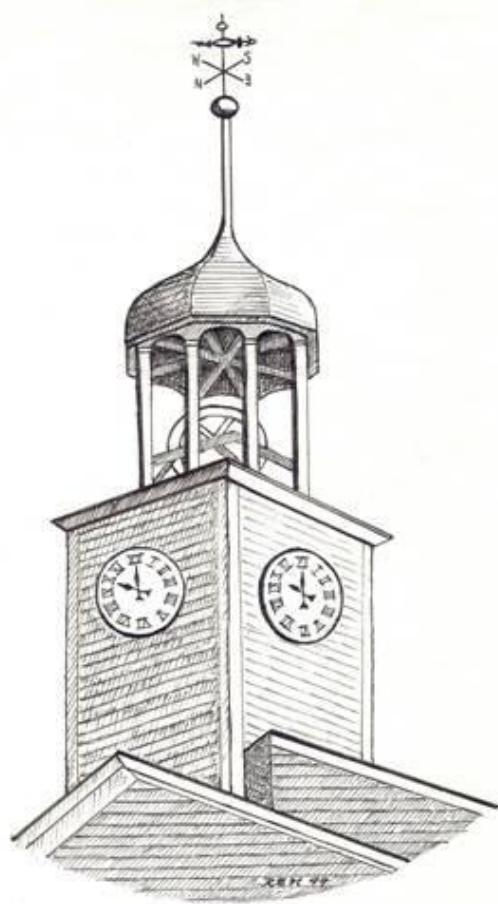


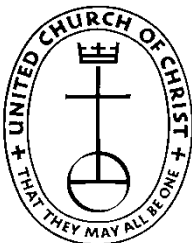
# THE ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Building a loving, living church since 1807

**THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
OF SOUTH DARTMOUTH, MA**  
*(United Church of Christ)*

*In Its  
217<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year*



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**Church Officers (2023-2024)**

Church Moderator: Lara Stone  
Vice Moderator: Lori Pettengill  
Clerk: Kathy Pappas  
Treasurer: Phil Guymont  
Assistant Treasurer: Beth Hobbs

**Ministry Leaders (2023-2024)**

Caregiving: Teresa de Jesus De La Torre  
Fellowship: Beth & Pete Miller  
Finance: Steve Roberts  
Outreach: Jan Tatelbaum  
Religious Education: Andrea Vigus  
Worship: Jonathan Gray  
The Guild: Cecelia Roberts

**Church Staff (2023-2024)**

Pastor: Rev. Emily J. Kellar  
Office Administrator: Robin E. Lake  
Director of Religious Education: Elizabeth Neto  
Music Directors: Dr. Sarah H. McQuarrie/Dr. Ronald Sherwin  
Tara Thomas/Mark Vadnais

**Children's Circle Nursery School Staff (2023-2024)**

Samantha Barrett, Director and Lead Teacher of Children's Circle Nursery School  
Amy Bettencourt, Lead Teacher of Children's Circle Nursery School

## Pastor's Report

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### Pastor's Report

When I turned in my annual report last year, I was about to embark upon a three-month sabbatical. I remain grateful to the kind people of the Congregational Church of South Dartmouth, UCC for honoring my three months off after five years of service to the church. I returned in August from sabbatical. I remember returning and enjoying folks dropping by the office, inviting me for coffee or lunch, or asking me to take a walk to catch up. I also returned as sadness swept our little community. We lost the mother of a young girl from our youth group. I had known her mother and her mother's family before I moved here to Dartmouth. I sought to be present to the family as they navigated sudden grief.

I also remember returning to my work schedule seeking to have more balance in my days. I came back from sabbatical with new work and rest rhythms. I will remain grateful for the time away that taught me this valuable lesson. I believe the church has benefited from my sabbatical learnings as well. I can report nine months later that I am still following my "new" post sabbatical routine.

My seventh year of ministry at the Congo Church commenced in September. The month came with new ideas and new faces in our pews! We had a wonderful Rally Sunday and picnic afterwards. The church shaped jumpy house continues to delight all ages! I enjoyed seeing the young families return on Sunday mornings ~ a sign that summer had ended. September also came with an Adult Mission Trip to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi and my youngest child's wedding! October found me blessing the animals during the church service on Sunday. Our Fall theme was one of kindness and we celebrated with confetti canons during worship! We also began our stewardship season (the earliest in my time here) during October with a beautifully written letter by our new moderator.

I took on mentoring a young Member in Discernment in the Old Colony Association of the UCC this fall. It is an added joy to share time in someone else's journey to ordained ministry. The Youth Mission Trip chaperones met and expressed great enthusiasm over going to Biloxi in the spring for the first time with our youth. In previous years, we had taken them to New Orleans. In October, we also had a church staff dinner at The Sail Loft. It is always great to spend time as a staff together in a causal setting. We hosted the old Colony association Clergy lunch in October. I also met with some World History classes from Dartmouth High School and discussed progressive theology with them.

In November, I gave an End of Life talk on a Saturday morning and facilitated a discussion around the topic. My Pastoral Relations Committee met in November over a bag lunch in the library one Sunday. We moved through Thanksgiving and began to plan for Advent. Our weeknight Advent services were held on Wednesdays at 7 p.m. The new year arrived, and I stepped away for a week retreat at the monastery before Lent began. Ash Wednesday coincided with Valentine's Day this year! Since I received such a positive response from the Advent (The Gift of Being Present) and Epiphany (Bread, Bath & Beyond) series from Worship Design Studio, I decided to try one of their Lent series titled Busy.

It is April now, Easter has arrived! New life continues in our midst! New people cross our thresholds weekly! We will meet with potential new members tomorrow on Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. Currently, our church council is dreaming of making some changes to our by-laws to streamline our council. The youth mission trip team will depart for Biloxi in another week. We also are excited to have four property projects starting this summer ~ "the new" continues. I continue to feel called to ministry here and am grateful for the Beloved Community!

Faithfully in Ministry,

Rev. Emily J. Kellar

### Moderator's Report

Greetings CCSD Community,

What a year this has been! Let's take a tour down memory lane.

