

Annual Report

2018



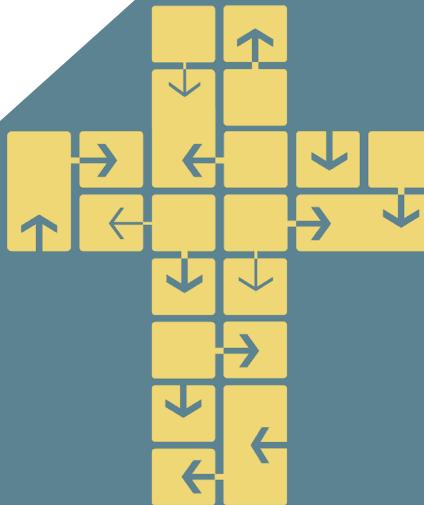
Community Church of Vero Beach

1901 23rd St. Vero Beach FL, 32960

We Are Connected

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Report of the Senior Minister

My dear friends,

Once upon a time I never thought about retirement, other than knowing I needed to be a responsible person who salted away some rainy-day dollars each month for a far distant future.

How could I ponder retirement when sermons needed to be preached each Sunday in our beautiful sanctuary? How could I think of retirement when our sanctuary seats were full of people hoping to hear a word that might change everything, or maybe just hoping the preacher of the day would say something that made sense?

No, retirement was never a thought. It is now. The proverbial fat lady (or contour-challenged man!) is going to sing sometime late fall of 2019 or early 2020, and we will change from your “active” to “retired” clergy.

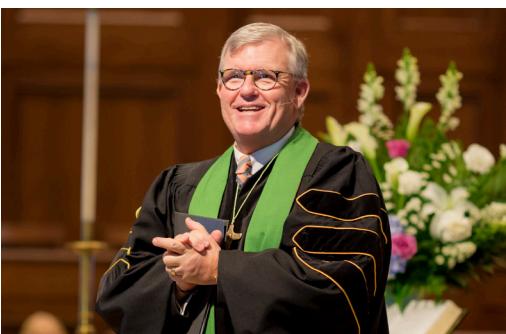
Granted, as one retired clergy named Grant Miltread has said, “In retirement we will still traipse after Jesus (with a hundred daily failings) and God, ever elusive, ever sublime, will continue to lure us toward being neighborly, open to the new and the next. And the spirit, holy or not, ghostly or not, will still swirl with divine nudges of love and light”.

So yes, we will continue our commitment to growing spiritually, hoping that we can love and serve God in this very difficult world. We will simply retire from being your leaders in this precious place. I’m fully convinced that there is a man or woman God is grooming to join you, with whom you will serve Christ joyfully and faithfully in years to come.

This will be my last Annual Report, and I would like to place in writing something that up to this point has only been spoken. It is the Christmas Eve welcome that I have offered across the years at our services. I do so now because we received a hand-written note this past week from the daughter of one of our members. She lives in Connecticut, but was here visiting her family and attended one of our five Christmas Eve Services. Her long note was complimentary about the homily, the choir, the spirit, and especially the opening welcome. She wrote in her note, “I did not know that churches like yours existed. And after hearing that Call to Worship, which was so hospitable and inviting, I seriously thought about moving to Vero Beach just so my four young children could grow up in a church like this.”

Just what is a church like this all about? I want you to remember. And I do believe the Call to Worship on Christmas Eve, which is a paraphrase of that used in Canterbury Cathedral, captures so well who and what we are. So I leave you with its welcoming words.

In the future, if ever the way becomes strained, your vision a bit impaired, or the answers to life’s complicated questions seem unanswerable, then I invite you to return to this statement. This is who we have all worked to become over these 15 years together. This is who I pray you will continue to be after the fat lady (or contour-challenged man) sings at our farewell.



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The Call

3:00, 4:30, 7:00 and 9:00 service

Christmas Eve, 2018

Community Church of Vero Beach

Beloved in Christ, on this Christmas Eve we welcome all who live in Vero Beach, or wished you lived here, especially during the Winter months.

We welcome those who are single, married, divorced, widowed, straight, gay, confused, well-heeled or down-in-the-dumps.

We welcome wailing babies, excited toddlers, and teenagers forced to turn their phones to vibrate, grudgingly having to respond to their friends, “@Church.”

We welcome all whether you can sing like Pavarotti or just growl quietly to yourself. We don’t care if you’re more Christian than the Archbishop of Canterbury, or when you hear the word Creed, you think it is a Rock Band.

We welcome cross-fit moms, and half-marathon dads, tree huggers, latte sippers, vegetarians, and junk food eaters.

We welcome you if you haven’t been to church since Christmas 10 years ago, or don’t like organized religion, because, quite frankly, we sometimes get fed up with it ourselves.

We offer welcome to those who think the Earth is flat, work too hard, or don’t work much at all.

We welcome those who are inked, pierced, both, or neither, and those who had to be here, because you are visiting your parents and you would not want to disappoint them.

And we offer a special welcome tonight, to those who could use a little prayer, because, well, life’s not working so well right now.

For to all of you, I have some good news to share. On this magical night, hope is being born, a hope that proclaims: No matter who you are, you are beloved. No matter what you have done, you are forgiven. And no matter where you go, from this day forward, you will not go alone.

So welcome pilgrims, tourists, seekers, doubters, and you.

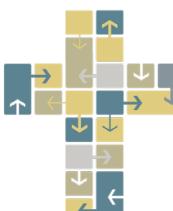
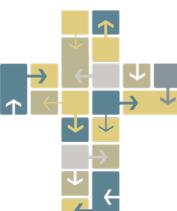
There is nowhere you can go that can separate you from the love of God that shone through Christ Jesus. And that is a truth you can safely believe. Amen.

Respectfully submitted, as Christ’s humble servant and your loving pastor,

The Rev. Dr. Robert T. Baggott

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Moderator's Report

Dear members and friends,

2018 at Community Church...a year of change and looking toward the future, but also a year marked by great generosity of spirit. "Change is inevitable. Change is constant." Thus said 19th c. British statesman, Benjamin Disraeli. The reality of change can be unsettling, but we are a strong, vibrant and healthy congregation that has faced challenges of all kinds in our nearly 100 years.

As I review the year two events stand out to me which will impact the life of Community Church going forward: the announcement mid-year that our beloved ministers, Dr. Bob and Dr. Casey Baggott will soon retire after 15 years of ministry among us; and the 12-month visioning and strategic planning process we began in February.

The Vision 2020 Plan which resulted from this time of discernment lays out what the congregation feels is God's purpose for us right now and where we want to focus our priorities. The plan will be an excellent blueprint to guide us as we enter the transition time involved with this significant pastoral change that is on the horizon.

In accordance with our Bylaws a Search Committee was appointed and then commissioned by the congregation to find our next Senior Minister. The Committee's crucial work is well underway. With the assistance of the UCC Conference and a respected executive search firm our reach will be broad.

During the year we said goodbye to several highly regarded, veteran staff members and then welcomed several new ones with fresh energy and ideas. Our leadership Boards, teams and staff have worked tirelessly to be good stewards of the finances, buildings and souls entrusted to them. We have continued to spearhead interfaith dialogue and relationships in our community. We have supported our youth and staff as they continue their education and as they reach out into the world to share God's love through mission opportunities. We have tried to be open and listen to what is happening in the world and in our church family and act with compassion and care. We gave of our time, talents and money. Above all we worshipped our God together in a loving, welcoming community of faith.

With a staff of 61, lay leadership numbering nearly 200 and a congregation of 2400 active participants it would be impossible to detail all the wonderful work that happens around here. I am grateful for the dedication of each one of these people and for the opportunity to be serving as Moderator during this time in the history of our church. We are poised for an exciting future. Hang on!

Blessings abound,

Allison Matsik, Moderator



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Board of Deacons

The Deacons of The Community Church of Vero Beach are called by God and authorized by the Church membership to a ministry of spiritual leadership to the congregation. Our services include sympathy, witness, and caring support, as well as assistance in the worship of the Church. During worship the Deacons assist with the administration of the sacraments of baptism and communion, and perform other duties as determined in conjunction with the Clergy. We also serve as liaison to all those committees and groups within the Church which facilitate services of worship.

The following is a recap of our rewarding and uplifting experience as we have served others at Community Church during 2018.

Deacon Alumni Liaison Committee – Under the mantra: "Once a Deacon, Always a Deacon," we, on the Deacon Board and those on the Alumni Deacon list, are privileged to serve our congregation at Community Church of Vero Beach in as many ways as needed. We have eighteen dedicated men and women on the current Deacon Board. Once a month we serve Communion to the congregation in the chapel and at the sanctuary services. We maintain a list of 50 alumni deacons who serve when there is a need. The list provides the current contact information for each person, their desires as to which services they wish to serve, whether or not they are available to provide support to grieving families during Memorial services, and whether they will be available to substitute for current deacons when needed. Some on the alumni list request to once again serve as active deacons.

Baptism Committee – The Baptism Committee of the Board of Deacons offers hospitality and guidance to the baptism families as they prepare and participate in the sacrament of baptism. We had nine deacon assisted baptisms scheduled for the chapel, the sanctuary or the C2 services. The deacon contacts the family by email and phone to explain details for the day which includes arrival time, seating, photography options and availability of the Garden Room prior to the service. On the day of the baptism, the deacon prepares and holds the water. A baptism stole, a symbol of servanthood with Christ, is handed to clergy to be wore by the person being baptized. After the baptism, the deacon provides the certificate of baptism, presents a card of congratulations and a small gift which is usually a Christian picture book about baptism. Adult baptisms follow a similar plan and may be performed publicly or privately.

Calendar Committee – The job of the calendar committee is to create the yearly deacon calendar, which is a colored-coded compilation of each month of the year showing liturgy assignments, communion Sundays, special events and deacon board meetings. In addition, deacon contact information and communion serving positions are listed. The calendar is put together each January and revised throughout the year. The committee also informs deacons through email of their upcoming liturgy and communion responsibilities and co-ordinates with the communion chair the subs for communion each month.

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Communion Committee – The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is celebrated the first Sunday of every month during all worship services (unless otherwise designated). Holy Communion is one of the two sacraments observed in our church. Preparing and serving the elements thus becomes one of the most important responsibilities of the deacons. It takes 18 active deacons to serve communion in our church sanctuary. Each deacon has a designated section to serve in the sanctuary during their three-year tenure. Thus, often members, who sit in the same location each Sunday, and deacons develop a relationship where a member may identify his or her deacon as “my deacon.” During communion the process of entering the sanctuary and serving communion is highly choreographed. New members must be trained in this process. Periodically, deacons serve communion to members who are unable to attend church services or at services other than the Sunday morning worship service. Communion is prepared by deacons in the church sacristy. All communion supplies are maintained here. Deacons inventory these supplies and inform the church office when supplies need replenishing. A rotating team of three deacons, plus a captain, prepare the communion elements each month, overseen by the committee chairperson. Thirty-three plates of bread and trays of wine are prepared for communion each month. Five of each are used for the chapel service with the remainder used in our sanctuary, save one which is prepared for a monthly service our church conducts at a local nursing home. We recently began using biodegradable communion cups to reduce the ecological impact of using hundreds of disposable communion cups each month. Communion for our C-2 Sunday morning service is served by intinction utilizing five chalices and five loaves of bread. A few days prior to Communion Sunday each month the captain purchases loaves of bread. These loaves must be sliced into small, individual cube pieces for partaking during communion. Both white and wheat bread are utilized. Several years ago, a thoughtful deacon used his talents to craft an ingenious tool which is used, along with an electric carving knife, to remove the crust and slice the bread loaves into cubes of just the correct size. Gluten-free wafers are also made available for communion at all services. Our church has beautiful ceramic chalices and plates for serving communion by intinction and during other special services. An alumni deacon designs and makes this lovely pottery for our church.

