

Annual Report for the Year 2022



Westminster Presbyterian Church

presented at

**The Annual Meeting of the
Congregation and Corporation**

February 26, 2023

**The Annual Report
for the Year 2022
Westminster Presbyterian Church**

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**Westminster Presbyterian Church
Statistical Report
Membership Statistics for 2022**

Total Communicant Membership as reported December 31, 2021

253

Additions during 2022

	Male		Female		Total
By Certificate	1		1		2
Reaffirmation	0		1		1
Profession	0		1		1
Confirmation	0		0		0
Other	1		0		1
TOTAL	2		3		5

Losses during 2022

By Death	2		2		4
By Certificate	0		2		2
Other	38		60		98
TOTAL	40		64		104

Total Communicant Membership as reported December 31, 2022

154

Affiliate Members Male: 1 Female: 0 Total: 1

*Into the Church Triumphant
Members Rhoda Bannon, John Berman, Ruth Curtis and Howard West
Friends of Westminster including June Johnson, Jim Elsner and Ralph Sundquist*

Child Baptisms 3
Adult Baptisms 0
Marriages 2

Attendance Figures

Due to the continuation of the global pandemic into 2022, there was a brief time at the beginning of the year where in-person worship was suspended and services were held online:

January 1—February 13, 2022: Worship was held online during this period due to COVID-19 restrictions.

February 20—December 25, 2022: Worship returned to a hybrid format (a combination of in-person worship in the sanctuary plus individuals online, worshipping together) for the remainder of the year.

2022 Zoom Analytics

During the period from January 2 to February 13, Zoom was the only option. Average Zoom attendance was 50 (7 services).

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(Statistical report continued...)

2022 Hybrid Analytics

February 20—December 24

Average in-person attendance:	42
Average online attendance:	17
Average total attendance:	56

Easter 2022 (Hybrid)

In-person attendance:	109
Online attendance:	27

Christmas Eve 2022

5:00 p.m. (no online service)	
In-person attendance:	70
9:00 p.m.	
In-person attendance:	79
Online attendance:	21

Overall average attendance for 2022: 56

**Report of the Clerk of Session
For the Year 2022
Heather McBride, Clerk
Tom Buckley, Clerk pro tempore
Janet Wade-Utay, Clerk pro tempore**

Members of the Session

Nicole Aronson	Tom Buckley	Larry Carr
Ken Garrison	David Hall	Greg Hammond
Heather McBride	Ann Osoba	John Rhine
Art Riihimaki	Barbara Riihimaki	Michael Seltzer
Pam Torsiello	Janet Wade-Utay	

Moderators: The Reverend Julie Emery, The Reverend John Merz

The year 2022 began amidst the Omicron surge of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the first few weeks of the year saw us worshipping virtually until a return to hybrid worship on February 20th. Rev. John Merz ushered in the new year with Westminster as Rev. Julie Emery was completing her leave of absence. The Westminster staff, leadership, and community were very grateful for his support during this time. Westminster was excited to receive Rev. Julie back to work in mid-January. Also in January, the Session voted to hire Anna Pan as Westminster’s musical accompanist. Longtime bookkeeper Jeannine Stimson departed at the end of February, and in March the Session approved the hiring of Accounting Resources Inc. to take over bookkeeping for the church.

Discerning Our Proximate Purpose

In the February Session meeting, Elders Larry Carr and Tom Buckley led a Strategic Imperative Planning Activity for Session members. The Elders voted on church-wide imperatives that had two goals: (1) the highest impact on living our core values of deepening faith, building relationships and pursuing (2) the highest overall achievability.

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(Clerk Report continued...)

Three teams were formed to continue our work:

1. Clarifying Purpose Team led by Elder Tom Buckley,
2. Staff Role Description Team led by Elder Larry Carr,
3. Communications Team led by Elder Greg Hammond.

The Session continued to work on our proximate purpose through our retreat in January 2023. Here is the proximate purpose they proposed:

Westminster will become a community hub focusing on mental health, food insecurity, and affordable housing. The role of the Westminster community hub will be to welcome, coordinate and build relationships to address concerns and needs in our community.

In 2023, the Session, through further discussions with potential partners, will narrow this idea to better align with community needs. The work on defining our proximate purpose would not have been possible without a sub-team of Session who worked to define opportunities, create our congregational process, and analyze the data. We are deeply grateful to the Clarifying Purpose team of Peter Benner, Tom Buckley, Julie Emery, Bob Raney, Nancy Sousa, Karen Wagner, and Janet Wade-Utay.

The Year in Review

In February 2022, the Session accepted with regret and prayers the resignation of Elder David Hall from Session, the Finance Committee, the Endowment Committee, the Stewardship Committee, and as President of the Corporation. The following month, Pam Torsiello joined the Session for a one-year term to replace David Hall as chair of the Finance Committee, and Janet Wade-Utay was also installed as an Elder for a one-year term. In June, the Session accepted with regret the resignation of Elder Heather McBride from Session and her role as Clerk.

We voted to transition Callie Boone from the interim to permanent Minister of Music in May and have continued to appreciate her musical and spiritual leadership.

Through several months of research, the MR&P team identified a third party firm, Advanced Benefit Strategies (ABS), who offers and administers employee benefit plans for small organizations with a specialty in non-profit organizations. At the recommendation of MR&P, the Session approved offering healthcare premium support, Health Savings Account (HSA), and Flexible Spending Account (FSA) plans to qualified employees working 20 hours or more beginning in 2023. The HSA and FSA plans are employee funded with the church paying an annual administration fee to manage the programs.

The Engage team supported the continued update of Westminster roles to reflect our active membership and offered a membership class in September 2022. Following the class, the Session voted to receive five new members into our faith community.

In May, Rev. Emery, Elders, and congregants traveled together with members of First Presbyterian Church, Hartford on a service and learning trip to Puerto Rico to help rebuild after the hurricane. A second trip planned for September was postponed when another hurricane hit the island at the time the trip was supposed to happen.

We celebrated new life in our congregation with the baptism of Juniper Feingold, granddaughter of Ma'Lynn Feingold. We also celebrated the baptisms of Nora Mae Downing and Maggie Rose Mansolf, children of Abbey Downing and Alyssa Mansolf. These were the first baptisms since COVID and were indeed beautiful worship services of celebration!

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(Clerk Report continued...)

Budget discussions for 2023 began in October with each ministry team preparing and submitting budget requests to the finance team. The Session had significant budget discussions at the November and December meetings resulting in an approved budget for 2023. Through these discussions, we continued to pray and discern how God is calling us at this time and how that impacts our church finances. The budget discussions were informed by the draft terms of call for the Pastor that will be presented to the congregation for approval at the Annual Meeting in February 2023.

Alyssa Kissel, a member of Westminster and Yale Divinity Student, requested Session support her as a prospective Inquirer to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. The Session unanimously approved the request and appointed Art Riihimaki and Janet Wade-Utay to support her journey.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather McBride, Clerk of Session
Tom Buckley, Clerk pro tempore
Janet Wade-Utay, Clerk pro tempore

**The Rev. Julie Emery
Pastor/Head of Staff**

“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs forth! Do you not perceive it?” - Isaiah 43:18

The year 2022 was a year of continued shifts and adjustments to what has become a ‘new normal’ for Westminster in the wake of the 2020 Covid Pandemic. We learned that our need to pivot quickly will be essential for our ministry going forward. We learned that our need to connect with people via hybrid format, allowing for online community and accessibility, will continue to be an important value for our future. And we learned that these pivots, on top of the trauma and stress that has been endured by our community over the past few years, have taken a toll on our staff, volunteers, and congregation.

We are now experiencing a different church than the church of even five years ago. Both the number and the capacity of our volunteers has diminished. We are no longer able to offer the programming, care, service opportunities or events of a mid-sized congregation. And, the events and programming we do offer must be offered for both in person and online participants, requiring multi-level planning and preparation. All of this has inevitably affected our ability to raise the income we need to support the building and staff in a way that is needed in today’s world. It is challenging to be the church in 2023.

This is not only the plight of Westminster. These challenges are happening in nearly every church and many non-profit organizations. While we are not alone in these struggles, we do have an opportunity to respond to them by listening to God’s unique calling for our congregation.

When I made the difficult decision to take a leave of absence in 2021, I became acutely aware that I was not alone in feeling burnt-out, overwhelmed and exhausted. I continue to be deeply grateful to Westminster, the leadership and staff, who acted with kindness and generosity when I shared my need to take leave. That time was vital for my recovery from burnout and exhaustion, as well as deeply important for my family, and I am so grateful for it.

During that time and upon my return in late January 2022, I began noticing and hearing more about the mental health concerns of many of our families within the church as well as within our community. We held a worship service in February where we asked our congregation, “What have you been carrying?” and learned that many had been struggling with mental illness either themselves or through supporting family members. We saw leaders stepping back due to burnout or health concerns. It became clear that we needed to make some adjustments.

