

Second Congregational Church of Stafford at West Stafford



2015

Annual Meeting: February 7, 2016
1:00 P. M.
Fellowship Hall

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The Second Congregational Church of Stafford
Established in 1764
West Stafford, Connecticut

481 West Stafford Road
Stafford Springs, Conn. 06076
Telephone (203) 684-2336

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

January 11, 2016

The Annual Meeting of the Second Congregational Church of Stafford will be held on Sunday, February 7, 2016. This date is in compliance with Article XII, Section B, 1, a of the Constitution.

The Annual Meeting will convene at 1:00 PM to hear reports of the officers, boards, committees and delegates, elect officers, boards, standing committees, delegates, auditors and historian, act on the budget, act on business and petitions legally presented, review the work of the past year and recommend priorities for the coming year. No items other than those on the agenda may be acted upon at this meeting.

Signed,

Clerk

Agenda

Annual Meeting for 2015

12:00 P.M. Call to Order

- I. Reading of the Call
- II. Determination of Quorum
- III. Opening Worship
- IV. Determination of Voting Procedure
- V. Adoption of Minutes of the 2015 Annual Meeting
- VI. Adoption of Agenda
- VII. Presentation of Annual Reports:

- A. Pastor's Report
- B. Church Council
- C. Clerk
- D. Trustees
- E. Diaconate
- F. Christian Education
- G. Stewardship Committee
- H. Missions Committee
- I. Delegates
- J. Historian
- K. Auditors
- L. Financial Secretary
- M. Treasurer

VIII. Nominating Committee

IX. Election of Officers, Boards

X. Adoption of 2016 Budget

XI. Old Business

Recess - [Diaconate and Trustees will elect their officers if quorums are present. Church Council will elect a secretary, if a quorum is present.]

New Business

A.

XIII. Closing Worship

Adjournment

Minutes of 2015 Annual Meeting

The meeting opened at 1:05 with a reading by the moderator, Kay Myott.

It was determined that a quorum was met as there were 23 members present.

Motion was made by Bill Gowdy and seconded by Bruce Ladr that all voting would take place by a show of hands. The motion passed.

The 2014 minutes were accepted. A motion was made and seconded by Bill Gowdy and Bruce Ladr.

Motion was made and seconded by Ken May and Alan Bolieau to accept the agenda. Motion passed.

Motion was made and seconded by Bill Gowdy and Bruce Ladr that one vote would take place to accept the following reports together: Pastor's Report, Church Council, Church Clerk, Trustees, Diaconate, Christian Education, Sunday School, Stewardship, and Missions. Motion passed.

Reports were "as written" with the exception of Sunday School. Sunday School donated \$50 to the Little Shop for racks.

Auditors reported that books are all correct. We ended with a year slightly to the good. Bruce Ladr made a motion and Alan Bolieau seconded that all reports be accepted. Motion passed.

Ken May made a motion and Bruce Ladr seconded it that the Nominating Committee report be put off until after New Business. Motion passed.

Treasurer, Don Sanger went over the 2015 budget. We plan to spend \$6,000. Less than last year. A motion was made by Bill Gowdy to accept the budget. Florence DeMars seconded it. Motion passed.

Old Business: None

New Business: A motion was made and seconded by Bill Gowdy and Florence DeMars for the discussion of changes to be made to the Church Constitution:

Article V Section C1 –The Board of Christian Education shall consist of three members rather than four members.

Article VI Section A1 – The stewardship committee shall consist of at least two people, rather than three members.

Article VI Section A2 The missions committee shall consist of at least two people, rather than three.

Article VI Section A3 The nominating committee shall consist of at least two, rather than three members.

After a short discussion this motion passed.

A motion was made and seconded by Linda Sprague and Alan Bolieau that the church council will have only one member at large on the Church Council and that person will be the secretary. Also the Sunday School Superintendent will not have to attend the council meetings because he/she is a member of the Christian Education committee, and the head of that committee attends the meetings. This motion was passed.