Youth Confirmands’ Committee - The end of February deacons met with the 2018 Confirmand Class to share how the deacons serve the congregation. Then we had lunch together so we could develop a relationship with the young people. On March 4, the confirmands shadowed the deacons during communion. In April a docent tour was conducted for the confirmands to acquaint them with features of our church campus. Confirmation Sunday was May 5, where deacons placed hands on the shoulders of the confirmands as they and the congregation joined in singing “It Is I, Lord.”

Deacons’ Fund Committee – The Deacons’ Fund, which offers confidential emergency financial help to our church members, is one dimension of fulfilling the deacons’ mission. Each Sunday that the deacons serve communion, we request that worshippers consider placing a small contribution in a Deacons’ Fund offering envelope, available in the pews, and putting the envelope in the offering plate to support the ongoing ministry of the Deacons’ Fund. This year the total contributions to the Deacons’ Fund were \$7,655.90. Four church members were recipients of Deacons’ Fund disbursements in 2018, for a total of \$6,800. Our deacons were pleased, through these disbursements in 2018, to offer emergency help to our members for their medical costs, housing, and childcare.

Memorial Assistance Committee – The deacons are blessed to provide hospitality, sympathy and comfort to families and their guests before, during and after approximately 23 memorial services held in 2018 in the chapel or sanctuary. We coordinate the memorial preparation with our senior ushers and host the receptions that are scheduled for the courtyard or community hall after the service.

Usher Liaison Committee – There have been four deacons on the Usher Liaison Committee to provide help and support to the ushers, including recruiting, training and scheduling. Depending on the time of year, sixteen to twenty-four ushers are required to adequately staff the worship services in the chapel and sanctuary. The year began with a roster of 38, several of whom are seasonal members. Nine of the group were new to ushering. Throughout the year the number of ushers fluctuates, so five current deacons are listed on the roster. At least half a dozen more are available to be recruited at the last minute as subs. While our ushers are primarily serving weekly worship services, there may be occasional requests for special occasions. We, at Community Church, are blessed to have dedicated ushers, some of whom have served for 25 to 30 years and more. Donald “Hutch” Hutchinson, our Senior Usher, and Clare Paryzek work faithfully to prepare and follow-up for all worship services, memorials and other events.

Youth Correspondence Committee - This committee coordinated correspondence of encouragement on behalf of the Deacon Board to our 13 young members who were graduating from high school in the spring. Then in late fall we sent a second note to them to let them know we are thinking of them and wishing them well. We enclosed a Starbucks prepaid card in this second mailing.

Looking forward to 2019 and beyond, the deacons will be focused on maintaining consistent and excellent service to the congregation as our newly commissioned deacons begin their service. We will accomplish this via training and mentorship. As the Vision 2020 Plan rolls out, we will evaluate our customary sets of tasks and skills to see how we might improve them to meet the new vision over the next few years.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Clower, Chair
The Rev. Dr. Casey G. Baggott, Executive Minister



Board of Trustees

Community Church of Vero Beach once again performed very well in regards to exceeding our revenue vs. expense objectives. Stewardship contributions totaled \$2,701,750 this year, which was \$86,750 above budget. Usage income (facility usage, wedding and funeral income) was favorable to budget by \$15,615. Program budget exceeded budget by \$55,063 due largely to special offerings for hurricane relief and strong preschool enrollment.

On a positive note, expenses totaled \$3,701,103 which is \$6,307 below budget. However, total revenue of \$3,697,815 was \$9,595 below budget. This is due largely to a \$31,023 deficit balance in earnings from our investment portfolio, compared to \$152,131 in earnings last year. This \$183,154 "swing" in our investment portfolio has resulted in an operating deficit of \$3,288 for 2018, compared to a surplus of \$90,971 in 2017.

Community Church took on several large capital expenditures this year. Most notably were:

- An HVAC upgrade in the Education Building, which will have a positive impact on our utility costs
- The addition of hurricane storm shutters throughout much of our campus
- Renovation of the Music Offices
- Enhanced sanctuary lighting and sound booth renovations

Our independent auditors have again confirmed that the Church's financials are presented fairly and in conformity with the financial reporting guidelines. We remain grateful for the significant efforts of Stephanie Toomey our Business Administrator, and Shawna Stout our Director of Development.

Despite our budget deficit, triggered primarily by the recent volatility of the market, Community Church remains very healthy as we enter 2019. We are confident that the leadership transition at the Senior Minister position will provide an exceptional opportunity to further bolster our already strong stewardship program by providing opportunities to recognize and celebrate the great legacy and impact Drs. Bob and Casey Baggott have had, while also ensuring that we position our future Senior Minister for great success.

I would like to thank my peers on the Board of Trustees for their unwavering commitment to our church.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen M. Higgins, Chair



Board of Mission

This year's board consisted of chair: Phil Chadeayne; vice-chair: Scott Turner; finance: Hal Lambert; and secretary: Pat Draper. Other members include Wayne Tozzolo, Rod Roth, Frank Iodice, Lisa Morrison, Carolyn White, Carol Bieber, and Sandy Robinson.

Together, we supported, both financially and through volunteer efforts, 30 local agencies and two international ministries. All are listed in our new brochure available at the kiosks. Board members liaison with local agencies to better understand their effectiveness, to understand the challenges they face, and assess how Community Church can best support their efforts. We also try to keep the congregation informed by highlighting an agency in the bulletin each week and through the mission table, which is set up most Sundays in the courtyard.

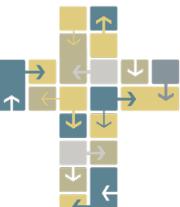
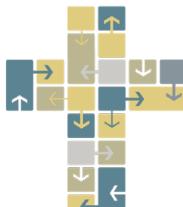
Highlights of our accomplishments include:

- Participation in the Circle of Faith lending our talents in support of the construction of a new home at the Habitat for Humanity neighborhood on 20th St. south of Oslo Rd.
- Participated in the Soup Bowl in support of the Samaritan Center by making nearly 200 quarts of soup for sale, acting as the soup distribution center storing 90 5-gallon pails of soup in our chiller, and hosting our normal Soup Bowl lunch and pottery sale.
- Sent a mission team to support the work of Haiti Partners in Petion-ville, Haiti.
- Supported the youth mission trip to Houston, Texas to assist with rebuilding efforts following Hurricane Florence.
- Supported the Indian River County Food Pantry with our annual food drive raising over \$8,000 and 1600 lbs of food.
- Supplied nearly 350 Christmas gifts through our Christmas Wish Tree effort.
- Supplied bell ringers for the Salvation Army.
- Distributed nearly \$200,000 to agencies, mostly local, to help them provide food, shelter, and educational services to those in need.
- Coordinated additional financial funding of approximately \$75,000 to entities in Florida, North Carolina, and Puerto Rico suffering monetary losses caused by hurricanes Irma, Michael, Maria, and Florence.

Respectfully submitted,

Phil Chadeayne, Chair

Rev. David Johnson, Minister of Missions and Education



Caring for our Community of Faith

Rev. Holly Adams, our Interim Minister of Community Care said, "I'm honored to have been invited to serve CCOVB's pastoral needs as of September 2018." As a newcomer to this community, Rev. Holly has had lots of people to get to know, beginning with her colleagues. And, then there is the congregation, some 2000+, who have been warmly welcoming. The challenge of her role is that she generally meets parishioners when they're in need of support of some kind, often in a hospital or rehab facility, and feeling sickly and way below par. It is a testament to the power of human presence, with credit to her predecessor, Rev. Joel Reif, that CCOVB lives into Jesus' commandment to love one another through a pastoral presence, in sickness and in health. "I have found a congregation quite appreciative of, and receptive to the pastoral care we provide," she said.

In addition to visiting with congregants in their times of need, Rev. Adams is also honored to serve the Called to Care (C2C) Ministry, a gathering of trained and dedicated lay caregivers, who supplement the clergy's pastoral presence in the church community. We hope to invite and train a second generation of caregivers into this Ministry in 2019. Also, we are delighted to minister to the Caring & Sharing support group, a gathering of men and women who came together in their shared pain of loss several years ago and who have supported each other in re-writing the next chapter of their lives. We plan to offer another support group in 2019 for those who've suffered more recent losses.

Respectfully submitted,

Ferguson Taylor
Sharon Richards
Diana Mrotek
Leslie Tilley
John Hillhouse
Rev. Holly Adams, Interim Minister of Community Care

lead our worship services with great enthusiasm each Sunday. We look forward to the challenging repertoire in the upcoming year and know they are an inspiration to our congregation and community. We have collaborated with the Atlantic Classical Orchestra for several performances of Beethoven's great Ninth Symphony and also successfully performed the monumental Requiem by Giuseppe Verdi for our Good Friday service. Our Christmas concert and Christmas Eve services were hailed as the most inspiring and well done in our music ministries history. Thank you for the wonderful support that you have shown our ensembles and musicians.

The concert series has grown in its overall quality, diversity of musical offerings and attendance in the last year. We are currently bringing world-renowned performers and ensembles to our church and its community for all to experience for a minimal charge. We are grateful for all those who help to make this series one of the shining ministries of our church.

We are grateful that the Fine Arts portion of our ministry is finally coming to fruition through the opening of a new art gallery which will be located in our narthex. With this new visual arts ministry we will see how beautiful God's world is through the eyes of many different artists who will show their great work in our halls.

The Music and Fine Arts ministry of Community Church continues to be a vibrant, spiritually based, growing artistic family with its message of glorifying God through music and the arts reaching far beyond the walls of our church and into the greater Treasure Coast community.

Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth; Break forth and sing for joy and sing praises.
Psalm 98:4

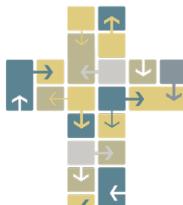
Respectfully submitted,

Chad Morrison, Music and Fine Arts Board Chair
Andrew R. Galuska, Director of Music and Fine Arts

Board of Music and Fine Arts

The Music and Fine Arts ministry has truly flourished over the past year with many new and exciting programs and events. We all have been blessed through the wonderful ensembles, musicians and artists we are fortunate to have in our vibrant ministry. This ministry has accomplished so much in such a short amount of time and we look forward to many more successful musical/fine arts endeavors in the years to come. We are so fortunate to have put together a great musical team (the Music and Fine Arts Committee, volunteers and staff) that help with the implementation of our music ministry goals and aspirations. This year we hired Jill Truax as Associate Director of Music and David Mundy as Worship Leader for our C2 service. With these hires we are now fully staffed in the music ministry. We are truly blessed!

The Chancel Choir has grown not only in active membership but also musically and spiritually. We are so proud of our choir members and realize how fortunate we are to have such devoted and talented members who diligently, purposefully and musically



Board of Adult Ministry

It has been another full year of educational opportunities here at Community Church. Our clergy have, and continue to offer Bible Studies at five different times during the week.

The School of Christian Living, hosted by Elaine Matthes, is in its second full year, offering 4-6 week, interactive modules covering various aspects of life for followers of Christ. During 2018 these modules included: Who/What is a Christian, Reading Scripture With Our Minds and Hearts, and How Do The Ten Commandments Apply Now?

A number of small groups met to explore spiritual writing with Beverly Zell, navigating our capstone years with Diana Mrotek, and a study of Barbara Brown Taylor's book, An Altar in the World.

Community@Community on Wednesday nights featured presentations from parishioners, staff, and outside speakers covering a wide variety of theological and church related topics.

- We learned about missions from groups working with children as close as Indian River County, and as far away as South Africa.
- We delved into theological topics as wide-ranging as why bad things happen, and as narrow as our understanding of Jesus' birth as the incarnation of God.
- Heather Stapleton taught us about the sea turtles native to our coastline. A talk that resulted in a group of us observing turtles late one evening in June.
- Beverly Zell and Elaine Matthes demonstrated a restorative circle, a method of resolving conflict and restoring relationships.
- We have begun discussing a video series presented by progressive theologians discussing new ways of viewing Jesus' life and ministry.
- In February Wednesday nights focused on Dietrich Bonhoeffer and his understanding of Christian community, hearing presentations from Bob Inhoff and Don Stoner, hosting Al Staggs who delivered a one hour monologue as Dr. Bonhoeffer, and watching a film that depicted his life.