Meanwhile, the Session started a process of strategic thinking and discussions during my leave of absence that carried through the spring. Leaders focused on taking a deep look at the job descriptions of the staff and pastor to increase clarity, understand division of labor, and help with both support and accountability. We spent some time considering the ways we needed to increase communication, both internally and externally. And finally, we gathered a sub-group of both Session leaders and church members to begin discerning what God might be calling us to do and be in this new world that is emerging in the wake of the pandemic.

There were some glimmers of the Holy Spirit at work in the conversations of what became the Clarifying Purpose Team in the Spring of 2022. Many felt a pull to consider ways to address the mental health crisis facing our community. But by summer the burnout and exhaustion from our volunteers seemed to be reaching a fever pitch. It was time to rest.

The summer of 2022 began a season of Sabbath. We asked committees and teams to take a break from business-focused meetings but to instead focus on spiritual practices and building community. Session members were invited to spend the summer in prayer, worship, to participate in Bible study, and to read a book titled, “How to Lead When You Don’t Know Where You Are Going,” by Susan Beaumont. We pared down our volunteer needs for worship significantly and invited conversations in worship around rest and sabbath, hearing God’s voice and calling. We invited people to worship and rest.

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(Pastor Report continued...)

Out of this season of rest the Session began a period of deep discernment in fall 2022. Led by Beaumont's book we began a contemplative practice of listening for God's leading for Westminster. We spent time at each meeting reading Scripture and in silent prayer. We shared our passions and concerns about our church's future. To widen our circle of discernment, in September we sought input from the congregation through small groups in worship and online. We asked about the passions and concerns of our community, where they felt God's Spirit moving and how they wanted to engage in our ministry together. All of these conversations were wonderfully fruitful.

The congregational conversations re-affirmed the three basic values the Session has been lifting up since 2020: **Building Relationships, Deepening Faith, and Pursuing Justice**. These values continue to be essential to who we are as a church. The conversations in September, coupled with the congregational conversations from earlier in the year also lifted up many concerns for our surrounding community, among them xenophobia, affordable housing and food insecurity and mental illness. We began to discern our way to what Susan Beaumont calls a 'proximate purpose.' This purpose is 'proximate,' because the speed at which our world is changing prevents us from thinking too far ahead. Instead, this purpose is a 'next right thing' that will lead us to the *next* right thing and the *next*, as we continue to listen to God's Word and Spirit among us.

There is a sense of urgency among the leaders of Westminster. Our current financial commitments are not sustainable with our current level of giving and income. And yet, there is renewed excitement and energy for our future. At present, coming out of a Session retreat in January 2023, the Session is exploring the possibility of becoming a 'community hub' of resources and support centered around either mental illness or affordable housing. We are seeking community partnerships, investigating available resources and current community needs. We are both hopeful and open to God's leading as we discern our future.

We know that pursuing a revitalized future for our church will require intention and investment of time, talent and treasure. None of us can make guarantees. What we must do, is have faith. God is with us, calling us and strengthening us for that calling. So in faith, we move toward our future with hope. We continue to build relationships, deepen our faith and pursue justice so that God's Spirit might move through us and through God's beloved church, Westminster.

Rev. Julie Emery

Ministry Areas

Worship

The Worship team supports our pastor in offering creative and vital worship that invites and engages people of all ages and backgrounds, welcoming the people of God into praise, lament, singing, and prayer in the communal worship of God.

Guiding Scripture: Psalm 100, “Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the lands! Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!”

Worship Elders: Ken Garrison and Janet Wade-Utay

Team Members: Rev Julie Emery, Nicole Aronson, Callie Boone, Karen Hammond, Alyssa Kissel (Yale Divinity Student Intern)

Organist/Accompanist: Anna Pan (February 2022—present), Barbara Riihimaki (Interim until February 2022)

Choral Scholars: Andrew Gagiou, Ryan Mancini and Vanessa Paré

A/V Technician: Jack Zapata

A/V Volunteers: Nicole Aronson, Ken Garrison and Janet Wade-Utay

Chancel Choir: Eliza Cleaveland, Christina Garrison, Art Riihimaki, Barbara Riihimaki, Janet Wade-Utay, Karen Wagner

Hand Bell Choir: Nicole Aronson, Marti Boyer, Liz Doering, Barbara Riihimaki, Carol Schramm, Tony Torsiello, Janet Wade-Utay

Communion Coordinators: Liz Doering and Karen Wagner

Banner Coordinators: Carol and Craig Schramm

Callie Boone Minister of Music

It is truly a blessing to be afforded the opportunity to reflect on the Music Ministry’s presence in our WPC community throughout the last year. To make the point short and sweet:

The Music Ministry at WPC is a family that embodied faithful education, worshipful inclusion, and creative innovation in 2022.

The Music Ministry made an active choice in 2022 to make “Communion” the nucleus of its program. For those who attended Communion in Concert last June, you might have had the opportunity to read that, to us, communion means to share one’s intimate thoughts or feelings with (someone), especially on a spiritual level, or to feel in close spiritual contact with. For us, that looked something like this:

Faithful Education

Each rehearsal from 2022 to present features activities and repertoire that offer an opportunity for all of us to learn how to support ourselves and our bodies in a way that will allow us to worship through music for as long as we are able. We purposefully connect in devotion and prayer that both challenge our understanding and welcome new perspectives of our Christian faith. We were blessed by the presence of three scholarship students - Andrew Gagiou, Ryan Mancini, and Vanessa Paré - who bring to us musical and personal teachings that are invaluable to our growth. Additionally, two A/V interns were welcomed into our midst last year, Ian Kimberly (May-August 2022) and Jack Zapata (September 2022-present).

Worshipful Inclusion

To truly commune, one cannot take part in the experience of worship alone. Knowing that, the Music Ministry welcomed members of the WPC congregation to participate in **Music Sunday**, a **Christmas Eve Choir**, and regular paperless congregational singing. We invited guest musicians from within and outside of the WPC community to share with us their remarkable artistry. With the intention of creating welcome, we encouraged (and will continue to encourage) participants of all ages, stages, and musical abilities to engage musically with us.

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(Minister of Music report continued....)

Creative Innovation

Truth be told, 2022 presented a necessary exploration of ways to bolster the funding and support of the Music Ministry. In a bold response, Anna Pan, our organist/accompanist, facilitated the exquisite **Communion in Concert** opportunity for us in June. Ryan and Vanessa, two of our scholars, welcomed us to a celebratory outdoor event - **Raking in the Fun** - filled with music, fellowship, and some of the best homemade baked goods I have ever eaten. Each of these experiences, among others, created opportunities for us to commune together in celebration of the music that serves as a special part of worship at WPC. It also gave us the privilege to welcome members of our community outside of this church to join us in these jubilant music events.

It is important to note that none of the works of this ministry would have been possible without the support of countless volunteers and attendees who stepped up with a surge of time, talent, and treasure. To all of those who supported us this year, please know that you are deeply appreciated. A special thank you is also due to Anna Pan, who jumped into her new role at WPC with wholehearted courage, engagement, and expertise. Our communion would not have been the same without her.

The communion journey asks of us vulnerability, humility, grace, and humor. Speaking from my experience with the members of the WPC Music Ministry, I can share that all of those and more are eagerly exemplified each week. 2022 was a year of faithful humans working together to make worshipful music now, and for years to come. Please know that if you are ever interested in the opportunity to take part in the Music Ministry, we are here for you.

Worship Team **Ken Garrison and Janet Wade-Utay, Elders**

In 2022, we were delighted to welcome more congregants back to in-person worship while still maintaining an on-line worship presence. We met throughout the year to plan hybrid worship services and continue to rebuild our worship team post COVID. We celebrated Ash Wednesday and Easter services in our sanctuary for the first time since 2020 and it was indeed a joyous Easter celebration! During Holy Week, we joined First Presbyterian Church of Hartford (FPCH) for Maundy Thursday Communion Service at FPCH. Worship included a meal and worship.

Our summer worship was a bit more relaxed but continued in the hybrid format. In the fall, we once again welcomed everyone back to worship with renewed energy. Our monthly Living in Faith Together (LIFT) services began an experiment with morning worship and an evening hands-on worship with mission focus and a meal. Our Advent season was capped with beautiful services at 5:00 and 9:00 PM. At the 5:00 PM service we celebrated with a paper bag pageant to recall the Christmas story that involved people of all ages to retell the story. The second service music was enhanced by Thread City Brass, our bell choir, and a reunion voice choir of musical celebration of the Savior's Birth.

We welcomed Callie as our permanent music minister and we give thanks for Anna Pan, our amazing accompanist who started with us this year. Their tireless energy and love of God are evident in all they do and we are so grateful to have them! Both have extraordinary talents and add greatly to our worship experience. We gave thanks to Barbara Riihimaki as our interim accompanist until Anna was hired and are grateful that Barbara continues to sing in the choir and accompany us as needed when Anna is away. Barbara's love of music and commitment to Westminster's music ministry is an inspiration to all and greatly appreciated!