In April of 2023, we sent Pastor Emily and David off on sabbatical to the desert. Many of us took her up on her invitation to read Richard Wagamese's, *Embers*, along with her as she prepared for the experience. One passage a day for nearly six months leading up to departure. A favorite passage between he and an elder read, "*When you listen, you become aware. That's for your head. When you hear, you awaken. That's for your heart. When you feel, it becomes a part of you. That's for your spirit. Three times. It's so you learn to listen with your whole being. That's how you learn.*" Our church community sent them off with a great deal of love and welcomed them home in the same fashion. We do that well here. Pastor Emily continues to bring thought-provoking, inspiring energy to her work as our spiritual leader. We are blessed by her return to the pulpit and our shared learning through her absence. She teaches all of us to listen.

Being Moderator has offered me a unique opportunity to collaborate closely with members of our staff, our Council, and our congregation. I am ever grateful for the chance to see love and kindness in action. New members continue to formally join our church.

I have observed Samantha pour extra attention and care into growing the Children's Circle Nursery School enrollment. There are new families attending the pre-school and our church. The 2023-2024 school year has been more abundant and this summer will bring three weeks of camps and a whole new group of kiddos to the school. Thank you to Beth and the RE Ministry for creating a Sunday School program that includes art, music, fun and discussion. Youth Group is back and we are growing middle schoolers into high schoolers. Youth Mission Trip 2024 will be one for the books. This makes my heart full, as all three Stone boys had life-changing Mission Trip experiences.

We welcomed AA meetings to the church and grief group one Wednesday evening a month. Potlucks, prayer shawls and Mobile Ministry continued. Thank you to our Ministries and Committees for hosting social events for our church families and for others throughout the region. Our food pantry makes a difference for those who need it most. Thank you to Robin for keeping track of all of our efforts with an open, organized heart. Tara and Mark, you bring variety and spice to our music program—there's room for young and old. We all look forward to being surprised and delighted each week.

We have been working on property projects that take care of our beautiful, historic building. With the support of our operating budget, our strong endowment and our ERTC COVID relief funds, we have big plans this summer and into the fall. Keep watch as the painters and carpenters refurbish the sanctuary and Hay Hall, our church rest rooms and the church playground. Our side entrance will receive needed attention, as well.

Our finances are strong and this is a welcome relief during a regional and national trend of downsizing houses of worship. Thank you for helping us to maintain a physical place of worship and sharing love with one another and the world. Our church is active and engaged. We have a great deal to be proud of as we embark on another program year.

Warmly,

Lara H. Stone  
Moderator

## **Record of Statistics for the Year: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024**

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### **In Memoriam**

Lillian Henriksen	4/07/23
Elizabeth Dubiel	7/03/23
Margaret Cote	8/12/23
Clinton Mosher	8/28/23
Mary Elinore Davies	1/25/24
Virginia Mosher	2/16/24
Bruce Clarke	2/17/24

### **Baptized into the Christian Faith**

Elianna Mercy Rose Haskell	8/13/23
Trustin-Cruz Cory Haskell	8/13/23
Leonardo Roberto Soto	10/08/23
Luka Oliver Soto	10/08/23
Savannah Mae Levesque	3/17/24
Wyatt Matthew Levesque	3/17/24

### **Confirmation**

9/10/23  
Finn Paradise  
Emma Silva

### **New Members**

4/16/23  
Jody Wigfield  
Dana Dornbusch  
Patricia Bevilacqua  
Siobhan Bickmann

### **Letter of Transfer**

Leanne Gunn                      4/27/23

Current Active Membership total: 320

**ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES**

April 16, 2023

**CALL TO ORDER**

Moderator David Neilson called the meeting to order at 10:55.

**DECLARATION OF A QUORUM**

Clerk Kathy Pappas declared a quorum.

**OPENING PRAYER**

Rev. Emily J. Kellar

**PASTOR'S REPORT**

Rev. Kellar presented highlights of her Annual Report which included: the Random Acts of Kindness Project; adult and youth mission trips; the food pantry; a study in anti-Semitism; the grief group; monthly potluck suppers; a study of the Book of Job; and a sermon series on the 12 Step program. Rev. Kellar welcomed the church music ministry for the 2023 program year of Tara Thomas and Mark Vadnais. She expressed gratitude for church staff, Council, ministry members and to the congregation who continue to live the Gospel.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Per Phil Guymont, 2022 was a strong financial year with income exceeding budget. It was followed by a successful 2023 Stewardship Campaign. The church is blessed by the generosity of the congregation to keep the church fiscally sound.

**MODERATOR'S REPORT**

Outgoing Moderator David Nielson stated that the “church is back” with attendance at pre pandemic levels, noting that we have received 50 new members in the past 5 years. As he prepared to pass the baton to incoming Moderator Lara Stone, David expressed gratitude to the congregation for its faithfulness while emphasizing the extraordinary church outreach mission.

**ELECTION OF CHURCH OFFICERS AND MINISTRY MEMBERS**

A motion to elect church leadership and ministry members as presented in the nominating slate was made (Dan Perry), seconded (Kate Fentress), and carried unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Per Moderator Lara Stone, the remaining task for the congregation is to celebrate Rev. Kellar as she prepares for her sabbatical, requesting notes and cards for her to read while she is away.

**CLOSING PRAYER/ADJOURNMENT @11:15**

Rev. Emily J. Kellar

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathleen Pappas

## **Annual Budget Meeting – January 28, 2024**

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### **Annual Budget Meeting Minutes January 28, 2024 @11:00 AM**

**OPENING PRAYER** - Rev. Emily Kellar

**DECLARATION OF A QUORUM** - Kathy Pappas, Church Clerk, declared a quorum.

**CALL TO ORDER** - Moderator Lara Stone called the meeting to order. The purpose of this meeting was to present and vote on the 2024 budget.

**PASTOR'S REPORT:** Referencing scripture 1 Thessalonians 2:8, Pastor Emily reported the following: The Church is financially stable. The Church is thriving with its current membership, visitors, and prospective new members. The Advent sermon series of "Being Present" and the current one of "Bread Bath and Beyond" will combine with the Lenten series of "Busy" to form the theme of the meeting and the path going forward.

