardship	250	146	58%
Summer Worship			
Fellowship	300	1,003	334%
Worship	500	435	87%
<u>Buildings &amp; Grounds</u>			
Church - Maint	24,933	23,845	96%
Parsonage - Maint	4,704	4,415	94%
Church - Utilities	15,627	18,599	119%
Avoided Electricty Cost			
Parsonage - Utilities	5,022	5,694	113%
<u>Administrative</u>			
Insurance	15,725	14,987	95%
Office Supplies	2,607	1,997	77%
Postage	330	160	48%
Copying	1,500	1,602	107%
Marketing & Publicity		62	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>306,190</b>	<b>303,233</b>	<b>99%</b>
<b>NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>(5,087)</b>	<b>7,587</b>	<b>-149%</b>

**Pilgrim Congregational Church****Account Balances****31 December 2022 - 31 December 2023****ASSETS**

	Balance as of 12/31/2022	Cash in / Increase in Value	Cash Out / Decrease in Value	Transfers	Balance as of 12/31/2023
Peoples United Checking	\$ 4,860.00	\$ 222,033.48	\$ (26.00)	\$ (217,200.00)	9,667.48
Fidelity Brokerage	\$ 216,850.55	\$ 240,336.59	\$ (582,679.62)	\$ 273,535.73	148,043.25
Fidelity Money Market	\$ 41,604.12	\$ 1,977.64	\$ (205.16)	\$ -	43,376.60
PNS Remainder	\$ 5,462.34	\$ 202.95	\$ (449.00)	\$ (3,240.55)	1,975.74
Fidelity Floating Rate High Income (FFRHX)	\$ 135,913.91	\$ 15,867.49	\$ (695.30)	\$ (8,675.36)	142,410.74
Pioneer Multi-Asset Income Class A (PMAIX)	\$ 140,671.08	\$ 22,542.56	\$ (10,864.33)	\$ (10,653.57)	141,695.74
WisdomTree Large Cap Dividend Fund (DLN)	\$ 116,515.62	\$ 26,402.16	\$ (16,119.51)	\$ (14,036.31)	112,761.96
WisdomTree Mid Cap Dividend Fund (DON)	\$ 109,958.16	\$ 39,610.45	\$ (25,114.26)	\$ (7,858.18)	116,596.17
WisdomTree Small Cap Dividend Fund (DES)	\$ 93,554.17	\$ 41,021.54	\$ (25,884.70)	\$ (3,020.67)	105,670.34
WisdomTree Global Equity Income Fund (DEW)	\$ 99,685.57	\$ 27,422.96	\$ (18,253.22)	\$ (2,931.78)	105,923.53
Fidelity 500 Index Fund (FXAIX)	\$ 172,332.62	\$ 65,842.67	\$ (20,913.84)	\$ (5,919.31)	211,342.14
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 1,137,408.14</b>	<b>\$ 703,260.49</b>	<b>\$ (701,204.94)</b>	<b>\$ (0.00)</b>	<b>\$ 1,139,463.69</b>

**FUNDS**

[NOTE: Figures in parentheses indicate that more has been spent from a fund than has been put in.]

Beckwith Memorial (Income)	\$ 12,458.30	\$ -	\$ (21,990.17)	\$ 24,577.63	15,045.76
Beckwith Memorial (Principal)	\$ 564,413.95	\$ 151,455.34	\$ (73,444.12)	\$ (24,577.63)	617,847.53
Care Fund	\$ 3,329.64	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	3,329.64
Education Fund	\$ 710.07	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	710.07
Equipping The Saints	\$ 41,604.12	\$ 1,977.64	\$ (205.16)	\$ -	43,376.60
Fellowship Fund	\$ 158.17	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	158.17
Flower Fund	\$ 82.61	\$ 822.43	\$ (555.50)	\$ -	349.54
Forever Pilgrims (Distribution)	\$ 957.25	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 482.35	1,439.60
Forever Pilgrims (Principal)	\$ 62,884.98	\$ 15,844.44	\$ (7,597.63)	\$ (1,439.60)	69,692.19
General Fund	\$ 24,074.17	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	24,074.17
Goddard Fund	\$ 1,960.03	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	1,960.03
Interest	\$ 2,524.93	\$ 7,561.75	\$ -	\$ (2,524.93)	7,561.75
Land Sale	\$ 118,565.75	\$ 31,713.54	\$ (15,784.78)	\$ (5,152.49)	129,342.02
Memorial Funds	\$ 15,024.22	\$ 6,670.00	\$ -	\$ (5,000.00)	16,694.22
Memorial Garden Fund	\$ 11,373.33	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	11,373.33