We continued to enjoy the musical talents of our music scholars throughout the year. Andrew Gagliu (tenor), Ryan Mancini (bass) and Vanessa Paré (mezzo soprano), gave strength of voice to our choir and shared solo talents blessing worship in many ways. We were also treated to spring and fall concerts by our music scholars. The concerts were fun and offered an opportunity to appreciate the varied talents of our music scholars while raising funds for the music scholar program.

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(Worship Team report continued...)

In addition to the music of our adult choir, the Westminster Bell choir played multiple times throughout the year, enhancing worship with music at Christmas, Easter, and several other times during the year. We are thankful for their commitment and the music ensemble they create.

We were blessed by the continued contributions of Alyssa Kissel, our Yale Divinity School Intern who worshipped with us, preached for us, shared her talents in worship planning, and helped with many behind the scenes activities. We are also grateful to the Rev. John Merz, Rev. Chris Tate, and Rev. Shannan Vance O'Campo who led worship while Julie was away.

This year we offer a special thanks to Carol and Craig Schramm, our banner coordinators for many, many years as they are passing the baton on to new volunteers. The banners grace our Sanctuary with beauty as the liturgical seasons change and we appreciate their dedication to this activity. We also give thanks to Nicole Aronson who supported our worship team and our on-line worshippers through Zoom host coordination and so many other ways. As Nicole steps up as moderator of the Presbytery of Southern New England, she has passed on her knowledge and gifts to others to support our on-line worshippers.

We want to thank all the many wonderful volunteers and staff who work tirelessly to make our worship and musical experiences a blessing to all. This includes but is not limited to the audio-visual technicians, Zoom hosts, bell ringers, choristers, communion planners and servers, flower donors and arrangers, welcome team, Elders, liturgists, musicians, pastors and lay preachers, our music minister, church administrator, sanctuary decorators, instrumental soloists and all other volunteers who enhance our worship.

As we look forward to 2023, we have continued opportunities to support the development and delivery of meaningful and creative services that bring a worshipful experience to both in-person and virtual worshippers. If you love worship, we invite you to join us in big or small ways to make it happen. Please come join us!

Flourish Team

Flourish supports and encourages ALL people as they grow on their faith journey through community, Bible study, prayer, practice and service.

Guiding Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:5-7 “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.”

Elder: Larry Carr

Karen Hammond Director of Faith Formation

I was recently asked (by my dental hygienist!) why “Christian Education” is now called “Faith Formation.” It’s a great question. And while I couldn’t answer too completely while my teeth were being cleaned, the question has been sitting with me and I have been considering this quite a bit.

I believe that this shift in lexicon – these new words – are an attempt to try to more accurately describe our individual and collective faith journey. When you get right down to it, faith is something that is very personal and unique to each individual. For that reason, it is something that cannot be taught in the same way that arithmetic or scientific facts can be taught. Instead, faith is something that must be individually formed. Learning stories of faith, worshiping communally, hearing others’ ideas and perspectives, asking questions, practicing justice work, and living in community are all actions that can help with this formation. But in the end, each person must form, define and choose their faith for themselves.

Considering this shift in perspective, it seems to make sense that we no longer talk about “Christian Education.” This viewpoint also makes my job as Director of “Faith Formation” more exciting. I am humbled and honored to be charged with helping to lead this community on individual and collective faith journeys. When I look back at 2022, I see many ways that we at Westminster have supported faith formation. The Flourish Team report from Elder Larry Carr outlines many of these specifics. Please know that each program, presentation, and worship element that is led, comes from a deep desire to respect and foster each person’s unique path.

My sincere hope is that all that we do will lead each person connected to Westminster – children, youth, adults and those who feel in between – to consider and deepen their personal faith. It is an honor and a pleasure to be deeply involved in this work, and I am grateful for the opportunity to grow with and among you. This year I have greatly enjoyed the opportunity to speak at a national conference about LIFT and to coach other church educators through the process of rethinking faith formation. I have absolutely loved the chance to engage with young ones weekly during worship services at our Worship Stations and at our Time for Children. I have been stretched (in very positive ways) to develop and plan our LIFT Sundays in a way that they might speak to people of all ages. And I am thankful for conversations that revolved around what we want to offer to our teens as we planned for a 2023 Confirmation program.

Please know that I close out 2022 being indeed very grateful to be called the Director of Faith Formation. I look forward to seeing where we will grow in the year ahead.

Flourish Team **Larry Carr, Elder**

Some Highlights

- We began our LIFT (Living in Faith Together) programs in 2022 by choosing to use the “8 Habits of Evangelism”, a study provided by the Presbyterian Mission Agency, as our starting point.
- The focus of each monthly LIFT offering was informed by this study, with the following themes: January – Generosity; February- Sacraments; March- Prayer; April – Justice and May- Fellowship.
- LIFT – a time for rebuilding followed our summer break. A new focus was set around our undertaking service projects. A dedicated team of Rev. Julie Emery, Callie Boone, Minister of Music, and Karen Hammond, Director of Faith Formation, spent a significant amount of time discussing how to reconstitute LIFT beginning in the fall of 2022. They revisited the purpose, form, and implementation model for LIFT. This included choosing to offer a meal following the Sunday afternoon LIFT, targeting members of our community and beyond, and encouraged us all to assist in getting the word out.
- Number of people attending increased to about 40 or so, with nearly 80% of them only attending the LIFT event on Sunday. Nearly 25-30% of attendees were under 18 years of age.
- A good many families with young people attended in the fall, allowing us to achieve our goal of having more intergenerational programs.
- The Flourish Ministry also continued to offer worship stations at our worship services and lead a Time for Children as a part of each service.
- The first confirmation class in four years is being planned for 2023, with the first three months being based on Matthew 25. Our new curriculum places an emphasis on our desire to meet the greatest needs of our day with love, hope and compassion. This program will kick off with a 24-hour retreat for the confirmands and their mentors. The age group this year will include all interested high schoolers. The volunteer mentors will meet with their assigned confirmand perhaps six times during the program to discuss how to live out their purpose.
- Matthew 25 tells us that God wants our lives to overflow with mercy, love, and compassion. We can do this by following him in responding to the greatest needs of our day with love and hope. We need to consider how we are looking out for those in need around us, and then develop ways we can be of help to them.
- We feel strongly that the value of our rather unique LIFT programs far exceeded their associated costs, while being very well attended, providing increased visibility for WPC, and truly adding much to our fulfilling our overall mission.
- Easter Egg Hunt in April was very well received and publicized. Many non-members from the community chose to attend. Many volunteers offered their time to stuff eggs, hide eggs, greet families, take pictures, help with crafts, and serve snacks.
- In May, the LIFT event discussed the habit of fellowship and its connection to evangelism. A potluck lunch followed services.
- In November we filled Thanksgiving baskets for our neighbors and prepared holiday notes to incarcerated people housed in a penal institution in Ohio. This work certainly reinforced how blessed we were to be giving thanks with our family and loved ones this year.
- In December the LIFT Sunday gathering was spent making gifts for our Westminster friends who are unable to be with us in person over the holidays.

What are we grateful for?

- That we as a community of faith continue to serve the needs of our neighbors, while we recuperate from the pandemic.
- For our committed and dedicated staff members who gave of themselves to sustain our church and its many worthwhile programs and activities, while also investing considerable time in reinvigorating the LIFT program to make it larger, and more inclusive.
- Proud to be a part of this faith community who are committed to serving the needs of the underserved and furthering our initiatives and those of outside organizations, like GHIAA, in their pursuit of social justice.

Engage Team Greg Hammond, Chair

The Engage Team strives to have all members involved in the ministry of Westminster through the offering of their God-given time, talents, and treasures. We are committed to spreading our Christian message by making meaningful connections with the broader community.

Guiding Scripture: Romans 12:4-8 “For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, through many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”

Engage Team Members: John Berman, Cyndi Brown, Larry Carr, Ann Cox, Abbey Downing, Sandy Fry, Duane Grabber, Greg Hammond (Chair, September-December), El Harp, Pam Rekow, John Rhine, Barbara Riihimaki (Chair, January-August), Stacy Raney, and Michael Seltzer.

Stewardship

The Stewardship Committee was successfully created in 2022 to include a representative from each of Westminster’s ministry teams plus our Yale Divinity School Intern. The Committee consisted of Cyndi Brown, Larry Carr, Linda Geisler, Greg Hammond, Alyssa Kissel, Stacy Raney, Pam Rekow, Barbara Riihimaki (Chair), and Ellen Smith.

With a strong committed committee, the 2022 Stewardship Campaign exceeded the financial commitment goal of \$285,000. The campaign included an initial letter mailed on January 3rd, weekly emails starting on January 9th, and weekly Moment of Generosity stories shared by ministry team representatives and summarized by Linda Geisler and Ellen Smith to be included with the weekly status updates via Constant Contact and social media. The result was:

Total Financial Pledges: \$289,000
Total Per Capita Contributions: \$5,367

This milestone was celebrated with a thank you note to everyone who pledged. Following the end of the financial campaign, monthly speakers continued the conversation of stewardship throughout the year with stories of sharing time and talent.