Now back to Nominating. A motion was made and seconded by Bill Gowdy and Alan Bolieau that the members on the 2015 roster be accepted. Motion passed.

Ken May brought up the Capital Campaign Project. A motion was made by Bill Gowdy and seconded by Bruce Ladr to discuss this. After a short presentation by Ken about the roof of the church needing to be replaced in the not too distant future, the driveway needing to be redone, and the lower driveway needing much work, it was decided that the trustees would look into these matters and possibly begin setting up a capital campaign project. The motion passed.

The moderator would like dates of all events given to her by April 1st so that they can be advertised and so church members can plan to be around to help at these events. Linda Sprague gave us the following dates: Spring Flea Market May 8 &9 rain date May 15 & 16. Duck race July 11. Fall Flea Market Sept 18 &19 with rain date Sept. 25 & 26.

The meeting ended at 2:00 PM with a song.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Gowdy

Pastor's Report

2015 was, in a many ways, a rather quiet and peaceful year, which is Good! Worship attendance has been steady, if not growing, on average. I was surprised at how it stayed "up there" during the Summer when it usually shrinks. The REALLY Good News is that we have maintained, if not exceeded our income expectations, even without the Rest Stop weekends, and we have had no crippling, unexpected expenses (knock on wood). We do have some challenges ahead, like the roof, but I'm sure we can meet them.

Pastorally, we have had more good times than bad times, though as our average ages get further "up

there” there are continuing needs for prayers for healing and help, and there will be occasional crises. I’m sure we will meet them all. There were no weddings or baptisms in 2015, and there were two memorial services (Frank Barton and Donald Woods). We have occasional “new faces” in the congregation and that, too, is Good! I was amazed at how we had 70+ people for Christmas Eve, many of them new or at least returnees.

Occasionally someone asks me why I am here in this little congregation when I probably could be serving a much bigger congregation with more pay and perks...well, I have been there and I have done that...and the bigger the congregation the bigger the headaches and heartaches that go with it. I am right where I want to (and I believe I should) be. After all, it all started when I had been out of the pulpit for more than ten years, and just on a whim I opened up the UCC employment opportunities and there you were, just down the road; a Church I had driven by at least a thousand times. God can be pretty clear on occasion.

When anyone asks me what this congregation is like, I am always pleased to say that “This is the friendliest congregation I have ever served: friendly to each other, strangers, newcomers and me.” We go with the flow when I mess up the bulletin or something, and Ken May has done an exceptional job of sorting out the hymns so I don’t choose any doozies.

So I am honored to serve you and walk with down our faithful paths, and I thank you for having me.

Be well, do good works and keep in touch...Carl

Church Council Report

The Council met seven times this year to conduct the business of the church and hear reports from boards and committees.

Our first discussion and decision was to bring before the church body a change in the constitution. It was decided to reduce the number of Boards and Committees, to remove the requirement that Boards and Committees need to wait a year before standing for re-election and to reduce the number of the Council by removing the Sunday School Superintendent from its membership. This was brought to the annual meeting and approved by the membership.

A Capital Campaign was discussed to start making improvements to the church grounds but was put on hold for the time being.

It was discussed to have strawberries at the July 4th town festival but because of costs we decided against it and instead decided to do cookies. This was not a great fund raiser and we would pass onto the next Council not to do it again.

Once again there was a successful Duck Race headed up by the Sprague and DelBene families. Thank you.

Also Linda Sprague did her thing with the Flea Market with another great turnout. Couldn’t do it without you.

We did a lunch table at the Talamini auction in October with not too much success there.

The Arts and Crafts Fair was headed up by Kim Dickson and did very well. Thank you Kim as a first timer for your work.

To be honest, your Moderator has not been at the last two meetings but I know that all business was conducted in the capable hands of the Clerk and I thank her for doing that duty.

All in all it was a good year and I thank everyone who served the church this year in small and large capacities.