**PRESENTATION AND VOTE OF THE BUDGET:** Steve Roberts, Chair of Finance Ministry, presented the budget with net operating revenue of \$447,845 (deficit of \$69,745). In a separate hand out, Steve discussed in detail the income streams of: Bequest Income, Contribution receipts, Pledges, Facilities Income, Miscellaneous Income, Non-operational income, Payroll Transfer (CCNS). Expenses were presented: Administration, Mission Trip, Outreach, Pastoral, Payroll, Property, Religious Education, and Worship. Net operating revenue for 2023 was positively impacted by the receipt of ERTC funds with results of being on budget. The budget includes a 3% staff increase. The deficit will be funded with \$60,000 ERTC funds and \$10,000 of invested funds.

Phil Guymont reported on the status of current invested funds as \$2,073,064, reflecting an increase of \$412,000 (ERTC funds \$120,000 plus investment increase of \$292,000) from 2023. The increase of \$292,000 off-set the decrease of 2022. The investment increase mirrors the overall activity of the stock and bond market.

*A motion was made (Cecelia Roberts) and seconded (Lori O'Neill) to approve the 2024 budget. The motion carried unanimously.*

**PRESENTATION OF ERTC FUNDING PROPOSAL AND VOTE:** Lara Stone, Moderator, presented the plan for the use of Capital Campaign funds and the balance of ERTC Funds. Projects for 2024 are: Painting the sanctuary (summer 2024); drainage work on the parking lot side of the church; refurbishing the bathrooms; removal of the current playground and installation of a new one. To fund these projects, it was proposed that \$205,000 of ERTC funds be used as follows: \$125,000 for capital projects (added to the \$80,000 remaining Capital Campaign funds); \$60,000 toward funding the 2024 deficit; \$20,000 to be used for additional Outreach donations. Discussion of each project followed.

*A motion was made (Lisa Mellgard) and seconded (Sonja White) to approve the funding plan for the 3 spending areas (deficit, outreach, and capital) and the 4 identified capital projects. The motion carried unanimously.*

The meeting adjourned with a prayer by Pastor Emily at 11:45.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy Pappas Clerk



## Caregiving Ministry

**The Prayer Shawl Ministry:** The Prayer Shawl Ministry dedicates their talents, yarn and time to create gifts of love and comfort for the church family/friends, those in need of healing and for the greater community.

The following is/are the report(s) of the ministry for January 2023 through February 2024.

In total the ministry currently has 38 blessed shawls and not yet blessed: 14 wash cloths, 1 baby blanket and 18 hats.

In January shawls were given to the Women's Center and to the Sisters of Charity.

At February's ministry meeting we discussed knitting caps for babies at St. Luke's hospital and agreed it would be a wonderful side project.

In May shawls and wash cloths were blessed by the wonderful Reverend Terry Martinson. Later that month necessity kits (a Ziplock bag with a bar of soap, toothbrush, toothpaste along with a knitted washcloth) were given to the New Bedford's Women Shelter and P.A.A.C.A. (Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction).

On November 19th 134 hats were blessed by Pastor Emily. Hats were given to George H. Potter school, New Bedford public schools and 5 refugee families in Dartmouth.

In January and February shawls and hats were given to Child and Family Services in New Bedford. They were very much appreciated.

There were no meetings for the months of July, August, September and December as there was no pressing business. The ministry was still conducting "labors of love", knitting away.

The monthly meetings not mentioned above (March, April, June, October); it was business as usual in knitting and discussing projects in general.

For the months of March and August the ministry oversaw coordinating readers, greeters, coffee hour and flowers for those Sundays.

The ministry welcomed Christine Plante!

**The Lay Shepherds:** Lay Shepherd visits continue by telephone, cards and visits. All those church members eighty years and older receive a birthday card from the church. Cards of concern and of joy are sent to church families throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa Choquette, Co-Chair and Carol Flack Co-Chair

## Fellowship Ministry

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### Fellowship Committee

#### Mission or Purpose

The Fellowship Committee plans and coordinates programs and events to encourage social participation in the Church Community, builds and maintains membership ensuring a welcoming environment.

**Committee members include:** Beth Sjogren-Miller (chair 2025), Pete Miller (2025), Margaret Jones (2023 this is her last year on committee), Elizabeth Breese (2026), Margie Pullo (2026), Lee Murray (2023 outgoing– but has agreed to stay on 2026), Jody Wigfield (2026), Michele Almeida (2026) Deb Burke (2026) and Linda Lally (nominee)

Our committee meets the second Sunday of the month after church.

- Our first event in the spring was to re-open Pickleball and organize a weekly “pick-up” game Tuesdays at 6:30, weather permitting.
- The weekly craft group on Thursdays 10:00-1:00 has been productive and fun.
- As a group we made 12 quilts to donate to New Bedford Women’s Shelter in the fall 2023. We are working on more quilts to donate fall of 2024.
- Craft group attendees have made macrame projects, quilts for themselves and are embarking on Barn Quilt projects. We welcome new members to come and explore art in various forms.

#### 2023 scheduled events:

- In May a large group of church members enjoyed Cocktails and Theater Night. We met at Dave and Linda Nielson's home for lively conversation followed by the Your Theater production.
- In June we held an outdoor party at Buzzards Bay Brewery where we were entertained by live music, enjoyed good appetizers and lively conversation.
- October was our Soup/Chili cook-off. We had numerous pots of soup or chili to taste and having it right after church was perfect because attendance was great, feedback was excellent.
- November, we met at Running Brook Winery for music, food and fellowship, with about 20 people.
- December was perfect for our Bonfire and Caroling held on the church grounds. The event was very well attended by children and adults who enjoyed singing and nibbling on the many treats organized by fellowship members.

#### 2024 scheduled events:

- March was our St Patrick's day brunch held after church. It was very well attended; the food was great, and our church community gave lots of positive feedback.

We are exploring the idea of having a Friday or Saturday night “coffee house” or “open mic” type event which would be a venue for our church musicians to jam/entertain and provide fellowship.