Communications

In 2021 the Communication Committee decided to make updating Westminster’s website a priority for 2022. A small group consisting of Greg Hammond (Chair), Karen Hammond, Becky Kimberly, and Alyssa Kissel looked at a long list of church websites making notes of what we liked, what we did not like, and what pages and components we felt were important to include in the new website design. From these conversations the Committee developed a draft framework for a new website and started to gather contact information for potential website designers. With the ministry team sabbatical for the summer and Session’s search for Westminster’s proximate purpose, the website was put on hold until 2023.

During the spring of 2021 the Communications Committee created a framework for sharing Westminster’s activities and events to the various media in our surrounding community. These efforts were fruitful in having our Community Easter Egg Hunt featured on the front page of the *Hartford Courant*.

Thank you to Tom Buckley, John Rhine and Michael Seltzer who joined and contributed to the Communications Committee mid-year. In the fall of 2022, the Communications Committee stopped meeting independently and started to meet with the Engage Team.

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(Engage Team Report continued...)

Throughout November Westminster shared the Alphabet of Gratitude from Vibrant Church Communications on its social media. We are grateful for the time and effort of Stacy Raney who set up and scheduled all the social media posts.

The Engage Team Blueprint for the Future

During 2022, Session challenged each ministry team to develop a blueprint for the future. The Engage Team developed the following for the desired future state of engagement at Westminster:

1. MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Westminster is a vibrant church of engaged members whose interconnectedness creates a lively, energizing community of faith and ministries. All members of Westminster are connected to a small group, Team, or ministry.

Through each member's engaged involvement at Westminster and consistent, enrolling messages about stewardship throughout the year, the annual stewardship campaign is a celebration of Westminster's ministries and the start of a new year. Members provide financial pledges and commitments of time and talent for the coming year by the end of January so the church can continue its ministries seamlessly and without concern for financial support and member participation.

Measures of Success:

- Each member is participating in a group, team, or ministry of Westminster.
- Each Westminster Team has at least 10 team members.
- Westminster offers a variety of small groups that serve the various interests and passions of its members. At least 50% of the members participate in a small group.
- At least 85% of member households, including 100% of Westminster's leadership, submit a financial pledge by January 31st each year.
- Messages about stewardship of time, talent and treasure are shared with members on a regular basis throughout the year.
- Visitors to Westminster receive a warm welcome from Engage Team members who follow up with individuals within a week of their visit if they provide their contact information.
- Westminster hosts at least two gatherings per year to share information about Westminster Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian faith. These sessions will be available as a refresher for current members and an introduction for visitors and potential members.

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Westminster is known in West Hartford and throughout Connecticut as an accepting, diverse, vibrant community of faith sharing God's love through intergenerational worship and actions for social justice. Our website, social media and community mentions attract new visitors to become actively involved members.

Measures of Success:

- Westminster has an updated website that is attractively designed and easy to navigate and maintain. The website draws 10 new visitors per month.
- The number of people who like or follow Westminster's social media pages are equal to at least two times the number of members. Our online community is interested in what we are doing and the impact our actions are having in the world.
- Through proactive press releases Westminster is mentioned or featured in various online, print, or broadcast media at least once each calendar quarter

(continued....)

3. CONGREGATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Part of being in the Westminster congregation is that you are seen and known. Our congregation is a community of individuals with personal, caring connections developed and maintained through small and congregation-wide gatherings.

Measures of success:

- Westminster hosts at least two events to invite and involve the entire congregation. The goal of each event will be to attract and deepen the relationships within the Westminster congregation. At each event we will have at least 50% of the congregation in attendance.
- All members of Westminster attend at least one in person or virtual event outside of worship each year.
- The Engage Team reviews the membership rolls at least once a year to determine each member's engagement and participation as well as looking at members who have drifted away from Westminster. Steps will be taken by the Engage Team to reach out to members who are not engaged to reengage them or may need to be removed from the membership rolls.

Engage Team Highlights

- January – March 2022: Successful stewardship campaign exceed the contributions goal for the year.
- April 23, 2022: Westminster hosted a Community Easter Egg Hunt. The event was well received and attended by many families with young children. The appearance of the Easter Bunny (thank you Aiden Emery!) was a huge hit with everyone, including the photographer from the *Hartford Courant*.
- May 21, 2022: Members gathered for the spring cleanup to provide the church grounds with some attention and care.
- June 12, 2022: A tasty, retro ice cream social was held after the worship service.
- September 2022: Thanks to the hard work of Nicole Aronson, Duane Grabber, Becky Kimberly and Barbara Riihimaki, an updated picture directory was prepared and distributed.
- October 15, 2022: Rake in the Fun Fall Festival was organized by the Westminster music scholars. The event with a live band, food truck, bake sale and 50/50 raffle raised over \$2,100 for the music scholarship fund.
- October 22, 2022: A small but productive group of members gathered for a fall clean-up of the church grounds and some apple cider and doughnuts.
- November 20, 2022: Members decorated the sanctuary for Advent. This year's decorations included two new Christmas trees, one for the sanctuary and one for the foyer. We are very grateful to Karen and Greg Hammond who created new "winter sky" banners and Janet Wade-Utay for her assistance with the system to hang the banners.
- Throughout the year the Engage Team continued to greet and write welcome notes to visitors and send monthly birthday cards to members.
- In September, the Engage Team hosted a Westminster 101 class resulting in 5 new members.

Nominating Committee **Barbara Riihimaki, Chair**

I give thanks to the members of the 2022 Nominating Committee: El Harp, Eina Rieger, Art Riihimaki, Barbara Riihimaki, and Rev. Julie Emery, Ex-officio.

The Nominating Committee contacted 26 church members seeking to fill leadership positions on the Session, Deacons, nominating committee, endowment and memorial gifts committee, and audit committee with an emphasis on diversity in committee composition. While there were still openings that remained unfilled, we give thanks for those who said yes to these important positions.

Session – 12 positions

John Rhine (renew for 1 year)
Tom Buckley (renew for 1 year)
Janet Wade-Utay (class of 2025)
Art Riihimaki (class of 2025)
Ann Osoba (class of 2025)
3 vacancies

Deacons – 12 positions

Joanne Berry (renew for 1 year)
Jean Summers (renew for 1 year)
Charlotte Logan (renew for 1 year)
Joanna Myers (class of 2023)
Ma'Lynn Feingold (class of 2023)
Molly Gavin (class of 2025)
Abbey Downing (class of 2025)
2 vacancies

Nominating Committee – 9 positions

El Harp – (class of 2023)
Eina Rieger – (class of 2023)
Barbara Riihimaki (class of 2023)
Art Riihimaki (class of 2023)
Rev. Julie Emery (Ex-officio)

Endowment & Memorial Gifts – 6 positions

Sara Ambrosino (class of 2023)
El Harp (class of 2023)
Art Riihimaki (class of 2023)
Rev. Julie Emery (Ex-officio)

Audit – 3 positions

Pam Torsiello (class of 2023)
Ann Jarrett (class of 2023)
1 vacancy

Serve Team **Tom Buckley and Michael Seltzer, Elders**

The Serve team provides opportunities to experience and share God's love through serving others, advocating for God's justice, and educating our congregation regarding issues of social justice and community need.

Guiding Scripture: Isaiah 58 and Micah 6:8 "He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?"

Serve Team Deacons: Abbey Downing, Ma'Lynn Feingold, Joanna Myers, Katie Osoba, Ellen Smith

Slowly working our way out of a global pandemic, the Serve Team and our congregation again stepped up to answer the call of our mission service through our guiding values of building relationships, deepening our faith, and pursuing justice. The Serve Team is the "mission arm" of our church, engaging in charity, mission and pursuing justice locally and beyond.

We thankfully resumed our monthly live serving of meals at South Park Inn (SPI), thanks to our incredible Team and Congregation. Our preparers became more creative along the way with wider, healthier assortments of food. South Park Inn maintains its position as the premier model for housing and feeding residents, recognized by the State of Connecticut. We cherish the relationship we have with them and continue to expand our activities with them through the leadership of Deacon Abbey Downing.

Westminster continued its financial contributions and other donations at various times of need at SPI. This is the beauty of maintaining a liaison relationship with Ministries such as SPI, to manage the scheduling, volunteer experience, and special needs and activities throughout the year. Abbey maintains regular communication with SPI's new Director of Development and Community Outreach Jade Stolz, coordinating their needs with our ability to serve. Our Serve Team stepped up in August for another Back-to-School Backpack program, with our members donating 20 backpacks plus school supplies for children living in SPI. We kept another wonderful tradition in December of SPI receiving our Magi Gifting in 2022, with our members donating nearly 100 items. The year ahead is a time for opportunities to develop our Ministry further at SPI, as we grow our volunteer base through a campaign to engage our Team and the Congregation, to take part in this challenge.

