

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Annual Meeting date: 2/22/23

3400 Devon Road, Miami, FL 33133

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MODERATOR

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. — Galatians 6:9-10

It is common for the moderator to use this space to thank the leaders who served over the past year, and to mention their achievements. This task feels impossible this year. We came roaring back from COVID with enthusiasm for all things Plymouth: online ministry, in-person worship, music nights, fellowship gatherings, youth activities, and renewed support for the Preschool. So many people stepped up, in both elected leadership positions and spontaneous contributions, that the pages that follow only begin to capture the remarkable displays of love and support for the church.

In preparing for a capital campaign to raise funds to repair and improve the physical church property—a property which is over a century old and has always been maintained on a strict budget—we held “readiness meetings” to review capital needs with church members. In those meetings we learned about the high utilization of the church property, including church, preschool and community activities throughout the week, and the state of buildings that most of us do not visit regularly. Perhaps more importantly, we learned about each other. Members and visitors to the church shared visions of all-church dinners in a renovated Davis Hall, a dedicated space for church youth, improved wheelchair access to restrooms, and improved gathering spaces for small groups. These visions reflect inclusive love that is the heart of our mission and pinnacle of our faith.

Some of the feedback we received was hard to hear, as when Mary Ellis passionately reminded us that the church was 50 years overdue on a promise to dedicate space to the youth group. It can be difficult to accept that hard work and the best intentions did not yield perfect results, but I hope Mary (and others who provided constructive criticism) will say that we took the feedback to heart. The capital campaign plan now includes a youth center, with thanks to Mary for her unflagging advocacy for our teens.

Other conversations were challenging, too. The establishment of a committee for Church Life and the search for a third pastor for Church Life required us to explore differences within the church that are core to our identities—our theological philosophies, our expectations of what a church is and what it means to nurture “church life”. Like exercising atrophied muscles, we had to lean uncomfortably into patience and humility to find paths forward, and in every case we did find an encouraging path forward. As we continue to re-learn how to be together in-person, finding the courage to speak what is in our hearts and to compassionately hear things we might not want to hear will be imperative.

In the spirit of a loving challenge, I challenge the Plymouth community (members, visitors, and neighbors) to be mindful that we are called to do good *together*. It is dangerous to the church and to our individual wellbeing to pretend that secular trends toward tribalism, lying (“misinformation”), and hatefulness do not influence us. We are not cloistered. We must individually and collectively commit to do the hard work of loving each other for our differences,

which are part of the vastness and wonder of God's creation. Just as we struggle together through abstruse scripture, we must approach each other with faith, trust, and diligence in seeking to understand. We must trust that the plans most thoroughly vetted from the most perspectives are most likely to succeed, even if those plans do not precisely match our initial assumptions or personal preferences.

This was an odd year, caught between looking backwards to reboot in-person traditions as COVID restrictions eased and looking forward to preserve and grow the church in view of our reshaped world. I am delighted to say that we have planned boldly, envisioning a church where no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you can find comfort, challenge and above all, love, at Plymouth. We will continue to buoy one another with faithful enthusiasm, and lovingly hold one another accountable for our promises and our potential. We will wave off all weariness to reap what we've sown, and it will be a joyful harvest.

God bless,

Amy Foust

2022 Moderator

ANNUAL REPORT OF SENIOR PASTOR

Alvin W. Bunis, Jr.

For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:12)

Dear People of Plymouth,

I write this year's letter with a heart full of gratitude for the past year and excitement for the year to come.

The Apostle Paul describes the church as like a body, the Body of Christ, with many members, though different, all of whom are part of the same body. This past year, our 125th, our lay leaders and staff have worked to put in place critical initiatives for the future of this sacred body. And in the coming year, we will be acting on those initiatives. There is indeed much to be grateful for and much to look forward to.

A year ago, at the Annual Meeting, we talked about the Long-Range Plan, which the Council and Trustees had approved. That plan laid out priorities for Plymouth, which aim to keep Plymouth thriving and strong for many years to come.

Our Council and Trustees have been diligently and systematically implementing the core of the Long-Range Plan:

- **Church Life**: Create a new Church Life Ministry to strengthen our member engagement in the life of the church – particularly important in the wake of Covid – for our newest members and for long-tenured members alike. At the Annual Meeting we will vote on a slate of folks for this new ministry.
- **Mission**: Working through BOOM and the Cobb Family Emergency Response Fund, deepen our ability as a church to offer more mission service and trip opportunities, as we seek to live out Christ's call to love our neighbors as ourselves, whether near at hand, or far off.
- **Youth**: Build our Youth program – which we also heard was a priority from many members who participated in the Capital Campaign feasibility meetings. Our 26-member Confirmation class indicates how much potential we have here.
- **Pastor for Church Life, Youth and Mission**: Hire an additional Pastor to help lead these three priority initiatives. Our Search Committee is hard at work!
- **Capital Campaign**: Launch a Capital Campaign with the funds used to upgrade a number of key buildings on our campus, which are central to Plymouth's ability to live out our Mission Statement. As the Long-Range Plan says, the overall goal of the campaign is to both, better enable our buildings and grounds to support **growing** the church, while also **preserving** this historic campus which the Lord has given us. We look forward to formally kicking off the Capital Campaign very soon. There has been a lot of behind the scenes work already.

Each one of these initiatives is in process! My hearty congratulations to our Council, led by Moderator, Amy Foust, and to our Trustees, led by Chair, Beth Johnson, for enacting the Long-Range Plan. Outstanding follow through by our lay leadership!

Plymouth isn't resting on its laurels. We are leaning into the future. We aimed to come out of Covid roaring. We are bringing in new church members and seeking fresh ways to serve everyone, whether they just joined the church, or are life-long members. We are trusting that, as a sacred body, the Body of Christ, we can boldly look into the future.

Of course, I'm only scratching the surface on all the good things that happened at Plymouth this year. Like our wonderful Confirmation group. Our many fellowship events – new ones like pickleball and the Ladies Luau and standbys like the Men's BBQs. Another record year for the ministry of the This 'N That Shop. We doubled our BOOM budget and the team rose to the occasion, serving our neighbors in so many ways, including resuming dinners at Chapman Partnership and partnering with Macedonia in their reading program. And the Emergency Response team helped neighbors in many places, with largest gifts in Ukraine and Port Charlotte after Ian. Nurturing Faith, Joyful Noise and the Nursery all came back fully to pre-Covid operations. And the Chancel Choir blossomed with both new and longstanding much-loved voices. And we all smiled as special guests stepped out of Plymouth's history pages to worship with us, helping lift up our 125th anniversary.

While there is so much more I could talk about, let me instead summarize it all by saying that all parts of this Body of Christ are strong.

This year, we brought on board new staff members to our team: Lynn D'Agostino, Preschool Director, Jonathan Hine, Executive Administrator, and Melissa Kesden, Office Manager. Also, Dr. Vindhya Khare became Interim Director of Music, and Marie Ferguson took over as head of the Joyful Noise Children's Choir. Welcome team!