Moderator,
Kay Myott

Church Clerk Report

During 2015, we held regular services on Sunday morning as well as two special services, Maundy Thursday, and Christmas Eve. We also hosted the High School Madrigals during the Christmas season. The Brook Side service was cancelled due to rain, but the Sun Valley service was held in August. We also held the Annual Meeting in February 2015 for the year 2014.

Average attendance at Sunday service was 24, not counting SS teachers and students, and an average of 6 members in the choir. This compares with 27 and 6 in 2014, 32 and 6 in 2013 and 31 and 8 in 2012.

Our Church membership is as follows:

As of January 1, 2015	98	
Additions: Confirmation	-	
Affirmation	-	
Transfer	-	
In-active to active	-	
Deletions: Death	-	
Transfer	2	Lisa May and Michael Gowdy
Moved out of Town	-	
Going elsewhere	-	
Active to inactive	1	Alan Bolieau
As of December 31, 2015	95	

Respectively submitted,

Lee Kerr
Clerk

Trustees Report

The Trustees did not hold regular meetings, choosing instead to meet and discuss particular issues and decide how to address them as they arose. The church budget was a concern at the beginning of the year when the state DOT decided to close the Willington Rest Stops for rehabilitation. They were closed from March through early December. As a result, we were not able to hold Rest Stop Fundraisers. We were concerned that the financial impact would be greatly negative.

In May Jerry Dwyer arranged for xxx to bring his tractor with front loader and backhoe down to work on the lower parking lot. This resulted in many of the puddles being reduced in size and improved drainage. If we can have this maintenance performed every couple of years, the situation should be manageable.

Also in the spring the exterior of all the doors to the church and parish house were sanded, primed and painted resulting in improved appearance and extended life.

Throughout the summer we were successful in keeping the grass around the parish house and around the barn cut with mostly volunteer labor. Repairs to the push mower kept it in good repair. However, the tractor mower was on it's last legs. It was determined that continuing to pay money to keep the Craftsman tractor mower functioning was not in the best interest of the church. In December we purchased a used tractor mower in good condition to replace the Craftsman tractor mower.

Work days were held in the spring and fall. We have been aided by the neighbor next door who volunteered to vacuum up the leaves to be used in his mulch pile. The brush around the parish house was trimmed back in the fall.

As mentioned earlier, the loss of income from the rest stops was a concern. However, our income remained strong throughout the year and our expenses were managed effectively. Our thanks to Treasurer Don Sanger for his hard work and his counsel on financial matters.

At the Annual Meeting the congregation asked the Trustees to provide some advance evaluation of costs to accomplish three specific goals: the roof of the church, the upper parking lot and the lower parking lot. The Trustees will report on this concerns at the Annual Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Kenneth May, Chair

Diaconate Report

We had an active 2015 carrying on normal activities as well as special programs on a two occasions in Carl's absence. In one case, the Diaconate led the complete service and in the other case, we had a hymn sing in place of a sermon. Ken May provided assistance in planning the hymn list from which we chose.

The Easter period was again special with the Maundy Thursday service and the cross decorated with flowers on Easter Sunday morning. As always, the Christmas season was very festive and meaningful with our Christmas Eve service. We only held one outdoor service, Sun Valley, this year as the Brookside service was rained out twice.

At each of our meetings Carl discussed his visits with members and families. We also talked at length about how best for Carl to use the Prayer Book and its entries each Sunday to ensure he stays up with the joys and concerns expressed by our members and friends.

There was no confirmation class in 2015.

The Deacons fund ended the year with a \$477 balance. It was used twice during the year to assist members. This is the purpose of the fund. Of interest is that the Fund was established way back in 1979.

We did not review our church membership in 2015.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ross Kerr, Chair

Christian Education

Serving on the Christian Education Committee during 2015 were: Sheila Hoefle, Linda Sprague, and Janice Gowdy..