**Pilgrim Congregational Church**  
**Account Balances**  
**31 December 2022 - 31 December 2023**

	Balance as of 12/31/2022	Cash in / Increase in Value	Cash Out / Decrease in Value	Transfers	Balance as of 12/31/2023
Mission: Discretionary	\$ 1,069.25	\$ 6,292.00	\$ (9,524.59)	\$ 2,520.00	\$ 356.66
Operating Budget Fund	\$ 5,846.32	\$ 243,970.02	\$ (284,728.35)	\$ 42,498.71	\$ 7,586.70
Parsonage Fund	\$ 72,196.33	\$ 19,802.65	\$ (35,763.13)	\$ -	\$ 56,235.84
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	\$ 1,812.72	\$ 250.00	\$ (106.95)	\$ -	\$ 1,955.77
Pension Withheld	\$ (1,109.79)	\$ 26,458.62	\$ (26,923.29)	\$ -	\$ (1,574.46)
Pilgrim Congregational Fund	\$ 85,782.36	\$ 22,315.03	\$ (11,760.11)	\$ (3,670.23)	\$ 92,667.05
Pilgrim Pride Fund	\$ 17,895.95	\$ 18,625.00	\$ (99,271.75)	\$ 12,512.27	\$ (50,238.53)
Pilgrim Pride Fund - Solar	\$ -	\$ 96,236.38	\$ (107,680.00)	\$ 5,000.00	\$ (6,443.62)
Pilgrim Youth Fellowship Fund	\$ 1,373.14	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,373.14
PNS Remainder	\$ 5,462.34	\$ 202.94	\$ -	\$ (3,689.55)	\$ 1,975.73
Prepaid pledges subsequent yrs	\$ 32,300.00	\$ 11,712.05	\$ -	\$ (14,300.00)	\$ 29,712.05
Pumpkin Patch	\$ 526.52	\$ 16,150.66	\$ (5,869.40)	\$ (10,407.78)	\$ 400.00
Revolving Reserve	\$ 53,010.92	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,371.25	\$ 61,382.17
Steeple Antenna	\$ -	\$ 25,200.00	\$ -	\$ (25,200.00)	\$ -
Sunday School Fund	\$ 1,123.82	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,123.82
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>\$ 1,137,408.14</b>	<b>\$ 703,260.49</b>	<b>\$ (701,204.94)</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 1,139,463.69</b>



## **Description of Restricted Funds**

### **Beckwith Memorial Fund**

The PRINCIPAL fund contains the principle for the Beckwith Memorial Endowment. The income is transferred to the INCOME fund where it is administered by F&A to purchase office equipment and provide non-salary support to the music program.

### **Care Fund**

This fund holds money for the Care Committee to use in their activities in support of the congregants.

### **Education Fund**

This fund holds money to be used by the Director of Christian Education and Christian Education Committee for adult and children's supplies not covered by the operating budget.

### **Equipment the Saints Fund**

This wasting fund (established to be spent in its entirety) provides financial support to promote lay leadership of mission and care projects that provide for direct participation of Pilgrim members.

### **Fellowship Fund**

This fund is at the disposal of the Fellowship Committee for a variety of social needs within the church such as supplies for the Christmas party, barbecue, church birthday observance, and other social functions held at the church.

### **Flower Fund**

Easter lilies and Christmas poinsettias are purchased through annual donations to this revolving reserve fund. In addition, the fund can be used for flowers for special services.

### **Forever Pilgrims Fund**

Established in 2021, this endowment fund holds special donations and bequests. Income from this fund may be used for any purpose recommended by F&A and approved by Council.

### **General Fund**

This fund can be used for any purpose designated by F&A.

### **Goddard Fund**

This wasting fund (established to be spent in its entirety) is available to the pastor for extending grants or long-term non-interest bearing loans to members who have an emergency financial need. There is no requirement that the loans be repaid.

### **Interest**

This fund holds the interest received and is periodically allocated to other funds on a proportional basis.

### **Land Sale Fund**

This fund, designated as quasi-endowment, holds the principal and income from the 2007 sale of approximately 2 acres of land. Income goes to the Pilgrim Pride Fund (capital needs). The principal can be spent only by vote of the members of the church.

**Memorial Funds**

This is a pooling of individual memorial funds. The family members of the person(s) in whose memory the donations were made to advise on the use of the monies of the individual funds. Some individual funds have restrictions on them, whereas others do not. These funds cannot be used for operating expenses.