As always, I worked very closely with our Cabinet. Many thanks to Amy Foust and Beth Johnson, who I already mentioned above, along with John Shipley, Moderator-Elect, Michele Battle, Chair of Deacons, Jonathan Hine, and Pastor Moira.

Special thanks also to our Capital Campaign team, under the leadership of Co-Chairs, Dickie Davis and Larry Gragg, and the team, Bert de Armas, Amy Foust, Beth Johnson, and Lou Nostro. You'll be hearing more about the campaign very soon.

And, of course, we couldn't do any of this, without our lay finance leaders, Larry Gragg, Treasurer, and Lou Nostro, Treasurer-Elect.

As a genuine body, every member matters. Accordingly, there are so many others I could thank. But for now, let me close by thanking the one who makes it all possible, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Plymouth Congregational Church, 125 years strong. But also, leaning in and preparing for the next century.

In faith, hope and love,

Pastor Al
Senior Pastor

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Moira M. McGuinn

Listen carefully, I am about to do a new thing, now it will spring forth. Will you not be aware of it? I will even put a road in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. (Isaiah 43: 19)

It feels like God has been putting roads in the wilderness for us; opening rivers in the desert; sustaining us and helping us to find ways to sustain one another in the strange existence of life amidst the swirl of storms of all sorts.

Through a gracious gift from the Eve Dickie Trust, we have been blessed to sustain the livestreaming of our worship. This ministry has become very important in the lives of many of our seniors who remain hesitant about being in large groups, for some who have moved or find it challenging to join in person on Sunday mornings.

The arms of The Welcoming Christ above our sanctuary door, have greeted more people as they find their way back to the sanctuary for worship. It is wonderful to see familiar faces return, reunions in the pews, and folks meeting the many new members who have become part of our church family over the past few years despite of all the challenges of in person gatherings.

A real highlight for Pastor Al and for me was leading Confirmation. These were months filled with enthusiasm. 26 young people from many different schools engaged scripture and the ways God's Word shapes our life together with enormous good will for Pastor Al, for me and for each other. We studied and shared meals together. Thank you to all the parents who supported us. We used much of what we learned to create a very meaningful service of worship for the congregation. We had days of service with Rebuilding together, washing all the wood and pews in the sanctuary, planting flowers in the Cloister Garden. From these months together, new friendships have been formed and another generation of youth leaders is emerging.

We rediscovered joy of simple fellowship and faithful conversation with Bible study, brunches and BBQ's, Ladies Luau at the Orth's, pickle ball, and prayer. We had a little friendly competition between the Men's and Women's Fellowships to see who could have more than 50-60 people attending! It was neck and neck. We shall see in 2023!

We are grateful for Dr Vindhya Khare's creative and steady leadership as our Interim Music director. Our choir is growing as more members are participating. I encourage you to speak with Vindhya and lend your voice to our worship with the Chancel Choir. Give it a try. You will be in good hands with Vindhya and our wonderful section leaders to shepherd you.

Our life together is like a river of God's grace in the desert places. Our Lord blesses us and sends us into the world to share the good news of the gospel. We have given thanks for the lives of many good souls who have gone to be the Lord and welcomed little ones into the Body of Christ. We have fed the hungry and given joy to the most vulnerable children in our community and across the globe. May the Lord continue to bless us that new things may spring forth, within us and among us, to God's glory and delight.

The Lord bless you and keep you,

Pastor Moira

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHURCH CLERK

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED IN 2022

May 1, 2022

Ken Baker & Anna Dellarole Baker
Cindy del Marmol
Jonathan & Monica Hine
Sandy Lowenstein
Galina Reshetnikova
Zak & Leah Ringelstein
Ben Seidl
John Stewart
Elanor & Sam Williamson

November 6, 2022

Frances Alayeto
Fran-Joli Alayeto
Steven & Sheffield Bessellieu
Giselle & Jorge Borges
Nestor & Alejandra Delgado
Shavelli & Nicolas Fetter
Amy & Steven Herrup
Mike & Sharon Kiefer
Terry Marks
David O' Connor
Ana Rosa Phillips
Paula Quigley

Confirmands added to church membership on May 22, 2022

Gardner Berry
Lauren Brandon
Ava Crowley
Ella Crowley
Jackson Crowley
Thomas Crowley
Tosh Curtin
Tyler Curtin
Liam Jacobsen

Lauren Kaler
Anna Kate Kallaher
Chloe Kallaher
Raines Knight
Lucas Lippey
Ava McAliley
Halle Meltzer
Gabriela McGrath Morreira
Gabriella Roa

Alexandra Roa
Valentina Stromeyer
Ava Thelen
James Tullis
Peter Tullis
Emily Catherine Wheeling
Tiffany Grace Wheeling
Delanie Zub

MEMBER DEATHS IN 2022

George Berberian
Betty Conn
Flo Eible
Juli Gerlach
John Hoover
Lyn Parks
John Preston
Murry Sill
Rev. Dr. Richard Stanger
Cindy Tidwell
Anne Wood

Summary for 2022

Total Active Members on December 31, 2021 -----	850
New Members Received During 2022 -----	31
Confirmands Added to Membership in 2022 -----	26
Members Reinstated -----	1
Members Removed from Membership Due to Death-----	11
Members Removed from Membership -----	1
Members Inactivated-----	0
Total Active Members on December 31, 2022 -----	896
Total Baptisms Performed in 2022-----	71
Total Marriages Performed in 2022 -----	81

ANNUAL REPORT OF PLYMOUTH PRESCHOOL

2022 completes another year of Plymouth Preschool providing an early childhood program that serves children from Two Years of age thru Pre-Kindergarten in a beautiful spacious facility in Coconut Grove. I am honored to be the new Director this school year and continue the traditions and teachings that makes this school highly regarded in the community.

Prior to the opening of the 2022-2023 school year, the staff began work week with CPR and First Aid Training as part of the requirements for our accreditation standard. Then all the teachers attended an Active Shooter Training offered by The City of Miami Police Department. It was an informative training to help prepare the staff on how to respond in the event of an emergency. Throughout the school year we continue to practice monthly fire drills and lock down procedures according to our Emergency Preparedness Plan.

School began in late August, and it was a pleasure to see all the children and families return to school after the summer break. This year we offer one class of Two-Year Old's who attend two days a week, one class of Two's who attends three days a week and a third class of Two's who attends five days a week as well as three classes of Three-Year Old's and three classes of Four-Year Old's.

I am very fortunate to have started the school year fully staffed, especially in the current climate coming off Covid protocols. Most schools are short staffed and are struggling to find qualified teachers. All the teachers at Plymouth have been wonderful to work with and go above and beyond their job descriptions. They are a professional group of loving and caring people that provide a stimulating, hands-on learning environment for the children. Our registrar, Ms. Frances and our bookkeeper, Ms. Tara have made my transition to Plymouth seamless. They have guided me through all the policies and procedures, and I greatly appreciate their wealth of knowledge and experience in running the office. Ms. Patti, who was previously the Two-Year Old Teacher, is our new Assistant Director this year. She works hard and is a great resource for the staff and a wonderful asset to the school. It has been a pleasure to work alongside Ms. Patti.