The committee wants to thank Margaret Jones for her terms of service for Fellowship, she is ending her time with us this spring.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Sjogren-Miller

**Financial Report**

2023 was another strong financial year for the Church. Income far exceeded the budget. The Church applied for and received Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) funds in the amount of \$217,000. These funds are from the IRS and are pandemic-era funds that reward employers for retaining their employees during the pandemic (as the Church did). See below for the approved use of these funds.

The 2023 Stewardship campaign received about 100 pledges equaling about \$212,000. This represented about a 5% increase over 2022. We are thankful to all congregants for their generosity.

We are blessed to have significant invested funds that help fund Church operations and outreach activities. 2023 was a very good year in the market. We basically recouped all of the losses of 2022. The investment report follows this narrative.

There were 3 major projects during the year that included work in the parsonage, upgrades to the Church security system, and the purchase and installation of a new sound system and camera for broadcasting the Sunday service live on YouTube. These projects were funded by previously raised capital campaign funds.

The Congregation approved at the Annual budget meeting the use of \$125,000 of ERTC funds (plus the remaining \$80,000 of Capital Campaign Funds) for 4 major projects in 2024, as follows:

- Upgrades to the playground
- Drainage improvements on the parking-lot side of the Church
- Painting of the sanctuary, Hay Hall and pews, and re-finishing of the floors
- Bathroom upgrades including re-finishing of the floors

Also, re-building the stairs leading to the Nursery School will be accomplished in the new year.

In addition, it was voted to use \$20,000 of the ERTC funds to donate to local non-profits through the Outreach Ministry. And finally, \$12,000 was used to fund the Church food pantry.

Also following this narrative is a spreadsheet showing several years' financial results, and the 2023 results compared to the 2023 budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Roberts  
Finance Committee Chair

Finance Committee members: Brian Fernandes, Phil Guymont, Steve Abdow, Joe Sciuto, Beth Hobbs

## Finance Ministry (Continued)

The Congregational Church of South Dartmouth						
Finance Committee 2023 Annual Report						
	2023	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>
<b><u>REVENUE</u></b>						
TOTAL BEQUEST INCOME	\$30,466	\$34,000	\$51,290	\$44,535	\$26,773	\$28,702
TOTAL LOOSE COLLECTION	\$10,640	\$9,500	\$8,800	\$4,903	\$4,710	\$22,186
TOTAL PLEDGES COLLECTED	\$212,653	\$228,070	\$199,876	\$196,506	\$194,416	\$171,038
TOTAL FACILITIES INCOME	\$12,000	\$10,000	\$4,500	\$10,000	\$5,138	\$8,235
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	\$218,938	\$7,500	\$6,583	\$19,301	\$19,821	\$10,104
TOTAL NON-OPERATIONAL INCOME	\$38,271	\$17,850	\$7,242	\$119,258	\$63,346	\$48,598
PAYROLL TRANSFER - NURSERY SCHOOL	\$90,239	\$94,000	\$93,844	\$85,796	\$64,303	\$98,522
<b><u>TOTAL REVENUE</u></b>	<b>\$613,207</b>	<b>\$400,920</b>	<b>\$372,135</b>	<b>\$480,299</b>	<b>\$378,507</b>	<b>\$387,385</b>
<b><u>EXPENDITURES</u></b>						
TOTAL ADMINISTRATION	\$71,231	\$66,687	\$63,773	\$56,790	\$56,092	\$58,671
TOTAL COUNCIL	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,925	\$41	\$0
TOTAL FINANCE & PAYROLL	\$644	\$600	\$659	\$461	\$455	\$427
TOTAL MISSION TRIPS	\$13,113	\$15,000	\$12,645	\$200	\$11,620	\$40,473
TOTAL OUTREACH/UCC	\$17,690	\$16,600	\$13,892	\$10,073	\$12,883	\$13,139
TOTAL PASTORAL	\$93,361	\$96,187	\$107,685	\$85,309	\$83,869	\$15,911
TOTAL PAYROLL EXPENSES	\$103,132	\$105,200	\$107,870	\$109,703	\$103,737	\$194,245
TOTAL PROPERTY	\$119,964	\$91,849	\$104,492	\$66,078	\$89,354	\$125,670
TOTAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	\$25,821	\$25,486	\$24,352	\$24,934	\$23,831	\$23,510
TOTAL WORSHIP	\$32,723	\$35,548	\$32,414	\$28,453	\$26,044	\$8,916
<b><u>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</u></b>	<b>\$477,679</b>	<b>\$453,157</b>	<b>\$467,782</b>	<b>\$389,009</b>	<b>\$407,926</b>	<b>\$480,962</b>
<b><u>NET OPERATING REVENUE</u></b>	<b>\$ 135,528</b>	<b>\$ (52,237)</b>	<b>\$ (95,647)</b>	<b>\$ 91,290</b>	<b>\$ (29,419)</b>	<b>\$ (93,577)</b>
<b><u>CASH FLOW ADJUSTMENTS</u></b>						
Subtract specific-purpose gifts added to investments	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$62,651	\$0	\$0
Minister's discretionary fund	\$0		\$20,329			
Adult mission trip	\$1,430		\$2,394			
Youth mission trip	\$6,233		\$5,301			
Capital campaign funds	\$10,164		\$17,785			
Camera and sound system	\$10,437					
Security system	\$5,002					
Back Bay Mission donation	\$2,000					
Special music fund - keyboard			\$850			
<b><u>TOTAL ADJUSTMENTS</u></b>	<b>\$35,266</b>		<b>\$46,659</b>			
<b><u>NET OPERATING REVENUE</u></b>	<b>\$170,794</b>	<b>\$ (52,237)</b>	<b>\$ (48,988)</b>	<b>\$ 28,639</b>	<b>\$ (29,419)</b>	<b>\$ (93,577)</b>

**Schwab Investment Account**

In accordance with Finance Committee guidelines, Church funds are invested in US Equities 40%, International Equities 20% and US Bonds 40%. Exchange traded funds (ETF's) are utilized to mirror the performance of these broad market segments. Each segment and the Church's portfolio increased in value during 2023.

