

*The Community Church of Sebastopol*  
*130<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting*

*January 26, 2020*



*Annual Report for Year 2019*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

AGENDA .....	1
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL & STAFF.....	2
REMEMBRANCES .....	3
129 <sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES .....	4
AUGUST SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES.....	6
LEAD MINISTER.....	8
ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF FAITH FORMATION.....	9
ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF CONGREGATIONAL CARE.....	12
FACILITIES RESOURCE AREA.....	14
PERSONNEL RESOURCE AREA.....	16
WORSHIP & ARTS MINISTRY AREA.....	18
FAITH FORMATION MINISTRY AREA .....	21
CARE & FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY AREA.....	24
OUTREACH MINISTRY AREA.....	27
CHURCH CLERK.....	32
NOMINATING COMMITTEE SLATE.....	33
FINANCE RESOURCE AREA.....	34
PROPOSED BUDGET 2020 .....	37
END OF YEAR REPORT 2019.....	41

130<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of  
The Community Church of Sebastopol  
United Church of Christ  
for the year 2019

---

**AGENDA**

*Meeting Date: January 26, 2020*

1. Call to Order – Michael Ott, Moderator
2. Opening Prayer – Rev. Lacey Hunter and Youth
3. Time of Remembrance – Rev. Rachel Knuth
4. Quorum – Denelle Tognozzi, Church Clerk
5. Approval of Minutes of the 129<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Special Congregational Meeting held August 11<sup>th</sup> – Michael Ott, Moderator  
MOTION: To approve the Annual Meeting minutes  
MOTION: To approve the August 11<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes
6. Ministers' Updates
7. 2019 Financial Report and 2020 Proposed Budget – John Henel, Council Officer for Finances (Treasurer) - MOTION: To Adopt the 2020 Proposed Budget
8. Facilities Update – Larry Stallings, Council Officer for Facilities
9. Outreach Update – Joyce Cox, Council Member for Outreach
10. Nominating Committee Report and Election of Leadership Council & Nominating Committee Members – Nancy Shimetz, Nominating Committee Chair  
MOTION: To adopt the Nominating Committee report
11. Expressions of Appreciation and Opinion on the Life of the Church
12. Installation of Leaders
13. Benediction – Rev. Benjamin Broadbent
14. Adjournment – Michael Ott, Moderator

## *LEADERSHIP COUNCIL & STAFF*

### *2019 Leadership Council*

Moderator	Michael Ott
Council Officer for Facilities (Vice Moderator)	Larry Stallings
Council Officer for Personnel (Secretary)	Kathy Bell
Council Officer for Finance (Treasurer)	John Henel
Council Member for Worship and Arts	Linda Roa
Council Member for Faith Formation	Linda Inman
Council Member for Care and Fellowship	Bobbie Johanson
Council Member for Outreach	Joyce Cox

### *2019 Staff*

Lead Minister	Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent
Associate Minister of Faith Formation	Rev. Lacey Hunter (beginning August)
Associate Minister for Children & Families	Rev. Rachel Knuth (January)
Associate Minister of Congregational Care	Rev. Rachel Knuth (beginning March)
Minister of Music	Rev. Brian Plaugher
Youth Ministry Coordinator	Emily Syal (through July)
Children's Ministry Coordinator	Julie Reimer (February – July)
Congregational Administrator	Becca Emerson
Bookkeeper	Jennifer Halleck (through November)
	Julie Reimer (beginning December)
Handbell Ensemble Director	Karna Roa
Keyboardist	J. Althea
Custodian	Maria Mojica
Sound Technician	Gavin Bright
Nursery Attendants	Traci Harris
	Patricia Bowen

*REMEMBRANCES*

---

With resurrection hope, we remember those in our community who have died this year.



Members of the Church

*Barbara Zimmer*

*Helen Williams*

*Meg Brittan*

*Barbara Wilson*

Friends of the Church

*Roger Collins*

*Bill Feige*

*Sean Manchester*

*Ruth Halleck*

*Don Schilling*

*Ron Feige*

*Bill Barrow*

*Cliff Bright*



*God, step into the moments when we feel the loss of these beloveds the most.*

*Cover their families with care.*

*With gratitude for all that is sacred in a life well-lived,  
and in your Holy Name we pray, Amen.*

---

**129<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES**

---

*Denelle Tognozzi, Church Clerk*

**Minutes of the 129<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting  
The Community Church of Sebastopol  
January 27, 2019**

The meeting was called to order by Nancy Shimetz.

Emily Syal and youth group members opened with a Scramble prayer.

Pastor Benjamin and Pastor Rachel commemorated with a prayer and soft bell tone members and friends who passed away since the last annual meeting. They were: Lizann Bassham, Kevin Bench, Priscilla Best, Roger Collins, Bob Gordon, Jean Peterson, John Simmons, Diane Stallings, Bob Thomas, Don Victor, Louise Wakefield, Babetta Wilson.

M/S/P Judy Rice/Gail Thomas to approve the minutes of the 128<sup>th</sup> annual meeting.

M/S/P Jane Huneke/Judy Hawkins to approve the minutes of the April 15<sup>th</sup> Special Congregational meeting.

M/S/P Emily Davis/Norma Watson to approve the minutes of the October 7<sup>th</sup> Special Congregational meeting.

**2018 Financial Report and 2019 Proposed Budget:**

John Henel reviewed the 2018 financial report and the proposed 2019 budget. He did a recap of 2018, explaining that for the third year in a row, we ended with a surplus. This year's surplus of \$27,645 was moved to the Reserve Fund which now has a balance of \$100,574.

He then reviewed the proposed budget for 2019. He thanked the budget committee, Pastor Ben, Kathy Bell, Larry Stallings, Jennifer Halleck and John Henel. The committee met several times beginning in September to produce the budget. Beside the usual increases in operating costs and personnel expenses, the 2019 Budget had three special challenges:

- The planned addition of a new full-time Associate Minister
- Maintaining Pastor Rachel as she transitions into a new role
- Providing for some significant facilities needs

While we didn't meet our annual appeal goals, generous pledges helped us get close enough to move forward with most of the priorities. There was a generous gift to the Facilities budget which will fund Upkeep Reserves.

There was some discussion from members about what to do with excess funds.

Kathy Matthies suggested that we look into other options for the Preschool facility that might be less expensive than the current tenant and available to more members of the community.

M/S/P Marian McDonald/Bobbie Johanson to approve the 2019 Operating Budget for the Community Church of Sebastopol.

**Facilities Update:** Larry Stallings reported that there are 3 teams in the Facilities Area. They are the Landscape team, Facilities team and the Safety/Security Team. There has been much accomplished within each team area. We are doing our own landscaping, which includes

composting. There is new signage around campus which makes it easier for our visitors to find their way around. There have been meetings with local leaders to discuss ways to be better prepared for possible future disasters. The Facility team is doing a lot of the labor on various projects.

**Outreach Update:** Michael Ott reported that Mission and Outreach Committee distributed funds exceeding \$4700 to various organizations. These were funds provided by the congregation's pledged Mission giving. Some of the areas that benefited from the committee's help were the Safe Parking program, Adult Mission Trip, Food Pantry, 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday lunch program, Shower outreach/towel service and the Thanksgiving dinner. Their goal is for the Community Church to be the best neighbor in 2019.

Paula Pearce asked if we could possibly purchase a washer/dryer set to install here at the church to make the laundry from showers easier to manage. This is an item to explore in the coming year.

### **Nominating Committee Report and Election of Leadership Council & Nominating**

**Committee Members:** Chris Dawson explained that with the adaption of the new church governance structure, there were changes in the Nominating Committee responsibilities in 2018. With the new structure, only a handful of positions are presented to the congregation at the annual meeting for approval, including the 6 Leadership Council positions as well as the Nominating Committee itself. The positions on the Leadership Council as well as the Nominating Committee are staggered year to year, so only a few positions each year are open for the Nominating Committee to fill. The 2019 positions are as follows:

Council Officers:

Moderator: Michael Ott, Facilities (Vice Moderator) Larry Stallings, Personnel (Secretary) Kathy Bell, Finances (Treasurer) John Henel

Council Members:

Worship and Arts: Linda Roa, Faith Formation: Linda Inman, Care & Fellowship: Bobbie Johanson, Outreach: Joyce Cox.