This year we brought back many events that have been cut from the program for the past two years due to Covid. For me as well as many families, it was the first time being a part of the Ice Breaker, Open House and Family Picnic, The Halloween Trunk or Treat, Holiday Bazaar and The Littlest Angel's Christmas Party. The Board of Directors play an instrumental role in the planning and implementing of these school events and activities. Parisa Sieber and Kelly Howard, who serve as our Board Chairs along with Sheffield Bessellieu, Sarah Barrios and Anthony Cole, who are members of the Executive Board, are a dedicated group of parents that give so much of their time and energy to Plymouth. Parent participation creates a wonderful community and is one of the reasons this school is so special.

We continue to provide an excellent learning environment for young children where play provides active learning opportunities. In addition to the lessons guided thru our curriculum, we offer weekly special Music, Art and Science classes as well as monthly Story Time and Chapel for all the children. Plymouth Preschool maintains an N.A.E.Y.C. accreditation. This year we are renewing our credentials and will go through a rigorous self-study and will be observed and assessed to ensure that we meet the highest standards in early childhood education. The renewal takes place every five years and should be completed by February 2023.

I look forward to continuing working with the preschool and church staff, the families and children this year.

Lynn D'Agostino
Director

ANNUAL REPORT OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Reflecting on the year 2022, I would describe our ministry with children and youth as being in transition due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Nurturing Faith (formerly Sunday School) continued in-person gatherings on Sunday mornings with restrictions for the first half of the year for children ages 4 – 11 years old. In June, with the opening of the nursery for childcare, the age for children attending was modified to ages 3 – 11 years old. We meet as one multiage group. While this is a wide age-span, our attendance numbers do not support multiple age level groupings at this time. The older children help with the younger ones. The Bible story for the week is presented to everyone and appropriate age level activities reinforce the message of the day's story.
- June 5, we began offering childcare in McNaughton Hall for the first time since the pandemic shut the world down in March 2020. We began with two paid staff and in September hired an additional staff person to provide childcare. Two of the staff providing childcare are CPR/First Aid certified.
- The attendance for our monthly event known as "inSPIRIted Together" began declining in the first half of the year. With the departure of two members of the leadership team for this event during the last quarter of 2021, Gerry Brenes and I after prayerful reflection made the decision that May 2022 would be the last monthly event. We would rethink how this style of event could continue moving forward.
- Gerry Brenes, Director of Music, ended his ministry at Plymouth in June 2022 when he received a call to fulltime ministry of Director of Music for a church in Portland, Oregon. He wanted and was ready for a fulltime ministry position. I was losing another ministry partner but was so excited for him. His leaving impacted our joint ministry, the Joyful Noise Choir. I am grateful for his leadership in securing Marie Ferguson, an excellent vocalist who had recently joined the choir, to succeed him as Director of the Joyful Noise Choir. It was a smooth transition and Marie is doing an amazing job. I enjoy working with her.
- We had great fun and nurtured our faith with our Vacation Bible School theme "Food Truck Party: On a Roll with God!" which was held the first week in August. I am so grateful for the amazing volunteers that made the week such a success.

While we introduced the idea of a new youth grouping, presently known as Mid-Youth, our ministries with children and youth need the adults of our faith community to commit to be leaders along with our staff to nurture the faith of all our young people birth through age 17. This is an area I plan to give more focused attention to as we move into 2023.

We have some challenges ahead of us but I am certain that if we are open to listening, God will help us navigate these uncharted waters.

Blessings!

Andrea Burt, Director of Children's Ministries

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIACONATE

The term "It takes a village" is a perfect expression for our Diaconate Committee and its responsibilities. The 2022-2023 Diaconate Year was a wonderful year of resuming our weekly diaconate duties. The Diaconate Team which is made up of all of its current, past and future members all stepped in to lend a hand. It takes our Plymouth Village to come together every week to make sure the sanctuary is ready for our weekly services and extending the warm smile of friendship as people enter our beautiful church. We are so blessed to have such a wonderful group of Plymouth members and friends who are always eager to help.

We were excited to resume normal worship without the mandatory masks, separation of pews, and making reservations. We were able to resume Communion on the third Sunday of the Month as well as other special dates. Coffee hour was as popular as ever with our secret coffee punch.

As some of you know, the Diaconate Committee is responsible for welcoming everyone as they walk in the door as greeters, handing out the programs, cleaning the pews and restocking the offering envelopes, ringing the bells, collecting the offering, preparing and serving communion, preparing and serving the coffee hour. As well as other numerous duties. We hope to continue and grow our efforts in 2023.

We truly appreciate all the love and support this committee receives from its Plymouth Family. Know that we welcome everyone to be part of this amazing group of volunteers- all are welcome. We cannot do this alone. It takes a Village and what an amazing Village Plymouth has.

Michele Battle, Chair of Deacons

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Our church continues to grow and prosper in faith, as the past 12 months demonstrated. In 2022, the Nominating Committee welcomed the newest members, Maureen Gragg, Donna Huck, and Jane Battle. The current committee consisted of Lolly Anderson, Lee Damus, Phyllis Pals, Maria Reyero, Jeff Crockett, Bill Gerlach, and myself.

On the committee, we are tasked with receiving input from the congregation, the pastors, and the church council to fill the vacating slots for each committee and board within the church.

The task is taken very seriously as it staffs the positions that lead the church in so many beautiful ways, from the board of outreach and mission to deacons and trustees, to name a few.

By September, we were in full swing. Our committee members were diligent and enthusiastic about reaching out and bringing candidates to the table. I found it encouraging that each board member had acquaintances with a wide range of church members. In many instances, "oh, I know that person, and they would be perfect for such and such a board." We got a broad mix of well-established congregants and many new members from the extensive new member list. Way to go, Plymouth!

Something new was at Rally Day; each committee and board had a table set up to illustrate and talk about their committee's work. It generated a wealth of interest from the congregation and was a helpful resource for us.

Having Church Life as a new committee was exciting but challenging since the task force was still defining and meeting long after we had started our work. The good news is there was great interest in serving on Church Life. I can't wait to see it grow and evolve. We are not a stagnate bunch.

Phyllis Pals had served the previous two years as chair of nominating and had done such a great job of putting solid people in position. We will miss her next year. Also rotating off are Lolly Anderson, Lee Damus, and Maria Reyero. Thanks for your three years of service. The love for our church was illustrated when we were making our calls and was reflected in the willingness of the community to serve when asked. One of the huge draws to Plymouth is our open and welcoming spirit and ability to work together for the greater good. I was able to witness that time and time again while serving. It is an honor to be part of this beautiful church.