Change in Account Value	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Starting Value</b>	\$1,973,767	\$1,661,325
<b>Deposits &amp; Withdrawals</b>	(18,118)	169,701
<b>Transfers</b>	5,331	18,109
<b>Change in Value of Investments</b>	(299,655)	223,929
<b>Ending Value on 12/31/22</b>	\$1,661,325	\$2,073,064
<b>Total Change in Account Value: including Deposits and Withdrawals</b>	\$(312,442)	\$411,739

### **Property Committee**

The Property Committee of the Congregational Church of South Dartmouth is charged with managing and overseeing all major and minor maintenance and repair projects in and around the church and Parsonage properties. The group is a subcommittee of the Finance Committee. It also depends greatly on Robin Lake's observations and sharing of noted issues in and around the building. Robin also coordinates all routine inspections on the property such as Fire Safety, elevator and kitchen related inspections. She and Pastor Emily keep a close eye on issues that arise and work to get them addressed quickly. John Sacramento continues to do our weekly church cleaning and other maintenance items that arise on an as needed basis.

There have been a few projects completed this year. The parsonage kitchen cabinets and much of the interior was repainted and freshened up. The chain link fence was painted and repaired as was the gate separating the 2 parking areas. It is much easier to operate now. The old playground structure has been removed for safety reasons. The heating vents from the former system were cleaned and capped as they are no longer in use. A new entry/security system was also installed. A new and improved sound system was also installed. A new camera was also purchased to improve our live streaming of Sunday worship.

Projects that are to be addressed in the upcoming year include painting of the entire sanctuary and Hay Hall. The hardwood floors in these 2 areas will also be resurfaced. Our church pews will be repaired and repainted and the cushions will be cleaned and repaired or replaced with this new facelift. This work will be done in the summer of 2024. The playground will also be receiving an update. Research into appropriate play equipment is being conducted. Our bathrooms will also receive an update with new paint and new toilet stalls. We will also work to improve the drainage system at the side entrance. All floors in the entire building will be cleaned and sealed as appropriate.

This group in conjunction with the Finance Ministry continues to review the Capital Campaign Report as identified projects and works to prioritize these as much as possible.

As always, we thank the congregation for its patience during the completion of these projects. We work hard to not have them interfere with our worship experience as much as possible.

Cecelia Roberts,

Property Chair

**Capital Campaign Update**

In 2017, the Church completed fund raising for a capital campaign. The purpose of the fundraising drive was to raise \$200,000 for use over time to undertake major physical capital projects needed at the Church.

In total, the campaign raised just over \$237,000. A number of items on the list laid out at that time have been completed, along with a couple of major unanticipated expenses. Some of the larger items are as follows:

Reimburse roof repair - \$22,000

Reconstruct front stairs - \$13,000

Paint the exterior of the Church, including needed repairs - \$54,000

Complete repairs at the parsonage - \$11,500

Install new ceiling in Schoening Hall - \$12,000

Drainage improvements in the Church yard - \$5,825.

Also, the furnace was replaced at a cost of \$26,500. However, this was completed using funds donated by Peter Hindle for this purpose.

Currently, there is a balance of approximately \$100,000 in the Capital account, which is being held in our investment account at Charles Schwab. These funds will be used for future capital improvement needs.

## Outreach Ministry

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### Outreach Ministry

**Outreach Ministry Team:** Fae Nason, Terry Cryan, Sarah Van Fleck, Derrick Jones, Susan Gabert, Jan Tatelbaum

**2024 New Members:** Kate Fentress, Christine Plante, Liz and Frank Carbone.

The Outreach Ministry achieved our goals of 2023 through kindness and generosity from our congregates.

In late 2023, Outreach was also gifted a donation from ERTC. We are forever grateful. Through this generosity, we have provided the following to our community:

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY:** On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, eleven volunteers erected, painted, and insulated the two-family home in Westport. Lunch was also provided.

**FOOD PANTRY:** Volunteers assist on food day also help to replenish.

**SALVATION ARMY TURKEY DRIVE:** Turkey Drive raised \$1,595.00.

**CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES:** The congregation again purchased specified gifts; wrapped and delivered to make a joyous holiday for a needy child.

**SOUTHCOAST LGBTQ:** The congregation purchased gifts cards for 25 teenagers.

**RUMMAGE SALE:** Many hours given by all volunteers to achieve another successful sale.

**WOMEN'S CENTER:** Through donations; we purchased clothing for the women for Mother's Day. We had some extra dollars, so we bought toiletries, toothpaste and toothbrushes for the Caregiving.

**We also continued to support the following local, national, and international groups that come from the church's offerings, donations, and pledges:**

#### **Mercy Meals & More**

**\$1000**

Mercy Meals and More provides a free healthy breakfast served at tables to clients in need. Clients can also get free donated clothing and books. Local student nurses come weekly to offer a variety of screening tests and to work in the foot clinic. We support both the breakfast program and the foot clinic.

#### **Nativity Prep School**

**\$1000**

Nativity Prep is an independent, tuition free middle school for boys from low-income families in the New Bedford area. The school provides a challenging and supportive learning environment and high-quality education. Parent volunteers are expected so that all parties have a vested interest in the school and their child's success. 100% of the funding comes from private sources.

#### **Our Sisters' School**

**\$1000**

The school is a private, tuition free middle school for girls from low-income families, similar to the Nativity Prep model. The mission is to educate and inspire girls to reach their full potential through small classes, personalized guidance and expanded school days.



**Boys and Girls Club NB**

**\$500**

Club Programs and services provide a stimulating and wholesome atmosphere for a diverse group of youth from 7-18 years of age. The Club places a strong focus on youth residing in public housing and disadvantaged neighborhoods. Services include homework help, with tutors from UMass Dartmouth, a basketball league, Health Habits food program, summer programs and more.

**PAACA Insight Youth Services**

**\$500**

Insight is the youth services program of Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction (PAACA). This program provides support services for young people affected by substance abuse and HIV and works with them to strengthen their coping skills, resources, and educational achievement in order to help them overcome challenges in their lives.

**Project MEMA**

**\$1000**

Making Education in Moshi Accessible (MEMA) seeks to enrich the lives of children by promoting education and healthy living in Moshi, Tanzania. Simple improvements (chalkboards, benches, and sanitary latrines and running water) have had a meaningful impact on the educational experience and outcomes. MEMA also sponsors several students through secondary school by paying their tuition and expenses.