The Nominating Committee members are: Patty Raney, Judy Rice, Nancy Shimetz, Norma Watson and Roger Wilson.

M/S/P Gail Thomas/Emily Davis to adopt the Nominating Committee report.

**Report on Search for Associate Minister for Faith Formation:** Kathy Bell reported that Pastor Ben introduced a proposal to initiate a search process to call a full-time Associate Minister for Faith Formation. In August, the Leadership Council approved forming a Search Committee which would be charged with doing the prep work needed prior to submission to the Conference Office for an official search. A special congregational meeting was held in October to take a poll of the members on initiating the search process. The results were 49 members in favor, 3 against.

In December a job description for Pastor Rachel's new position-Minister of Congregational Care-was approved and Council is currently working on a job description for the new position.

Kristen DelMonte, chair of the Search Committee, reported that the committee is working on a church profile and hopes to have it ready by the beginning of March. They will be having

listening sessions for ALL ages to gather input for the position. The Search Committee members are: Linda Inman, Kathy Matthies, Judy Rice, Marin Broadbent-Bell, Keenan Foster, Joanne Feige, and Elizabeth Thomas.

**Affirmation of Call:** Michael Ott presented Pastor Rachel with a gift of appreciation for all she has done in her service to the congregation. There was a request for a description of Pastor Rachel's new position. Pastor Ben stepped up to briefly describe the position. He said it will be mostly Pastoral Care, taking care of the many needs of the church with a more organized approach. She will oversee the visitation team, prayer shawl team and kindred groups as well as other areas.

M/S/P John Henel/Paula Pearce to affirm the Call of Rev. Rachel Knuth as she transitions from Associate Minister for Children and Families to Associate Minister for Congregational Care.

**Expressions of Appreciation & Opinion:** Pastor Ben presented outgoing Moderator Nancy Shimetz with a gift of gratitude and appreciation. He praised her for her great leadership during a time of significant government change.

**Installation of 2019 Leaders:** Pastor Ben recognized the leaders for 2019.

Pastor Rachel led the benediction and blessing.

**New Moderator for 2019:** Michael Ott, 2019 moderator, adjourned the meeting.

---

### **AUGUST SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

*Denelle Tognozzi, Church Clerk*

#### **Special Meeting of the Congregation August 11, 2019**

The meeting was called to order by Moderator, Mike Ott. Mike thanked Althea for providing music as meeting participants were seated. In accordance with the Bylaws, the Leadership Council has called this Special Meeting to consider the Search Committee's recommendation to call Rev. Lacey Hunter as our church's Associate Minister of Faith Formation.

Rev. Rachel Knuth, Associate Minister of Congregational Care, opened the meeting with a prayer.

Denelle Tognozzi, Church Clerk, and Kathy Bell, Council Secretary, confirmed that there was 10% of our church membership present for a quorum.

Mike introduced Rev. Lacey Hunter and her partner, Sharon, to the congregation. Rev. Rachel and Search Committee member, Marin Broadbent-Bell, escorted Rev. Hunter and Sharon to the Chapel until the end of the meeting.



Kristen DelMonte, Chair of the Search Committee, presented a motion that the congregation calls Rev. Lacey Hunter as our Associate Minister of Faith Formation. Since the motion comes from a committee, it does not require a second.

Mike asked Kristen to speak to the motion. Kristen introduced the members of the Search Committee: (Linda Inman, Judy Rice, Joanne Feige, Keenan Foster, Kathy Matthies, Elizabeth Thomas, and Marin Broadbent-Bell.) She gave a brief recap of the search process. The committee's first job was to create a church profile. This took longer than expected, but by April they had it online and ready for perspective candidates to read and apply for the position. After several Skype and in-person interviews they were confident and excited to present Rev. Lacey Hunter as their candidate. She has been trained in the Godly Play program which we use and also the OWL program. Her amazing energy also stood out as such a positive attribute.

Mike asked if there were any questions and comments from the congregation. One concern was the issue of the commute from Oakland. Kristen assured us that Lacey is totally committed and excited about this job opportunity and is open to possible overnight stays with church members, if needed. There was a request to give a job description of the position. As Associate Minister of Faith Formation, Lacey's position would be full time. She would have weekly office hours, be a part of worship, oversee Adult Ed and Children/Youth programs and do pastoral visits. By making this job full time, the hope is to keep her for a long time. Since there were no more questions, Mike addressed the motion on the floor to call Rev. Lacey Hunter as our Associate Minister of Faith Formation. Since we had established, per the Bylaws, that a quorum is present, we proceeded to vote by written ballot. The Council members distributed ballots to all members present and collected them to be counted when completed. The ballots were counted in the Narthex while Althea provided music.

There were 75 votes cast, 93% of which were in favor of the motion. The motion to call Rev. Lacey Hunter as our Associate Minister of Faith Formation passed. As a runner went to fetch Lacey, Sharon, Rachel and Marin, Althea invited the congregation to sing a hymn. When Lacey enters, she and Sharon, join Rev. Benjamin and Mike on the chancel.

Mike informs Lacey that our congregation has voted to call her as our Associate Minister of Faith Formation and welcomes her into our fellowship. He asks Lacey to share some words with the congregation. She enthusiastically shares her joy and deep excitement to join our fellowship.

Rev. Benjamin offers a blessing.

M/S/P Kathy Bell/Marian McDonald to adjourn the meeting and gather in the courtyard for a reception.

Meeting was adjourned.

**LEAD MINISTER  
2019 REPORT**

---

Rev. Dr. Benjamin J. Broadbent

“We went through fire and through water;  
yet you, O God, have brought us out to a spacious place.”  
– Psalm 66:12

The week before the Kincade Fire caused evacuation in droves from Sonoma County, I heard this verse while on retreat in Inverness. Fires and floods now appear to be annual occurrences that disrupt lives, destroy property, and deteriorate our collective sense of safety and well-being. And yet, God remains faithful, providing the community of the church, the testimony of our ancestors in the faith, and the assurance of Christ’s abiding love even when the air is thick with smoke. While local, national, and global disasters command our attention and, as a selection in our hymnal puts it, “cause us to withdraw in pain,” a survey of the past year reveals God’s faithfulness refracted throughout the life of our congregation.

**January** – We gathered for lunch and our annual meeting in Memorial Hall, approved a bold-yet-balanced budget, and Nancy Shimetz handed the moderator’s gavel to Michael Ott. That same day, 11 new members joined the church and we launched our search for new Associate Minister.

**February** – Rev. Rachel Knuth took a month-long sabbatical to mark her transition from ministry with Children & Families to Congregational Care.

**March** – The season of Lent began on Ash Wednesday. People of all ages gathered for a service in the sanctuary that included the imposition of ashes and the words, “Child of God, remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

**April** – As Easter drew near, we finished a special adult education series based on the poetry of Mary Oliver, who died earlier in the year. We read her poetry throughout Holy Week, beginning with “The Poet Thinks about the Donkey” on Palm Sunday. On Easter, we relished the words, “Every morning the world is created.”

**May** – 38 church members participated in a Leadership Retreat at the home of Denelle Tognozzi. We focused on 3 R’s: getting clear about the ROLES we play and how best to collaborate with others; learning to use REALM, our church’s online database and communication tool; sharing strategies for RECRUITING others into important and life-giving ministries of the church.

**June** – As summer began, community activities were abundant: a Middle School Service and Learning Together (SALT) Trip to community gardens in the East Bay; the Annual Gathering of the Northern California Nevada Conference at Sonoma State, attended by Laura Pearsall; Vacation Bible School, led by Julie Reimer, Children’s Ministry Coordinator; High School SALT Trip to the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota; Adult Mission Trip to Lake County. Meanwhile, 13 new members joined on June 23.

**July** – As we bid farewell to Emily Syal, our Youth Ministry Coordinator, many of our young people attended programs at Camp Cazadero and many of our adults served on camp staffs. I was the Chaplain at Junior High Camp and had one of my best camp

experiences ever. The Search Committee, chaired by Kristen DelMonte, following six months of focused work, and trusting the Holy Spirit, decided to recommend that the congregation call Rev. Lacey Hunter to the position of Associate Minister of Faith Formation.

**August** – Following a vote at a special meeting of the congregation on August 11, Pastor Lacey began her ministry among us and experienced her first Apple Pie Fundraiser and Family Camp.