Throughout the spring and fall, Wednesday nights have also featured a brief Vespers service in which Middle School Students gathered with seniors to sing, pray, and hear a brief meditation.

One disappointment during the year was that our Ella Dodd Distinguished Lecturer, Dominic Crossan, was forced to cancel due to medical reasons. We look forward to hearing from him in 2019.

Finally, in 2019 the Board of Adult Ministries will attempt to implement one of the suggestions from our consultant, operating more as a flexible team than an elected board. We look forward to sharing our experience with you in the coming years.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David Johnson, Minister of Missions and Education
Elaine Matthes, Ministry Associate for Spiritual Formation

Community Preschool

May of 2018 brought us to the end of the 2017-2018 school year. January through May included several successful events such as the Trike-a-Thon, a fundraiser for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, sweet Valentine's Day and Mother's Day events and our Spring Music Program. These special activities are just a sampling of what happens in the preschool. Teachers work hard every day to plan and implement a well-designed curriculum to help support each child reaching their fullest potential. We have an excellent reputation within the community for preparing children to succeed in kindergarten and beyond, and we proudly sent another group of special Pre-K "graduates" on to the next chapter in their educational journey.

Early in the year we also received word from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) that our re-accreditation efforts were successful and we were awarded another five year accreditation term. NAEYC accreditation is the national gold standard for excellence in early childhood education and we are extremely proud of our continued high standing with them.

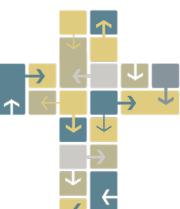
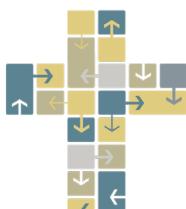
The summer of 2018 included four well-received camps. Altogether we offered seven weeks of camp with an afternoon option in addition to the camp day. Themes included Land of Make-Believe, Shiver Me Timbers, Super Heroes and Wacky Water Week.

The 2018-2019 school year got off to a great start! We have nine classrooms this year including three Explorers classes (two and young three year old children), three Voyagers classes (three and young four year old children), and three Pre-K Pioneer classes (four and young five year old children). We currently have a wait list in both our Explorers and Pre-K programs and limited openings in our Voyager program. August through December we were busy starting the new school year with home visits, orientations, school wide and classroom holiday events and parent teacher conferences.

On behalf of all of us, we continue to be thankful for all of the tremendous support we receive from the Church and our wonderful school families.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Squires, Preschool Director



Board of Children's Ministry

It has been an eventful year for the Children's Ministry at Community Church. There was great fun in family events. We connected with people beyond our walls with community events. Sunday School continues to be strong every week. Sunday mornings are an eventful time for children and families. Children experience worship, faith formation, and fellowship all in one morning. They start in worship with "worship bags" to connect them to the scripture lessons. The youngest of our children safely attend one of our two nurseries during worship. The older nursery has their own special Sunday school curriculum each week.

Our older elementary children (Pre-K through Grade 5), participate in the Godly Play Sunday school. This is the second year for Godly Play at Community Church. The stories are heard, seen, and played with every week. These stories are connecting with the children, some even remember the stories from the first year.

This fall, on Communion Sundays, we started a new worship tradition, the Pray Ground. During worship children are invited to sit together in a Pray Ground worship space and participate in faithful play while listening and participating in the service. They are then brought back to their families to receive communion together. Every Sunday after worship, all children and families are invited to join in our Holy Chaos in Commotion. This is a time for snacks, games, fun, and fellowship for parents and children alike.

This Christmas Eve, we introduced a new Family Christmas Eve Service called the "ABC's of Christmas." The story of Christmas was told using the alphabet to describe the events at the time of Jesus' birth. Each child wore a costume and had a "shout-out" part during the service, some of the parents got involved!

The 3 major community events we had this year were Boo Bash, a Halloween themed event; Jingle Jam an event held at Christmas time and our Easter festival. These events were extremely successful, they connected families from Community Church, Community Preschool, and families throughout the community.

This summer Doug Johnson joined the Community Church staff to work alongside Elizabeth Hipp as the new Ministry Associate for Emerging Generations.

Our new Kid'z Night Out events were fun for both parents and children. The kids enjoyed a night filled with food, fun and games, while their parents enjoyed a night out. In addition, Elizabeth Hipp coordinated many fun activities which included Sunday Bowling, a trip to the museum and an airboat ride. These events had a wonderful turnout and were thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance. The Children's Ministry continues to grow and develop under the direction of our professional and dedicated Emerging Generations team.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Scott, Chair
Doug Johnson, Ministry Associate for Emerging Generations

Board of Youth Ministry

Our New Year began with a fun reunion dinner with our college kids in Commotion. Many were home for the holidays and we enjoyed a time of fellowship. Many of them commented on the wonderful Care Packages the Youth Board sent out during exam week!

The end of the first quarter brought significant change to our group with the resignation of Neal Watkins to further his career with the UCC Florida Conference. The focus of our board was then to ensure a positive transition during this change of leadership with Elizabeth Hipp in charge of both the Youth and Children's Board. We also supported our youth through the difficult time that ensued after the school shooting in South Florida.

The second and third quarters remained busy with Confirmation and Graduation activities, as well as monthly outings for fun and service. The youth volunteered for several mission events throughout the year with various local agencies. Twenty-six youth and nine adults attended the Houston Mission Trip in June (*see the below group photo.*) We volunteered with the hurricane relief efforts on four houses with the help of Heartwork Mission.

After joining us during the mission trip, Doug Johnson joined the staff as our Ministry Associate for Emerging Generations focusing on the middle school students. Doug has been instrumental in developing monthly events on Sunday evenings that have been both fun and educational. We are thrilled to have him join us!

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Cleary, Chair
Elizabeth Hipp, Ministry Associate for Emerging Generations

2018 Highlights

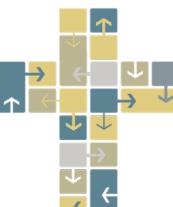
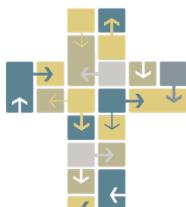
Mission Events:
Souper Bowl of Caring
Indian River Food Pantry
Childcare Resources
Post Office Food Drive
Houston Mission Trip
Fall Food Drive

Fellowship Events:
Capt. Bob's Airboat Ride
Rapid's Water Park
Sky Zone Trampoline Park
HS Lock-In

MS Pandemonium Events: **Faith-Building Events:**

Game Night
Escape Room
Laser Tag
Mystery Dinner

MS Youth Group
MS Sunday School
HS Girl's Small Group
HS Boy's Small Group



Board of Fellowship

Due to staff changes earlier in the year, the Fellowship Board was without a staff liaison. However, they continued their commitment to supporting the "Fellowship time" each Sunday after the worship service by recruiting and training greeters to welcome people on Sundays.

In the summer, staff member Elaine Matthes became the staff support person and started to put the focus on "fellowship" and what that means for this Board. We have once again become involved with the new members classes and are working on ways to make the new members feel more connected to our congregation. We also have become more involved in following up on visitors and those who have just moved to our community.

The Board will continue to be responsible for recruiting volunteers to clean-up after fellowship hour but we will also do more to mingle and talk with anyone sitting or standing alone. One of our most important roles in the church is to find greeters for each door on Sunday mornings. Lois Forrest does a great job with this and will hopefully find someone else to train this year to carry on this great ministry.

This past year we helped with the Easter Festival, the Ice Cream Social, the Boo Bash and the Jingle Jam. We will continue to help with several of these events in the coming year, finding ways to not only be the food providers but to help recruit volunteers so they can feel more connected to our church while serving and having fun.

We hope in 2019 to incorporate new ideas to support the fellowship of all the members of Community Church. That includes the return of Sunday morning gatherings around 'home states' and special events to welcome new members.

Also tied into Fellowship are the exercise classes that Elaine Matthes leads twice a week here at the church. On average, 12 to 15 people show up to work on balance, strength and flexibility meanwhile becoming a very cohesive and loving group, supporting and caring for one another in class and out.

Respectfully submitted,

Vikki Feurer, Chair

Elaine Matthes, Ministry Associate for Spiritual Formation



The Community Church of Vero Beach Annual Meeting January 31, 2018

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Moderator Allison Matsik, who declared that the necessary quorum was present.
- 2) The Rev. Joel Reif gave the invocation.
- 3) The church's Director of Music and Fine Arts, Andrew Galuska, led the opening hymn, verses 1 and 2 of "The Church's One Foundation"
- 4) On a motion by David Sams seconded by Robi Robinson, the congregation unanimously approved the Minutes of the January 25, 2017 Annual Meeting.
- 5) Words from the Senior Minister:

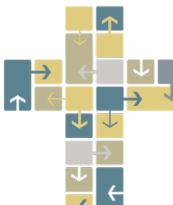
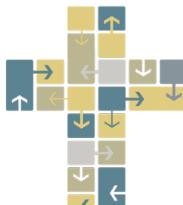
Dr. Baggott highlighted several issues that stood out as he reflected on 2018 and when he read the 2017 Annual Report. We experienced a decline in overall church membership, but not necessarily in participation or in need for ministry from the church. Another issue is the need for new, unique staffing scenarios to make sure we care for all the people who come into our faith community

"Throughout the history there has always been a time when the church arrives at a point and something has to happen," Dr. Baggott said. "And there is a little scuffling, a little dust is shaken off and something new happens. And then it rises back up to its next journey."

"So there are a couple things that jump out at me about our numbers here at Community Church," he said. "I'm not certain what to make of them, but what it says to me is that God is doing something really new here. I don't know quite what that is. But whatever it is, I do have the great faith that it will put us where Community Church is supposed to be for its next season of its life."

Our membership numbers are down, he said, primarily for two reasons. One is that we have systematically deleted from the rolls many people who no longer have a connection with the church. One reason for that action is stewardship. Accuracy is important because the church pays the Florida Conference of the UCC \$17.50 per member, each year, to support its mission and ministry primarily in Florida and throughout the world. Another reason for declining membership is the high number of deaths in our congregation.

But a more interesting and more challenging reason for lower membership numbers is that more and more people who come to churches, are "attending" but not "joining," at least not joining in the numbers that their predecessors have joined.



"They are coming to be transformed, to give, to utilize programs. They are coming to have something that's not "just what's downloadable." Some show up and we never know who they are. Dr. Baggott said. These people may also list CCOVB as their church when they check in at the hospital, for example.

"So something new is happening that I think the church has never faced before. Our challenge is: How then do you reach people who don't want to join but want to be part of the journey?"

Beyond Sunday services within our own walls, CCOVB invites people to join with us in worship and other events via many electronic platforms ranging from "livestreaming" from our own website to people being able to find us much easier on Facebook or other social media sites. Ironically, we are now having more views on Facebook than on our website.

The upcoming retirement of Rev. Joel Reif, our veteran and beloved Minister of Pastoral Care, will give the church an opportunity to explore new staffing patterns. We will be working with a church consultant on charting the future of the church and staffing will be one of those areas likely to come up.

We need to restructure to meet new needs of our fellow congregants who are non-members.

"What are the stories of these people who we don't know? These people who connect with us through social media, who come into C2 and arguably we can't see their faces and they don't sign in? We don't know their names. How do we connect with people who come to our Sunday morning worship services in the sanctuary but never sign a thing? How do we pastor them? How do we care for them?" How are we going to meet the needs of these people who call this their church home?

The bigger picture beyond staffing:

People are "experiencing a need for peace," Dr. Baggott said. A need "to have a place to be that is not confusing. To have a place where you can feel a fresh, sweeping breeze of a spirit that is calming, loving and caring and gentle. The church is becoming one of the few safe havens that we can come to find that kind of peace in our society right now as we are so fragmented in so many other places."