Ellen Smith maintained our wonderful relationship with our Covenant to Care social worker Nadia Pelaez. In November, we collected Thanksgiving Baskets of food: 15 baskets of food were donated for 15 families in the care of Covenant to Care along with a \$25 gift card to Stop & Shop for each family to purchase a turkey or food of their choice. Ellen and Karen Hammond got creative by developing a LIFT service in November to involve the congregation, particularly the youth, in sorting and packing the food donations. In December, our congregation again generously donated Angel Gifts for 12 Covenant to Care children, and \$250 in Walmart gift cards for Covenant to Care families as identified by Nadia during 2022 for her social work needs.

Ann Cox continued to provide wonderful coordination of Jesse's Garden in 2022. Jesse's Garden had a bountiful harvest of beans, tomatoes, herbs, eggplant, and peppers, including the ever-returning sunflowers. All produce was donated to Loaves and Fishes in Hartford which provides meals daily to the food insecure. Wanda Bender helped harvest the produce and take it to Loaves and Fishes, while Mike McElroy watered the garden. Ann expresses her endless thankfulness for all the help she has received to deliver a plentiful harvest for the food insecure.

Food insecurity was the Serve Team's theme for 2022 and will continue to be in 2023. In addition to our work with SPI, our ministry with Loaves and Fishes continues and is led by Margaret Taylor and Nicole Aronson. We increased our financial contribution to Foodshare, as we supported the historic merger in September 2021 between the state's two largest nonprofit anti-hunger organizations, Connecticut Food Bank and Foodshare to create a new name: Connecticut Foodshare. We have re-established our connection with The Hillcrest Area Neighborhood Outreach Center (HANOC), a collaborative effort of the Town of West Hartford, the West Hartford Housing Authority, West Hartford Public Schools, and other community agencies.

(continued....)

(Serve Team Report continued...)

HANOC helps families with limited economic means to become more financially independent and integrated into the schools and community by coordinating resources to meet their needs. Deacon Joanna Myers and our Youth Deacon Katie Osoba will lead our work with them. Similarly, Deacon Ellen Smith will lead our reconnection with Hands on Hartford, a social service nonprofit organization that serves Hartford's most economically challenged residents in the areas of food, housing, and health. We are planning an educational program with Hands on Hartford at the church for Spring 2023.

We had a wonderful update on the progress of the Al Radi family, the Syrian family we resettled in 2017 with our partners from Beth El Temple and Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS). The Al Radi family has become incredibly independent and successful, purchasing and renovating a house in West Hartford and supporting their children who are all very successful in the West Hartford school system, all while expanding their family with a new young son two years ago. This success story is a true testament to the significance of committing to "welcoming the stranger" and genuinely exemplifies our values at Westminster.

While Westminster was not in a position to sponsor a refugee family to resettle this year, we did reach out to IRIS to see if there was an opportunity for Westminster members to help in small ways with other sponsoring groups. Thanks to the work of our Deacons Ma'Lynn Feingold, Joanna Myers, and Ellen Smith we reached out to various groups in the Greater Hartford area to see if there was a need for volunteer work from anyone at Westminster. Those opportunities do exist and IRIS has provided a streamlined online training program for anyone that has not been trained to be a refugee volunteer in the past 3 years.

Our connection with our mission work in Puerto Rico with the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) program was highlighted and energized through a service and learning trip to Puerto Rico with our brothers and sisters from First Presbyterian Church of Hartford in June 2022. Twelve intrepid adults and youth traveled to San Juan and stayed at La Casona de Monteflores, hosted by our PDA friend Michelle Munoz. The excited, but tired, group brought back wonderful stories to share with the congregation during the Sunday church service the day after they arrived back from San Juan. Unfortunately, another trip to San Juan needed to be postponed in the Fall of 2022 due to the damage of Hurricane Fiona, which arrived 5 years after the devastating Hurricane Maria, from which our Puerto Rican PDA brothers and sisters are still providing supportive relief services. Working with our sister Michelle from the San Juan PDA, we hope to have another successful service and learning trip in 2023.

Westminster is a proud founding member of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA) since its Founding Assembly in October 2019. As of this writing, Westminster is one of 52 dues paying members of GHIAA, consisting of churches, synagogues, mosques, and community organizations. The goal of GHIAA is to build a diverse organization of lay leaders and clergy from across bounds of race, class, gender identity, religion, and geography to build relational power to address social justice issues in local communities and beyond. In December of 2022, Westminster contributed 46 members both live and online to the GHIAA Power Summit, in which over 1000 people celebrated our successes and launched the 2023 issue campaign that includes these five areas of focus: mental health, environmental justice, housing, education, and gun violence. Each congregation that is involved in GHIAA has formed and trained a core team of lay and clergy leaders. The Westminster Core Team leaders are: Nicole Aronson, Peter Benner, Tom Buckley, Cindy Buckley, Julie Emery, Heather McBride, Nancy Souza, and Michael Seltzer. The organizing principles of GHIAA create a unique synergy with our church's core values: by building relationships and deepening our faith, we pursue justice.

We are grateful for the opportunities to serve and to "walk the walk" because, as Micah 6:8 tells us the Lord has required us: *To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

Care Team **Ann Osoba, Elder**

The Care Team seeks to be a caring presence in the lives of our members through nourishing the body and soul by bringing “Living Proof of a Loving God” to our members through one-on-one ministries of visitation, prayer, phone calls, meals, flowers, notes, and other avenues of caring. We seek to show each member of Westminster that they are loved, remembered, prayed for, thanked, and supported.

Guiding Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12 & 26 “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ...If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.”

Deacons: JoAnne Berry, Nancy Dewey, Molly Gavin, Charlotte Logan, Donna Morrison, Jane Sebolt and Jean Summers

Care Team Member: Elsie Harp, Jeanie Heyer and Linda Geisler

The Care Team continued its ministries of support and care in 2022. A team of dedicated volunteers continued to contact our members via phone calls, emails, notes, texts, and visits.

Other Care Team ministries include the following:

- Meals for those in need
- Coordinating the making and distributing of prayer shawls
- Birthday cards for Westminster members
- Memorial service support

The Care Team hosted one memorial service reception, including food donations, set up, assisting the family and guests during the event, worship service assistance, and clean-up of the used spaces. The team also offered support for one off site memorial service.

In December, handwarmers with holiday cards were made by church members and friends on that month’s LIFT (Living in Faith Together) Sunday and were distributed to those in our congregation who are home-bound.

Future plans for the Care Team include the return of Sunday morning coffee hour in 2023 being offered on Communion Sunday each month. Discussion continues on ways to minister to Westminster’s congregation with an emphasis on ways to connect to those who are limited in their access to the church due to health and mobility issues.

We give God thanks for all the volunteers who were part of our caring ministries this past year.

Memorial & Meditation Garden El Harp, Chair

Committee members: Dan Bender, Lynne Carey, George Dewey, El Harp, John Rhine and Karen Wagner.

The Memorial and Meditation Garden was dedicated in 1986 and continues to be a resting place for the ashes of our members and friends. The location and landscaping provide a special place for reflection and thanksgiving for the lives of those remembered. Two benches have been installed to improve seating.

This past year, Rhoda Bannon (November 21, 2022) joined other members and friends in the Garden. We also mourned the deaths of beloved Westminster members and friends including John Berman (October 25, 2022), Jim Elsner (November 2, 2022), June Johnson (July 8, 2022), Ralph Sundquist (September 22, 2022) and Howard West (April 20, 2022).

Each spring on the Sunday before Memorial Day, following our church service, a special service is held in the Garden as a reflection of the love and care from their families and friends. We welcome all to the service.

Sustain Team

The Sustain Team supports Westminster's congregation and leadership teams by coordinating, managing, and leading Westminster's facilities, employee support, and finances for today's and tomorrow's needs.

Guiding Scripture: Matthew 6:2-4, 19-21 "But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

Leadership: Elder John Rhine (Buildings & Grounds), Elder Art Riihimaki (Finance)

Buildings & Grounds Committee: John Rhine, Scott Brown, El Harp and Alan Zapata

Building and Grounds Committee John Rhine, Elder

This team is composed of John Rhine, Chair, El Harp and Scott Brown.

At the beginning of 2021, there was a lot of hope that things would get back to normal now that people could be vaccinated. But it soon became apparent that, as in 2020, we would need to be flexible. The big event in May was the rental of the Fellowship Hall and several classrooms to the movie crew producing the film, "Call Jane". The church received \$15,000 for this rental and we got to see several movie stars but it meant quite a bit of extra work for Sexton Mike McElroy and Paul Sigler, his assistant. The choir room and adjacent classroom on the lower level had some ceiling and door frame areas repainted and the exterior doors to the Fellowship lobby and Handicap entrance were also repainted. In an effort to make the outside landscaping look more colorful and manicured, additional perennial plants were planted and Mike started mowing the areas close to the building with the hand mower. The Memorial Garden also has two new benches which were installed by Dan Bender and painted by John and Mike.

After initially returning to work at the beginning of the spring, Paul had additional medical issues that meant he had to again stop work. After going the rest of the year with just Mike working as the Sexton, it was decided that he needed some help with interior cleaning and we contracted with Excel Cleaning Services to come in once a week. This coincided with the church opening up again in the fall and the return of most of our regular rental groups. This included our long-time friends, The Old Guard and several performances by the West Hartford Community Theater as well as AA, the YMCA and Bloodline sports basketball groups, the Scouts and 45+ women's exercise.