Pre-kindergarten through high school students met for Sunday school classes weekly during the school year (September through June); middle and high school students did not meet on the first Sunday of each month so students could attend church and receive Communion. Pre-K and elementary students attend Chapel in the Parish House on the first Sunday of each month. The nursery would be staffed if a family with small children attended church. There were six children enrolled in Sunday School for this year.

Students eligible to participate in Youth Group were in sixth grade and up. We combined our Youth Group with the First United Methodist Church. Sarah Roman and Andrew Greaves are the adult representatives for Youth Group.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sheila Hoefle, Chair

Stewardship Committee

In October 2015 I requested a 2016 pledge goal amount from Don Sanger, and a mailing list from Ken May.

Fifty-one stewardship letters were either distributed at church, or mailed by November 2, 2015. November 29th was selected for Stewardship Sunday.

We received 25 pledges, with a pledge amount of \$43,480 for the General Fund and \$1,450 for Missions. In comparison to 2015, pledge commitments have increased by three, the General Fund pledge amount has increased by \$5,512, and the Missions pledge amount has increased by \$260.

I would like to thank everyone who pledged this year, and am very grateful for the generosity of our congregation.

Respectfully Submitted,
Stewardship Committee
Lisa Ostrowski

Missions Committee

Once again we had a busy year managing the numerous missions for our church. We started off with One Great Hour of Sharing on March 15 and 22. Our congregation contributed \$140 which was sent to the UCC.

An ongoing mission that we participate in is the sharing of food with the Stafford Human Services emergency food bank. We collect nonperishable food items in the red shopping cart found in the Narthex throughout the month. These food donations are then delivered to Stafford Human Services.

Another ongoing mission is the 5th Sunday collection taken for the benefit of Safenet Ministries of Stafford. Specially marked envelopes are placed in the pews on the 5th Sunday of any month and the funds collected are forwarded to Safenet to be used as they see fit.

We also collect can tabs for Ronald McDonald House throughout the year. These are delivered to Ronald McDonald House in Springfield, MA.

This year Erin Currey organized a blood drive during the month of July and she donated \$75 collected in a silent auction to Foodshare in honor of our church.

We took up a collection for Neighbors In Need on October 4th and the money was sent to the UCC.

For Thanksgiving, we collected food items and assembled 8 boxes which were taken to Stafford Human Services on November 23rd where they were given to 8 families providing them with a full Thanksgiving meal.

The bakers in our congregation donated cookies that were sent to the troops. These cookies were collected on December 13th and delivered to the American Legion by Janice Gowdy and Claire Richens.

We once again collected gently used coats and donated those to Stafford Human Services for distribution in the community. Janice took 34 coats and 6 pairs of pajamas to the Community Center.

For Christmas, 20 children's names were placed on the angel tree in the Narthex and taken by our church family. 20+ unwrapped gifts were returned and put under the tree along with 30+ hats, gloves, mittens and scarves and 3 sweatshirts. These were delivered to Stafford Human Services on December 21st along with 8 boxes of food items that were donated by the congregation. These boxes contained the ingredients for a Christmas dinner complete with a turkey, brownie mix and fresh fruit.

On Christmas Eve, the collection taken during the service, known as the Christmas Fund (previously Veterans of the Cross), was sent to the UCC to be used by retired ministers and their families. The amount donated was \$352.

We will be starting 2016 with money in our bank account and look forward to another "mission filled" year.

As a committee we feel blessed to be a part of such a kind and generous congregation.

Respectfully Submitted,
Judy DelBene, Chair

Delegates

No report submitted.

Historian

No Report Submitted.

Auditors

Report to be given at the Annual Meeting.