**UCC International**

**\$1000**

**Emergency Fund**

The UCC through UCC/Disciples' Global Ministries and membership in worldwide church humanitarian organizations, is deeply involved in refugee emergency relief and creating durable solutions for refugees. Donations to the IEF enable the UCC to support specific refugee crises.

**Y.O.U. Youth Opportunities Unlimited**

**\$500**

This is a New Bedford program, which funds field trips and after school activities for children ages 9-16. They have extended summer programs which include reading challenges, gardening and cooking classes.

**Children's Advocacy Center**

**\$1000**

Provides funding for children and families identified through the Bristol Court system, including legal services and counseling.

**Interchurch Council**

**\$1000**

ICC's purpose is to foster cooperative Christian service and fellowship among churches and other interested organizations of the Greater New Bedford area. Projects focus on attainment of social, economic and racial justice. Our church is a member of the ICC and supportive of its many programs.

**Empower Her**

**\$250**

Their mission is to empower, support and connect girls and young women who have experienced the loss of their mothers. They offer events, mentorship and virtual programming for girls and young women up to age 24. The organization was founded in 2013 in Boston and now has chapters nationally. Our funding was designated for a local chapter.

## **Outreach Ministry (Continued)**

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### **Sharing the Harvest \$500**

Sharing the Harvest is a program of the Dartmouth YMCA. Their objective is to alleviate hunger by growing and providing fresh produce for local consumption. They also seek to promote volunteerism and awareness of hunger in our area and teach volunteers about farming and nutrition. The Hunger Commission distributes their produce to area food pantries, soup kitchens and other food programs. Our donation was designated for their Seed Program.

### **Caregiving Ministry \$100**

The Caregiving Ministry in our church made a request for a donation to buy supplies for necessity kits to be distributed in a shelter in New Bedford. Caregiving does not have a budget at this time and members of the ministry donate supplies, like yarn for their Prayer Shawl projects.

### **Hunger Commission United Way New Bedford \$500**

### **Narragansett Council Boy Scouts of America \$500**

This donation was designated for workshops to train staff to work with the diverse community of youth in New Bedford. This will also help young people take part in scouting who cannot afford to participate without assistance. The program is called Scout Reach.

### **Fishing Partnership \$500**

Since 1997, Fishing Partnership's mission has been to improve the health, safety and economic security of New Bedford commercial fishermen, their families, and the shoreline workers that support the fishing industry.

### **2023 TOTAL \$11,850**

The checks were prepared and sent out mid-December. Through the generosity of our church, we hope all those served by these organizations had a brighter new year.

## **OUTREACH MINISTRY 2024**

### **HABITAT FOR HUMANITY- JANUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>**

Twelve volunteers again went to hammer, paint, and do whatever required to complete this two- family home. The church also provided meals.

**THE WOMEN'S CENTER:** Mother's Day gifting will be our May project. We will be collecting donations to provide these women with a gift!

**BIKES NOT BOMBS:** June 22<sup>nd</sup> will be the collection date for bikes! BIKES NOT BOMBS requires a \$20 donation fee! We will also be collecting bikes during this April's rummage sale!

**JUNE PRIDE FESTIVAL** June 1<sup>st</sup> is festival day at Buttonwood Park

Respectfully submitted by,

Jan Tatelbaum

### Religious Education Ministry

RE Members: Andrea Vigus (chair), Lisa Tufano, Linda Mello, Kristi Charest, Katie Christianson

Rally Day Kick Off took place on Sunday, September 10th at 9:00. Our theme this year is “Super Bible” We continued with Group Publishing’s Dig in Program, Epic Teachings of the Bible. The curriculum continues to help children read and understand scripture through games, music, experiments, and crafts. This on-line curriculum is easily accessed and can be tailored to different ages as well as interests! Masks and capes were worn to go along with our Super Hero theme. “Kindness is my Super Power” tied in well with Pastor Emily’s Be Kind theme! Emma Silvia and Finn Paradise were Confirmed as well. A yummy brunch was served by the council! Brunch and the bouncy house were great opportunities for fun and fellowship!

Jonathan taught the high school and middle school class together. Beth taught the elementary class.

### **Outreach/ Adopt-A-Grandparent activities for the year:**

Emma, Finn, and Beth volunteered at the Food Pantry on August 19th. They attended the Synagogue Sunday, August 27th.

September: Baby Bundles Outreach for the United Way, we collected diapers, pacifiers, blankets, and clothes to help support The United Way’s Baby Bundle program for underprivileged new moms. Beth met with Sunday School Teachers on October 22nd to review our Safe Church Policy and to review our safety plan.

Adopt-A-Grandparent (A-A-G): Scarecrow Making took place September 24<sup>th</sup>. Teams created crafty scarecrows from items they had at home. A great time was had by all.

October: We raised money for Pet Us Don’t Forget Us through a bake sale after church on October 8<sup>th</sup>. This amazing non-profit saves animals that would be euthanized due to deformities or age. This coordinated well with our Blessing of the Animals worship service.

A-A-G: Pumpkin Carving took place on October 29th! Teams carved and decorated adorable pumpkins together!

RE reached out to all our college freshman. College student cards/gift cards were sent out to Myles, Grace, Kyle & Talia.

November: We collected new toys for Gifts to Give for the month of November.

On November 4<sup>th</sup> our Sunday School Families volunteered at Gifts to Give. We got to do many important jobs to help impact children who are in need.

December: RE collected shoe boxes for Sierra Leone to bring joy to children in need.

A-A-G: On Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> A-A-G pairs enjoyed a holiday celebration. Tara played Christmas music while the pairs sang carols and enjoyed decorating cookies together.

Our Christmas Pageant on December 19<sup>th</sup> was a success with many thanks to Tara and Mark and their musical talents!

## **Religious Education Ministry (Continued)**

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January: A Day of Gratitude took place in Hay Hall on January 14th. Adopt-A-Grandparents and their child painted abstract watercolor art and will add things that they are grateful for throughout the year.