Yours in service,
Cynthia Collins

**ROSTER OF CHURCH'S GOVERNING
BOARDS AND COMMITTEES – 2022**

<u>Position or Committee</u>	<u>Term Ending January 2025</u>	<u>Term Ending January 2024</u>	<u>Term Ending January 2023</u>
Moderator		John Shipley	Amy Foust
Moderator-Elect			John Shipley
Church Clerk		Celeste Miller	
2-year term			
Treasurer	Lou Nostro		Larry Gragg
Treasurer-Elect			Lou Nostro
Church Council (At Large)	John Corey	Jeff Crockett	Gordon Fales
	Robin Gowda		Iden Stromeyer
	Edith Houlihan		
Trustees	Dickie Davis	Bonnie Blomberg	Beth Johnson
Total members = 12	Harry Nixon	Ray Martinez	Donna Fales
Beth Johnson, Chair	Manny Joya	Lou Nostro	Chris Lunding
			Karl Muench
			Lynne Steinfurth
			Larry Gragg
BOOM	Pat Vegnani	Ralph Davies	Cristina Duffy
Nick Smith, Chair	Linda Fink	Lauren de Lavalette	Susan Fuhrman
	Amy De Saint- Seine	Phillippe de Lavalette	Gwen Saunders
		Lynne Goldenberg	Nick Smith
		Amy Shipley	
		Kate Taylor	

<u>Position or Committee</u>	<u>Term Ending January 2025</u>	<u>Term Ending January 2024</u>	<u>Term Ending January 2023</u>
Adult Christian Education	Donna Ginn	Alix de Siefe	Lorna Owens
Maria Reyero, Chair	Donna Huck	Ana Brown	Maria Reyero
			Rebecca Curtis
CYEF	Cathy Wheeling	Tim Abraham	Douglas Crawford
			Mari Gelabert
			Nada Green
			Fred Stromeyer
Diaconate	Maggie Burchill	Michele Battle	Joan Johnson
Total members = Minimum 24, Maximum 30	Tom Burchill	Patrick Battle	Nina Arnett
Michele Battle, Chair	Tony Scornavacca	John Corey	Joan Bounds
	Joyce McIntosh	Robert Kostas	Nick Correa
	Tim Battle	David Velazquez	Margaret Fronefield
	Jane Battle		Phyllis Lee
	Lolly Anderson		Cookie Thelen
	Ann Schroeder		Mary Thorp
	Walt Orth		Vilma Wheeler
			Paula Hiebert
			Ariel Gonzalez
			Tony Thelen
Personnel	David Bianchi		Tres Arnett
Tres Arnett, Chair	Bruce Bounds		
Total members = 3			

<u>Position or Committee</u>	<u>Term Ending January 2025</u>	<u>Term Ending January 2024</u>	<u>Term Ending January 2023</u>
Music Committee	Renan Nance	Susie Kayyali	Rebecca Curtis
	Dorthea LaFrieda	Pat Vegnani	Lee Damus
	Dr. Diane Baker		Kathy Ezell
			J.B. de Rosset
Nominating Committee	Jane Battle	Jeff Crockett	Lolly Anderson
Total Members = 9	Donna Huck	Bill Gerlach	Lee Damus
Cynthia Collins, Chair	Maureen Gragg	Cynthia Collins	Phyllis Pals
Members will be elected by congregation at Annual Meeting to 3-year terms. At least three members shall be elected each year; more if needed to fill vacancies.			Maria Reyero

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

Thanks to the Finance Committee's guidance, led by the Church Treasurer, Larry Gragg, the Church was able to adhere to a balanced budget. The CCC campaign reached its goals, and the staff continued its diligent efforts to stick to its budget and keep expenses manageable. The Trustees began meeting in person this year, and the committee worked tirelessly to oversee the Church's finances. Weddings made a remarkable rebound this year, under the terrific leadership of Donna Martinez. The ongoing budgetary challenge is primarily the rising costs of insurance for our beautiful property. The committee will continue to work with Tim Battle to address these costs.

Led by co-chairs Dickie Davis and Larry Gragg, the Capital Campaign hosted multiple meetings with members of the congregation to assess the feasibility of a capital campaign for the purpose of doing many much needed renovations to Church bathrooms, Davis Hall and its kitchen, building a Youth Center, and ensuring that long term maintenance projects can be properly funded. The overwhelming positive response from the congregation led to the Trustees' approval of a capital campaign. In the future, the Trustees will be closely monitoring the expenditures of the campaign funds.

This year, the Trustees undertook the extremely important task of counting the collection plate after church services. Special shout out to John Corey for implementing an extremely detailed procedure for doing same.

This is my last year as Chair of the Trustees, and I am forever grateful for the careful stewardship and commitment to its fiduciary duties of the committee members. I leave the committee in the capable hands of Ray Martinez, the incoming chair.

God Bless,
Beth Pryor Johnson

TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERSHIP

Plymouth Congregational Church together with Plymouth Pre-school, the This n' That Shop and the Foundation all continue to operate with strong financial controls and balanced budgets. The Church Finance Committee, together with staff, monitor the Church finances and address specific financial issues as they arise to ensure that the Church is operating on a sound financial basis. I would like to recognize the efforts of the members of the Finance Committee:

Lou Nostro – Incoming Treasurer
John Corey- Past Treasurer
Beth Johnson – Chair Trustees
Bert De Armas – Chair Foundation
Brad Houser
Vince Kallaher
Tara Gorman– Preschool
Scott Powers – Controller
Jonathan Hine – Executive Administrator
Al Bunis – Advisor

Thank you all for the time you gave to this effort during this year. Thanks also to the Trustees and Council members to whom the Treasurer and Finance Committee report and who have the responsibility and authority with respect to the Church's financial direction. After several COVID driven budgets, the 2022 budget was essentially a normalized budget.

During 2022, the Church's in-person activities increased materially and while not mirroring pre-COVID, activities adapted to the new "normal" and the Church was able to achieve a successful financial year. After a midyear adjustment to delete the revenue and expense related to the third minister position which is now targeted for 2023, we budgeted revenue and expenses for 2022 of \$1,703,769. In our actual results we exceeded budgeted revenue and expenses by \$40,552 and \$32,304, respectfully, for a positive actual to budget variance of \$8,248.

The Church is in the strongest financial position it has been in for many years. The 2023 Budget "leans into" our mission but in a financially sound manner with a balanced budget. The Budget anticipates the cost a third Minister, which the Church leadership believes is essential to grow the Church and fulfill our mission. In addition to the third Minister, the Church has several other initiatives which the Church leadership believes makes it the opportune time to "lean-in" in our 2023 budget.

The Congregation is requested to approve of the 2023 Budget as presented.

Larry Gragg, Treasurer

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Pursuant to a recommendation of The Long-Range Planning Committee Report, in April of 2022, the Board of Trustees retained a consultant, James D. Klote & Associates (“Klote”) to assist the Church in conducting a readiness assessment to determine whether the Church had the capacity and willingness to conduct a capital campaign (“Capital Campaign” or “Campaign”).

With the assistance of Klote, the Church conducted this assessment, which included 15 multiple participant information sessions and numerous one-on-one contacts which resulted in contact with, and feedback from, well-over 100 congregants. As part of this process, a Feasibility Study was conducted which concluded that the Church had the capacity and willingness to undertake a capital campaign with the goal of raising \$5M.