Financial Secretary

Amounts received 1/1/2015 - 12/31/2015

Pledges	\$40,128.00
Contributions	\$2,823.00
Freewill	\$1,840.53
Missions	\$588.00
Special Missions	\$805.17
Total	\$46,184.70

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Robinson

Treasurer

Receipts

R14	Church Utilities		\$0.00
R18	Maintenance - Buildings and Equipment		\$0.00
R21	Freewill		\$1,840.53
R22	Pledges		\$40,128.00
R23	Contributions		\$2,823.00
R24	Fund Raising		
	Little Shop	\$2,220.95	
	St. Pauley Shed	\$1,886.94	
	Barn Sale	\$696.50	
	Tag Sale/Flea Market	\$2,369.12	
	Summer Fest	\$244.00	
	Duck Race	\$1,180.50	
	Food Booth at Auction	\$257.00	
	Craft Fair	\$1,058.10	
	Misc	\$55.00	\$9,968.11
R25	Checking Account Interest		\$3.85
R26	Invested Funds		\$8,000.00
R27	Memorial Gifts		\$100.00
	Jean Hanson Cook		
R29	Lighting Of the Cross		\$300.00
R33	Postage		\$0.00
R37	Summer Conferences		\$0.00
R39	Miscellaneous		0.00
R51	Missions - Basic Support		\$588.00
R52	Missions - UCC Special Missons		
	One Great Hour of Sharing	\$140.00	
	Neighers In Need	\$99.63	
	The Christmas Fund	\$352.00	\$591.63
R53	Missions - Other Special Missons		\$213.54
	Safenet		
	TOTAL RECEIPTS		\$64,556.66

DISBURSEMENTS

D1	Minister's Salary		\$20,402.46
D3	Travel Expense		\$1,200.00
D5	Housing Allowance		\$1,929.46
D9	Health Insurance		\$7,214.25
D11	Custodian		\$1,000.00
D13	Organist		\$0.00
D14	Church Utilities		
	Williams Oil Co.	\$2,476.56	
	Eversource (Lights)	\$1,020.80	
	Frontier Phone	\$911.17	\$4,408.53
D15	Parish House Utilities		
	Williams Fuel Oil Co.	\$2,225.09	
	Eversource (Lights)	\$1,682.36	\$3,907.45
D16	Property Insurance		\$4,609.25
D17	Employee Insurance		\$450.00
D18	Maintenance - Buildings and Equipment		
	Outdoor Equipment		
	Lawnmower Repair	\$255.55	
	Tractor Purchase	\$900.00	
	Williams Fuel Oil Co.(furnace Cleaning)	\$221.32	
	Banner Water System (system maintainance)	\$348.83	
	North American Fire (extinguisher maintainance)	\$138.50	
	Kem May (furance Filters)	\$83.04	\$1,947.24
D19	Maintenance - Grounds		
	Armstrong's Landscape Construction (Snow Plowing)	\$4,658.00	
	Andy DelBene (mowing)	\$200.00	\$4,858.00
D24	Fund Raising		\$50.00
	North Central Ct Health District		
D26	Invested Funds		\$5,100.00
	General Fund	\$5,000.00	
	Memorial Escrow	\$100.00	

D30	Community Benevolences		\$0.00
D31	Worship Supplies		\$70.84
D32	Other Supplies		\$105.72
D35	Christian Education		\$25.00
	Bible Purchase		
D37	Summer Conferences		\$0.00
D39	Miscellaneous		\$25.00
	Cemetery Maintenance		
D41	Connecticut Conference Dues		\$392.00
D42	Tolland Association Dues		\$58.80
D51	Missions - Basic Support		\$588.00
D52	Missions - UCC Special Missions		\$591.63
	One Great Hour of Sharing	\$140.00	
	Neighbors In Need	\$99.63	
	The Christmas Fund	\$352.00	
D53	Missions - Other Special Missions		\$213.54
	Safenet		
	TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS		\$59,147.17
	Summary		
	Total Receipts		\$64,556.66
	Total Disbursements		\$59,147.17
	Net Operating Gain/Loss		\$5,409.49
	Checkbook Summary		
	Balance on Hand (1-1-2015)		\$4,013.66
	Plus - Receipts		\$64,556.66
	Less - Disbursements		\$59,147.17
	Balance on Hand (12-31-2015)		\$9,423.15
	Invested Funds Accounts		
	Premium Passbook Account #48000789		
	Balance 1-1-2015		\$68,460.27
	Deposits		\$5,100.00
	Withdrawals		\$8,000.00
	Interest Earned 1-1-2015 - 12-31-2015		\$125.73
	Balance 12-31-2015		\$65,686.00