Ours is a history of resilience.

We were dealt a blow during the market crash of 2008, Dr. Baggott continued. We responded by going into debt to keep programs going. We decided to complete the construction of and purchase of the new organ instead of storing it half-built. We launched a \$13 million building campaign to build Community Hall and renovate the sanctuary. We embraced what it fully means to openly welcome everyone regardless of their sexual orientation.

"I suspect God is doing something here and you are going to be the ones who help us through all that. You are the Community Church of Vero Beach."

Dr. Baggott concluded his message with a tribute to Rev. Reif, someone he has

known for decades starting with their collegial friendship as pastors in Chicago. "We have been blessed to have him at Community Church for six years now. We are going to have a great festive send off in the courtyard in February. Good luck and we will miss you," Dr. Baggott said.

The members responded immediately with a long and soul felt standing ovation.

- 6) Treasurer's Report: The summary 2018 proposed Budget, the unaudited Statement of Operating 2017 activities and the end-of-year snapshot called, "Statement of Financial Position" are concise and contained within the Annual Report.

Treasurer Bob Inhoff highlighted just a few elements within three written reports.

The really good news is that revenue is \$82,000 more than budgeted including the fact that contributions were \$19,000 more than last year. On the other side of the ledger, expenses were about \$100,000 greater than budgeted, owing largely to disbursing \$61,000 in mission related projects. That said, most the \$61,000 was covered by special gifts that came in during the hurricane relief campaign.

He also noted that 15 percent of contributions come in the month of December. The months of October, September and November, are much leaner months and we had to go to our line-of-credit to meet expenses during part of the fall. Mr. Inhoff said the church appreciates the faithfulness of supporters both those who pledge and others so that when we are looking at potential operating deficits in the fall, those who help make it possible for us not to have to slam on the breaks, so to speak, just as we are getting to the most important part of the year in terms of activities.

Mr. Inhoff pointed out that the pre-school did much better financially than budgeted.

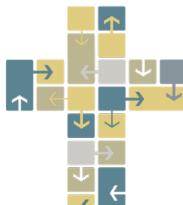
The church benefited from a good performance of our market investments. Because of warmer weather in 2017, utilities were 10 percent higher. He also noted that the church received a clean audit and management letter from its outside auditing firm.

- 7) Presentation and approval of the 2018 Annual Budget. Please see copies of the various financial documents, including the proposed budget, in the 2017 Annual Report booklet.

Mr. Inhoff called the budget "very conservative," noting that, in essence, trustees took last years' budget and increased it by 1.7 percent to support primarily existing programs and ministry. On a motion by Amy Banov seconded by Phil Kulakoski the budget and financial reports were received and unanimously approved by the congregation.

- 8) Moderator's Reflections: Moderator Matsik touched on a lengthy list of accomplishments and dreams for the future. Together, we:

- Welcomed 68 new members and several new staff as well.
- Said good-bye to many members who died during 2017.
- Paid off the church debt in 2017.



- Mourned together over the hurricanes and other natural disasters that devastated so many people in Puerto Rico, Texas and other places.
- Focused on communication and collaboration in every facet of our church life together.
- Developed the new “We are Connected” logo.
- Rolled out a new, newsier and more user-friendly website.
- Augmented our live-streaming capabilities so that people who are interested in following this wonderful church can do so wherever they are in the world, via the internet. We can donate online and get an immediate text back with the receipt. “Amazing technology,” she said.
- Introduced new administrative accounting software. We can now get our statements by email.
- Sponsored or participated in well-attended interfaith events, worship and fellowship several times.
- Rejoiced as our members supported financially and provided labor for housing for 16 single, homeless women as part of a wide-range, locally based mission program, at the same time reaching out to those in need in other parts of the country and the world.
- Supported Haiti Partners a project that teaches teachers and operates a school in Haiti. We also embraced a new program that provides jobs for people in the ARC program in our community.
- Expanded our outstanding music and fine arts programs.
- Hosted many events and programs that used the skills of countless numbers of volunteers.
- Grew our planned giving program that raises money to help ensure the financial health and future of the church through wills, bequests other methods.

As we approach the 100th anniversary of the founding of the church, Moderator Matsik concluded, we hired consultant Rev. John Wimberly to help us set a new vision for the future. It is called the 2020 project. It is not just for staff and lay leaders. Everyone in the congregation will have an opportunity to participate in charting the new course. John D Rockefeller once said: “Don’t be afraid to give up the good for the great.”

9) Old Business: There was none.

10) New Business: There was none.

11) Recognition of outgoing leaders and the Report of the Nominating Committee/Election of new Leaders: Please see the report and the slate of officers in the 2018 Annual Meeting booklet. Ken Hill, co-chair of the Nominating Committee recognized, thanked and asked the outgoing board members to stand and receive the thanks of their fellow members. Then Mr. Hill introduced the slate of nominees recommended to serve in positions for the next three years, as well as those tapped to fill vacancies within some of the boards. He called the nominees forward. More than 35 women and men stood in a single line in front of their peers. Moderator

Matsik called for additional nominations from the floor. There were none. On a motion by Ken Hill and duly seconded, the slate of officers was unanimously approved by the congregation.

12) Installation of new board members and officers:

Dr. Casey Baggott told the newly elected leaders and the congregation that these leaders have been called into service at this time and this place.

“As we install you into these positions, we do so prayerfully,” Dr. Baggott said, “and we invite both your prayer and the prayer all of those present as we install you and commission you for the work that you will undertake on behalf of the church.”

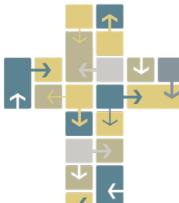
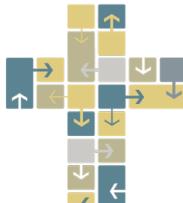
“Let me share with you that our happiness is great that you have stepped forward to serve,” Dr. Baggott continued. “We praise you and we praise God that your gifts have been promised to us at this particular church at this particular time. Whether you will work with youth or children, whether you will teach or lead, or to advise or oversee. Whether you will help our congregation share in fellowship or offer aid and service to those beyond our walls, you have been chosen for this time and this place. You are needed and we are thankful.”

13) Closing Hymn: “The Church’s One Foundation” verse four.

14) The Rev. David Johnson gave the benediction.

15) Following a motion duly made, seconded and passed without opposition, Moderator Matsik declared the meeting adjourned at 7 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: Phil Long, Clerk



In Memoriam

Jean Luckett 1/5/2018
George Riggins 1/12/2018
Neal Richardson 2/3/2018
Roger Parsons 2/13/2018
Bruce Sutphen 2/22/2018
Marjory (Jean) Reisert 3/9/2018
John Hanley 3/15/2018
Marilyn Link 3/19/2018
Anne Cross 3/24/2018
William Van Tilburg 3/29/2018
Judith Palmer 4/9/2018
Dorothy Williams 4/10/2018
R.B. Jennings 4/18/2018
Harold (Gene) Kurzweg 4/23/2018
Alice Flynn 4/26/2018
Christopher Talley 4/28/2018
H. Webster Walker III 5/21/2018
Alec Blum 5/31/2018
Betty Kleopfer 6/6/2018
Marge Wysocki 6/13/2018
Joseph Morris 6/16/2018

New Members: 36

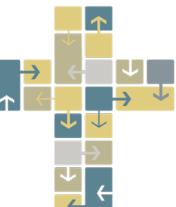
Deaths: 44

Transfers/ Withdrawal: 0

Membership as of December 31, 2018: 1762

Total of Active Participants over 19 years of age: 2495*

*Participants are those who participate in worship, programs and financial contributions.



Community Church of Vero Beach

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Treasurer's Report

For the year ended December 31, 2018, Community Church had a deficit of (\$3,288) from its Operating Activities. This includes expenses related to salaries, maintaining our extensive buildings and grounds, including utilities, insurance, care of the grounds and supplies. Included, too, are program related expenses, and of course, our significant support of missions, both here in our community and beyond. Each year our budget is set to make sure that we receive the necessary funds to cover these expenses. The major source comes from our pledges and other contributions to our operating budget. We also receive significant funds from program fees, especially our pre-school, and from investment returns on unrestricted funds.

Highlights from 2018

- Contributions (Pledges, General Offerings, etc.) were \$86,750 favorable to budget and \$36,785 greater than last year. We also had greater than budgeted income from program revenues and use of our building for special events.
- The one significant downside on revenue was a loss of (\$31,023) on "Earnings Income" compared to a budgeted \$136,000, due to market performance in December. Overall, Total Revenue was (\$9,595) below the budget of \$3,707,410, a variance of 0.25%.
- Operating Expenses were \$6,307 below budget.

When we turn to the Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet), we continue to see a strong financial position, reflecting our investments in our physical facilities and the various funds that support our ongoing ministry. Thanks to the generous support of our members and friends we have no debt. While a difficult market caused the valuation of our total invested funds to decrease by \$265,207 in 2018, we continue to experience solid positive returns over a multi-year investment period. Our Board of Trustees has a very experienced Investment Committee who carefully monitor the performance of our investment manager and assure conformity with our investment policies.

At its January 2019 meeting the Trustees voted to approve and recommend to the Church Council and the Congregation the Budget of Operating Activities for 2019. Budgeted Total Revenue for 2019 is \$3,709,434, a slight increase over the 2018 budget, and \$11,620 higher than actual revenue for last year. Expenses reflect the same modest increase of \$2,024 over the previous year budget.

The Board of Trustees met with the auditors following their audit of the financial records for 2017. Community Church again received a positive, "unqualified" opinion. The auditors expressed compliments regarding their review of our financial management processes.

I again acknowledge and thank our business office staff: Stephanie Toomey, Carolyn Steere, and Susan Rachor who so competently manage the complex financial activities of Community Church. Their conscientious and professional care of our financial resources, along with our generous donors, committed staff and volunteers, help make Community Church a place I am proud to call home.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Inhoff, Treasurer

2018 Annual Report

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The Community Church of Vero Beach, Florida, Inc.

Statement of Operating Activities

For the year ended December 31, 2018 (*Unaudited*)

| Description | 2018 | | Variance |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| | Actual | Budget | |
| Income | | | |
| Contributions | 2,701,750 | 2,615,000 | 86,750 |
| Usage | 74,615 | 59,000 | 15,615 |
| Earnings | (31,023) | 136,000 | (167,023) |
| Total Contribution, Usage & Earnings | \$ 2,745,342 | \$ 2,810,000 | \$ (64,658) |
| Program Income | | | |
| Adult Ministries | \$ 21,311 | 32,000 | (10,689) |
| Children's - General Fund | \$ 247 | 1,000 | (753) |
| Deacon's - General Fund | \$ - | - | - |
| Missions - General Fund | \$ 166,364 | 109,000 | 57,364 |
| Fellowship - General Fund | \$ 21,814 | 23,000 | (1,186) |
| Music - General Fund | \$ 871 | 300 | 571 |
| Music C-2 Service | \$ 25,000 | 25,000 | - |
| Administration - General Fund | \$ - | - | - |
| Youth - General Fund | \$ 41,992 | 49,000 | (7,008) |
| Preschool | \$ 655,083 | 640,110 | 14,973 |
| Concert | \$ 19,790 | 18,000 | 1,790 |
| Total Income from Programs | \$ 952,472 | \$ 897,410 | \$ 55,062 |
| TOTAL REVENUE | \$ 3,697,814 | \$ 3,707,410 | \$ (9,596) |
| Expense | | | |
| Administrative Personnel Expense | \$ 1,273,434 | 1,273,276 | 158 |
| Adult Ministries | \$ 24,647 | 40,000 | (15,353) |
| Children's - General Fund | \$ 78,638 | 82,493 | (3,855) |
| Deacon's - General Fund | \$ 3,123 | 3,500 | (377) |
| Missions - General Fund | \$ 348,028 | 320,364 | 27,664 |
| Fellowship - General Fund | \$ 29,950 | 32,000 | (2,050) |
| Music - General Fund | \$ 302,655 | 312,388 | (9,733) |
| Music C-2 Service | \$ 147,283 | 157,622 | (10,339) |
| Administration - General Fund | \$ 764,723 | 787,200 | (22,477) |
| Youth - General Fund | \$ 141,003 | 126,584 | 14,419 |
| Preschool | \$ 565,285 | 561,983 | 3,302 |
| Concert | \$ 22,333 | 10,000 | 12,333 |
| TOTAL EXPENSE | \$ 3,701,102 | \$ 3,707,410 | \$ (6,308) |
| TOTAL OPERATING SURPLUS | \$ (3,288) | \$ - | \$ (3,288) |

The Community Church of Vero Beach, Florida, Inc.