February: Cupcakes for Clara was a big hit. Sunday school children decorated and sold cupcakes during coffee hour. We were able to fund Clara's private education in Tanzania for another year.

March: RE collected sports balls for the Boys and Girls Club of New Bedford.

A-A-G: Lucky Leprechaun Minute to Win It Shenanigans took place on March 17th! Nine teams raced to complete 10 fun tasks! There were lots of laughs and plenty of fun!

March 31<sup>st</sup> Re sponsored an egg hunt after church. Thank you to Andrea and Lara for orchestrating this event.

April: Sharing the Harvest will take place Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> from 10:00-12:00. We will celebrate Earth Day!

A-A-G: Talent Show will take place April 21st!

\*Youth Group activities planned:

**October 22** - Youth Mission Trip meeting right after church with parents & youth

**November 12** - Bowling at Wonder Bowl

**December 10th** - Decorate & deliver Christmas cookies to our older members.

**January 21** - Inconsequential Olympics (Minute to Win It Stations) ~ bring new white socks for Dr. Fogg.

**March 10th** - March Madness (Rock, Paper, Scissors tournament)

**April 14th** - Youth Mission Trip departs.

**April 21** - Youth Mission Trip Service ~ welcome back party at coffee hour with cake

**May 19th** - Youth help with Children's Sunday ~ walk youth down to get ice cream after church as a thank you for helping or order pizzas for their lunch.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Beth Neto, RE Director

### Worship Ministry

#### Your 2024 - 2025 Deacons:

Beth Hobbs	Carol Flack	Dan Parry
Jane Rioux	Joe Sciuto	Lisa Mellgard ( <i>Chair</i> )
Michael Gouveia	Steve Sedgwick	Susan McLaren

The program year commenced with an exhilarating Superhero Sunday School-themed worship igniting the imaginations of our young learners and sparking excitement throughout the congregation. Little did we know that this theme would extend beyond our classrooms to encompass the tireless dedication and heroic efforts of our Deacons. As the year unfolded, it became abundantly clear that our Deacons truly embody the spirit of superheroes, rising to every challenge with grace.

This year, our Deacons displayed remarkable resilience and ingenuity, gracefully navigating both the day to day as well as unforeseen challenges. Among the many highlights, one stands out—the successful execution of a lay-led Christmas celebration. This endeavor initially seemed daunting, yet thanks to Rev. EK's meticulous planning and foresight, it became a cherished moment of love, joy, hope, peace and community.

In the midst of the bustling demands of the ministry, it is essential to acknowledge Rev. EK, a true superhero among us. Her exceptional ability to plan ahead and meticulous attention to detail not only simplifies our tasks but also fosters an environment of ease and efficiency. We are deeply grateful for her steadfast support and compassionate leadership, which enriches our community and strengthens our collective mission.

#### Worship: The Heartbeat of Our Community

At the heart of our faith community lies worship—a sacred space where we gather to commune with one another and with the divine. This year, the Worship Ministry operated as silent servants, helping to make our gatherings memorable and meaningful. Behind each moment, imperfect or flawless, Deacons work tirelessly behind the scenes, acting as faithful shepherds, to ensure that our worship experiences are transformative.

#### Honoring Departing Deacons

We bid farewell to three beloved Deacons who have completed their terms of service and extend our deepest gratitude to Linda Neilson and Sue Sullivan for their dedication and selfless service. Their contributions have left an indelible mark on our community, and we are profoundly grateful for the countless hours they have devoted to enriching our worship experiences.

Additionally, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation as I conclude my second term as Chair of the Worship Ministry. It has been a privilege and an honor to serve alongside such devoted individuals, and I am confident that the ministry is in capable hands as Lisa Mellgard assumes the role of Chairperson. Lisa's leadership will undoubtedly guide us to new heights in the coming year.

## **Worship Ministry (Continued)**

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### Looking Ahead

As we reflect on the past year and look ahead to the future, let us carry forward the spirit of unity, resilience, and devotion that defines our community of faith. Together, as we embark on the next chapter of our journey, let us continue to lift each other up, inspire one another, and serve with hearts full of love and gratitude.

In closing, I extend my sincerest thanks to each and every member of our congregation for your support and commitment to our shared mission. May the year ahead be filled with blessings beyond measure as we continue to worship, serve, and grow together in faith.

With deepest gratitude,

Jonathan E. Gray  
Outgoing Chair, Worship Ministry

**The Guild Ministry**

The Guild Ministry continues its work on the mission of our ministry. As in most years, we have had 2 very successful Thrift Sales, 1 in the spring and 1 in the fall. These sales offer an opportunity for many people in our greater community to purchase many needed items to help them live within their financial means. Our sales are all filled from donations from our church family and friends of the church. This past year we were able to refurbish the library with new colors of paint and a beautiful new carpet. We are working on purchasing new chairs for the meeting table and updating some of the other furniture.

The financial statement below outlines the other areas within the church that the proceeds from these sales have supported. Along with that we have been able to add additional support to other non-profit organizations in the community. Sadly, we have also lost some long-term members (or their spouses) and have honored their memory with appropriate donations.

As always, we thank the congregation for its volunteerism before, during and after our sales. We couldn't get it done without you. We look forward to the Guild's continued presence in our church.