Upon the receipt of the Feasibility Study, the Board of Trustees authorized the Church to undertake a Capital Campaign to raise \$5M for the purposes of financing multiple much needed capital improvements to the campus and creating an endowment fund, the earnings from which will be dedicated to campus capital needs in perpetuity.

To effectuate the Capital Campaign, the Board of Trustees created a formal *ad hoc* Capital Campaign Steering Committee (“Committee”) and appointed Elizabeth Johnson, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, Amy Foust, Moderator, Larry Gragg, Treasurer, Lou Nostro, Treasurer-Elect, and Dickie Davis, Trustee Board Member, as the initial members and provided the committee the authority of to appoint such additional members as it deemed advisable from time to time. The Steering Committee appointed Bert de Armas as an additional member of the committee and Al, Moira, and Lynn Bunis as ex-officio members of the Committee.

The Capital Campaign has been divided into the following three phases:

1. **Feasibility Phase-** The activities of this phase are discussed above.
2. **Planning Phase-** During this phase the Committee worked with the Church leadership, past and present, to (i) define the projects to be funded with the campaign proceeds, (ii) design, create and print the campaign collateral materials and design the Campaign strategy and (iii) work with the Church leadership to identify and source the seed capital for the Campaign.
3. **Public Phase-** This phase was scheduled to kick-off with a Church-wide dinner on January 20, 2023, which was postponed due to the illness of the Campaign Co-Chairs. During the public phase every Church member will be solicited. The projected time for the completion of this phase is 3-4 months.

In addition to the traditional capital campaign program, as a result of several factors which are unique to Plymouth, specifically its (i) outstanding preschool program, (ii) non-member wedding ministry, (iii) loyal former members who have moved to other geographic locations and (iv) historic and iconic architecture, the Campaign will have the following additional prongs (a) a solicitation of current and former non-member preschool parents, (b) a soft outreach to non-member couples who were married at Plymouth with the dual purpose of recruiting new members and soliciting contributions for the Campaign, (c) a solicitation of select former members who have relocated and (d) an effort directed at organizations that support historic preservation, such as private foundations and organizations such as the Villagers. As the Campaign progresses, efforts will be made to develop other non-traditional capital campaign fund-raising avenues.

The Committee is pleased with the enthusiasm and support that the Campaign has received to date and is optimistic that the Campaign will meet or exceed its goal.

Capital Campaign Steering Committee

ANNUAL REPORT OF BUILDING AND GROUNDS

Your Buildings and Grounds Committee is alive and well. The Pandemic presented challenges Plymouth soldiers on and does what Plymouth does for 125 years...cares for our congregation, our campus, and our community.

We continue to be fully active in all phases of project and maintenance work around and about the campus and consists of:

Walt Orth:	Committee Chair/Budget
Scott Powers:	Financial Oversight
Rob Bobson:	Plantings, Grooming and Floral Upkeep
Moira McGuinn:	Pastoral Representative
Frank Rumpf	B&G Staff Supervisor

Many B&G projects done by the team are too numerous to mention. They include painting, carpentry, water line repair, air conditioning repairs, roof repair, septic system repairs, grass/plant/tree maintenance, Pre-School support and so on. We were able to air condition the organ loft this year to help preserve that wonderful asset. Converting Preschool window air conditioners to central units is an on-going project.

Our wonderful 11-acre campus housing 24 buildings is one of our greatest blessings but one of our greatest challenges. You have seen many upgrades and improvements in the past decade plus and we carefully plan for that to continue. We will support the forthcoming Capital Campaign.

Our B&G operations budget for 2022 is \$223,138. This represents approximately 15% of the entire Church Annual Budget for 2022 to keep the campus up and running. This does not include salaries, pensions, capital reserve and other non-operational expenses. FPL is our single largest expense at almost \$50,000 per year...that's essentially keeping the lights on and the air conditioning running. Operating within the B&G Budget is always a challenge in that many expenses are relatively fixed.

Many thanks to Oliver Hale, Danay Lorenzo and Donovan Lamey lead by Supervisor Frank Rumpf. Thanks also to Rob Bobson and his crew who work closely with our staff and take wonderful care of our grass, flowers, and trees. A special thanks to Pastor Moira who is vigilant and active in giving suggestions and making recommendations.

Thanks to Pastor Al, Trustee Chair Beth Johnson, and Treasurer Larry Gragg for their continued support plus Controller Scott Powers for his continuous insight and teamwork as well as Jonathan Hine. More thanks to those of you in our Plymouth family who make donations and contributions that help maintain our historic and unique campus... an oasis in the City of Miami.

Walter H. Orth, Jr.
Chair
Buildings and Grounds Committee

BOARD OF OUTREACH AND MISSION (“BOOM”)

2022 was a triumphant return of many BOOM endeavors following the COVID-19 pandemic that restricted a number of our staple activities.

Headline events included (but are certainly not limited to) revitalization of our annual Birthing Kits event with the Footprints Foundation, our successful Christmas in July fundraiser and our investment of both Plymouth members’ time and BOOM funds to upgrade and facilitate the Reading Program at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church.

Our Birthing Kits assembly was an amazing community event held in October with over 30 participants making over 1,000 birthing kits (string, gauze, alcohol pads, bag, stocking, razor & gloves) that have since been shipped in partnership with the Footprints Foundation (<http://footprints-foundation.org/>) to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Central Africa to help mothers giving birth in remote locations.

Our Christmas in July fundraiser took on a different form this year – typically, we raise for local childrens’ causes but given our increased budget and ability to support these through our direct benevolences, we elected to fundraise for a specific cause instead. Namely, investing in technology for children at the Granville All Age School in Montego Bay, Jamaica. This is the same community where we sponsor an annual Christmas Dinner as organized by Plymouth congregant Blandel Allen. We raised over \$5,000 towards the cause and provided a full classroom of tablets to children who otherwise would not have access to the much-needed technology for a modern education.

Another major effort this year by the Board was our investment of both time and funds in Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church’s Summer Program and Reading Program (<https://macedoniambcmiami.com/>). The Board voted at the start of the year to make our first ever single five figure investment in this important and impactful program at our sister church here in Coconut Grove. The Summer Program was a roaring success with over 20 Plymouth volunteers donating over 150 hours of time reading with the children participants and Macedonia’s year-round Reading Program recommenced this year with similar support from Plymouth. Our benevolence specifically financed laptops for these programs – especially important for children who are given online homework without internet or computer access at home.

Other endeavors included the continuation of our monthly Food Drives for the Coconut Grove Crisis Food Pantry (<https://coconutgrovecrisisfoodpantry.com/>). This ministry expanded from serving 50 clients in Coconut Grove before the pandemic to serving over 200 now. They rely on Plymouth’s monthly donations for a good supply of shelf stable items, which typically makes up 10-20% of the necessary items for any given month. This year, we voted to invest in shelving for the Pantry to improve their setup at Gibson Hall at Christ Episcopal Church – delivered and installed in November. An exciting additional project we sponsored was purchasing 1,000 canvas tote bags for the This N That shop

emblazoned with the Pantry logo and website to raise awareness about the Pantry in the Grove. These will be distributed to customers of the This N That shop, complete with a flyer in each explaining the Pantry's mission, activities and ways to help out.