**September** – On Launch Sunday, September 8, we enjoyed a wonderful Committee Fair with lunch provided by Birgit Quezada. The Confirmation program for 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Graders began with a retreat at the Russian River cabin of Julie and Russ Reimer.

**October** – We kicked off our 2020 Pledge Drive with the theme “Finding the Way.” Attempting to do something unprecedented in the life of our church – fund 2.5 ministry positions - our goals were 150 pledges totaling \$375,000 toward local ministry and \$39,000 toward wider mission. See the proposed 2020 budget in this report to see how close we got!

**November** – This month I celebrated my 47<sup>th</sup> birthday and 20 years of Ordained Ministry. 9 New Members joined in worship on November 10, and another 6 on November 24. That day, I felt blessed to be a minister and father on Confirmation Sunday which included my son, Marin, and 6 other amazing young people.

**December** – Pastor Lacey and the Children’s Faith Formation Action Team coordinated a lovely Advent workshop. Pastor Rachel led a “Longest Night” service on the solstice. Christmas Eve services were well attended and beautifully prepared, including a “Pick-Up Pageant” in which anyone could participate. Rev. Brian Plaugher preached on “Jesus the Refugee” the First Sunday after Christmas.

Through fire and water, God has remained faithful. God has remained faithful in the music ministry of Barbara Wilson, Choir Director from 1963 – 1998, who died this past September. God has remained faithful in the ministry of Gail Thomas who, after 34 years, is stepping down from her roles as Flower Team Coordinator and Adult Education Committee Chair.

And God remains faithful still, in the lives of 39 new members who joined in the past year; in the ministry of Pastor Lacey, who brings new skills and fresh perspectives to our community; and in the myriad ways this congregation fulfills its mission to teach the message of Jesus to all ages, putting our faith into action. Truly, God, you have brought us out into a spacious and abundant place.

### **ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF FAITH FORMATION 2019 REPORT**

---

Rev. Lacey Hunter

Dear Beloveds, what a joy it is to be called as Community Church’s first full-time Associate Minister of Faith Formation. I am grateful for the Leadership Council, Search Committee, Faith Formation Ministry Teams, staff, and all those who committed their time,

prayers and energy to imagining the possibilities of this position. And I am grateful to the congregation for calling me to this role in August.

Taking on the call to serve in a new congregation is in many ways a spiritual practice. I am reminded particularly of the Christian practice of *Lectio Divina*, where one encounters scripture through repetitive reading, deep listening and meditation, prayer, and contemplative action. Similarly, journeying alongside a new community is an invitation to receive and deeply listen to the stories, traditions, hopes, and visions of the gathered people and wonder together what all of this says about who we are, how we are being formed as disciples of Christ, and what we are called to live into.

My first four months with Community Church have been filled with stories of gratitude for those who have nurtured and sustained such programs as Godly Play, Mission Trips, and Outdoor Ministries. In my first three weeks I had the privilege of coring apples at the Apple Pie Weekend Fundraiser, as well as gathering in the redwoods for prayer, play, and communion during our Annual Family Camp. In the Fall we celebrated Launch Sunday and our Faith Formation ministries took off. These ministries have included:

- Weekly Sunday morning Faith Formation Hour – Nursery care, Godly Play gatherings for grades K-5, Middle School Youth Group for 6-8, and Adult Bible Study.
- Confirmation for grades 9-10, led by Pastor Benjamin and myself, met for 10 weeks + 2 overnight retreats and culminated in a service of Blessing and Confirmation in worship on November 24. In addition to Confirmation, High School Youth Group, led by Julie and Russ Reimer and myself, met once a month for dinner and community building.
- Our Whole Lives: Faith and Our Sexuality (OWL) for grades 5-6, led by Brooke Bell and Pete Emerson, met for 10 weeks and culminated in an OWL Blessing in worship on November 17. I led two additional OWL sessions for Parents and Caregivers of participants.
- Bless This Mess, a community building and conversation group for Parents/Caregivers/Grandparents, led by Pastor Benjamin and Pastor Rachel, met through the month of October. Lay Leaders Daniela Kingwill, Nicole Whitehorn, and Jamie Malone continued leading the group during the month of November.
- A special service in honor of Transgender Day of Remembrance was held on November 20.
- With the season of Advent came even greater opportunities to creatively explore the power and possibilities of multigenerational faith formation ministries at Community Church.
- We begin with the Advent Workshop on December 1, led by ChilFFAT. Here different ministry teams, including the Middle School Youth Group, Men's Group, Women's Bible Study, and Mission and Outreach participated, each hosting a table for the different Advent wreath themes (Hope, Peace, Joy,

Love, and Christ the Light). People of all ages moved about the room, creating a take-home Advent wreath kit that included weekly prayers, spiritual practices, and candles.

- Children's Worship gathered for three Sundays, led by Rev. Blythe Osner, Jon and Jonah Gonzales, Chloe Madden, and myself. Here we explored the meaning of the carol, "Joy to the World," through movement, art, and meditation.
- On December 8, with the help of Kristen DelMonte and Stuart Mitchell, I led the annual Advent Spiral, a simple, multigenerational, candlelit service and walking meditation.
- Throughout December 20+ children and youth gathered with me in the sanctuary after worship for Christmas Pageant Rehearsal. Dorothy McKoin taught all of the children and youth various Christmas carols on the chimes. Paula Berndt, Terri Harper, and Sheina Curtis helped participants make costumes and learn the story of Christmas.
- On Christmas Eve we held our first "pick-up pageant," where everyone gathered was invited to become part of the telling of the Christmas story. Children and Youth led the service, and with the guidance of Dorothy, youth leaders, including Sophia Broadbent-Bell, Elia DelMonte, and Eliana Curtis, directed the Children's Chime Ensemble.

As we look now to a new year together, I am excited about the ways these ministries will continue to deepen and grow. Middle School and High School Youth groups will be traveling to camps this winter and summer, as well as committing their time and energy to justice work through mission trips in May and August. A new Our Whole Lives (OWL) Ministry Team is being formed, led by Brooke Bell, and looking to offer OWL for grades K-1, 8-9, as well as lay a foundation to begin offering OWL for Adults. In mid-June we will be hosting our annual vacation bible school, this year with an emphasis on Faith in Action—developing spiritual practices and skills for creative imagining to build a just world. I am also eager to hear from the community, what directions we want to see our Adult Faith Formation go in, and to begin experimenting in speaker series, study groups, and justice-filled action.

As with a scripture passage in *Lectio Divina*, each of these ministries is an opportunity to encounter again and again, the layers of God's unfolding presence in our midst. I look forward to continuing this prayer with you.

in communion,  
Pastor Lacey

## ASSOCIATE MINISTER OF CONGREGATIONAL CARE 2019 REPORT

Rev. Rachel Knuth

---

It has been my deep joy to offer leadership and care as Associate Minister of Congregational Care, from March-December 2019. My role has mainly involved bringing attention, intention, and organization to our congregation's care ministries. I have been blessed to hold the hands of the lonely, to be a trusted support in times of grief and sorrow, and to pray alongside the people of our church.

Offered leadership and support to *individual members* of the church:

- Pastoral Care & Counseling
- Visits to homebound members
- Visits to ill and hospitalized members
- Delivery of prayer shawls
- Delivery of sanctuary flowers (weekly)
- Officiated memorial services and graveside services

Offered leadership and support to *ministries* of the church:

- Visitation Ministry
- Prayer Shawl Ministry
- Kindred Groups (reboot!)
- Nine-to-Dine Program (new)
- Women's Fellowship Card-Writing Ministry
- Confirmation Mentoring Program
- Attended Leadership Council meetings
- Connected with Council Member for Care & Fellowship

Offered leadership and support to the *worshiping life* of the church:

- Prayers of the People (weekly)
- Printed Prayer Concerns (weekly)
- Preaching (monthly-ish)
- Good Friday Cemetery Walk
- Good Friday Ecumenical Service
- The Longest Night Worship Service
- Collaboration and camaraderie with clergy colleagues

Connected with our church's Association and Conference:

- Attended Golden Gate Association Meeting
- Participated in Clergy Review with the NCNC
- Updated Letter of Call
- Hosted a meeting of the Leadership Council of the NCNC at our church

Connected with our Sebastopol & Sonoma County community:

- Attended Interfaith Day of Peace at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
- Attended Pride Parade

Continuing Education:

- Attended Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged for Mental Health (WISE) workshop, hosted by our church's Northern California-Nevada Conference (NCNC), to learn more about mental health resources and supporting the mental health of parishioners and congregations. The NCNC voted to become a WISE Conference at their annual meeting in June this year
- Attended Wild Goose Festival in North Carolina, a 3-day ecumenical campout for progressive Christian leaders. Attended workshops and heard speakers, including Brian McLaren, Nadia Bolz-Weber, William Barber, and Otis Moss III
- Attended Wisdom of the Heart Advent Retreat

## *MODERATOR*

### *2019 REPORT*

---

*Michael Ott, Moderator*

2019 was a wonderful year for our church! It has been an honor and blessing to serve our congregation as Moderator in 2019 and I look forward to another fulfilling and blessed year in 2020. I wrote in my first Balcony View article in February that the Leadership Council and I were extremely optimistic for 2019 and beyond. Turns out our optimism was exceeded by events. A major emphasis for the Leadership Council this year was strengthening our culture of volunteerism. Volunteers are critical to our church's ministry and the volunteers served in so many meaningful, faith-filled ways in 2019! Much of our spring leadership retreat was spent on the topic of recruiting – helping potential future volunteers to say “yes” to ministry programs they care about and are uniquely called to fulfill.

Pastor Rachel expanded and strengthened our Pastoral Care ministries with increased homebound visits, prayer opportunities, and fun social initiatives like Nine to Dine and the revamped Kindred Groups. Mission and Outreach continued to involve the congregation in all sorts of passionate ministry within our church and in our community. We introduced Realm to the church and congregation – the exciting new database system that facilitated increased communication through easy access to member profiles, groups and resources as well as directory modernization and real time financial information.

Facilities seemed to work around the clock maintaining and improving our campus buildings and grounds. The big event of course was the Sanctuary beam repair project that proceeded and was completed without any problems.

The Leadership Council developed and implemented a formal partnership between each Leadership Council member and their related Staff Team member to facilitate effective collaboration and communication in governance and ministry functions.

The Leadership Council and the Gratitude + Generosity team led a successful pledge campaign this fall, trusting in Jesus showing us the way and trusting that “our future is secure – and already underway.”

I have saved the best for last. In August the congregation held a special meeting to call Rev. Lacey Hunter as our church's Associate Minister of Faith Formation. We welcomed Pastor Lacey and her partner Sharon and have been blessed by the gifts they have bestowed upon us. Pastor Lacey has already uplifted and expanded faith formation opportunities for all ages and I don't believe we have seen anything yet – just wait for all of 2020's faith formation offerings!

My hope for 2020, our 130th year as a congregation, is that all of us embrace our opportunity to participate fully in every aspect of our church's life and ministry, sharing in worship, fellowship, membership, and leadership.

### **FACILITIES RESOURCE AREA 2019 REPORT**

---

*Larry Stallings, Council Officer for Facilities (Vice Moderator)*

The integration and mutual support of the three facility teams continues to be an annual highlight. For large events such as spreading mulch they extend an invitation to the church community. They have had more than 30 volunteers for these labor demanding projects. The teams continually find themselves in a position to conduct repairs, dispose of dumped items, and maintain the green space without contractor costs. These teams delight in serving the church community and avoiding costs. One of the primary tasks in 2020 will be to assess our roofs and make recommendations to the Leadership Council. We also want to increase our green footprint by expanding recycling to the many groups who use our facilities. Please look around Memorial Hall and you will notice it has been painted. The Facilities Team plans to paint Fellowship Hall in 2020. We want Community Church to be a first choice for space to rent in our community. If any member wants to join one of the Facility Teams please let them know. They will gladly explain their process and invite you to one of their meetings to observe the team planning projects.

***Facilities Committee – Judy Peterson, Facilities Chairperson***

***2019 Members – Jane Huneke, Kim Buckman, Larry Stallings, Roger Wilson, Tom Terry***

The Facilities Committee's challenge this year was to tend to an aging church campus and many years of deferred maintenance. We were fortunate to have members of our committee who have the knowledge and skills to perform a multitude of handyman repairs that normally would have been done by a professional service.

Our team has cleaned gutters, repaired a broken fountain, repaired doors and latches, performed weekly landscaping duties including mulching and removing a very large tree that had fallen in the Danmar Parking Lot.

We had new flooring installed in the media room and brides room bathroom, repaired and painted benches in the courtyard, removed and disposed of all old and broken tables and chairs in Memorial Hall, repaired the preschool shed, removed and replaced



toilets and stalls in Memorial Hall bathrooms in preparation of new flooring and painted the Memorial Hall gymnasium.

The biggest project was planning and overseeing termite damage and dry rot damage to the Sanctuary roof deck.

These are only a few of the many things the Facilities Committee has done this year. We are very proud of our accomplishments and we are looking forward to another productive year.

***Health and Safety Team – Marian McDonald, Chair***

***2019 Members – Marian McDonald, Stuart Mitchell, Irma Bachelor***

Health and Safety Team began in November 2017 after use of our facilities as an emergency shelter following the fires of 2017 and an active shooter incident at a church in Texas. We are completing our second full year. We currently have 3 members – Marian McDonald and Stuart Mitchell are co-chairs and Larry Stallings is our Council member. We would welcome another person with interest.

**Projects completed in 2019**

- Safety Coordinator duties have been added to the job description for the Congregational Administrator.
- Locks on main sanctuary doors and other doors allow locking from inside without a key.
- We did an Evacuation drill with sanctuary emptied in less than 2 minutes
- We have a bullhorn for communication in emergency and used it during the evacuation drill.
- Fire extinguishers and signage are in place.
- FRS radios ("Walkie-talkies") are in routine use by staff.
- Ladder Safety process has been implemented.
- Tent for preparation of Thanksgiving dinner now has written permission to block the fire lane.
- Campus signage is now completed.

**Projects partially completed**

- We have three major procedures in draft form, in process of development -
  - Emergency on-site, with and without congregation present
  - Use of facilities as shelter in community emergency
  - Active shooter plan
- Sebastopol Emergency Plan – we are an active church participant. A Map Your Neighborhood class was given here. Marian is active participant in development of the Sebastopol Plan.
- Police support in unclear situation – we proposed communication via hand signals – "Phone – YOU!" We need to verify that several folks would know the meaning and be prepared to respond.
- Combustible load – many cubic yards have been cleared off-site. This is an ongoing project.

- Utility shutoff locations and been documented and are available to staff. We need to verify if they are readily available in emergency.
- A second AED is being ordered for placement in Memorial Hall.
- We have obtained loud air horns for communication in emergency and have devised signals to communicate action needed. We have not yet placed the air horns nor posted the signals next to them. **Number of blasts equals the number of words** in the direction.
  - ONE blast: EVACUATE!
  - TWO blasts: All Clear
  - THREE blasts: Shelter in Place.
- First Aid kits are in place in 3 locations. We do not yet have a solid system for re-stocking them.

#### Projects in process

- We need to define the process for Implementation and accountability of safety procedures.
  - We would like to have a written process for implementation and accountability.
  - We developed a standard for First Aid providers for off-site activities but it was not implemented in 2019.
- We want to address safety for contract users of premises – perhaps by a poster in the rooms.

*Grounds Team – Larry Stallings, Leadership Council Officer for Facilities*

*2019 Members – Bob Holland, Larry Stallings, Garth Watson, Roger Wilson*

We started composting at the beginning of 2019 resulting in over 172 cubic yards of green material being removed from the perimeter of our church property. Composting containers and pickup is a free service. We have removed the heavy overgrowth of trees and shrubs and will trim in 2020 to maintain a safer environment in case of a wildfire. We will maintain the rose garden and our courtyard, cut and trim grass and remove dead fall. In early 2020 we will top trees to ensure proper growth. Periodically, area residents use our property as a dumping site requiring us to dispose of junk and abandoned property. We hosted two mulching parties in 2019. Our new green effort in 2020 is to expand our recycling efforts.

### **PERSONNEL RESOURCE AREA**

#### **2019 REPORT**

---

*Kathy Bell, Council Officer for Personnel (Secretary)*

We welcomed a new Associate Pastor to our family in August this year – Welcome Pastor Lacey! Lacey assumes her role as Associate Pastor of Faith Formation. Her role will focus on all things Faith Formation; children's ministry, youth groups, adult education etc. Pastor Rachel has shifted her role to Congregational Care. We are so grateful to have these strong women of faith supporting our community!