**Memorial Garden Fund**

This fund holds donations for memorial plaques and is used for the maintenance of the Memorial Garden with the intention of having it self-supporting.

**Mission Fund**

This fund is to be used by the Mission Committee for whatever purposes not covered by the annual budget that the committee deems appropriate.

**Parsonage Fund**

Established in 2009 to hold the net proceeds of the sale of the parsonage at 25 Hathaway Road and the purchase of the parsonage at 26 Douglas Road, this fund this fund can be used for extraordinary expenses at the parsonage.

**Pastor's Discretionary Fund**

This fund is used by the pastor for small expenditures in response to a particular need.

**Pilgrim Congregational Fund**

Income from this quasi-endowment fund is transferred into the Pilgrim Pride Fund (capital expenses). Principal can be used only by vote of the church membership.

**Pilgrim Pride Fund**

This is quasi-endowment fund is the source of monies for capital improvements (as contrasted to maintenance expenses, which are covered in the operating budget) for the church and the parsonage.

**Pilgrim Youth Fellowship Fund**

This fund can be used for youth expenses not covered by the operating budget.

**Prepaid Pledges for subsequent years**

This fund contains money given in the current budget year for pledges in following year.

**Pumpkin Patch**

This account holds the net proceeds of the Pumpkin Patch, Its use if determined by Congregational vote via the budget process.

**Revolving Reserve**

This is the repository of operating surpluses and the source of payments for operating deficits.

**Steeple Fund**

This a revolving fund facilitates the allocation of income from a fixed-term lease of our steeple to T-Mobile for a cell tower transceiver.

**Sunday School Fund**

This is the recipient of all Sunday School collections.

## Forever Pilgrims Fund & Society Annual Report – 2023

Committee members: Bob Beckwith (Chair), Rich Edmiston, Rev. Reebee Girash,  
Doug Johnston, and Chris Reaske

The Forever Pilgrims Fund (FPF) and Society was established to help ensure Pilgrim Church will remain an active community for years to come. FPF can be funded in two ways—by donations from current church people as well as by naming the fund in one's will. It was also agreed that FPF donors would be listed in each year's Annual Reports, providing the donor wishes to have their name appear.

The fund is currently set up to annually distribute up to one half of its earned interest and dividends, plus one quarter of the fund's value that exceeds the total amount donated. Areas of need for the distributions are suggested by the F&A Committee with final say and approval voted by the Council. Thus, this formula allows the fund to grow over the years and yet still offers yearly distributions. The first year's distribution (2021) was \$280.27. This was small because the funds were only invested for six months. In 2022 the amount rose to \$957.25 and this year's distribution (thanks to a kind stock market) will be \$2,112.65. Obviously, the growth and payout formula are working very well.

### FOREVER PILGRIMS SOCIETY MEMBERS

Robert E. Beckwith	Sandra Gardiner	Derek Gardiner
Rebecca Kavich Girash	Susan Fagerstrom	Doug Johnston
Barbara Munkres	James Munkres	Mary K. Mackie
Peter A. Mackie	Lesley Morrison	Kevin Morrison
Marcy Gefter	Michael Scott Morton	

The FPF committee is most grateful for the generous support of the above Society members. Please contact Bob Beckwith at [rebeckwith@verizon.net](mailto:rebeckwith@verizon.net) if you would like to become a Society member and help keep Pilgrim Church strong and active for years to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert E. Beckwith

## Pilgrim Congregational Church Investment Committee Report 2023

Members: Bob Beckwith, David McClave, Chris Reaske, Brooks Taylor

2023 was an excellent year for the mutual funds that make up the bulk of the investments managed by the Committee, reflecting the results of the stock market at-large. The list of holdings displayed on the following two pages shows that all five funds managed by the Committee – Beckwith (Principal), Land Sale, Parsonage, Pilgrim Congregational, and Forever Pilgrims – showed significant increases in valuation (net of withdrawals or transfers).