Because we were closed for long periods, we noticed some rodent and ant activity and we hired Abair Lavery to remediate that problem. I can report that they appear to have been successful.

In both the spring and fall, the Engage team hosted two church cleanup days which really helped to get the grounds in better shape. In addition, the Scouts did their usual great job in removing the millions of leaves from the property. We were fortunate that we did not have any major infrastructure issues this year and were able to keep our expenses under budget.

Next year, we hope to research possible efficiency suggestions with our HVAC provider, ESC and finally, we want to determine how we might make the banks on the Boulevard side of the property more attractive.

Ministerial Relations and Personnel (MR&P) **Pam Rekow, Chair**

2022 Committee: Pam Rekow, Chair, Cyndi Brown, Russ Cormier, John Rhine, Janet Wade-Utay and Rev. Julie Emery

The Ministerial Relations & Personnel (MR&P) committee works closely with WPC's pastor and staff throughout the year.

2022 was an active year for MR&P. Our work focused in several main areas:

- **Pastor's Return from Leave of Absence:** MR&P worked closely with Rev. Julie Emery and Session as Julie returned from her leave of absence and resumed leadership of staff and moderator of Session, and Rev. John Merz completed his service as temporary head of staff and Session moderator. MR&P also worked with the Finance team in transitioning the bookkeeping functions to accounting services provider ARI after the bookkeeper resigned in February.
- **Strategic Imperative Team on Staff Roles:** MR&P members served on this Session team, providing input and feedback on role descriptions and meeting with staff members to review their role description and incorporate their feedback.
- **Music Ministry:** MR&P and the Worship Team recommended to Session the transition of Callie Boone from interim to permanent Minister of Music, based on feedback gathered from members of the congregation and choirs during Callie's first six months. Session approved the motion effective 7/1/22. We also welcomed Anna Pan as organist/accompanist and several AV technicians who have supported WPC worship services during the year.
- **Health Plan Offering:** Recognizing the importance of affordable health care to employees who need it, MR&P spent much of the summer researching health plan options for WPC staff. Based on MR&P's recommendation, Session approved an Individual Coverage Health Reimbursement Account (ICHRA) option for WPC employees working 20+ hours per week. For each eligible employee who chooses to participate in 2023, WPC will contribute \$210 per month (\$2520 per year.) WPC will also offer FSA and HSA options to eligible employees. MR&P has worked with plan administrator ABS to set up the HRA and health savings accounts.

In preparing the 2023 staff budget and proposed Pastor Terms of Call, taking into account current economic conditions, MR&P recommends a 5% cost of living increase for WPC staff.

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation
Westminster Presbyterian Church
February 27, 2022**

Moderator Julie Emery called the meeting to order at 11:20am with an opening prayer.

Moderator Julie Emery declared that there was a quorum of at least 25. Actual attendance was 43. The Clerk read the call for the meeting. Notice had been given on at least two preceding Sundays.

The congregation **VOTED** to approve the agenda.

The congregation **VOTED** to approve the consensus motion, including receiving: the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation of February 28, 2021; the minutes of the Congregational Meeting of June 27, 2021; the statistical report of the membership; the Pastor Report from Rev. Julie Emery; the Former and Current Interim Ministers of Music Report from Barbara Riihimaki and Callie Boone; the Director of Faith Formation Report from Karen Hammond; and the Clerk of Session Reports.

Moderator Julie Emery invited each Elder chairing a ministry team to present their team’s highlights.

Moderator Julie Emery invited Treasurer Kevin Morrison and Elder Pam Torsiello to present on behalf of the finance team, including an overview of 2021 Year End Financials and the 2022 Operating Budget. Kevin provided a presentation of the information, and Kevin and Pam answered questions from the membership.

It was **MOVED, SECONDED, and VOTED** to receive the 2022 budget.

The Chair of the Ministerial Relations and Personnel Committee, Pam Rekow, for the Session, presented the Pastor/Head of Staff’s terms of call for 2022.

It was **MOVED** and **VOTED** by a secret ballot vote using the Zoom Polling feature with 31 in favor, 2 against, and 3 abstentions.

The Pastor’s terms of call for 2022 as voted are:

Proposed Pastor Compensation for 2022

Cash Compensation	\$67,587.54
Housing Allowance (actual to be set by Senior Pastor)	30,000.00
Effective Salary	\$97,587.54
Medical (27% of effective salary)*	26,348.65
Pension (8.5% of effective salary)	8,294.94

(continued...)

(Annual Meeting of the Congregation minutes continued...)

Death & Disability (1.5% of effective salary)	1,463.81
Medical Deductible (1.5% of effective salary)	1,463.81
Dental PPO (Actual cost)	1,752.36
Social Security - Employer (7.65% of effective salary)	7,465.45
Retirement Match	1,470.56
Vouchered Expenses:	
Business Expense Allowance	3,000.00
Education Allowance	3,000.00
Total Compensation	\$151,847.12

Number of working units per week 13

Weeks of annual vacation 5

Additional Sunday leave 1

Weeks of annual study leave 2

Number of paid holidays 10

After completing 6 years of service, the Pastor is entitled to a sabbatical of 3 months.

The Nominating Committee presented Pam Torsiello and Janet Wade-Utay as nominees to join the Session class of 2022 in order to complete the unfinished terms of David Hall and Callie Boone respectively, who had previously submitted their resignations. The congregation **VOTED** to accept their nomination. Next, Art Riihimaki and Karen Wagner were presented as nominees to join the Nominating Committee. The congregation **VOTED** to accept their nomination.

It was **MOVED, SECONDED, and VOTED** to recess the Annual Meeting of the Congregation at 1:17pm to convene the Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

Following the Meeting of the Corporation, the Annual Meeting of the Congregation reconvened at 1:22pm.

There was no Other Business brought before the congregation.

Moderator Julie Emery led a prayer in recognition of the following members and friends of the congregation who joined the Church Triumphant in 2021: Henryk Bender, Ed Carney, Cornelia Ford, Natalie Lewis, Betsey Miller, Judy Moss, and Edmund Offei.

Moderator Julie Emery closed the meeting at 1:23pm with prayer. It was **MOVED, SECONDED, and VOTED** to adjourn at 12:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather McBride
Clerk

The Reverend Julie Emery
Moderator

(Annual Meeting of the Congregation minutes continued...)

Moderator Julie Emery asked for a moment of silence in recognition of the following members of the congregation who joined the Church Triumphant in 2020: Clyde Brown, Cheryl Heilig, Barbara Hutton, Georgia Silliman, and Bernita Sundquist.

Moderator Julie Emery closed the meeting at 1:23pm with prayer. It was **MOVED, SECONDED, and VOTED** to adjourn at 1:27pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather McBride
Clerk of Session

The Reverend Julie Emery
Moderator

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Corporation
Westminster Presbyterian Church
West Hartford, CT
February 27, 2022**

Moderator Julie Emery called the Meeting of the Corporation to order at 12:17pm.

It was **MOVED, SECONDED, and VOTED** to elect Art Riihimaki as president pro-temp of the corporation.

It was **MOVED, SECONDED, and VOTED** to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Corporation of February 27, 2021.

Art stated that Clerk of Session Heather McBride would continue to serve as Secretary of the Corporation.

No other business was brought before the Corporation.

It was **MOVED, SECONDED, and VOTED** to adjourn. The meeting was closed at 12:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather McBride
Secretary

**Minutes of the Called Meeting of the Congregation
Westminster Presbyterian Church
June 19, 2022**

Moderator Julie Emery called the meeting to order at 11:10 with prayer.

A quorum was present. There were 32 members in attendance including on-line participation.

The Session has called this congregational meeting for the purpose of electing new officers. The call for the meeting was published on 2 Sundays: June 5 and 12, 2021. The call was read by the Moderator Julie Emery and then it was **MOVED, SECONDED, and VOTED to approve the agenda.**

Elder Barbara Riihimaki proposed the following slate of Ruling Elders to be elected

- John Rhine - Class of 2023 (1 year)
- Tom Buckley - Class of 2023 (1 year)
- Janet Wade-Utay - Class of 2025 (3 years)
- Art Riihimaki - Class of 2025 (3 years)

Moderator Emery asked if there were any nominations from the floor for Ruling Elders. Hearing none, the Moderator called for a vote. **It was VOTED to elect the slate of Ruling Elders as proposed.**

Elder Barbara Riihimaki proposed the following slate of Deacons to be elected.

- Joanne Berry - Class of 2023 for Care (1 year)
- Jean Summers - Class of 2023 for Care (1 year)
- Charlotte Logan - Class of 2023 for Care (1 year)
- Joanna Myers - Class of 2023 for Serve (1 year)
- Ma'Lynn Feingold - Class of 2023 for Serve (1 year)
- Molly Gavin - Class of 2025 for Care (3 years)
- Abbey Downing - Class of 2025 for Serve (3 years)

Moderator Emery asked if there were any nominations from the floor for Deacon. Hearing none, the Moderator called for a vote. **It was VOTED to elect the slate of Deacons as proposed.**

Elder Barbara Riihimaki proposed the following slate for the Nominating Committee to be elected.