Respectfully submitted,

Cecelia Roberts  
Chair, Guild Ministry

# The Guild Ministry (Continued)

## Guild Financial Statement

	<b><u>Contributions</u></b>	
03/04/2023	Craft Group- Batting for 15 quilts donated to shelter	320.69
03/02/2023	Rev. Emily Kellar- Sabbatical Gift	1000
05/06/2023	bathroom Toiletries Baskets- 3 bathrooms	50.43
05/06/2023	6' Folding Tables -	270
06/02/2023	CCSD Food Pantry Donation	1000
08/07/2023	Library Carpet Replacement- Deposit	2000
08/10/2023	Library Paint- 1st Gallons	245.4
09/18/2023	Pastor's Discretionary Fund- Biloxi Food Bank	1000
09/25/2023	Library Capret -2nd Deposit	1000
10/13/2023	Library Painting- 1st Half	1750
10/16/2023	Library painting-2nd Half	1750
11/21/2023	Gifts to Give- Donation	1000
11/21/2023	Fall River Floral Supply- Christmas Sanctuary & Outdoor Ribbon Updates	33.9
01/08/2024	Library Carpet- Installation- Final Payment- Fred Assad Carpets	1100
02/28/2024	Southcoast VNA- Memorial Gift- Bruce Clarke	100
	<b><u>Total Contributions</u></b>	<b>\$ 12,620.42</b>
	<b><u>Expenditures</u></b>	
05/06/2023	Dishwasher Supplies & Painter's Tape for thrift sale	72.53
05/23/2023	Signature Sign- New Thrift Sale Signs, Date changes	270
06/02/2023	Southcoast Today Ad for Thrift Sale	50.44
07/09/2023	Ace Junk removal- Removal of old deep freeze unit in undercroft	100
08/07/2023	Flea traps for Library	38.21
08/07/2023	Sherwin Williams- Paint Samples and Supplies for Library	42.46
09/02/2023	Signature Sign- Fall Thrift Sign Updates	44
12/15/2023	Town of Dartmouth- Annual Kitchen License	300
	<b><u>Total Expenditures</u></b>	<b>\$ 917.64</b>
2023	<b>Spring Thrift Sale- June 2023</b>	
	Friday	3918.5
	Saturday	2613
	Coin- Thrift	40.2
	Early Thrift	335.56
	Late thrift	150
	Thrift Items Auctioned with Mike Corcoran- Newport	525
	Spring Sale Total	<b>7582.26</b>
2022	<b>Fall Thrift Sale- October 2023</b>	
	Friday	3314.65
	Saturday	2144
	Thrift Coin	40.4
	Early Thrift Sales	451
	Late thrift	55
	Fall Thrift Sale Total	<b>\$ 6,005.05</b>
	<b><u>Consignment Income</u></b>	
06/08/2023	Consignment Check - 2/13/23-6/8/23	\$ 458.65
10/13/2023	Consignment Check- 6/8/23-10/13/23	569.17
	Consignment Total	<b>\$ 1,027.82</b>
	<b>Facebook Marketplace Sale- Wood Train Set</b>	<b>75</b>
	<b><u>Total Funds Raised</u></b>	<b><u>14,690.13</u></b>
03/31/2024	Ending Checkbook Balance	<b>\$ 13,102.30</b>



### Children's Circle Nursery School

Children's Circle Nursery School is doing well. We have seen a large increase in enrollment, which is amazing! Our students are thriving in all aspects of our daily curriculum and routines. The children are embarking on adventures day-to-day through our monthly themes, art projects, literature, singing and dancing, and through the power of play! We allow the children to express their feelings and spark creativeness in their minds. There is not a time where you can't feel and hear the joy of children's laughter during the school day in our beautiful indoor and outdoor environment.

We begin our school year gathering at the scenic Round Hill Beach for "Ocean Splash" to welcome the new school year, a great way to meet new friends and families outside of the classroom setting. We host various events throughout the year like our Halloween Parade, Thanksgiving Performance, A Christmas Carnival, Muffins with Mom, Easter Egg Hunt, and our Annual Art Show in May. We then sadly say goodbye in June to our preschool graduates who are off to Kindergarten in the Fall and celebrate with the students who will be returning for another year. We are looking forward to the upcoming 2024-2025 school year, where we will welcome previous families back and welcome many new families as well. Our classroom enrollment is close to being full for the upcoming school year. We are excited and looking forward to continuing providing educational care to local families in our area.

Samantha Barrett  
Director and Lead Teacher of Children's Circle Nursery School

Amy Bettencourt  
Lead Teacher of Children's Circle Nursery School

<b>The Congregational Church of So Dartmouth</b>	<b>Church Leadership Nominations</b>
Rev. Emily J. Kellar, Pastor	2024-2025
<b><u>NAME</u></b>	<b><u>POSITION/YEAR TERM STARTED</u></b>
<u>Church Officers</u>	
Lara Stone	Moderator 2023
Jonathan Gray	Vice Moderator 2024
Grace Wyss	Clerk 2024
Phil Guymont	Treasurer 2020
Beth Hobbs	Asst Treasurer 2023
<u>Finance Ministry</u>	
Steve Roberts (Chair)	2021
Phil Guymont	2017
Beth Hobbs	2022
Steve Abdow	2023
Dennis Burke	2024
David Wyss	2024
<u>Worship Ministry (Deacons)</u>	
Lisa Mellgard (Chair)	2022
Michael Gouveia	2019
Carol Flack	2022
Jane Rioux	2022
Beth Hobbs	2023
Susan McLaren	2023
Dan Perry	2024
Joe Sciuto	2024
Steve Sedgwick	2024

<u>Religious Education Ministry</u>	
Kristy Charest (Co-Chair)	2019
Katie Christianson (Co-Chair)	2024
Lisa Tufano	2022
Linda Mello	2024
Karin Wood	2024
<u>Outreach Ministry</u>	
Terry Cryan (Chair)	2022
Susan Gabert	2022
Jan Tatelbaum	2022
Sarah VanVleck	2022
Siobhan Bickmann	2024
Liz Carbone	2024
Kate Fentress	2024
<u>Fellowship Committee</u>	
Beth Miller (Chair)	
Pete Miller	
Elizabeth Breese	
Margie Pullo	
Michele Almeida	
Deborah Burke	
Jody Wigfield	
Linda Lally	
<u>Human Resources Committee</u>	
Dan Perry (Chair)	
Melissa Lennox	
Jeff Stone	

<u>Caregiving Committee</u>	
Teresa De Jesus De La Torre Choquette (Chair)	
<u>Guild Committee</u>	
Cecelia Roberts (Chair)	
Kathy Pappas	
Kate Ouellette	
Susan Choquette	
Sonja White	
<u>Pastor Relations Committee</u>	
Steve Banno	
Elizabeth Breese	
Terry Cryan	
Lara Stone	
<u>Property Committee</u>	
Brian Fernandes (Chair)	
Kate Ouellette	
Kathy Pappas	
Cecelia Roberts	
Ed Pimental	
Pete Miller	