That same list of holdings also shows that the Beckwith (Principal) Fund generated \$24,578 in income, while the Land Sale Fund and Pilgrim Congregational Fund combined generated \$8,823 in income, and the Forever Pilgrims Fund generated \$1,440. All of these returns are the highest since the Investment Committee was established in 2013. Not surprisingly, as a percentage of the starting value of the funds, all these figures are well above historic returns of 2.8%–3.0%. The income from the Beckwith (Principal) Fund goes to the Beckwith (Income) Fund, where it is used to support the music program and to purchase office equipment/software. Income from both the Land Sale Fund and Pilgrim Congregational Fund goes to the Pilgrim Pride Fund, where it is used to pay for capital projects. Income from the Forever Pilgrims Fund is distributed by Council, following a recommendation from the Finance & Administration Committee.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

*David McClave*

David McClave, Treasurer

Home Phone: (781) 861-7466

Email: dramccl@hotmail.com

**Funds Under The Mangement of the Investment Committee  
For the year January 1 - December 31, 2023**

**Holdings as of 12/31/23**

<b>Beckwith (Principal) Fund</b>		
Starting Balance	\$ 564,413.95	\$ 10,256.84
Additions	\$ -	\$ 94,603.68
Transfers to Beckwith (Income) Fund	\$ (24,577.63)	\$ 92,150.89
Change in Valuation	\$ 78,011.21	\$ 71,382.53
Ending Balance	\$ 617,847.53	\$ 73,960.15
		\$ 65,952.55
		\$ 66,777.47
		\$ 142,763.43
		<b>\$ 617,847.53</b>

<b>Land Sale Fund</b>		
Starting Balance	\$ 118,565.75	\$ 2,271.37
Additions/(Withdrawals)	\$ (400.00)	\$ 19,566.38
Transfers to Pilgrim Pride Fund	\$ (5,152.49)	\$ 19,350.82
Change in Valuation	\$ 16,328.76	\$ 14,992.49
Ending Balance	\$ 129,342.02	\$ 15,523.50
		\$ 13,930.10
		\$ 13,880.43
		\$ 29,826.93
		<b>\$ 129,342.02</b>

<b>Parsonage Fund</b>		
Starting Balance	\$ 72,196.33	\$ 6,357.77
Additions	\$ -	\$ 6,171.51
Withdrawals	\$ (26,105.95)	\$ 6,545.21
Change in Valuation	\$ 10,145.46	\$ 6,060.84
Ending Balance	\$ 56,235.84	\$ 6,277.65
		\$ 6,370.86
		\$ 6,084.67
		\$ 12,367.32
		<b>\$ 56,235.84</b>

**Funds Under The Mangement of the Investment Committee  
For the year January 1 - December 31, 2023**

**Holdings as of 12/31/23**

<b>Pilgrim Congregational Fund</b>			
Starting Balance	\$	85,782.36	Cash
Additions			Fidelity Floating Rate High Income
Transfers to Pilgrim Pride Fund	\$	(3,670.43)	Pioneer Multi-Asset Income
Change in Valuation	\$	10,555.12	Wisdomtree Large Cap Dividend
Ending Balance	\$	92,667.05	Wisdomtree Mid Cap Dividend
			Wisdomtree Small Cap Dividend
			Wisdomtree Global Equity Income
			Spartan 500 Index Advantage
			<b>TOTAL</b>
			<b>\$ 92,667.05</b>

<b>Forever Pilgrims Fund</b>			
Starting Balance	\$	62,884.98	Cash
Additions	\$	-	Fidelity Floating Rate High Income
Transfers to Forever Pilgrims (Dist)	\$	(1,439.60)	Pioneer Multi-Asset Income
Change in Valuation	\$	8,246.81	Wisdomtree Large Cap Dividend
Ending Balance	\$	69,692.19	Wisdomtree Mid Cap Dividend
			Wisdomtree Small Cap Dividend
			Wisdomtree Global Equity Income
			Spartan 500 Index Advantage
			<b>TOTAL</b>
			<b>\$ 69,692.19</b>

## Mission Annual Report 2023

We are pleased to report that total Mission giving by Pilgrim in 2023 was \$21,472, about seven percent of the church's annual budget. The total includes directed giving through the church by individuals. We are once again a UCC *Five-for-Five* church, including the gift to Our Church's Wider Mission designated by Council. The four Special Offerings are collected in response to UCC appeals and supplemented by Mission's portion of the Steeple Fund.



United Church of Christ - Five-for-Five Giving	
- Our Church's Wider Mission - Church Council Designated	6500
- - One Great Hour of Sharing	1300
- - Strengthen the Church	500
- - Neighbors in Need	700
- - UCC Christmas Fund	1100



Our youth continue their monthly project to prepare fifty lunches for The Outdoor Church, the 'church on the street' ministering to the homeless in Cambridge. For this heartfelt, heavily hands-on cause, members of the Congregation supply the ingredients each month. If you want an uplift, stop by to watch the finely-tuned prep in action – if you want to help, look for the signup in E-Notes, Mission will reimburse your costs.