Statement of Financial Position (*Unaudited*)

December 31, 2018

| | <u>2018</u> | <u>2017</u> | <u>Change</u> |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| ASSETS | | | |
| <i>Current Assets</i> | | | |
| Cash | \$ 380,973 | \$ 471,943 | \$ (90,970) |
| Investments - Temporarily Restricted | \$ 5,660,687 | \$ 5,904,173 | \$ (243,486) |
| Investments - Permanently Restricted | \$ 56,518 | \$ 56,518 | \$ - |
| Deposits | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Total Current Assets | \$ 6,098,178 | \$ 6,432,634 | \$ (334,456) |
| <i>Accounts Receivable</i> | | | |
| Capital Pledge Receivable, net of allowances | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Accounts Receivable - Other | \$ 17,897 | \$ 18,717 | \$ (820) |
| Total Receivables | \$ 17,897 | \$ 18,717 | \$ (820) |
| Property and Equipment, net of depreciation | \$ 13,591,459 | \$ 14,330,014 | \$ (738,555) |
| Other Assets | \$ 22,490 | \$ 53,977 | \$ (31,487) |
| TOTAL ASSETS | \$ 19,730,024 | \$ 20,835,342 | \$ (1,105,318) |
| LIABILITIES | | | |
| Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses | \$ 106,741 | \$ 238,392 | \$ (131,651) |
| Deferred Revenue | \$ 180,307 | \$ 159,962 | \$ 20,345 |
| Notes Payable | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Total Liabilities | \$ 287,048 | \$ 398,354 | \$ (111,306) |
| NET ASSETS | | | |
| Unrestricted Funds | \$ 13,998,285 | \$ 14,926,866 | \$ (928,581) |
| Permanently Restricted | \$ 56,518 | \$ 56,518 | \$ - |
| Designated and Restricted | \$ 1,410,941 | \$ 1,526,472 | \$ (115,531) |
| Temporarily Restricted | \$ 3,977,232 | \$ 3,927,132 | \$ 50,100 |
| Total Net Assets | \$ 19,442,976 | \$ 20,436,988 | \$ (994,012) |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS | \$ 19,730,024 | \$ 20,835,342 | \$ (1,105,318) |

The Community Church of Vero Beach, FL, Inc.
BUDGET FOR 2019

| Description | Actuals 2018 | Budget 2019 | Change Actual vs 2019 Budget |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Income | | | |
| Contributions | \$ 2,701,750 | \$ 2,675,000 | \$ (26,750) |
| Usage | \$ 74,615 | \$ 75,000 | \$ 385 |
| Earnings | \$ (31,023) | \$ - | \$ 31,023 |
| Total Contribution, Usage & Earnings | \$ 2,745,342 | \$ 2,750,000 | \$ 4,658 |
| Program Income | | | |
| Adult Ministries | \$ 21,311 | \$ 24,000 | \$ 2,689 |
| Children's - General Fund | \$ 247 | \$ - | \$ (247) |
| Deacon's - General Fund | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Missions - General Fund | \$ 166,364 | \$ 115,000 | \$ (51,364) |
| Fellowship - General Fund | \$ 21,814 | \$ 21,000 | \$ (814) |
| Music - General Fund | \$ 871 | \$ - | \$ (871) |
| Music - C-2 Service | \$ 25,000 | \$ 25,000 | \$ - |
| Administration - General Fund | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - |
| Youth - General Fund | \$ 41,992 | \$ 66,000 | \$ 24,008 |
| Preschool | \$ 655,083 | \$ 690,434 | \$ 35,351 |
| Concert | \$ 19,790 | \$ 18,000 | \$ (1,790) |
| Total Income from Programs | \$ 952,472 | \$ 959,434 | \$ 6,962 |
| TOTAL REVENUE | \$ 3,697,814 | \$ 3,709,434 | \$ 11,620 |
| Expense | | | |
| Administrative Personnel Expense | \$ 1,273,434 | \$ 1,267,677 | \$ (5,757) |
| Adult Ministries | \$ 24,647 | \$ 32,500 | \$ 7,853 |
| Children's - General Fund | \$ 78,638 | \$ 103,489 | \$ 24,851 |
| Deacon's - General Fund | \$ 3,123 | \$ 3,400 | \$ 277 |
| Missions - General Fund | \$ 348,028 | \$ 315,443 | \$ (32,585) |
| Fellowship - General Fund | \$ 29,950 | \$ 31,000 | \$ 1,050 |
| Music - General Fund | \$ 302,655 | \$ 336,291 | \$ 33,636 |
| Music - C-2 Service | \$ 147,283 | \$ 127,132 | \$ (20,151) |
| Administration - General Fund | \$ 764,723 | \$ 739,720 | \$ (25,003) |
| Youth - General Fund | \$ 141,003 | \$ 148,456 | \$ 7,453 |
| Preschool | \$ 565,285 | \$ 586,326 | \$ 21,041 |
| Concert | \$ 22,333 | \$ 18,000 | \$ (4,333) |
| TOTAL EXPENSE | \$ 3,701,102 | \$ 3,709,434 | \$ 8,332 |
| TOTAL OPERATING SURPLUS / (LOSS) | \$ (3,288) | \$ - | \$ 3,288 |

Report of the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee, whose members' names are listed below, met twice in November and December plus once in January. We conducted many e-mail exchanges and phone conversations to come up with the attached slate of nominees.

Our Committee was blessed by being able to consider so many qualified people whose names were brought up by their fellow church members. We feel that our combined effort produced an outstanding slate of lay board members and church officers who will join scores of other laypersons already serving in leadership positions helping advance the mission and values of the Community Church of Vero Beach.

Within the report are persons whose names are marked with an asterisk (*). The asterisk represents the filling of a vacancy and the individual is eligible for consideration for a full term when the vacancy term expires. By approving this report and slate of new nominees, the congregation also affirms the Church Council's filling those vacancies.

On behalf of the committee, it is our pleasure to present and recommend to the congregation for approval, the nominees listed in the attached report.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Richards, Chairperson
Jeannie Saver, Co-Chairperson

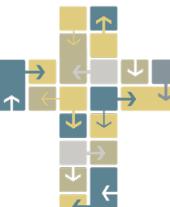
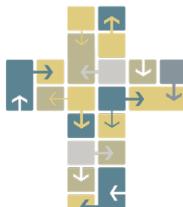
Members of the Nominating Committee

Allison Matsik, Moderator
Dr. Robert T. Baggott, Senior Minister
Christine Scott, Board of Children's Ministry
Jane Clower, Board of Deacons
Chad Morrison, Board of Music and Fine Arts
Steve Higgins, Board of Trustees

Matt Cleary, Board of Youth Ministry
Vikki Feurer, Board of Fellowship
Phil Chadeayne, Board of Missions
Tom Richards, Chairperson
Jeannie Saver, Co-Chairperson

Clergy, staff and others who assisted in the process

Dr. Casey Baggott, Executive Minister
Andrew Galuska, Director of Music and Fine Arts
Rev. Dave Johnson, Minister of Mission and Education
Elaine Matthes, Ministry Associate for Spiritual Formation
Doug Johnson, Ministry Associate for Emerging Generations
Elizabeth Hipp, Ministry Associate for Emerging Generations
Linda Knoll, Member-At-Large, Church Council
Phil Long, Member-At-Large, Church Council
Sharon Richards, Clerk
Scott Turner, Board of Missions



Church Board Members

Term Expires 1/31/2020 Term Expires 1/31/2021 Term Expires 1/31/2022

Board of Adult Ministry

Diana Mrotek
Mary Ann Lyle*

Beverly Zell

Board of Children's Ministry

Jennifer Oseroff*
Janet Meyer*
Charles Weise
Carrie Franco

Kelly Thompson
Allison DeLisi
Karen Davis
James White

Char Higgins
Bea Stoner
Cindy Millstein

Board of Deacons

Bruce Metcalfe
Karl Dietrich
Tom Richards
Cassandra Coker
Marilyn Case
Joyce Smith

Richard Gray
Gary Zell
John Langfitt
Joy Lambert
Linda Shipley
Betsy Sams*

Everett Schleter
Dave Mrotek
John Smith
Artie Palermo
Kathy Dunlop
Kendall Wyckoff

Board of Fellowship

Pat Bilotta
Mark Feurer
Lois Forrest
Brian Kroh

Roxanne Wilcox
Shelley Sweeney

Carla Flournoy
Sue Schrager
Jack Ward

Board of Missions

Frank Iodice
Carolyn White
Lisa Morrison
Pat Draper

Rod Roth
Scott Turner*
Hal Lambert
Wayne Tozzolo

Vikki Feurer
Carol Bieber
Sue Chadeayne
Jean Cravens

* (V) Vacancy Filled

Church Board Members cont'd

Term Expires 1/31/2020 Term Expires 1/31/2021 Term Expires 1/31/2022

Board of Music and Fine Arts

Beth Cleary
John Anderson
Dave Williams

Patty Maes
Glenda Taylor
Teryl Viner

Travis Blanton
Joan Ohl
Pat Sawyer

Board of Trustees

Steve Higgins
Kathy Nelson
Kim Anderson
Bill Bell

Robin Blanton
Harriet Dyer
Bob Gibb
Judy LaFage*

Valerie Larcombe
Chad Morrison
Bob Inhoff
Kay Hammond

Board of Youth Ministry

Sara Reece
Catherine Carlin
Kay Yurigan
Jake Lucas

Holly Owen
Abbey Bolinger
Chris Helseth
Linda Hiegel

Robert Baker
Nicole Williams
Courtney Dietrich
Robi Robinson
Christine Scott

Council At Large

Don Stoner

Phil Long

Janet Hill

Moderator

Allison Matsik

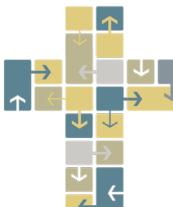
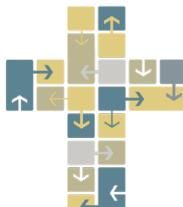
Clerk

Sharon Richards

Treasurer

Peter Calfee

* (V) Vacancy Filled



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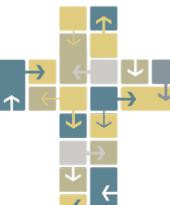
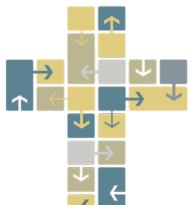
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Coordinator
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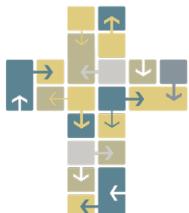
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Jill A. Truax
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Community Church Life





Community Church of Vero Beach

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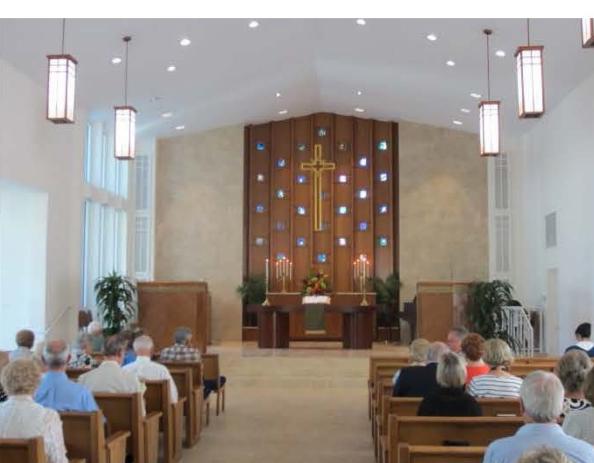
Vision 2020 Report

Community Church of Vero Beach A Strategic Plan for 2019-2021

Report Prepared by John W. Wimberly, Jr.
Congregational Consultant

Fall, 2018

As approved by Church Council on December 17, 2018
and recommended for adoption by the Congregation



Dear Friends,

The Vision 2020 Planning Team was authorized by the Community Church of Vero Beach congregation at our January 2018 annual meeting. The congregation had not undertaken a comprehensive strategic plan since 1999. The 2020 Planning team examined the congregation's goals for the next few years as we prepare to celebrate our 100 year anniversary in 2024.