***Personnel Committee – Marge Holland, Personnel Committee Chair***

*2019 Members – Marge Holland, Gary Bachelor, Becky Wessling, Chris Jenkins, Chris Chang Weeks*

This year we updated the Employee Handbook. We made minor changes to reflect actual practices.

Performance reviews were completed on all non-clergy staff.

Exit interviews were performed with Emily Sayel and Jennifer Halleck.

On-line harassment prevention training was implemented per California law.

Jennifer Halleck, our bookkeeper, resigned effective December 1<sup>st</sup>. The position was posted. Julie Reimer was interviewed and hired as the new Bookkeeper.

***Pastor-Parish Relations Teams-2019 Members:***

*Pastor Ben's team; Caitie Carciere (chair), Steve Beck, Gail Thomas, Jim Jenkins, Chris Chang Weeks and Ava Whitehorn*

*Pastor Rachel's Team; Joanne Matson (chair), Lois Michaelson, Pete Emerson, Sohni Yaylian, and Beth Larssen*

*Pastor Lacey will be working on creating her team this year.*

Each of our pastors is supported by a 6-person Pastor-Parish Relations Team. The purpose of the groups is to foster clear and direct communication and to encourage healthy relationships between the pastors and the congregations.

***Nominating Committee – Nancy Shimetz, Chair***

*2019 Members – Patty Raney, Judy Rice, Nancy Shimetz, Norma Watson, Roger Wilson*

We began meeting monthly in May to discuss the core values for selecting and evaluating potential candidates and from this a guideline was created. This document was presented at the November meeting of the Leadership Council for their information.

In 2020 we will begin meeting in February to plan ahead and work on the possibility of doing some leadership training.

This committee is charged with filling vacancies on the Leadership Council and Nominating Committee. As shown below, there were four council positions to be filled, and one on the Nominating Committee as Patty Raney asked to be replaced.

Nominations to be voted on are as follows, all with two-year terms ending in 2022:

- (To be determined) Council Member for Faith Formation – 1<sup>st</sup> term
- John Henel, Council Officer for Finances (Treasurer) – 2<sup>nd</sup> term

- Kathy Bell, Council Officer for Personnel (Secretay) – 2<sup>nd</sup> term
- Bobbie Johanson, Council Member for Care & Fellowship – 2<sup>nd</sup> term
- Brooke Bell, Nominating Committee member – 1<sup>st</sup> term

## **WORSHIP & ARTS MINISTRY AREA**

### **2019 REPORT**

---

*Linda Roa, Council Member for Worship & Arts*

The Worship and Arts Ministry area includes committees, teams and volunteers who coordinate worship, music and other “behind the scenes” areas at Community Church. As you will see, it involves many different aspects in putting together Sunday worship.

The worship life of our congregation involves and requires many volunteers. We invite church members to deepen their spiritual journey by serving as ushers, greeters, communion servers, liturgists, flower arrangers, and more. Additionally, both the Chancel Choir and Handbell Ensemble always welcome new participants.

#### ***Worship Planning Team – Rev. Benjamin Broadbent, Lead Minister***

This team meets quarterly to do mid-range planning of our Sunday morning worship. The team consists of the Lead Minister, Associate Minister of Faith Formation, Associate of Minister of Congregational Care, Minister of Music/Chancel Choir Director, Keyboardist, Handbell Director, Liturgist Coordinator, Communion Coordinator, Chancel Décor Coordinator, Flower Team Chair, and the Council Member for Music & Arts. The Team met on January 24 to plan the seasons of Lent and Easter; on May 9 to plan summer worship; on August 29 to plan fall worship; and on October 24 to plan the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany.

#### ***Liturgist Program – Judy Rice, Liturgist Coordinator***

As part of putting our Faith into Action, we encourage anyone who’s interested to help lead our worship service by serving as a liturgist. Members of all ages have contributed their talents this past year and we look forward to seeing new faces and hearing new voices during 2020. It’s easy, it’s fun and – most important – it’s meaningful. Please join us this coming year. We’ll support you and provide coaching if you like. We promise you’ll enjoy the experience

#### ***Flower Team - Gail Thomas, Flower Team Chair***

***2019 Members – Garth Watson, Marie Cotton, Barbara Wilson, Mary Lou Lennox, Kathy Matthies, Emily Davis, Muriel Weaver and Gail Thomas***

The Flower Team has continued to be privileged to bring flowers to enhance the Sunday Morning worship. Flowers in the chancel, the entry, the bathrooms, and sometimes

other locations are provided by a dedicated group of volunteers: Sadly, Barbara Wilson's health prevented her participation and we grieved her death in October. She had been a faithful flower person for over 30 years.

On occasion we have provided flowers for memorial services or weddings which are left for Sunday morning. Likewise, we have also welcomed opportunities to provide special flowers for you if you to remember an anniversary or special occasion. For the second year, in 2019, we have had a flower sponsor calendar in the church office and have been pleased to have a growing number of sponsored Sundays. The flower requests have been honored by the flower person assigned to that Sunday. Contributions to the flower fund either by sponsoring a Sunday on the calendar or by making a general contribution are always appreciated and welcome.

The Christmas wreaths and decorations come from Rodolfo Onofre. He and his crew continue to create the large chancel wreaths, garlands, and other decorations as requested. 2019 is our last year of doing this together and our efforts to decorate the sanctuary with live greens have continued for over 20 years with Rodolfo, his wife Zenaida, and assorted helpers. It began with the employees of Pooh Corner Farm but has continued after we sold the farm with the same crew of people. Creating the live greens in garlands and wreaths is a great effort and I personally appreciate the loving devotion of Rodolfo and crew over the years.

This will be my last year of flower coordination. In the almost 35 years it has been a great joy to serve our church in this way. I want to Thank all the Flower Team members who participated this year and note that new Team members are always welcome and anyone interested in participating should contact the church office.

***Worship Support Team – Sohni Yaylian, Worship Support Team Coordinator***  
*2019 Members - Kathy Bell, Bobbie Johanson, Kathy Matthies, Joanne Matson, (Communion), Tom Terry, and Sohni Yaylian*

The Worship Support Team (WST), formerly the Diaconate Board, is responsible for supporting Sunday worship by scheduling ushers and greeters, preparing for communion and subsequent clean up. The members also help to resolve any issues that might arise in connection with worship services throughout the year.

In 2019, the Worship Support Team (WST) focused on encouraging church members to usher or greet during Sunday services, updating a roster of willing volunteers, maintaining a schedule of head ushers, and making sure that Sunday mornings ran smoothly. All members regularly served as head usher, and additionally often filled in where needed. A new position, Usher Coordinator, was developed to serve as a liaison between ushers, pastors, and the office. Towards the end of the year, the Usher Coordinator worked with Pastor Rachel (Minister of Congregational Care) to schedule Kindred Groups to serve as ushers twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. This has so far been quite

successful and we hope will help church members to familiarize themselves with what happens "behind the scenes" on Sunday.

*Music Ministry – Rev. Brian Plaugher, Minister of Music*

But we, with our dreaming and singing,  
Ceaseless and sorrowless we!  
The glory about us clinging  
Of the glorious futures we see,  
Our souls with high music ringing:  
O men! It must ever be  
That we dwell, in our dreaming and singing,  
A little apart from ye.  
—Arthur O'Shaughnessey

At The Community Church we very often hear high music ringing! In our gatherings for worship it is a rare time indeed that singing or instrumental music—or both—are not a part of our time altogether.

We continued as we have in the recent past, with Brian Plaugher as Minister of Music, directing the Chancel Choir and coordinating our music program. Karna Roa continued to lead the Handbell Choir, and J. Althea maintained her music ministry at the keyboard, with occasional help from Judy Kinsey on the organ.

Our worship celebrations continued to benefit from the contributions of all our musical groups. The faithful offerings of the Handbell Choir, other instrumentalist musicians and our vocal choirs all contributed their gifts to Sunday mornings and special worship occasions. We continued to hear occasionally from our jazz ensemble, usually New Orleans style. Additional wind instruments in groups also added to our worship experience. Guitars and smaller strings shared at a sunrise Easter service and other more casual settings. We've had a number of diverse small vocal ensembles share during the regular worship year. As usual, summer also featured a variety of smaller ensembles. Also as usual, we had more volunteers than we had Sundays during the summer.