When Pilgrim learned of migrant families dropped in temporary shelters in Lexington and surrounding towns, we partnered with other faith groups to provide for them. The community largesse quickly overfilled local needs and was distributed widely. Pilgrim chose the International Institute of New England for half of our Christmas Eve offering, to help these families find work to support themselves, their expressed greatest desire.



Pilgrim Church and Lexington Neighbor Brigade launched another supply drive for Dignity Matters during Women's History Month in March. Pilgrim spearheaded the initiative, and Pilgrims and the community contributed more than 1,500 feminine hygiene products and underwear for women and girls in need. Mission donated funds, generously matched by a DM donor, to help store and distribute the products. We will hold another drive in 2024 and look for opportunities to volunteer in the DM warehouse.

We gave to the Sylvia Ferrell-Jones Fund at YW Boston in memory of our beloved former member. Here in Lexington, we support the Lexington Interfaith Clergy Association and the Lexington Interfaith Garden, and The Lurie Center for Autism. Through UCC Disaster Ministries we gave to the relief effort for the terrible earthquake in Syria and southern Turkey, and we donated to help the nearby town of Leominster recover from severe flooding. We ask our youth each year to choose a group to support – they again selected The Trevor Project – LGBTQ youth deserve a welcoming, loving world. We maintained our support for Cambodian Cocoon and to OUT MetroWest, and gave to Doctors Without Borders. We continued our annual, joyful Mitten Tree and 'Carols and Cocoa' event, collecting bags full of new mittens, hats, gloves, and scarves, and educational toys, for East End House in Cambridge.

Members of Pilgrim perform outreach in other ways. Lexington United Against Antisemitism (LUAA), an interfaith project, was formed last March to mobilize action against antisemitism, which has risen ominously in recent years. Lexington Christians, including six Pilgrims, are participants. If you want to participate in LUAA contact Steve Van Evera. More help is welcome!

We celebrate all the ways that Pilgrim is a caring community - our gifts are made possible by your ongoing support. We thank the many church members who donate goods, and the others who volunteer their time in service projects. The Mission Committee welcomes your ideas and is open to change. If there is a cause close to your heart, which you would have the church support, please come to a Mission meeting, and tell us more.

My thanks to those who participate regularly on Mission, and to Pastor Reebee for her enthusiastic support. The Mission Committee welcomes any member of the Congregation at any time.

Come join us, for one meeting or many – it's fun!

Respectfully submitted,  
Doug Johnston  
Mission Committee Chair

Mission's goal remains *Impactful Giving*, giving more where our dollars make a difference, and emphasizing groups where Pilgrim members play hands-on roles.

<b>Impactful Giving Report</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>United Church of Christ - Five-for-Five Giving</b>					
- Our Church's Wider Mission - Church Council Designated	6500	6500	6500	6500	6500
- - One Great Hour of Sharing	1000	1500	1600	1200	1300
- - Strengthen the Church	600	500	600	750	500
- - Neighbors in Need	1250	1200	1000	1000	700
- - UCC Christmas Fund	1250	1000	1800	550	1100
<b>via UCC Ministries - Disaster Response and Recovery, Climate Justice</b>	1650	1000	1000	1000	1250
- Andover Newton (at Yale)	500	250	250		
- LICA - Lexington Interfaith Clergy Assoc and The Interfaith Garden	450	400	400	400	600
<b>Selected Organizations Ongoing Support ( full list of all donations available upon request )</b>					
Cambodian Cocoon	3250	4820	2912	1400	750
Health Care Without Walls (fmr Women of Means)	1600	800	2500		
The Outdoor Church	500	750	3000	570	1431
East End House	300	300	700	300	300
OUT MetroWest	500	500	500	500	500
YW Boston - Social Justice - Sylvia Ferrell-Jones Fund	500	500	500	500	500
Lurie Center for Autism - MGH - in Lexington	500	500	500	500	500
Church World Service - Concord Crop Walk	250	250	250	250	
LexRAP - Refugee Assistance Program	500	500	500	500	
The Trevor Project			1000	500	404
Shriners Hospital for Children	1250			900	



## Moderator's Report 2023

Pilgrim Church continues to be blessed with a compassionate and energetic pastor, generous members and friends, and dedicated volunteers who both keep the church running and look for opportunities to live out our mission statement to be *“A welcoming home to all spiritual seekers, making a difference in our world by fusing our Christian faith with everyday life and serving God by serving others.”*

Pilgrim's extravagant welcome is central to our congregation's identity. We strive to welcome everyone to our worship services and our activities, whether they are long-time members or a new visitor. Recently more than one individual has commented to me that they noticed the difference from the first time they came to Pilgrim.