The planning team consists of Amy Banov, Chair and the following members: Fritz Spitzmiller, Sharon Richards, Kim Anderson, Janet Dunlap, Brad Lorimier, Courtney Dietrich, Jeff Meyer and Joyce Smith. Moderator, Allison Matsik and clergy Bob Baggott, Dr. Casey Baggott, and Rev. David Johnson are ex-officio members. The process was aided by church planning consultant, Rev. John Wimberly, and is described in this report.

During the planning process, Drs. Bob and Casey Baggott announced their upcoming retirement. While not totally unexpected, this information changes the impact of the planning team's work as it sets the foundation for a search process to replace our senior minister. It is important to note that the Planning Team had already held multiple focus sessions and established the church's Purpose Statement and Goals. The strategies to achieve these goals were not yet formulated. As a result of the upcoming change in leadership, the strategies in this report focus heavily on the next 2-3 years of pastoral transition and deliberately anticipate the strategies to be assessed with new clergy.

The 2020 Planning Team is pleased to present this plan to the Community Church congregation for approval and implementation.

God bless this church family,

Amy Banov, Chair
Vision 2020 Planning Team

1901 23rd Street
Vero Beach, Florida 32960
info@ccvb.org
call (772) 562-3633

Community Church of Vero Beach

Consulting Report

by

John Wimberly, Congregational Consultant

Fall, 2018

Introduction

Community Church of Vero Beach is a large, healthy congregation with a vital ministry to its members and the community in which it is located. Founded in 1924, the church is covenanted with the United Church of Christ in mission and service while retaining a non-denominational character in polity and vision. At the close of 2017, the congregation had 1897 members from over 50 denominational backgrounds but over 2500 people who were either members or active in the congregation but not officially members. The congregation receives 60-80 new members annually while suffering the loss by death of 45-60 beloved members annually.

The congregation's ministry reflects the fact that it is located in a community with a large number of retired people. Many of these individuals are "snow birds" who are in the area only during the winter months. Worship attendance has been steady over the past three years with 1200-1400 attending during the November-April months and 600 during the other months. There are two concurrent worship experiences. One is traditional while the other is multi-media contemporary. The congregation also offers a chapel service early on Sunday mornings.

The financial indicators at Community Church are very positive. The income for 2017 was \$3.8 million, with pledged income rising each of the last three years. In each of the last three years, pledges received have exceeded the stewardship goal for the year. Expenses for the past three years have been less than income, producing three years of financial surpluses. During 2016, the church paid down a \$958,012 building debt to \$105,697 and retired it entirely in January 2017. The church's limit on this revolving line of credit was \$2,999,958 as of December 31, 2017. The church has a financial reserve of approximately \$6.4 million, although much of it is unavailable for any use outside the restrictions placed on the funds from their donors.

The congregation's professional staff includes Senior Minister, Executive Minister and Minister of Mission and Education full-time pastoral positions. Currently, an Interim Minister of Pastoral Care provides part time support. This position replaced a recent retiree and may return to full-time status in the future. There are two full-time non-ordained Emerging Generations Ministry Associates as well as a part-time Ministry Associate for Spiritual Development. The staff also includes a full-time Director of Music and full-time Associate Director of Music and Organist. The congregation has a full-time Business Administrator, a full-time Director of Development and a full-time Director of Community Preschool.

The Senior and Executive Ministers have announced that they will retire sometime late in 2019 or early 2020. While causing much sadness in the congregation, this was not a totally unexpected event. As a result, Community Church of Vero Beach is in a time of transition as members celebrate the powerful ministries of Drs. Bob and Casey Baggott and begin the search for a new Senior Minister, as is called for in the church's by-laws. This process will warrant the need to consider whether or not to continue with an Executive Minister position or redesign the current staffing plan. The congregation intends to use a search firm as well as suggestions flowing from the United Church of Christ to assist in a nationwide search for their new pastoral leadership.

Section I The Strategic Plan for 2019-2021

The planning process was led by a team of lay leaders at Community Church. They hired a consultant to advise them. The Community Church staff was heavily involved. The process began with a retreat in February 2018 in which the planning team and key leaders discussed what God is calling the congregation to do in the next three to five years. They emerged with a consensus Purpose Statement to present to the congregation in focus groups.

Members of the congregation gathered in numerous focus groups to discuss the Purpose Statement. The Planning Team considered their comments and then finalized the statement. The next step involved the Planning Team creating goals that flowed from the Purpose Statement to help the congregation accomplish its purpose. A "Nurturing the Congregation Life Cycle Stages" matrix was developed to highlight the breadth of current ministries, activities and programs (See Appendix C).

In October 2018, the Planning Team met, with staff in attendance, and generated a number of strategies for each goal. Several weeks later, they prioritized the strategies into a smaller subset. With that step, the plan was completed.

The Word Cloud image below was created using all the words written down in the many focus groups that met during the planning process. The larger the word, the more it was used (or a theme associated with it). It is a fascinating way to see what members value at Community Church.



Vision 2020 Planning Team Goal Themes & Strategies

Assure institutional infrastructure:

Governance (encourage lay-leadership and participation)

Facilities (provide and maintain for Community Church and wider uses)

Stewardship (insure fiscal longevity)

Staffing (inspiring clergy, appropriate program support)

Narrative: Practice responsible stewardship of the financial, facilities and people resources entrusted to our care so that the mission and God's purpose for Community Church may be vigorously lived out. Community Church has historically valued and protected our institutional well-being. In response to the upcoming ministerial transition, these strategies have been given additional importance.

Immediate Strategies:

- **Appoint Transition Team to coordinate the search and call of new Senior Minister**
 - Search Committee
 - Support our staff through the transition time
 - Create team to celebrate retiring clergy's ministry
 - Welcome and integrate new clergy into church family
 - **Appoint Task Force within the Church Council to research alternate governance structures and recommend changes**
 - Review and modification of Community Church Bylaws and organizational chart
 - Alignment of mission/vision of boards and teams with Purpose statement
 - Strengthen understanding of church governance--decision-making and policy at leadership retreat or other annual events
 - Encourage multi-generational members to join committees and boards
 - Provide shorter time commitment for lay leadership roles
 - **Devise long term plan for the fiscal health for Community Church**
 - Address endowment funding for long-term needs of the church
 - Strengthen planned giving programs in line with Gift Acceptance Policy
 - Develop “crisis management” plan for “what if” scenarios (What if attendance or membership declines? What if a major economic event hits community? What if a natural disaster occurs?)
 - Align stewardship model with current technologies and generational expectations and trends
 - Create Reserve Funds for Unrestricted Operations and Capital needs

Long Term Strategies:

- Explore increased building utilization
 - Survey facilities for highest and best use (i.e. kitchen, Commotion, Preschool) in connection with space needs
 - Develop short term and long range plans with process for undertaking changes
 - Maintain security
 - Develop Maintenance and Replacement schedule for campus facilities to be supported by Capital Reserve Fund

Support and Nurture our church family

Children, family programs
 Pastoral care
 Small groups

Narrative: Communicate and share God's love to those of all ages and circumstance in our church family recognizing that we exist in community with each other. We value and desire social and spiritual connectedness and we recognize the role of Community Church to provide a genuine church family as a meaningful body of Christ.

Immediate Strategies:

- Improve church website to include interactive features
 - Variety of current images, videos, testimonials
 - Giving options
 - Member Directory
 - Events tabs for all ages
- Analyze programs to find a better fit with the schedules of families with kids, members with jobs which will enhance participation
 - Worship and program times and frequency
 - Online options (i.e. recent bulletins, lesson plans, lectionary)
- Establish and promote an accessible "clearinghouse" for all members to identify ways to become more involved with varying levels of time commitment
 - Volunteer recruitment plan
 - Volunteer coordinator position
 - Needs for teaching Sunday school (Godly Play), chaperoning youth trips, Sunday greeters, mission teams, etc.

Long Term Strategies:

- Examine adult educational ministry opportunities with the needs of our members
 - Events, classes, training, lectures, speaker series, trips, workshops
 - Online options, clergy blogs, lectionary previews
 - Community at Community programming
 - Expansion of small group opportunities
- Establish connections between church members
 - Similar non-religious interests (i.e. running group, cooking, book club),
 - Partner organizations, (i.e. health fair), healthcare ministry
 - Singles ministry
 - "Family tree" for intergenerational connection
 - Random acts of kindness
- Identify the unique needs and interests of our older members. Design an outreach strategy to fill one or more needs that uses gift/talents of members instead of staff
 - Connect seniors to each other
 - Caregiving for homebound members; telephone reassurance ministry
 - Support network for adult children of aging parents
 - Expand use the church bus

Insure consistent expression of our Christian theology

Sacraments and Worship
 Music and Arts
 Education

Narrative: Maintain and enhance the exceptional quality of Community Church's Sunday worship services, including extraordinary preaching, challenging and timely sermon content, high quality instrumental and vocal presentations and meaningful prayers. Provide continuity of the Sunday experience throughout all church activities and publications. Create environments and opportunities for all ages to learn and deepen our knowledge and understanding of our faith.

Immediate Strategies:

- Develop a plan to promote and market Community Church's music and fine arts ministry

Long Term Strategies:

- Evaluate the Sunday morning worship schedule and recommend adjustments or changes which encourage greater and consistent attendance

Communicate our warm welcome and acceptance of all

Embrace diversity

Encourage growth of participation and membership

Focus on accurate messaging and branding in marketing and communications

Narrative: Each week our Sunday worship bulletin and our website proclaim this defining message: "Recognizing the wide welcome offered to all through Jesus Christ, Community Church opens its arms to all. We strive to offer Christ's wide welcome to all people, regardless of creed, age, race, or sexual identity." Our congregation's character is reflective of this welcoming stance. As a congregation of diverse talents, backgrounds and beliefs, we celebrate our desire to be inclusive to all who wish to join us in a line we regularly quote from our founding documents: "There is more that binds us together than separates us in the worship of God." In keeping with that perspective, and with our denomination's traditional assertion that testimonies to faith are preferred to tests of faith, we prayerfully consider and thoughtfully and respectfully engage with one another in addressing issues of great significance. We watch together to witness more light and truth break forth among us, as we endeavor to share the unconditional love of Christ with all. In efforts to grow membership and participation, be mindful to respect all viewpoints while encouraging love for ourselves, our family and the greater community.

Immediate Strategies:

- Create a full-time communications and marketing staff position
 - To connect church to the community
 - To connect members to the church
 - Educate members in the use of technology
- Establish a team to connect with minority and interfaith communities
 - Identify music and other events/services that would attract diverse audiences
 - Collaborate with mission projects
 - Welcome use of facilities to minority groups
 - Show up at community events

Long Term Strategies:

- Invite the congregation to participate in creating an interactive artistic work at Community Church (perhaps 100 year anniversary theme, "story corps", what I love about Community Church)
- Celebrate the small and large "wins" that individuals have during the week in bulletin, testimonial videos, social media
- Collect ideas for attracting new members (purple bracelets, welcome cards, guest Sundays, pen-pal churches, invitations to preschool families)

Reaching out to and aiding others in need

Collective mission programs

Individual service in broader community

Narrative: We are connected to our community and the world, by partnering with people and agencies who are doing extraordinary things to make our world a more just and caring place. "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' (Matthew 25:40). Community Church of Vero Beach is actively engaged in effective and meaningful mission work locally and worldwide. Strategies for modifying the structure and funding of our mission outreach model should be addressed after the ministerial transition phase in our church.