Our diverse music program really benefits from the feedback you can provide. If you want to hear a particular piece of music or particular kind of music please let me know. And if you are interested in knowing more about any of our different musical groups please let me know that too. May we continue with our dreaming and our singing, and to make music in all our various ways.

*Sanctuary Décor Team – Kathy Matthies, Team Chair*

2019 was a simple year of Sanctuary Décor. With the addition of a new Associate Minister, beautifying the sanctuary has become a collaborative effort to enhance the

sanctuary following the UCC liturgy. We look forward to increasing our banner art, displaying more church members' artwork and spiritual expression through liturgical art in 2020. Joanne Matson continues to care for the communion altar décor and we thank her for that care. Sharon Fennema graciously helped and has lent her expertise of worship décor to this year's season of advent. A goal for 2020 is to increase the participation of other artisans, seamstresses and volunteers.

***Communion Ministry – Joanne Matson, Communion Coordinator***

It is our custom at Community Church to celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month. We continued in this tradition with a few exceptions. We celebrated Communion weekly during the season of Lent and once on Maundy Thursday evening. We commune by intinction, tearing bread and dipping into a chalice of white juice – we use white juice so as not to stain clothes or the floor.

Thank you to the many adults and youth who agreed to serve communion in 2019. Many of you have commented how meaningful it has been to offer the bread and the cup to your fellow worshipers.

***“Church Mouse” Ministry – Pastor Benjamin, Lead Minister***

This ministry goes largely unnoticed as each week a volunteer spends several hours in the sanctuary straightening Bibles and hymnals, replenishing offering envelopes and prayer request cards, sharpening pencils and generally cleaning up the pews. Jane Austin served as our “Church Mouse” for the first part of this year and described the work as a spiritual practice of caring for the community and spending time with God.

In the fall, Joan Martin joyfully accepted the role. Together with her husband, Fred, in a very organized fashion, they diligently and faithfully replenish and tidy up the pews each week. They have also been using tweezers to extract years of items that have accrued in the communion cup holes, everything from gum wrappers to paper clips and more.

We are grateful to those who carry on this important work behind the scenes for the benefit of us all.

***FAITH FORMATION MINISTRY AREA  
2019 REPORT***

---

*Linda Inman, Council Member for Faith Formation*

Faith Formation in 2019 experienced exciting growth and transformation. A variety of offerings resonated with adults. Godly Play and the OWL program were strong and well-attended. OWL being so vital, the program will grow even further in 2020 as a full-fledged team outside of Children's Faith Formation. Confirmation class this year was full of highlights and inspiration. The middle school and high school youth groups are on solid footing.

The search and call of our new Associate Minister for Faith Formation was, and continues to be, transformational. Pastor Lacey's presence provides the root system for these programs to continue to grow and thrive.

The Faith Formation team leaders and coordinators share their thoughts on the year in the section below. I hope you will join me in thanking them for their dedicated service and commitment to providing opportunities for faith formation in the multitude of ways that manifests for each of us.

The year ahead is full of promise for this community of *faith* and *action*.

### ***Adult Education – Gail Thomas, Coordinator***

The Adult Education program has been a loose organization of individuals dedicated to various activities supporting Christian Adult Education.

The overall program this year has included a Sunday morning Bible Study class, several different Bible Studies, the Lenten Faith Journey program, and a number of activities by other individuals providing diverse activities such as a Men's Retreat, Men's Bible Study, Women's Retreat, and Lenten and Advent Study by Pastor Ben. Pastor Ben also presented a program on the Gnostics during one Sunday Bible Study hour.

This year the Sunday morning program again studied the Bible passage(s) being used in the worship service and then hearing the sermon.

In 2019, the "Faith Journeys" and "Soup Suppers" during Lent were well attended and featured some of our newer members, some of our long-term members, and each with a very different approach to a faith journey. Again, I encourage people to attend for a very special way to get to know your fellow members of our church.

### ***Children's Faith Formation Team (ChilFFAT) – Brooke Bell, Chair***

***2019 Members – Brooke Bell, Sheina Curtis, Paula Berndt, Kristen DelMonte, Terri Harper, Matthew Melone***

- Godly Play, an ongoing program for K-5th graders during the Faith Formation hour, experienced a significant increase in average attendance. Additionally, our teachers attended a training by expert Diane Pagel.
- With Director of Children's Ministry, Julie Reimer, offered a multigenerational Lenten Workshop for the first time.
- With Julie Reimer, supported Vacation Bible school in June, which focused on helping our neighbor in the spirit of the Good Samaritan.
- Said goodbye to Julie Reimer and welcomed Pastor Lacey Hunter as staff liaison.
- Offered Our Whole Lives: Sexuality and our Faith (OWL) for 5th and 6th graders. Co-facilitators Brooke Bell and Pete Emerson worked with 17 participants while Pastor Lacey offered a parent class.
- With Pastor Lacey, co-created the annual Advent Spiral and the Advent



Workshop which, this year, welcomed various church groups to offer leadership at Advent stations.

- With Pastor Lacey, co-created a pick-up style Christmas Eve pageant that welcomed participation of people of ALL ages and included children playing chimes.

***Youth Ministry Team (YMT) – Russ Reimer, Chair***

*2019 Members –Gary Bachelor, Kathy Bell, Michelle Brueggemann, Patty Foster, Keenan Foster, Beth Larssen, Debbie McCallum, Stuart Mitchell, Luis Quezada, Julie Reimer, Russ Reimer*

2019 was an exciting year for the YMT! Our primary goals were to support the middle/high school youth groups and assist with the transition to a new, full time Faith Formation Pastor.

Early in the year, under the leadership of Emily Sayl, we assisted with two fundraisers. The middle/high school youth groups delivered a “Dinner and a Movie” event and led a “Pie Auction” for the greater congregation. These fundraisers helped fund the two mission trips.

For the middle school mission trip, the YMT provided support with adult supervision. That trip focused on affordable food access in the Bay Area. We also had YMT adult representation on the high school mission trip a South Dakota Native American reservation.

Moving into the fall, the YMT sponsored a trip to the Flynn Creek Circus for both youth groups. That certainly energized youth participation for the new school year! In support of Pastor Lacey, our team provided adult volunteers to augment the middle high faith formation class. We also sponsored multiple high school youth activities to include a movie night, a Scandia outing and a Cornhole tournament.

Moving into 2020, the YMT hopes to expand our volunteer pool in order to further support our outstanding youth. Please contact Pastor Lacey if you’d like to join the team.

***Women’s Bible Study – Joanne Matson, Facilitator***

Women’s Bible Study meets on Wednesdays from 10:00 to 11:30 in the Fireside room. Our general study includes both the Old and the New Testament, the extra canonical books and pertinent resource material from scripture scholars, theologians and pastoral commentaries.

We study historical context, cultural background and political settings, attentive to how the original audience heard and understood the Word. Through our study, sharing, and discussion we continually find new meaning in Scripture enabling us to apply it to contemporary issues and our individual lives.

The focus of our Winter-Spring 2019 Bible Study was Theodicy, the problem of God, Pain and suffering. In addition to scripture, we studied Barbara Brown Taylor’s book, “God In Pain.”

During the Fall session, we considered the Sermon on the Mount, giving emphasis to the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer.

### **CARE & FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY AREA 2019 REPORT**

---

*Bobbie Johanson, Council Member for Care and Fellowship Ministry Area*

2019 was a good year with strong programs and activities to build relationships within our congregation. Both men and women had active fellowship groups and retreats. Our Kindred Groups were reorganized and energized with new "apple" appellations, thanks to hard work by Pastor Rachel and volunteer leaders. Another new program, Nine to Dine, was launched by Pastor Rachel for members to gather for potluck dinners in small groups for making new acquaintances.

Prayer shawls were knitted and crocheted and distributed to folks needing a tangible expression of caring. Visits were made to members who can no longer make it to church. Apple pies were baked and sold to support our kid camperships and Family Camp at Camp Caz.

We did not have a Church picnic but we could this coming year if folks want to come forward to help organize it or perhaps an intergenerational baseball game. Do you have other ideas that might be fun or interesting? Let me know and we can look into new ways to help make connections among our flock.