Church Council started 2023 with an on-site retreat to ponder the way forward for Pilgrim. The sense was clear that we need to be more intentional in how we extend our welcome into our neighborhood and beyond. We have taken some first steps, but much work remains to make our outreach broader and more effective.

Zoom broadcasts of our worship services, initiated as a necessary response to the pandemic lockdown, have become an integral part of our worship. We have extended our reach to participants in distant locations and to local members of our community who cannot participate in-person in the sanctuary each Sunday.

The past year included several major projects designed to help fulfill our commitment to being good stewards of God's Creation as well as improving access to our worship services. In March, an enhanced sound system was installed to provide better amplification within the sanctuary and a better audio feed for our Zoom broadcasts.

Air-source heat pumps now provide heating and cooling to Pilgrim Hall and the rooms on the ground floor below it. A 34 kW solar photovoltaic system has been installed on our roof and awaits Eversource completing the installation of a new transformer to serve the neighborhood. Of particular note is that the solar project was finished and ready for connection to the grid only a year-and-a-half after Church Council approved the goal to “start to research solar.” Federal and state financial incentives combined with a successful fundraising drive raised most of the funds for the solar project, with the balance coming from the Pilgrim Pride fund and allocations of future cost savings to replenish those funds.

Installing solar panels required replacing the roof a few years earlier than would have otherwise been done. Often this major once-in-a-generation expense is accompanied by a fundraising campaign, but that was not done this time in order not to compete with the solar fundraising drive. You will notice that as a consequence our Pilgrim Pride fund has a negative balance, which we hope to replenish through utility cost savings and future contributions.

Pilgrim Church runs on faithful volunteers who serve as officers, Council Members, committee chairs and members, Church school teachers, youth advisors and chaperones, Zoom hosts, singers and musicians, rental coordinators, and those who just show up when the need arises. We are served by a dedicated staff whose work may seem effortless, but often is anything but. The accomplishments of many of these volunteers and staff fill the pages in this Annual Report. Thank you to everyone who helps make Pilgrim so vibrant.

Serving as Moderator has offered me the privilege of working closely our Pastor, Reebee Girash. Many may not realize that when she is not preaching, teaching Bible study, visiting parishioners, planning events, and tending to the Pilgrim flock, she serves as an officer of LICA (Lexington Interfaith Community Association), counsels and trains UCC students at Harvard Divinity School, and serves as Pilgrim's chief administrative officer. Thank you, Reebee. You are a blessing to us all.

Respectfully submitted,

*Duncan Todd*

Duncan Todd  
Moderator

## Music Ministry Annual Report 2023

Max and I are pleased to deliver the annual report for 2023.

One choral highlight of the year was Palm Sunday which featured two selections from Gabriel Faure's Requiem. The full choir offered a beautiful rendition of the *Angus Dei* and Elena Snow-Evrard sang a soulful solo *Pie Jesu*. The choir ended the program year with a rousing rendition of Craig Curry's *Jazz Alleluia*.

This year Max regularly incorporated a pickup choir into the anthem schedule, encouraging people to sing who are unable to commit to regular rehearsals. This group has been a wonderful addition to the music program and in December joined with violins, cello and saxophone on a rousing rendition of *Lift Up Your Heads O Mighty Gates*.

Volunteer instrumentalists continue to enhance the music program throughout the year. Raghu Amaravadi added his guitar to Max's vocals on multiple Sunday Richard Bruxvoort Colligan offertory selections and Dan and Em Dobre joined Dot for a trio *If You But Trust in God*. An ensemble of instruments featuring Nancy Fuller, Dan, Em, and John Girash supported the pickup choir in December while John, Zac Girash and Kevin Morrison played their hearts out and made Christmas Eve service joyful.

Max's colleague, the Georgian folk and rock musician and TV producer Aleksandre Kharanauli introduced the congregation to Georgian folk music on October 1.

Elena, Max and Dot held a vocal recital in November. Some of the featured composers were Lori Laitman, Clara Schumann, Gustav Mahler, and R. Vaughan Williams.

Thank you for allowing us to lead the Music Ministry at Pilgrim.