A fantastic example of our congregation's generosity this year was our donation of 173 Christmas boxes for children at Miami's Family Resource Center (<https://frcflorida.org/>). Each box contained the child's Christmas wishes which were fulfilled by our congregation, Plymouth Preschool families and the tireless work of Board members past and present! The Family Resource Center cares for foster children here in Miami to ensure they can grow up in a healthy and safe environment.

Another excellent activity that we restarted this year was monthly food service at Miami's Chapman Partnership empowering the homeless (<https://chapmanpartnership.org/>). We had continued to fund bag meals provided during the pandemic but this year, starting in July, 5-10 Plymouth volunteers have served food to over 100 diners at Chapman on the second Thursday of every month. We have also invested more to improve the quality and quantity of meals served. Separately but also benefiting the Chapman Partnership, a wonderful young Plymothian Maggie Meltzer conducted a summer underwear and toiletries drive that was hugely successful and will be continued going forward. We also provided our usual welcome bags for children just arriving at Chapman, school uniforms for those same kids and even had representation at the prestigious Chapman Partnership Gala!

We have also supported the following causes this year:

- Start (<https://www.thestartprogram.net/>)
- Thelma Gibson Health Initiative (<https://tghi-cg.org/>)
- ICU Baby (<https://icubaby.org/>)
- Rebuilding Together (<https://rebuildingtogethermiami.org/>)
- Transition (<https://www.transition-miami.org/>)
- Miami Rescue Mission (<http://www.miamirescuemission.com/>)
- Casa Valentina (<https://casavalentina.org/>)
- The Globe Scholars Program (<https://www.globescholars.org/>)
- Back to the Hood Coconut Grove Event

Thank you to the Board members and our supporters this year – we could not have done any of these wonderful activities without your hard work and care for the community.

Nick Smith,
BOOM committee chair

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COBB FAMILY EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND

In 2022, Plymouth's Cobb Family Emergency Response Fund made significant contributions as part of our Christian commitment to love our neighbors as our ourselves.

Our two biggest efforts:

First, we wired \$8,000 each, or \$16,000 total, to two Catholic churches in Poland to assist refugees fleeing their war-torn homeland in Ukraine, and

Second, we sent substantial resources for recovery efforts on Florida's Gulf Coast after powerful Hurricane Ian left so much damage, including \$10,000 to Pilgrim United Church of Christ in Port Charlotte – primarily to fix the playground for their school, which specially serves first responders.

In addition, Plymouth sent a six-person team to assist with food and water distribution in Port Charlotte on October 22.

ERF sent additional funds for Ukrainian aid and for help on the Gulf Coast, detailed below.

We also sent funds to New Vision Ministries in Marsh Harbour, the Bahamas (as follow-up to Hurricane Dorian and the playground project), to Second Christian Church, a black church in Mayfield KY (to assist after a large outbreak of tornadoes), and to St. Matthew's Baptist Church in Freeport, the Bahamas (as follow-up to rebuilding after Hurricane Dorian).

Below are additional details on 2022's ERF activities and donations:

COBB FAMILY'S ENDOWMENT FOR ERF

In September, because of the Cobb family's generosity, we were able to significantly increase the underlying endowment that helps support the Emergency Response Fund and all its initiatives. Chuck and Sue Cobb informed the ERF committee that the family "was so impressed with the good work of the committee" that they were increasing their previous \$190,000 in contributions to the ERF endowment by another \$160,000. That brings the endowment total to \$350,000. We express gratitude for the Cobb Family's generosity.

UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

Total: \$22,000

Russia's invasion of Ukraine led to vast numbers of refugees fleeing the war in Ukraine.

The Cobb Family Emergency Response Fund agreed to send \$8,000 each to two Polish churches that were assisting the Ukrainians. The first church, St. Stanislaus the Martyr

Cathedral, is in Lubaczow. The second church, the Basilica of St. Louis the King and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is in Katowice. Both parishes have been offering food, water, shelter, and medical care on the ground to Ukrainian refugees in need.

ERF also gave \$3,000 to Save the Children and \$3,000 to the International Rescue Committee to assist Ukrainian refugees.

HURRICANE IAN AND THE GULF COAST

Total: \$20,000

On October 22, a six-member Plymouth team traveled to Port Charlotte, Florida, to help distribute food and water to residents in need. We witnessed an extensive line of cars with people seeking food and water. Plymouth's team: Pastor Al Bunis, Chuck and Sue Cobb, Philippe de Lavalette, Tony Thelen, and Rich Bard.

We visited Pilgrim United Church of Christ in Port Charlotte. Pastor John Barnette pointed out the damage Ian had inflicted. Its school serves students with many working parents, including first responders. Its playground, kitchen, and community center were damaged.

ERF sent Pilgrim \$10,000 to help Pilgrim's school get back in operation, while also supporting a church in our denomination that has limited resources. More than three months later the school and kitchen are operating. However, the before-school and after-school programs are not yet open. Labor shortages and supply issues have slowed repairs, but Pilgrim is hopeful the playgrounds will be in full use by the end of January.

ERF sent additional aid to help Gulf Coast residents:

Soon after Ian slammed into Florida's Gulf Coast, ERF sent \$5,000 to the Disaster Response Team of Churches of Christ, with whom we worked closely in Panama City, Florida, in February 2019.

ERF sent \$3,000 to the Disaster Assistance/Church of Christ, an organization with no paid staff and whose leader, Mike Baumgartner, was key to bringing groups together to provide food, water, and supplies to residents.

ERF sent \$2,000 to the Port Charlotte Church of Christ. It suffered damage but nonetheless served as the home base for the food assistance efforts. Pastor Richard Combs was our gracious host. This church also has limited resources. This church was Joanne Matthews' parents' church.

MARSH HARBOUR, BAHAMAS, AND HURRICANE DORIAN

Total: \$8,000

We sent about \$8,000 to our partner church, New Vision Ministries in Marsh Harbour, on Abaco Island in the Bahamas, for final enhancements to the playground and basketball court that we helped finance and build the previous year. A Plymouth team that went to

celebrate the opening of the playground in December 2021 was moved by all that NVM had accomplished.

These funds were to help put sod around the basketball court, install light poles to allow for play after dark, and to place boxes or benches around the palm trees to provide seating for children, youth, and families.

The playground and adjacent basketball court have served as a visible sign of normalcy and hope to the Marsh Harbour church and the larger community. We had learned about the church through member David Winker.

MAYFIELD, KENTUCKY'S TORNADOES

Total: \$3,000

An outbreak of 71 tornadoes left 89 fatalities and catastrophic damage in portions of the South and the Ohio Valley on December 10-11, 2021.

The Western Kentucky storms especially affected about 20 families at Mayfield KY's Second Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a small Black church. ERF sent \$3,000 — raised by our congregation following the tornado outbreak -- to Second Christian Church to assist its families in most need.