**Visitation Ministry** – Joanne Matson, Coordinator

*2019 Members – Judy Davison, Lori Lapham, Joanne Matson, Stuart Mitchell, Sharon Olsen, Muriel Weaver*

The Visitation Ministry is part of the Care and Fellowship mission of our Church Community. We have 5 active members who visit homebound Church members as well as those who are in long term care or assisted living. With both physical visits and phone visits and cards of concern, the ministry strives to keep in touch with members who are no longer able to come to Worship.

Pastor Rachel oversees the ministry, providing guidance and helping the "visitors" deal with various issues of concern. It is the goal of Visitation Ministry to connect with all homebound members of our community.

The Visitation Ministry partners with the Prayer Shawl Ministry to provide comfort shawls, ("portable sanctuaries") to the homebound connecting them to the life of the community.

#### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

*The Visitation Ministry attends to the emotional, social and spiritual care of our ill or homebound church members, helping them remain connected to the Community through periodic visits, phone calls, bringing their prayer requests to worship. The Ministry will*

*coordinate with the pastors, women's fellowship and community church members to assure that no member is left out.*

***Women's Fellowship – Chris Jenkins, Coordinator***

All women of the church are an innate part of Women's Fellowship and are invited to participate in any Fellowship activity. Women's Fellowship has been an integral part of the Community Church since our church was first established in Sebastopol in 1889. The group began as the "Ladies Aid Society" and was formed "for the purpose of giving aid to the Congregational Society, combining our efforts to give both spiritual and financial aid". Our group continues to develop and change in order to best serve the women of the church. Our focus is to continue to promote fellowship and service. We welcome new ideas for activities or future fundraisers. We are using money earned from our previous fundraisers to support our Care Card Ministry and our Prayer Shawl ministry.

We are in the process of organizing the church's historical records, photographs and other ephemera. Storage of these historical archives will be in the Women's Fellowship Office.

***Prayer Shawl Ministry – Joanne Matson, Coordinator***

The Prayer Shawl Ministry was formed in order to create comfort shawls, "portable Sanctuaries," for those in our parish family who are in need of strength and comfort during times of illness and isolation from the community. With the gift of a shawl, one is reminded that she/he is connected and remembered.

Members of this ministry gather in the fireside room on the third Monday of each month to knit and crochet together, while sharing fellowship and prayer. Once given, the shawls are a visible expression of prayer and remembrance.

***Women's Retreat – Joyce Cox and Jane Huneke, Coordinators***

***2019 Members – Joyce Cox, Jane Huneke, Joanne Feige, Marge Holland, Chris Jenkins, Bobbie Johanson, and Gail Thomas***

The 39th Annual Women's Retreat was held January 18-20, 2019, among the towering redwoods at Westminster Woods. We enjoyed a fun dinner at the Union Hotel in Occidental before kicking off the retreat, which was led by Sheila Denton, Spiritual Director. Time was spent in small groups and silent meditation contemplating the theme Presence: Tending to What's Real. Music and laughter peppered the weekend. Free time was spent hiking in the forest, doing art projects, playing games, resting and growing in fellowship with one another.

Next year's retreat is in the planning process. It will be held March 20-22, 2020, at Bishop's Ranch in Healdsburg, led by our new pastor Lacey Hunter and her partner Sheila Fennema.

Our retreats are paid for by our own fundraising efforts and registration fees. We sell See's candy at Easter and Christmas and Christmas wreaths in December. We raise enough to offer scholarships, pay for our retreat leadership and subsidize everyone's fees a bit. All

women are invited to share in these spiritually based, fellowship-building weekends. Saturday only participation is also an option.

Many thanks to our committee members for all their hard work: Joanne Feige, Marge Holland, Chris Jenkins, Bobbie Johanson, and Gail Thomas. Thanks also to Paula Matzinger for putting together song books and leading us in singing.

***Men's Group – Warren Brisbin, Coordinator***

We are a group of men who meet once a month for one hour or so to share our lives and support each other in the ups and downs of daily living. We usually have a topic like exploring doubt, goals and issues related to our faith. Sometimes we get to the topic but a lot of times there has been so much going on during the month that it takes up all the time and more. Mr. Rogers had a saying that he often used "I see you. Your important". We try to always allow time to hear each other out. For men who want to get to know other men of the church, this is a great place to start. We usually have from 6 to 12 men and not always the same men. All comers are very welcome. We also have a yearly men's retreat and hope to have a few other activities in the future.

***Family Camp Planning Committee – Bobbie Johanson, Chair***

*2019 Members – Bobbie Johanson, Kathy Bell, Pat Furber, Marge Holland, Kathy Matthies, Judy Peterson, Nancy Shimetz, Brian Wetzel*

87 overnight campers enjoyed our annual Friday, Saturday and Sunday time at Camp Cazadero, August 30-September 1. 24 more folks joined us for Saturday. Our theme was "Making Connections." We carried out the theme by playing games, singing, sharing, discussions at meals, dancing at the slab, campfire, swimming, hiking, making crafts and an amazing Talent/No Talent Show. Pastor Ben led Vespers and Pastor Brian led Sunday morning worship. Pastor Lacey introduced herself in the Saturday morning program after a Community Church Bingo game. The weather was wonderful this year and participants of all ages had a relaxed time hanging out together. The cost of camp is subsidized by earnings from our Apple Pie Sale. Plan on joining the group next year the weekend before Labor Day and deepen relationships in our Church Family.

Thank you to our Committee: Kathy Bell, Pat Furber, Marge Holland, Kathy Matthies, Judy Peterson, Nancy Shimetz, Brian Wetzel.

***Apple Pie Team – Kathy Bell and Kathy Matthies, Co-Chairs***

*2019 Team Members – Kathy Bell, Kathy Matthies, Ellen Stillman, Paula Berndt, Marian McDonald, Susan Nestor, Beth Larssen, Pat & Amy Furber, Karna & Chloe Dawson, Bobbie Johanssen, Becca Emerson, Denelle Tognozzi, Judy Peterson, and Roger Wilson*

This year we made 1,307 Pies!!! Our gross income was \$16,820 and our net was \$8,524.95. We helped send 22 youths to summer camp at Camp Cazadero and 111 people to our Family Camp over Labor Day. While I will say – "It's all good!!!" financially, this was one of our lowest production pie sales in recent history. The Apple Pie team will be reinventing some parts of our wheel this year. Our apple source for the past several years

(Manzana) will no longer be able to provide us with peeled and cored apples so we have purchased an automatic apple peeler, corer, and slicer from KRONEN from Germany. Check out it out at <https://www.kronen.eu/en/maschinen/as2>. It will be a new year and we welcome all input. If you want to be part of the process, please connect with either Kathy Bell or Kathy Matthies.

We will be reengineering our apple prepping process this year and know that there will be lots of things to figure out. One thing that will be different is that we will be only selling pies from the church. Since we do not really know how many pies we can produce in this new way, we will be doing a trial run before the summer and are very hopeful that we will be ready to rock and roll by August. If you have skills and interests in helping us figure this out please let us know!

Words cannot adequately express the gift of a week at summer camp or all that a weekend with your church family in nature can offer! CAZ has been a very important part of the spiritual growth of this church for over 50 years! A week at camp can give kids time to really hear the voice of God in a way that is often hard to access in our busy daily lives. It can be a time to unplug, slow down, breath deep, sleep under the stars, and see yourself and others with a new lens. If you want to know more, ask a youth from the church who has been to camp what it means to them. Kathy and I have both had the blessing of sending our kids to camp so we have seen up close and personal what God can do in a week!

AGAIN – we thank the whole church community for all the hours many of you have dedicated to this amazing weekend!!!

### **OUTREACH MINISTRY AREA 2019 REPORT**

---

*Joyce Cox, Council Member for Outreach*

Outreach is an important part of the Community Church. The Outreach portion of our annual budget is divided between the following;

- Mission and Outreach of our congregation,
- Inter Church Food Pantry serving our area,
- Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) which funds our United Church of Christ conference and national organization, staff, camps and mission projects,
- North Bay Organizing Project Dues
- Our outreach to those in need at the church office, bus passes, snacks and emergency money given out.

Below are reports of the ongoing Outreach programs of our congregation. We appreciate all of your support of these programs. If you would like to become involved in any of these projects, please contact the person who wrote the report or Joyce Cox the Leadership Council member for Outreach [b-j-cox@att.net](mailto:b-j-cox@att.net).