2016 Budget

RECEIPTS		2015 Proposed	2015 Actual	2016 Proposed
Account	Description			
R14	Church Utilities	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
R15	Parish House Utilities	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
R18	Maintenance - Buildings & Equipment	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
R19	Maintenance - Grounds	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
R21	Freewill	\$1,500.00	\$1,840.53	\$1,250.00
R22	Pledges	\$37,968.00	\$40,128.00	\$43,480.00
R23	Contributions	\$2,950.00	\$2,823.00	\$2,000.00
R24	Fund Raising	\$15,000.00	\$9,968.11	\$12,000.00
R25	Checking Account Interest	\$4.00	\$3.85	\$4.00
R26	Transfer of Invested Funds	\$2,728.00	\$8,000.00	\$0.00
R27	Memorial Gifts	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$0.00
R28	Living Endowment Gifts	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
R29	Lighting of the Cross	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$300.00
R30	Community Benevolences	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
R33	Postage	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
R34	Music	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
R36	Youth Group	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
R37	Summer Conferences	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
R38	Stewardship	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
R39	Miscellaneous	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
R45	Sunday School Offerings	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	Sub-Total Receipts	\$60,700.00	63,163.49	59,034.00
BENEVOLENCE BUDGET				
R51	Basic Support	\$618.00	\$588.00	\$1,450.00
R52	UCC Special Missions	\$0.00	\$591.63	
R53	Other Special Missions	\$400.00	\$213.54	
	Total Receipts	\$61,718.00	\$64,556.66	\$60,484.00

Nominating Committee

<u>Position</u>	<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Moderator	Bill Gowdy / Kay Myott	1-Feb-17
Clerk	Lee Kerr	1-Feb-17
Asst. Clerk	Ross Kerr	1-Feb-17
Treasurer	Don Sanger	1-Feb-17
Ass't Treasurer	Ken May	1-Feb-17
Financial Secretary	Barbara Robinson	1-Feb-17
Asst. Fin Secretary	Janice Gowdy	1-Feb-17

<u>Boards & Committees</u>				
Name	Member	Term Expires	Member	Term Expires
Trustees	Bill Gowdy	1-Feb-17	Bruce Ladr	1-Feb-18
	John DelBene	1-Feb-17	Bruce Ekenbarger	1-Feb-18
Diaconate	Linda May	1-Feb-17	Kim Dickson	1-Feb-18
	Debbie Reynolds	1-Feb-17	Kathy Ladr	1-Feb-18
	Don Sanger	1-Feb-17	Bill Gowdy	1-Feb-18
Deaconess Emeritus	Claire Richens			
Christian Education	Janice Gowdy	1-Feb-17	Cindy Meyer	1-Feb-18
	Myrna Gambino	1-Feb-18	Judy DelBene	1-Feb-18
Stewardship	Judy DelBene	1-Feb-17	Lisa Ostrowski	1-Feb-18
Missions	Kathy Ladr	1-Feb-17	Janice Gowdy	1-Feb-18
		1-Feb-17	Lisa Ostrowski	1-Feb-18
Missions: Ex-officio	Bruce Ekenbarger			
Nominating	Peg Ekenbarger	1-Feb-17	Andy Greaves	1-Feb-18
				1-Feb-18
Auditors	Bruce Ladr	1-Feb-17	Ken May	1-Feb-17
Delegates	Kim Dickson	1-Feb-17	_____	1-Feb-17
Historian	Sarah Roman	1-Feb-17		
Church Council	Linda Sprague	1-Feb-17		