- Eina Rieger - Class of 2023 (1 year)
- El Harp - Class of 2023 (1 year)
- Barbara Riihimaki - Class of 2023 (1 year)

Moderator Emery asked if there were any nominations from the floor for the Nominating Committee. Hearing none, the Moderator called for a vote. **It was VOTED to elect the Nominating Committee as proposed.**

Elder Barbara Riihimaki proposed the following slate for the Audit Committee to be elected.

- Pam Torsiello - Class of 2023 (1 year)

Moderator Emery asked if there were any nominations from the floor for the Audit Committee. Hearing none, the Moderator called for a vote. **It was VOTED to elect the Audit Committee as proposed.**

There was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:34 with a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Wade-Utay
Clerk pro-tempore

The Reverend Julie Emery
Moderator

Finance Committee Report For Year Ended December 31, 2022

The Finance Committee is responsible for overseeing the financial functions of the church with the various members responsible for different functions including bookkeeping, financial reporting and controls, treasury functions and budget development. The members of the committee include: Art Riihimaki, Julie Emery, Pam Torsiello, Kevin Morrison and a representative of Accounting Resources Inc. (ARI).

Our Endowment Funds and some restricted funds are invested with Charles Schwab and New Covenant Trust Company. Art Riihimaki and Pam Torsiello are signers on the Schwab Funds and Kevin Morrison and Pam Torsiello are signers on the New Covenant Funds. The Endowment Committee is responsible for overseeing the funds.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our counters who work in teams to ensure all contributions are recorded properly and deposited weekly: Art Riihimaki (team leader), George Dewey, Jean Summers, Liz Doering, Liza Cleaveland, Sandy Fry, and Rick Thibodeau.

During the year, ARI assumed the bookkeeping duties for the Church as our bookkeeper, Jeannine Stimson resigned. We thank her for her 8 years of service to us. We would also like to thank all those instrumental in assisting during the transition to ARI, most especially Cyndi Brown. She was an excellent steward for our finances.

Financial Highlights for 2022:

Presented for the congregation are an Operating Statement, Statement of Funds Activity, Balance Sheet and Restricted Fund Balances. Accounts and activity have been consolidated where appropriate for ease of review. A detailed listing of Other Restricted Funds is included with the financial statements.

Operations for 2022 resulted in a deficit of \$44,923 compared to the budgeted deficit of \$56,475. This compares to 2021 when there was a surplus of \$73,312 because the church received benefits from Covid funds including a forgiveness of the PPP loan of \$68,158 and other grants of \$43,272.

Disbursements for the year totaled \$492,408 which was higher than 2021 by \$5,963 and higher than budget by \$7,675. The main reasons for the increase from 2021 were higher buildings and grounds costs of \$21,042 due to an increase in all categories but primarily in repairs and maintenance expenses and higher office expenses due to the addition of ARI fees of \$15,143. These increases were offset by a reduction of equipment purchases of \$33,423.

During 2022, the permitted amounts from housing and investment funds were transferred to operations. No other funds were loaned from the endowment.

The Statement of Funds Activity shows the cash activity in operations, restricted funds and investments for the year. Total cash and investments decreased by \$220,721 during the year to \$856,015. The operating funds deficit of \$79,588 plus a decline in the market value of investments of \$131,292 accounted for the majority of the decline. Other changes largely offset each other.

Respectfully submitted,

Art Riihimaki
Kevin Morrison
Pam Torsiello

Comparative Operating Statement - Actual and Budget For the Year Ended December 31, 2022 and 2021

	12/31/2022	12/31/2021	Change from 12/31/2021 Fav(Unfav)	Annual Budget 12/31/2022	Change from Budget Fav(Unfav)
Receipts:					
Operating receipts:					
Pledged Contributions	\$ 294,396	\$ 296,619	\$ (2,223)	\$ 285,000	\$ 9,396
Plate Offerings	2,034	508	1,526	1,200	834
Per Capita	5,592	5,450	142	5,400	192
Building Use	25,275	31,192	(5,917)	24,000	1,275
Total Receipts	\$ 327,297	\$ 333,769	\$ (6,472)	\$ 315,600	\$ 11,697
Gifts:					
Pandemic Grants and Gifts	\$ 28,725	\$ 59,182	\$ (30,457)	\$ 28,000	\$ 725
Public Grants	6,500	20,000	(13,500)	10,000	(3,500)
Special Gifts	38,305	37,620	685	25,000	13,305
Total Gifts	\$ 73,530	\$ 116,802	\$ (43,272)	\$ 63,000	\$ 10,530
Investment Income	\$ 0	\$ 2,729	\$ (2,729)	\$ 3,000	\$ (3,000)
Transfers and Loans:					
Transfer from Investments	26,552	20,900	5,652	26,552	-
Transfer from Manse Housing Fund	20,106	17,400	2,706	20,106	-
PPP loan forgiveness	-	68,158	(68,158)	-	-
Total Transfers and Loans	\$ 46,658	\$ 106,458	\$ (59,800)	\$ 46,658	\$ -
Total Receipts	\$ 447,485	\$ 559,757	\$ (112,272)	\$ 428,258	\$ 19,227
Disbursements:					
Ministry Programs					
Worship	\$ 3,654	\$ 4,205	\$ 551	\$ 4,560	\$ 906
Flourish	1,605	1,283	(322)	2,100	495
Serve	25,755	21,746	(4,009)	26,071	316
Care	(99)	101	200	600	699
Engage	903	1,304	401	6,880	5,977
Sustain - Office	54,327	38,144	(16,183)	38,242	(16,085)
Sustain - Buildings & Grounds	69,869	48,827	(21,042)	59,766	(10,103)
Staff Expenses	334,401	335,418	1,017	346,514	12,113
Total Ministry Programs	\$ 490,415	\$ 451,029	\$ (39,386)	\$ 484,733	\$ (5,682)
Purchased Equipment	1,993	35,416	33,423	-	(1,993)
Total Disbursements	\$ 492,408	\$ 486,445	\$ (5,963)	\$ 484,733	\$ (7,675)
Net Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (44,923)	\$ 73,312	\$ (118,235)	\$ (56,475)	\$ 11,552

Statement of Funds Activity
For the Year Ended December 31, 2022

	Webster Bank		
	Checking & Savings	Investments	Total
Balance as of January 1, 2022	\$ 51,563	\$ 1,025,173	\$ 1,076,736
<u>Operating Receipts:</u>			
Contributions	\$ 284,616	\$ 9,980	\$ 294,596
Plate Offerings	2,034		2,034
Per Capita	5,391		5,391
Building Use	25,275		25,275
Pandemic Grants and Credits	28,725		28,725
Interest and Dividends	0	-	0
Gifts and Grants	44,806	10,000	54,806
Total Operating Receipts	\$ 390,847	\$ 19,980	\$ 410,827
<u>Operating Disbursements:</u>			
Worship	\$ (3,654)	\$ -	\$ (3,654)
Flourish	(1,605)		(1,605)
Serve	(25,755)		(25,755)
Care	99		99
Engage	(903)		(903)
Sustain - Office	(54,327)		(54,327)
Sustain - Buildings & Grounds	(69,869)		(69,869)
Staff Expenses	(334,401)		(334,401)
Total Operating Disbursements	\$ (490,415)	\$ -	\$ (490,415)
Excess (Shortage) of Operating Funds	\$ (99,568)	\$ 19,980	\$ (79,588)
Transfer from Investments	\$ 67,947	\$ (67,947)	\$ -
<u>Restricted Fund Receipts:</u>			
Service and Learning Trip	\$ 7,722	\$ -	\$ 7,722
Tilton Music	6,899		6,899
Outreach and Expansion	5,000		5,000
Pastor Sabbatical	2,000		2,000
Other	1,875		1,875
Memorial Garden	1,705		1,705
Total Restricted Fund Receipts	\$ 25,201	\$ -	\$ 25,201

(continued...)

(Statement of Funds Activity continued...)