FREEPORT, BAHAMAS, AND HURRICANE DORIAN

Total: \$3,000

After Hurricane Dorian struck the Bahamas, we learned about St. Matthew's Baptist Church in Freeport through Plymouth member Gardo Gomez. The church suffered major destruction, but they have rebuilt the church. ERF sent St. Matthew's Church \$3,000 to help furnish the new church with sound equipment and musical instruments.

TOTAL 2022 DONATIONS: \$56,000

CURRENT MEMBERS of the Cobb Family Emergency Response Fund board: Rich Bard, chair; Pastor Al Bunis; Chuck Cobb (at-large); Sue Cobb (at-large); Amy Foust (Moderator); Beth Johnson (Chair Trustees); Nick Smith (Chair BOOM); Edith Georgi Houlihan (Thrift Shop head); Tim Battle, David Winker and Pat Morris joined the board as at-large members.

I thank the members of the Cobb Family Emergency Response Fund board for their commitment to help our neighbors, near and far, in need.

Richard Bard,
Cobb Family Emergency Response Fund chair

ANNUAL REPORT OF WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP/THIS N' THAT SHOP

On behalf of the Shop Committee of the This 'N That Shop, we are so grateful to the members of the church, both donors and volunteers, and are delighted to report on the success of the Shop this year.

To put it simply, this has been our best year ever! The Shop's annual sales in 2022 totaled \$281,780, an 18+% increase over 2021 sales of \$238,237. December 2022 was the best month ever at the Shop. But, as always, we don't take anything for granted. We know that our success is dependent on so many factors in the community: the economy, community networking, Covid closure issues, and the trends in Coconut Grove. Thus, as we enjoy success, we humbly recognize that what we achieve at the Shop is not guaranteed, but the fruit of efforts of so many volunteers. Our 50-plus volunteers as well as our committee deserve the world of thanks. We estimate that our volunteers have logged over 5,000 hours in this year alone. Also, we stand on the backs of the many women who have led the shop in the past. To all of them, deep gratitude!

When asked about our success in these recent years, I state the facts: during Covid, people cleaned out their homes and donations piled to the ceilings of Pilgrim House. This build-up of inventory allowed us, once reopened, to supply our shelves much more regularly than before. Our team of volunteers worked every Monday, even holidays, to sort, mark, and even transport items to the shop. This turnover has been significant. Additionally, our use of social media has been a magnet for shoppers. We regularly post on Facebook and Instagram as well as local sites. Thanks to Cristina Hernandez and Raquel Lieven, who have produced wonderful, inviting videos about the Shop.

We have gotten so much attention on social media that a company, Remoovit, contacted us to offer their donations. This group provides a service to people moving out of homes and then passes on to us many valuable items. We also receive many requests to donate items of great value through social media.

As for our happiest results, this year we donated over \$220,000 to various groups including: Agape Women's Center, Casa Valentina, Chapman Partnership, Christian Academy for Reaching Excellence, Coconut Grove Crisis Food Pantry, LEAP, Miami Lighthouse for the Blind, Lotus House, Miami Rescue Mission, The Lucy Project, the Thelma Gibson Health Initiative, and of course to our dear Plymouth Church. The ability to give to these groups, and the joy in doing so is the blessing of our ministry!

Finally, let me thank our committee members:

Nina Koven Arnett
Carol Barrus
Lynn Bunis
Kathy Ezell

Donna Martinez
Ann Schroeder
Lena Tenbroek
Hallie Yanno

We recognize and are thankful for the years of service by Pat Vegnani, who retired as treasurer early this year, and appreciate that Ann Schroeder has stepped up to fill this role. We are delighted to employ Paula Yermoli, Harry Nixon, and Travis Swain on a regular basis in the Shop.

With Best Wishes for Another Successful Year,

Edith Georgi Houlihan

Committee Chair

ANNUAL REPORT FOR MAGGARD MIGRANT MINISTRIES

Maggard Migrant Ministries (“MMM”) was founded and managed by Arvin and Helen Maggard, and has helped many migrant children realize a college education. Arvin and Helen were such beacons of light for so many and it is our honor and privilege to continue to spread their hope and love in our community.

Maggard Migrant Ministries continues to provide financial support via scholarships so that deserving students have the opportunity for a college education that might not otherwise afford it.

As other government and program options/scholarships have opened up for Migrant students, we were not seeing as much of a demand from the Migrant community so with Arvin’s suggestion and blessing beginning in 2021, we opened the MMM scholarship to deserving students, in need, outside of the Migrant Community.

In 2022, we assisted 3 students with either full tuition or just help with books and fees, including one nursing student who received full tuition each semester and will continue until graduation.

In addition to MMM, there is also the Arvin and Helen Maggard Migrant Ministry, which is completely controlled and administered by Miami Dade College.

We continue to need and accept donations from individuals, organizations and foundations in order to provide this needed service in the community. And we are grateful for the donations and support received.

In closing, with each and every scholarship given, each and every donation accepted, each and every student that graduates; may we always be reminded that each of us can make a positive difference in this world.

Love and Light,
Cindy and Jerome Smith

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

In the Sanctuary after service and on Zoom on January 23, 2022

Note: Due to Covid issues, this meeting was held in person in the sanctuary with others being able to join online by Zoom. It was reported that at least 50 households were online during the meeting. Combined with in person attendance we easily had a quorum.

Call to Order by Pastor Al at 11:21 AM

We all sang Hymn 356, *All Creatures of our God and King*, to start.

Pastor Moira gave words of welcome to those in person and on Zoom. “After 125 years of doing this, we make decisions today based on what those who came before have done”. Moira offered an opening prayer.

Moderator Rich Richards began the official meeting with words of welcome.

First order of business was the Minutes of the last annual meeting (included in the 2021 annual report.) A Motion to approve the minutes was made by Celeste Miller with a second by Walt Orth. Motion Passed unanimously.

Moderator Rich then gave a summary of the report of the Long-Range Planning Committee. As Church Council received the report in June and has had a thorough discussion of it, there is agreement to proceed on the various recommendations. Rich recognized the Committee by name and thanked each and every one.* Rich summarized the 7 areas that LRPC recommended the church to focus on.

* **First** was the recommendation for an Executive Administrator, which was approved and implemented.

***Second and third** recommendations: The church’s need for a third pastor to focus more on church life, mission and youth and to create a board of church life, with which this new pastor would work closely—we are prepared to move forward on this.

***Fourth**, we need to focus on outreach and mission with special emphasis on mission trips (with BOOM working closely with Emergency Response Fund). This goal has been adopted and passed to BOOM to implement. BOOM has been outstanding this year, thanks to Harry and Nick (applause).

***Fifth** concerns improvements (and deferred maintenance to the physical aspects of the campus (in particular Buildings), and creating a Capital Improvement Fund (a “Grow and Preserve Fund) to do so. Under the guidance of the Trustees, a committee has been formed. This will take a lot of work from the committee to plan and implement needed improvements and the capital campaign.