Dot & Max

Dorothy Bowe

Max Evrard

## **Pastoral Relations Committee Annual Report - 2023**

Members: Bob Beckwith, Alexis Stevens, and Susan Moffitt

The UCC defines the Pastor Relations Committee as “a standing committee in a congregation, with the purpose of supporting a healthy relationship between the pastor and congregants in order to enhance the effectiveness of the church’s ministry.” The goal of the PRC “is to promote faithful, shared ministry between the pastor and the congregation. The committee works in a context of confidentiality, support, care, and honesty with the pastor, while promoting healthy communication in the congregation as a whole.”

The PRC committee meets on an as-needed basis. This year, the committee operated as a thought-partner for Rev. Reebee as she considered key priorities and how to allocate time. The PRC also supports Rev. Reebee in boundary setting, to make sure she takes time for herself and her family.

Respectfully submitted,

*Susan Moffitt*

## Publicity and Outreach Annual Report – 2023

The objective of Pilgrim Publicity and Outreach is to continue to increase the Church's visibility and engagement in the community. **Pilgrim will continue to share our extravagant welcome and promote the good work that Pilgrim does for our neighbors near and far.**

Throughout the year, press releases and announcements were sent to the local press and lists, including *The Lexington Times*; *Lexington List*, *LexParents*, *LexFUN*, and the digital news source, *The Lexington Observer*. Most Pilgrim news and photos were picked up by the publications. Other digital avenues included Facebook, Instagram, Pilgrim's Website, and Mavens' Facebook page (reaching 3,000 women in Lexington).

We also created event postcards for Pilgrims to share with friends and family and for mailing to neighborhood groups. Many thanks to Pastor Reebee and Kim Provo for their help with publicity logistics, flyer/postcard creation, website maintenance, and social media posts. A special thanks to those Pilgrims who sent postcards or emails/texts to family and friends and/or posted/shared on their social media accounts. **We all are ambassadors of Pilgrim.**



This year we purchased new A-frame letter boards! This enabled us to continue our practice of signage out front. In addition, we displayed A-frame posters for the Pumpkin Patch Fundraiser. Next year we will create new Pumpkin Patch signage. **Many thanks to Jeff Boehm, Kim, and Pastor Reebee** for helping maneuver the large A-frames.

### 2023 Press Releases

- Pilgrim and Hancock Churches Announce Mardi Gras Celebration – 02/01/2023
- Pilgrim Church and Lexington Neighbor Brigade Announce Dignity Matters Supply Drive – 02/16/2023
- Pilgrim Church Services for Lent and Easter 2023 – 02/25/2023
- Pilgrim Church Hosts FREE Jenny the Juggler Magic Show – 04/20/2023
- Lexington Creative Start Presents STEM Exhibition for Children Ages 1-5 – 05/19/2023
- Pilgrim Church Announces Special June Services and Summer Schedule – 05/19/2023
- Pilgrim Church Announces September 2023 Season of Creation Service Schedule – 08/16/2023
- Pilgrim's Annual Pumpkin Patch Starts October 7 – 09/18/2023
- Pilgrim Church Advent and Christmas Service 2023 – 11/14/2023
- Pilgrim Church Celebrates the 2023 Advent and Christmas Season – 11/21/2023



Special posts were submitted to celebrate Fran Ludwig's 2023 Minuteman Cane Award, welcome Republic of Georgia musician Aleksandre Karanauli, and promote Max and Elena Evrard and Dot Bowe's November Recital.

Please contact Pastor Reebee or Lisa Boehm if you are interested in joining the Publicity Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Boehm, Pilgrim Communications Chair

## Pumpkin Patch Report –2023

It was the Pilgrim Pumpkin Patch's 13<sup>th</sup> year. Patterson Farm of Sunderland, Massachusetts, delivered our orange gems on October 7<sup>th</sup>, and we finished the sale a day early as we ran out of stock! More than **54 volunteers contributed their time, talent, and treasure** to help Pilgrim raise \$10,088.37. A portion of our proceeds came from the Apple Pie Fest, which raised \$600, the most since the event started in 2013. We sold 65 products, had 18 bakers, and added spice cookies to the menu, which were a big hit.



Kudos to all the volunteers who unloaded sugar and field pumpkins; staffed the Patch (even in the pouring rain or jumped in to pick up a shift); managed Patch finances; baked for Apple Pie Fest; set up and maintained the Patch through breakdown; supported the Communities United event; and publicized our beloved fundraiser.



Special appreciation for Patch Pilgrims, who provided staffing not only selling pumpkins but also making connections with the community and extending our Church's extravagant welcome. What a difference it made to meet and greet our neighbors. Not only did it influence our final sales tally, but it increased Pilgrim's visibility and reputation within the community. Staffing matters. The Committee will be reviewing staffing practices for 2024 and identifying times when staffing the Patch is most effective to help lighten the load on our members.