Restricted Fund Disbursements:			
Service and Learning Trip	\$ (18,197)	\$ -	\$ (18,197)
Allen and Willard	(8,527)		(8,527)
Major Repair and Renovation	(3,206)		(3,206)
Organ Improvement	(2,200)		(2,200)
Senger Christian Education Leadership	(1,711)		(1,711)
Peace and Global Witness	(1,433)		(1,433)
One Great Hour of Sharing	(1,350)		(1,350)
Music Fund	(1,202)		(1,202)
Refugee Mission	(1,110)		(1,110)
Tilton Music	(1,040)		(1,040)
Other	(863)		(863)
Total Restricted Fund Disbursements	\$ (40,839)	\$ -	\$ (40,839)
Loan to senior pastor	\$ 3,540	\$ -	\$ 3,540
Change in Other Current Liabilities	2,258		2,258
Change in Market Value	-	(131,292)	(131,292)
Net Change in Account	\$ (41,462)	\$ (179,259)	\$ (220,721)
Balance as of December 31, 2022	\$ 10,101	\$ 845,914	\$ 856,015

Comparative Balance Sheet
December 31, 2022 and December 31, 2021

	As of 12/31/22	As of 12/31/21	Change From 12/31/2021
<u>Cash and Cash Equivalents</u>			
Webster Bank Checking	\$ 10,101	\$ 51,001	\$ (40,900)
Webster Bank Money Market	-	562	(562)
Total Cash And Cash Equivalents	<u>\$ 10,101</u>	<u>\$ 51,563</u>	<u>\$ (41,462)</u>
<u>Schwab Accounts</u>			
Charles Schwab & Co. Account - General	\$ 61,056	\$ 66,077	\$ (5,021)
Unrealized Gain/(Loss) on Investments	58,632	75,588	(16,956)
Charles Schwab & Co. Account - Housing Fund	270,893	324,700	(53,807)
The Memorial Garden Fund	11,246	12,313	(1,067)
The G. T. Scoville Trust Fund Differently Able	7,810	8,551	(741)
The Scoville Scholarship Fund	7,694	8,424	(730)
Todd R. Tilton Music Scholarship Fund	14,146	15,486	(1,340)
Total Schwab Accounts	<u>\$ 431,477</u>	<u>\$ 511,139</u>	<u>\$ (79,662)</u>
<u>New Covenant Trust Company</u>			
Lydia & Richard Allen & Eleanor Willard Fund	\$ 171,971	\$ 220,494	\$ (48,523)
The Lester Senger Christian Education Leadership Fund	53,273	63,634	(10,361)
Westminster Endowment Fund	189,193	229,906	(40,713)
Total New Covenant Trust Company	<u>\$ 414,437</u>	<u>\$ 514,034</u>	<u>\$ (99,597)</u>
<u>Account Receivable</u>			
Deposit Receivable	\$ 1,450	\$ 1,450	\$ -
Loan Receivable - Senior Minister	13,510	17,050	(3,540)
Total Account Receivable	<u>\$ 14,960</u>	<u>\$ 18,500</u>	<u>\$ (3,540)</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 870,975</u>	<u>\$ 1,095,235</u>	<u>\$ (224,260)</u>
Liabilities:			
Other Current Liabilities	\$ 2,258	\$ -	\$ 2,258
Total Liabilities	<u>\$ 2,258</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 2,258</u>

(continued...)

(Comparative Balance Sheet continued...)

Equity:			
Endowment & Memorial Gift Funds			
Lydia & Richard Allen & Eleanor Willard Fund	\$ 148,139	\$ 205,190	\$ (57,051)
Westminster Endowment Fund	140,104	180,816	(40,712)
The Lester Senger Christian Education Leadership Fund	49,253	61,326	(12,073)
Todd R. Tilton Music Scholarship Fund	5,416	897	4,519
The Scoville Scholarship Fund	7,627	8,357	(730)
The G. T. Scoville Trust Fund Differently Able	7,877	8,618	(741)
Manse Housing Fund	279,632	327,150	(47,518)
Martha Richards Music Enrichment Fund	150	150	-
Memorial Gift Funds	17,413	17,285	128
Total Endowment & Memorial Gift Funds	\$ 655,611	\$ 809,790	\$ (154,179)
Restricted Funds			
The Memorial Garden Fund	\$ 15,915	\$ 15,366	\$ 549
Other Restricted Funds	83,229	94,238	(11,009)
Total Restricted Funds	\$ 99,144	\$ 109,604	\$ (10,460)
Unrestricted Funds			
Net Operating Fund	\$ 100,253	\$ 26,941	\$ 73,312
Allowance for Unrealized Gain/(Loss)	58,632	75,588	(16,956)
Net Income (Loss)	(44,923)	73,312	(118,235)
Total Unrestricted Funds	\$ 113,962	\$ 175,841	\$ (61,879)
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$ 870,975	\$ 1,095,235	\$ (224,260)

Other Restricted Funds
December 31, 2022 and 2021

	12/31/2022	12/31/2021	Change from 12/31/2021
<u>Other Restricted Funds</u>			
Music	\$ 18,169	\$ 19,221	\$ (1,052)
Service and Learning Trip	13,987	22,014	(8,027)
Organ Improvement	16,408	18,358	(1,950)
Pastor Sabbatical Fund	14,000	12,000	2,000
Westminster Feeds	2,755	2,755	-
Outreach and Expansion	5,810	810	5,000
Pastor Discretionary Fund	1,375	1,760	(385)
Major Repairs and Renovations Fund (MRRF)	6,682	9,889	(3,207)
Other	4,043	7,430	(3,387)
Total Other Restricted Funds	\$ 83,229	\$ 94,238	\$ (11,009)

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Audit Committee Report
Art Riikimaki, Elder and Finance Committee Chair

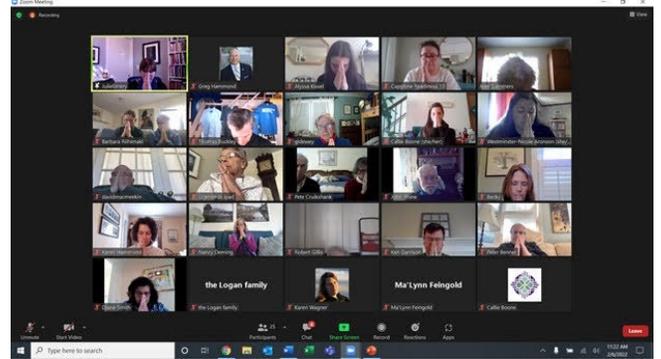
In 2022, this was a transitional year for the Finance Team as Westminster Presbyterian Church hired Accounting and Human Resources Inc., an accounting firm, to handle the church's finances. An audit will be done for the year 2022 as we continue to make sure our finances are being managed and recorded properly and clearly.

Respectfully submitted,

Art Riihimaki

Westminster People 2022: A Year in Photos

Highlights from LIFT (Living in Faith) Sundays



(continued ...)

Highlights from LIFT Sundays (continued...)



(continued...)

Highlights from LIFT Sundays *(continued...)*



Wedding of Sandy Fry and Rick Thibodeau

Ash Wednesday Outdoor Service



Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.



Spring and Fall Clean Up



Annual Community Easter Egg Hunt



(continued ...)

Annual Community Easter Egg Hunt (continued...)



Easter Sunday



Communion in Concert and Raking in the Fun: Music Scholars' Fundraisers



Music Appreciation Sunday



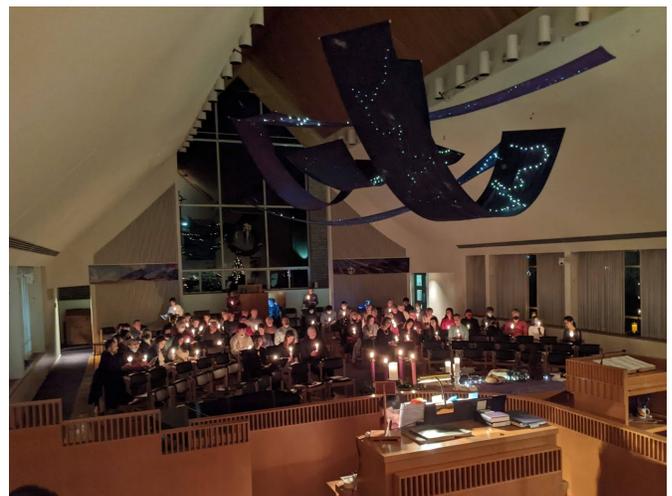
Puerto Rico Service and Learning Trip



Baptisms



Christmas Eve: Paper Bag Pageant





Westminster Presbyterian Church Vision & Mission Statements

Westminster is a vital, engaging, inclusive family of faith that serves God by: supporting each other on our spiritual journeys, sharing the gifts we have been given, and demonstrating the love and justice of Christ in our community and world.

Westminster offers living proof of a loving God.

Westminster Presbyterian Church Staff

The Rev. Julie Emery, Pastor/Head of Staff
Callie Boone, Minister of Music
Karen Hammond, Director of Faith Formation
Becky Kimberly, Church Administrator

Mike McElroy, Church Sexton
Wanda Bender, Security Coordinator

Leadership of Westminster Presbyterian Church

Care

Ann Osoba, Elder
JoAnne Berry, Deacon
Nancy Dewey, Deacon
Molly Gavin, Deacon
Charlotte Logan, Deacon
Donna Morrison, Deacon
Jane Sebolt, Deacon
Jean Summers, Deacon

Engage

Greg Hammond, Elder

Flourish

Larry Carr, Elder

Serve

Tom Buckley, Elder
Abbey Downing, Deacon
Ma'Lynn Feingold
Joanna Myers, Deacon
Katie Osoba, Youth Deacon
Michael Seltzer, Elder
Ellen Smith, Deacon

Sustain

William Hoelzel Clerk
John Rhine, Elder
Art Riihimaki, Elder

Worship

Janet Wade-Utay, Elder