***Sixth** was a recommendation concerning the Preschool, to have a committee to assess its needs in the future. Given Annie Booker’s pending retirement, a search committee has been formed. With the search beginning, it will be best to delay this committee.

***Seventh**-to grow outreach and marketing. The Council recognizes that we need to improve and update the website and expand social media. This dovetails back to the proposed Board of Church Life.

Nominating Committee Chair

Phyllis Pals presented the slate of nominees on the ballot and candidates for Nominating Committee for 2022. Phyllis thanked the committee for their hard work: Lolly Anderson, Jeff Crockett, Lee Damus, Bill Gerlach, Maria Reyero, David Velazquez, David Winker, and Cynthia Collins who served as co-chair.

Treasurer, Larry Gragg

Larry is especially happy to be back in person—his first-time worshipping in person in over a year. He commends the Pastors for the service and the sermon!

The Church is in sound financial shape. Three factors contribute to this: Payroll Protection Plan loans, reduced programming (due to pandemic), and tighter fiscal management.

Please refer to the full report on pp 19-20 of the annual report.

Larry thanked all members of the Finance Committee (see annual report).

Finally, Larry encouraged the entire congregation to pledge for the coming year.

Larry entertained questions on the proposed budget and answered all concerns effectively.

Applause!!!

Ballots were then collected (budget, slate, nominating committee).

Anthem sung as we voted. “My God is So High” sung by Vindhya Khare.

Moderator Rich Richards’ Report

Rich first recognized the pastors, Al and Moira, then the Council, Zach Dunn, Beth Johnson for Trustees, Larry Gragg as Treasurer, Bruce Bounds for Diaconate, Clerk Edith Georgi Houlihan, (also for the This n That Shop), Andrea Burt for CYEF, Lolly Anderson for Adult Christian Education, Harry Nixon for Boom, and all other leaders. Please refer to the Annual Report for an accurate list.

“It has been an honor to serve this Church.”

“If I could leave you with anything, it is from my experience as a scoutmaster: A scout is taught to be brave, not to fight the bear, but to be brave to come out of your comfort zone.”

Pastor Al

Pastor Al reported that the 2022 Budget and Nominating Slate have passed; the newly elected members of the Nominating Committee will be announced next week.

Al then discussed what it means to be a congregational church, touching on the history of the early church, keeping it simple based on “if 2 or 3 are gathered together....Christ promises to be there.”

“Today we are doing what is at the heart of our philosophy—we are doing democracy.” “In line with the Congregational tradition, this is a roll up your sleeves type of church” “125 years of exactly that!”

“The state of Plymouth Congregational Church is strong and looking to be stronger!”

But we have had challenges: Zach moving on, Thaddaeus moving on. “We have big shoes to fill, but we are in the process of doing it.” We are excited to welcome Jonathan Hine. Also thanks to Kevin Santamaria as well, and Camila Saldrigada, who are running the livestream and Zoom for the meeting. What a great team! Under Pastor Moira’s guidance, we also put together a team to run live streams when we don’t have a trained technician available. Al commended Julian Nixon, Harry’s son, for his technical contribution.

The biggest challenge was the Pandemic. We are grateful to Dr. Bonnie Blomberg and Dr. Fred Telischi for their guidance.

We have had worship open all year long, same for the shop, same for the preschool. WE ARE OPEN, but we had to adapt. We have a new sound system thanks to Bruce and Martha Clinton. We are more adaptable now. Now we are adapting our fellowship.

Here we are in our 125th year, a year of looking forward and investing in the future of the church - especially clear in the budget. We are investing by doubling our BOOM budget, hiring a 3rd pastor, living out the long range plan. Also looking forward in the next generation, particularly noting the new name for Sunday school: Nurturing faith, and the name for the Children’s Choir, Joyful Noise. Both are off to a great start.

Looking forward also includes thinking of potential capital campaign per the Long Range Plan – particularly focused on deferred maintenance and have enough reserves for future need. To be called a “Grow and Preserve Fund”

To enable our buildings to strengthen our ability to grow and to preserve what God has given to us on this beautiful campus. Special thanks to Walt for leading Building and Grounds.

Back to the writings of Paul, who called the church “The Body of Christ.” Each of us have different roles...different parts of the body...all essential. “What this really means is that we are all in this together. I can’t think of any people I would rather be in this with than the people of this congregation.”

Thank you’s. Recognition of Cabinet consisting of the Moderator, Moderator-elect, Head of Trustees, Head of Deacons, Associate Pastor. And many thanks to Treasurer Larry Gragg.

Recognition of Rich Richards. “A man of steady leadership and gratitude.” There followed the traditional presentation of a Bible and the gifting of a framed Photo of Plymouth to Rich.

Special recognition of Bruce Bounds for his service as head of Deacons during the pandemic.

Rich Richards then accordingly mentioned the abundance of “Riches” in the church. Rich thanked former moderators for their assistance.

And then moved on to the introduction of our new **Moderator Amy Foust:**
Amy, a very humble person, elegant speaker, excellent lawyer.

New Moderator Amy Foust gave humble and brief remarks (with her daughter cheering all the way.)

Amy built upon ideas already mentioned: 'roll up your sleeves church' and the time it takes and the struggle we continue to be in, and especially the Long Range Planning Committee encouraging us to shine even brighter. Amy asked everyone to think about special moments at Plymouth and to shine our light on each other. Send them a note of thanks."

The meeting concluded by singing *America the Beautiful*

Benediction by Pastor Al.

Meeting ended 12:35 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Edith Georgi Houlihan
Church Clerk, 2020-2021

**Please see annual report for full details.*

PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH MODERATORS

1976	Arvin H. Maggard
1977	Arvin H. Maggard
1978	Ross Apgar
1979	Ross Apgar
1980	Palmer A. Niles
1981	Palmer A. Niles
1982	Maggie Black
1983	Maggie Black
1984	Frank J. Callahan
1985	Frank J. Callahan
1986	Ruth Kassewitz
1987	Ruth Kassewitz
1988	George Jenkins
1989	George Jenkins
1990	Bob Schmidt
1991	Bob Schmidt
1992	Jeff Lane
1993	Jeff Lane
1994	Virginia McNaughton
1995	Virginia McNaughton
1996	JoAnne Matthews
1997	James (Jim) Clark
1998	Richard (Rick) Davis
1999	K. Larry Gragg
2000	Elizabeth (Liz) Miller
2001	Gordon Fales, Jr.
2002	Dickie Davis
2003	Patrick Battle
2004	Christine (Chris) de Armas
2005	Richard (Rick) Davis
2006	Meg Conaty
2007	Walter Orth
2008	Linda Clark
2009	Tim Battle
2010	Angela Miller
2011	Bill Gerlach
2012	Bonnie Blomberg
2013	David Bianchi
2014	Kathy Ezell
2015	Rich Bard
2016	Dickie Davis
2017	Henry Harnage
2018	Edith Houlihan
2019	Jeff Crockett
2020	Celeste Miller
2021	Rich Richards
2022	Amy Foust