Long Term Strategies:

- Establish congregational priorities for serving local, national, and worldwide needs. Prioritize mission target areas (e.g. housing, hunger, education or others).
 - Examine funding structure and increase resources allocated for mission outreach
 - Evaluate the number and type of organizations we support to align with the identified priority target areas.
- Design, incubate and shepherd into existence and eventual independence a new mission venture serving an unmet need.
- Develop ways to engage our members in hands-on mission participation. Publicize and promote opportunities for meaningful service. Incorporate collaboration between ministries, generations in mission service.

Section II Thoughts on Community Church of Vero Beach

Demographics and Staffing

Community Church is unique with its very large “over 70” age demographic. Nearly one thousand members and active participants fall into this category. Typically, this demographic has high pastoral care needs. In addition to a large “over 70” population, Community Church has 877 members and active participants in the 19-50 demographic. This group is a good size congregation in and of itself as is the 50-70 group consisting of 616 members and participants. In effect, the congregation has three congregations within its body that have distinct pastoral care and programming needs.

The percentage of the church’s budget allotted to personnel is somewhere in the range of 57-61%. The variance depends on whether or not the staff of the preschool is included. Either of these numbers is high when compared with other large congregations. That being said, the seasonal nature of Community Church’s membership may well dictate a higher-than-average staff cost. The congregation increases dramatically in size during the winter months.

To serve the larger winter congregation, it is necessary to carry a large staff year-round. Second, congregations nationwide have less volunteer help available to them than past generations. Therefore, they either have to hire more staff or cut back on ministry. Currently, Community Church has the financial resources to hire staff to do what volunteers might have done in the past.

Given the size and complexity of the demographics at Community Church, it would be wise to do a formal staff redesign once the new Senior Minister is in place.

Pastoral care is an example of how the staffing design needs to be carefully considered. Currently, the senior clergy lead approximately 60 memorial services annually. As a result, other pastoral care responsibilities are necessarily spread out across the staff and within their ministry areas. The church has implemented a “Called to Care” lay-ministry to supplement pastoral care activities. With the current part-time pastoral care associate, is it feasible to 1) meet the needs of such a large pastoral care group and 2) avoid burning out the entire staff? In the consultant’s opinion, the answer is “no.” In the transition ahead, the congregation should consider returning to a full-time, dedicated staff person working on and coordinating pastoral care at Community Church. This hire can best be made once the new Senior Minister is in place. A comprehensive pastoral care approach can then be developed.

Any redesign of the current staffing plan should consider additional retirements and possible turnover that may take place in the coming years, creating a chance to rethink responsibilities in those areas. While it is challenging to find volunteers these days for some ministry tasks, many congregations are using volunteers for tasks such as answering phones, receiving mail, etc. Because of technology, most clergy can now do their own correspondence, keep their own calendars, print documents, etc. As a result, the need for direct support of clergy in the administrative area is decreasing in many congregations. An opportunity exists to rethink the most efficient approach to administrative and support staffing needs.

In a redesign if not earlier, upgrading the communications staff position to full-time should be a high priority idea to consider. In the twenty-first century, there may be no more critical congregational staff person than communications. The church is in the business of communicating the Gospel. In the twenty-first century, this means using state-of-the-art technology and software to communicate. A full-time Communications Director would both 1) help devise a communications and marketing strategy and 2) do the hands-on work of maintaining the website’s content, sending out eblasts, working with social media, etc. There is a competitive market for this type of employee. The cost of such a position will not be cheap, but the expense of hiring the right person is worth the benefits that will follow.

A major question that needs to be addressed in the next year will be what to do with the responsibilities of the current Executive Minister. Currently, among other responsibilities, the Executive Minister is the writer of liturgy, the worship designer for most all services, the author of a weekly column in a local newspaper, the primary wedding officiant, officiant of about half of the annual funerals, the overseer of the Community Preschool, a preacher and worship leader, teacher of two weekly women’s bible studies, direct supervisor of the family ministries staff. While the Executive Minister describes herself as a “utility player,” she is, in effect, a Co-Pastor who handles many different assignments based on needs that arise within the congregation’s ministry. This unique arrangement between the Senior Minister and Executive Minister is reflective of the opportunity afforded by a married couple in these positions.

Short term, who will handle these responsibilities after the current Executive Minister retires? Will the congregation need to hire a full or part time person to fill-in until a new staff design is created with the leadership of the new Senior Minister? Are there ways to handle some of the Executive Pastor’s responsibilities by assigning them to other staff? Longer term, will the new Senior Pastor want to do some of the work the current Executive Minister does? Given the presence of a Business Administrator at Community Church, another title and role might well be considered for the duties of the current Executive Minister.

Financials

Community Church of Vero Beach is in solid financial shape. The pledging income has exceeded the annual stewardship goal each of the last three years. Total income has exceeded expenses over the same period. The congregation’s financial reserves are approaching \$6.5 million. However, approximately \$3.7million of this money is temporarily or permanently restricted to very well-defined uses. Such funds cannot be viewed as cash reserves.

A standard metric used to assess financial security involves calculating a worst-case scenario: the number of months a congregation can operate without any income. Community Church spends approximately \$317,000 monthly. With unrestricted funds of approximately \$2.2 million, the congregation could operate without income for approximately seven months. Conservative recommendations for financial reserves are in the range of 12-18 months of operating capital. Community Church needs to build up its financial reserves. The need to

increase the congregation's financial reserves becomes clearer when one analyzes the structure of funds available for each "operating" and "capital" reserves. \$1.5 million of \$2.2 million in total unrestricted reserves is the Nigh Vision Fund which is directed by Board of Trustees and can be spent for operations or capital expenses. The Scott Hadley Bailey Fund is restricted to capital building improvements and maintenance; \$457,000 is temporarily restricted and \$1.3 million is permanently restricted.

Building and Grounds

The congregation has a very large, well-maintained campus with several buildings. Does the congregation have a plan for maintaining the buildings in the future? The best practice for maintaining buildings is the use of Capital Reserve Fund. Every condominium in Vero Beach most likely has a Capital Reserve Fund. Most congregations do not. The advantages of a capital reserve fund are numerous:

- The money invested in constructing the facilities will be respected by ongoing maintenance of the properties;
- The congregation will not have to endure constant fundraising for capital expenditures in the years ahead;
- Those managing the facilities can act promptly when replacements are needed rather than waiting until the needed money is raised.

The congregation would be wise to do the full analysis of the building's needs over the next twenty years and then create a Fund that is designated as a Capital Reserve Fund to fund solely those needs. This will also reveal how much or little the congregation has in the way of financial reserves for non-building related crises. This is an appropriate task for the congregation's Trustees.

If Community Church creates and funds (partially in the beginning with annual contributions going forward or fully from the beginning) a Capital Reserve Fund, it essentially eliminates the building as a financial problem in the future. It also allows the congregation to have smaller cash reserves since other financial crises, typically, will be smaller in nature. Most important, it enables the congregation to focus its attention on its passions: nurture and care of our congregation, ministry with youth and children, excellent worship, and missions.

Section III Being Faithful and Effective as the Church in the 21st Century

21st Century Trends in the U.S. Relating to Church Growth



Many of the older members at Community Church can remember when sanctuaries looked like the one in the photo above in the 20th Century. Too few congregations have adjusted to the fact that realities in the 21st Century are far different. What are some of the key things we need to understand about our current context to be successful in ministry in the 21st Century?

- Fewer and fewer people are interested in the governance systems of our congregations. Their passion relates to serving people in need. As a result, we need to dramatically **reduce the size of our governance systems**, relying on small teams to do the internal work of the church. Simultaneously, we need to increase the number of opportunities for members to serve Christ and the community with **hands-on volunteer mission work**.
- Children and youth are doing other things on Sunday morning, especially soccer. As a result, Sunday schools nationwide are experiencing low attendance. Some congregations are beginning to **experiment with different models to fulfill our responsibility to teach the faith to our children**--on days other than Sundays, through intensive retreats, online, etc.
- Our stewardship models are still built around pledges. However, many young people prefer to give electronically with multiple small donations. Young people donate. Just ask politicians and non-profits who have raised hundreds of millions of dollars from the millennials. **We need to create opportunities for young people to give they way they prefer to give**.
- Sending money to missions in which the congregation is not heavily involved has little appeal. **Linking money with hands-on mission projects is popular**.
- **Time is more important than money to many people**. They don't lack the commitment of 20th Century church goers. They are over-committed to many different groups in the community. We need to consider this reality when we ask people to volunteer.
- We have five generations active in the church today (Silent, Boomers, GenX, Millennials, and Gen Z). Each generation prefers different ways of communicating (hard-copy newsletters, eblasts, email, texts, websites, etc.). Each generation has different preferences for learning. **Congregations need to segment their approaches to Christian education, communication, music, stewardship, etc. to match the preference of the different generations**.

Best Practices for Congregations

- Non-Bureaucratic, fewer rules, more policies, more freedom as to how policies are implemented
- Constantly Train Staff and Members
- Externally Oriented
- More empowering, less control
- Transparent/Open/Candid
- Higher Levels of Risk Tolerance
- Highly Focused and Aligned

The tight control from staff, governing boards and committees that was successful in the 20th Century doesn't work in the 21st Century. We need to create teams to do ministry, make sure the teams are clear about their task, and then give them the freedom to do the work. The role of a governing council is to think strategically about the mission of the congregation and set policies that empower the mission. Management should be done by ministry teams and/or staff.

Learning organizations are the high performers in our time. These organizations are constantly training their staff and members. Congregations need to do the same. Money spent on continuing education for staff and team members is one of the smartest investments we can make.

Congregations that are externally oriented are attracting younger generations. Congregations focused on internal issues are not. This means we need to be focused on creating hands-on mission projects to serve the world.

Transparency is more than a buzz word. It is an imperative in our time. Any and all information about the congregation's life needs to be readily available to members. Preferably, it is easily found on the church's website. The only thing exempt from transparency is private, personnel information.

Congregations are inherently conservative in their institutional approach to things. In some ways, this is positive. However, we need to take risks where appropriate. Jesus risked preaching a message that was offensive to some of his neighbors. Paul risked taking the faith into the diaspora. Martin Luther and John Calvin risked challenging the powerful Roman Catholic Church in Europe. We won't need to take risks of that magnitude. But can we risk re-thinking the type of staff positions we have; how much we invest in communications; and how we do mission work and Christian education. If we are to grow into the 21st Century, such risks will be required.

Research demonstrates overwhelmingly that highly focused organizations that align their resources to achieve a clear purpose are much more effective than those lacking focus. Congregations want to be all things to all people. Our programs pull us in many different directions. In some instances, this is fine. However, for the most part, we need to say "no"

more often to various ministry options, so we can remain focused on the clear purpose we hear God calling us to realize.