**Fact.** This year was not the easiest sales cycle because of the quantity of rain received over the summer that affected the stability of the pumpkin crop and the rain during October that further challenged the product integrity.

Removing rotten pumpkins from the patch was a daily task. **Intention.** Next

year, a composting initiative will be instituted to help reduce the number of spoiled pumpkins placed in the dumpster.

Finally, many thanks to the steering committee: **Lisa Boehm, Dave McClave, Mary Mackie, Duncan Todd, and Pastor Reebee, with the assistance of Jeff Boehm and Kim Provo,** who

worked tirelessly to shepherd Pilgrim's annual event.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Boehm, Steering Committee Chair & Pumpkin Patch Wig/Tiara Enthusiast



## Stewardship Committee Annual Report 2023

On Sunday October 22 we began our 2024 Stewardship Campaign with Rich Edminston, continued the next Sunday, October 29 with Lesley Morrison and finished on November 5 with Susan Moffitt. Their enthusiastic and passionate talks were very much appreciated by the entire congregation.

The theme for this year, “Together we are rooted in love”, recommended by Rev. Reebee, was based on Psalm 1:3:

“They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season.”

Our successful 2024 Stewardship Pledge Drive, concluded with the following results:  
**35** people/families have a total pledge commitment of \$176,628. There were two new pledges.  
**This is a testament to the love, caring and generosity rooted in our Pilgrim community.**

The Stewardship Committee, Michael Scott Morton, Dave McClave and David Nuss, with direction and support from Susan Carabbio and Rev. Reebee, sends its sincere thanks for the generosity of those who have pledged their support for the people, programs, and ministries of Pilgrim Church.

I would also like to thank the members of the Stewardship team for their input and effort in contacting other church members regarding their pledge.

Respectfully submitted,  
*David Nuss*

## Pilgrim Congregational Church Proposed Operating Budget 2024

	Actual	Actual	Proposed
	2022	2023	2024
<b>INCOME</b>			
Current Year Pledges	171,869	171,967	176,628
Less: Anticipated uncollected pledges			(3,533)
Prior Year Pledges	1,350	3,455	2,000
Non-pledge	520	480	250
Loose	1,973	2,804	2,400
Mission	7,347	6,292	9,000
Solar Panel - Income			418
Designated to Mission			
Facilities Donation	18,030	18,160	18,000
Fellowship Hall Rental	43,758	58,733	59,908
Steeple Rental	22,680	22,680	22,680
Pumpkin Patch	10,766	10,190	9,000
Other Fundraising			
Miscellaneous	14,427	16,058	14,400
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>292,720</b>	<b>310,820</b>	<b>311,151</b>



## Pilgrim Congregational Church Proposed Operating Budget 2024

	Actual	Actual	Proposed
	2022	2023	2024
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<u>People</u>			
Pastor - Salary	84,563	88,061	88,061
Pastor - Benefits	12,137	12,737	12,737
Pastor - Travel+Prof Exp	3,064	3,730	5,000
Directors of Music	25,800	25,746	26,802
Director of Christian Ed	31,343	32,640	32,640
Sunday School Teacher		861	2,153
Secretary	19,502	23,769	23,769
Sexton	16,697	18,398	18,398
Childcare Provider	1,373	1,615	1,615
Guest Preachers	550	250	500
Salary Pool			4,999
<u>Programs</u>			
Church School	471	756	800
Youth Groups	30	68	300
Confirmation		38	300
Adult Education	57		50
Care	57	150	250
Mission	22,139	21,472	24,418
Stewardship	279	146	250
Summer Worship			
Fellowship	277	1,003	1,100
Worship	872	435	500
<u>Buildings &amp; Grounds</u>			
Church - Maint	22,263	23,845	23,708
Parsonage - Maint	4,293	4,415	4,548
Church - Utilities	16,452	18,599	19,157
Avoided Electricity Cost			(3,300)
Parsonage - Utilities	5,204	5,694	5,865
<u>Administrative</u>			
Insurance	14,099	14,987	17,156
Office Supplies	2,371	1,997	2,000
Postage	434	160	330
Copying	2,548	1,602	1,650
Marketing & Publicity		62	400
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>286,875</b>	<b>303,233</b>	<b>316,155</b>
<b>NET INCOME (LOSS)</b>	<b>5,845</b>	<b>7,586</b>	<b>(5,004)</b>