Appendix A Demographic Information

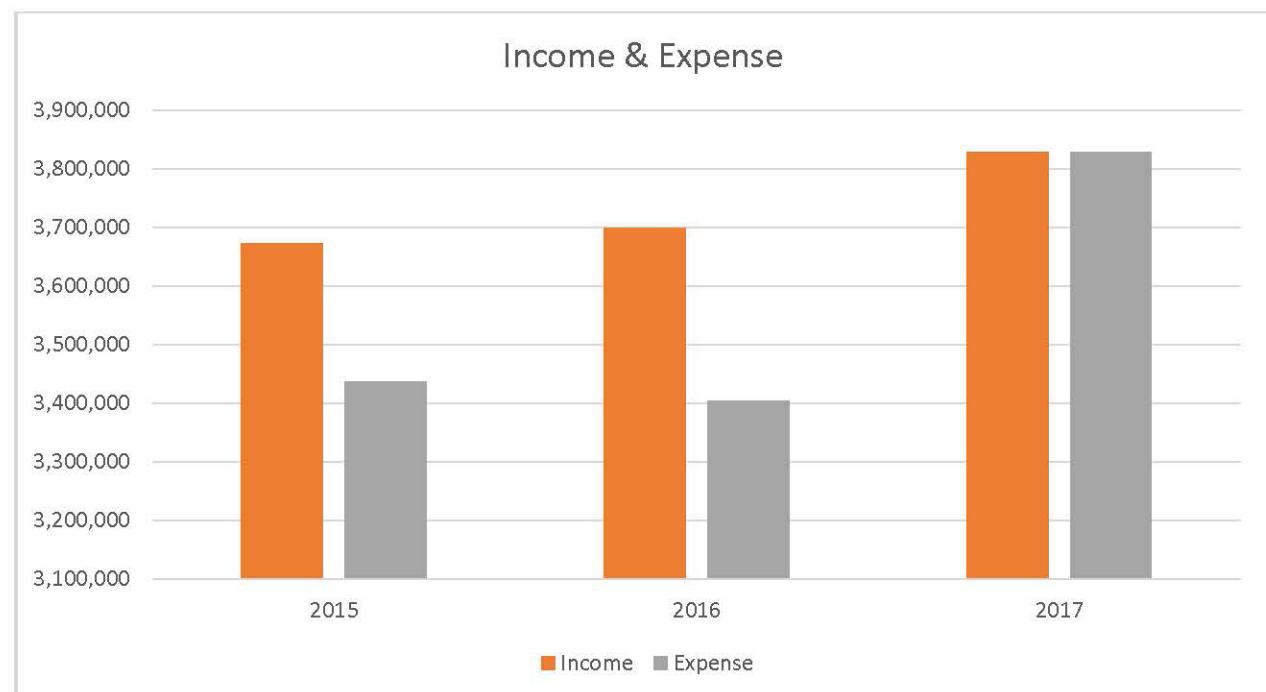
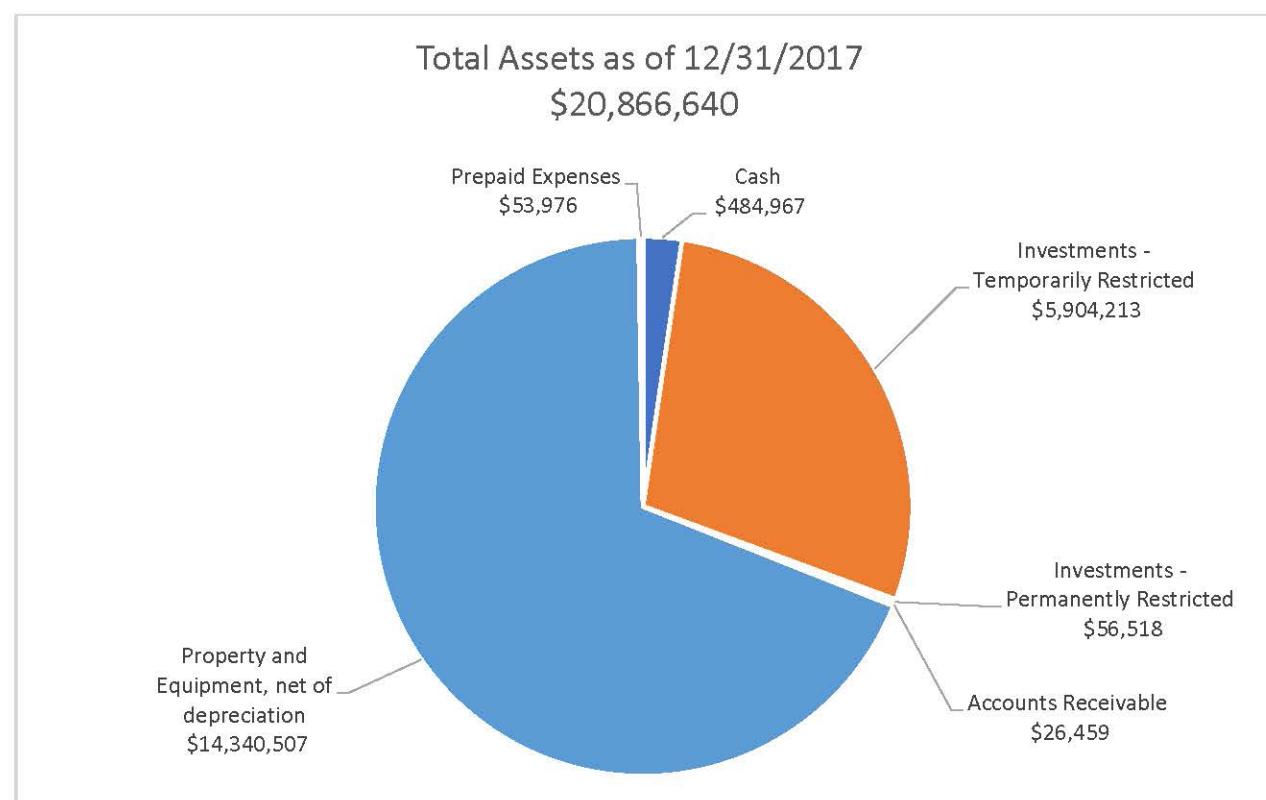
Community Church of Vero Beach Demographics

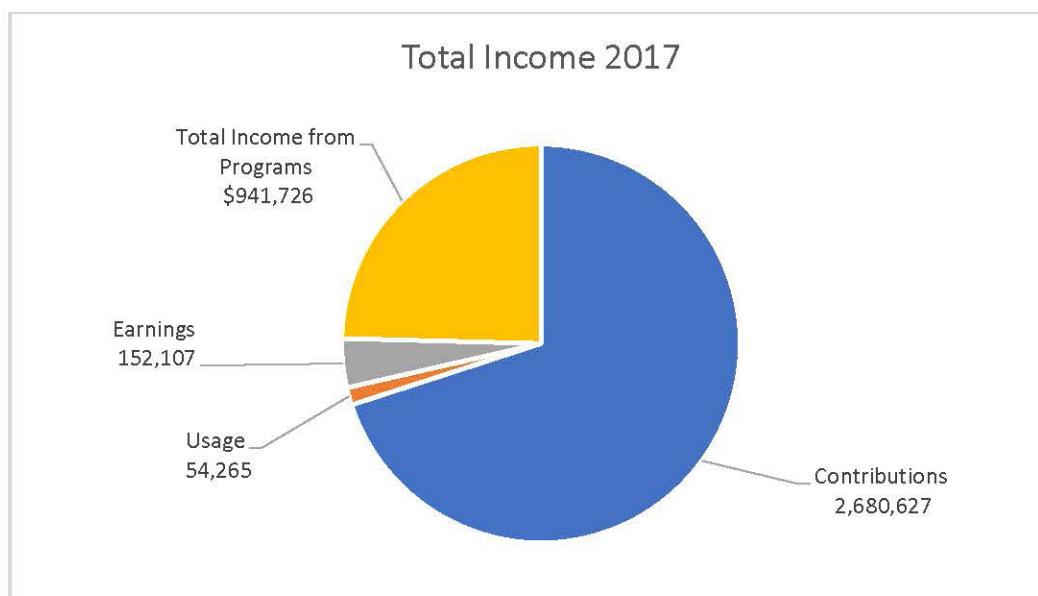
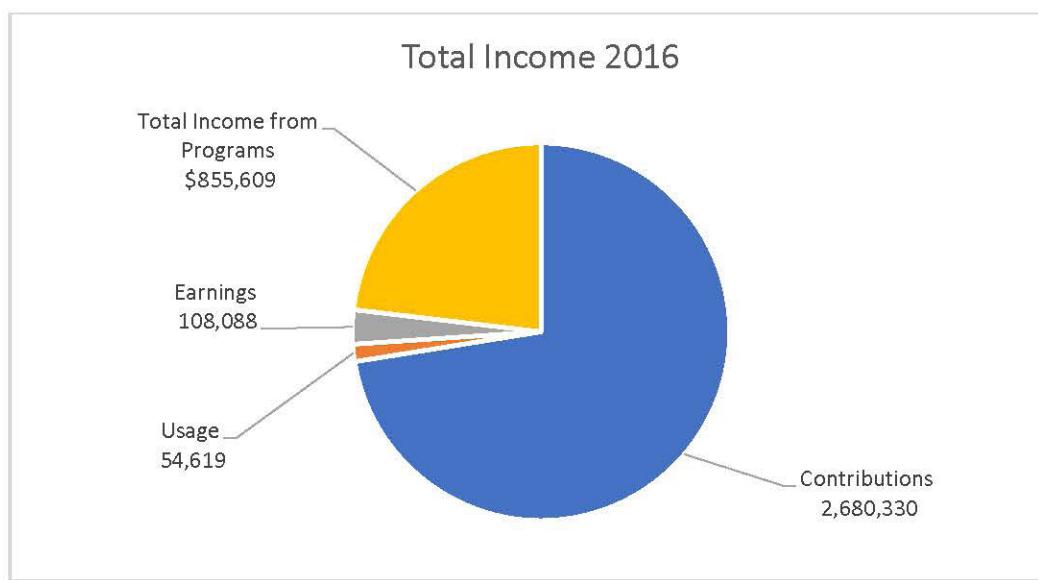
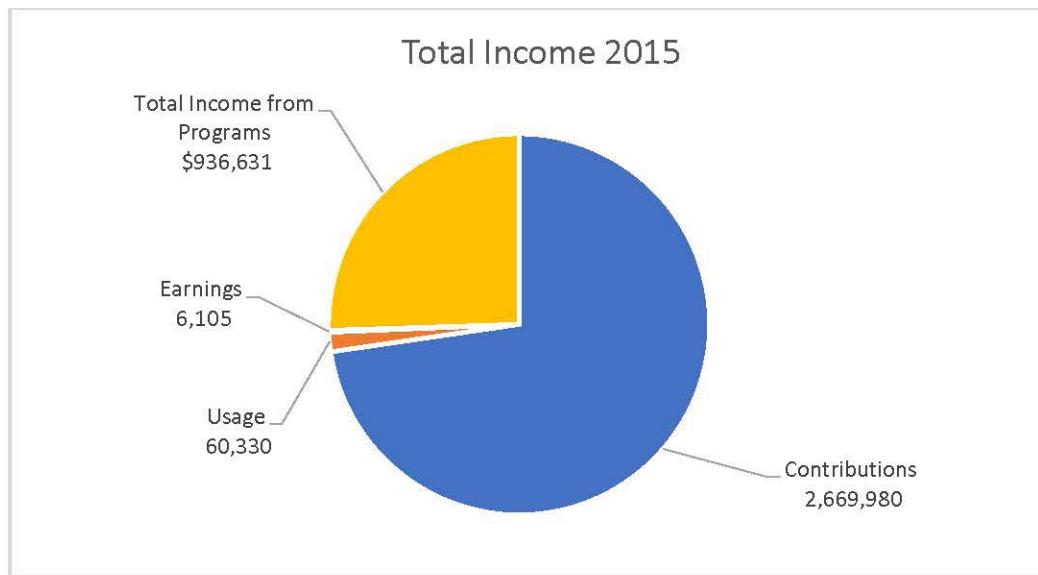
AGE GROUPS

| | | |
|--------|---|-----|
| 1-12 | = | 63 |
| 13-18 | = | 367 |
| 19-35 | = | 560 |
| 36-50 | = | 317 |
| 51-70 | = | 616 |
| 71-85 | = | 725 |
| 86-100 | = | 277 |

Number of Active Men = 1,008
Number of Active Women = 1,487
***Age 19 and over**

Appendix B Financial Information





Appendix C – Nurturing the Congregation Life Cycle Stages Matrix



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