***Mission and Outreach Committee – Michael Ott, Chair***

*2019 Members – Joyce Cox, Daphne Cripps, Lorinda Davis, Kathy Manchester, Susan Nestor, Michael Ott, Laura Pearsall, Dale Phillips, Peggy Porter and Ellen Stillman*

The Mission and Outreach Committee distributed funds provided to the Committee from the congregation's pledged Mission Giving. Funds were distributed to the following organizations:

Seeds of Learning received \$1,000 from the Committee. Seeds of Learning is a non-profit organization dedicated to improve educational opportunities in rural Latin America.

The Committee donated \$400 to Verity, a local organization that strives to eliminate all forms of violence, with a special focus on sexual assault and abuse. They offer counseling and resources to abuse victims.

The Jewish Community Free Clinic in Santa Rosa received \$1,000 from the Committee. The clinic offers free health care services to anyone in need, without regard to religion.

The Committee donated \$1,000 to Nueva Esperanza, a church in Mesa, Arizona that welcomes people who are released from the DHS Detention Centers after they get checked out by ICE. These families are coming from Central America and have already applied for asylum. The church provides food and a secure place to take a shower. The families receive a change clothes, and the church takes care of them while they wait to travel plans to their destinations.

The Committee donated \$400.00 to No More Deaths. The organization is dedicated to ending death and suffering in the Mexico-US borderlands through civil initiative - people of conscience working openly and in community to uphold fundamental human rights. Volunteers hike the remote desert trails and leave water, food, socks, blankets, and other supplies for migrants as well as providing emergency first-aid treatment to individuals in distress.

In April the Committee organized and participated in Rebuilding Sebastopol's work day.

The Committee worked with Brian Plaugher to prepare and serve a delicious Guatemalan feast after church on March 31 as part of a fundraising event for a mission trip to Guatemala.

The Committee organized and sponsored a Paradise Schools Supply Donations drive during the month of July and delivered the congregation-donated supplies in August 1 before school began.

The Committee assisted Brian Plaugher to organize and host a stay at our church for the Nicavangelists in August. The Nicavangelists - a talent-development program for at-risk Nicaraguan youth, are sponsored by Capital on the Edge, Inc., an American non-profit organization. They assist young Nicaraguans in their life's journey, encouraging them to grow physically, emotionally and spiritually. The Committee provided dinner for the group, then, along with our church members, were treated to an exciting performance of skits, dance and song that told the story of their country's physical, social, economic and political upheaval.

The Committee organized a sign up for volunteers from the congregation to provide casseroles, salad, bread and dessert for the 2nd Saturday lunches we sponsor in Fellowship Hall.

Throughout the year the Committee coordinated volunteers who provided bag lunches for the homeless and hungry Monday through Thursday each week at Sebastopol Christian Church.

For the Advent Season, the Committee sponsored the Shoebox Ministry and delivered 104 shoeboxes filled with toiletries to the shelter at Sam Jones Hall! Both the staff and clients were very grateful! The church Christmas tree was covered with Gloves, Hats and Scarves which were given to local people who participate in the daily bag lunch program and to the shelter at Sam Jones. The congregation gave \$2,668 in Alternative Gifts to support projects around the world.

We thank everyone who participated in our many outreach projects this year!.

### ***Shower Program – Roger Wilson, Coordinator***

The church provides a shower program to serve a portion of our community's homeless population. Three days a week (Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday) a volunteer supervises showers and distributes towels to an average of 10 person per day totaling 30 towels per week which are washed, dried and folded by 4 different families from our church, each family covering a different week of the month. This amounts to 1560 showers per year. This year we have moved two metal cabinets into the shower rooms to store towels and other toiletries. There is always a constant demand for additional towels and toiletries particularly the small soap bars from hotels.

### ***Safe Parking Program – Coordinator***

*2019 Members – Peggy and Dan Porter, Yvette Morris, Judy Hawkins, Steve Beck, Chris and Jim Jenkins, Julie and Greg Davis, Gary Bachlor, Michael Ott*

The Community Church in conjunction with the First United Methodist Church of Santa Rosa, Catholic Charities, and the County of Sonoma provides five parking spaces for individuals and families that have no other safe alternatives to spend the night. As of today – the allocated spaces are occupied from approximately 8:00pm to 8:00am.

Individuals wishing to find safe parking go through an intake process with Catholic Charities. In the case of the Community Church, they are then referred to the First United Methodist Church which then inquires whether we have space. If the answer is yes, we then meet with the potential parker and if accepted, we notify the relevant parties. At night, Safe Parkers place an authorization notice on one of their car windows. We currently have 4 parkers.

Community Church volunteers provide monitoring of the site to make sure the parkers are safe by driving through the parking lot one time during the night and if possible, in the morning. Volunteers are on call if there are any issues. Any calls from parkers are routed through a Google Voice number. Right now, we have 5 volunteers that each take one night.

Gary Bachelor and Michael Ott fill in on the weekends. We are always looking for additional help.

***Saturday Table – Joanne Matson, Coordinator***

*2019 Members – Sophie Sherman, Daphne Cripps, Joyce Cox, Tara Caffery, Marilyn McHugh, Joanne Matson*

Saturday Table is an ongoing ministry of 5 area churches; Sebastopol United Methodist, Sebastopol Christian, St. Stephen's Episcopal, Community Church and the Occidental Laguna Sangha. Initiated 8 years ago by Sebastopol Christian Church, each church community commits to a specific Saturday each month year round. Here at Community Church, we serve a noon meal on the Second Saturday of the month in Fellowship Hall. Our guests include seniors, homeless persons, backpackers, "safe parking" participants and families. All are welcome.

Between 10 to 15 guests enjoy a home cooked lunch, fellowship and sharing of resources. The team is responsible for menu planning, hosting the meal, set up and clean up. Members of our congregation as well as the team members, contribute entrees, salads and desserts. Saturday Table is an example of a successful cooperative ministry reaching out to all the sometimes forgotten residents of Sebastopol.

***Interchurch Food Pantry – Ellen Stillman, Volunteer***

The Interchurch Food Pantry, funded by several Sebastopol churches, offers food at no cost to anyone in need. The Pantry is located in the large parking lot behind the Episcopal Church on Robinson Road. No identity or proof of need is required, but clients must live in West County. The pantry is open Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 10 to 12 A.M. In past years, clients could come for food once every 30 days. This year, due to many donations and a good funding stream, it was decided to offer food boxes every 2 weeks. This change is still being evaluated to see if it is sustainable. Adequate refrigeration has long been a problem. This year we have acquired a big new refrigerator, and last year a freezer was donated, so the problem has been resolved. Donations are always welcome in the wooden box at the entrance to the sanctuary.

***Faith in Action Team (FIAT) – Joyce Cox, Chair***

*2019 Members – Peggy Porter, Judy Davison, Kathy Matthies, Julie Davis, Bernie Hovdin, Susan Shaw, Joyce Cox*

The Faith in Action Team is a group that connects the church to the North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP) which is a multi-racial, multi-issue organization comprised of 22 faith, environmental, labor, student and community based organizations. This year the Organizing Project has had 3 main focus areas, Roots (environment), Roof (fair housing), and Refuge.



The focus of our church's involvement this year has been working to accompany a family with 3 children, from Honduras, who came to the U.S. last January seeking asylum. Our accompaniment team is made up of church members and community members. We have helped the family with housing, accessing medical and dental care, education and legal aid. In November, the mother and 3 children were granted asylum!! This was a huge step and we all celebrated! A big thanks to everyone who has helped in ways big and small!

***Adult Mission Trip – Joyce Cox, Coordinator***

*2019 Members – Bobbie Johanson, Gene Nelson, Jane Huneke, John Henel, Joyce Cox, Judy Davison, Judy Peterson, Kathy Matthies, Keith Blackstone, Kim Buckman, Larry Stallings, Linda Roa, Nancy Shimetz, Peggy Porter, Roger Wilson, Scott Carlson.*

In June, 2019 sixteen hardy souls from the Community Church and 6 from Westminster Presbyterian in Tiberon (organized by Bethany Nelson) went to Lake County to help rebuild homes destroyed in recent fires. We worked with a wonderful group called Hope City. We worked on three homes, two that were built from scratch and one modular home. All three homes were nearly completed. We worked hard, enjoyed the fellowship of our group, ate fabulous food organized by Kathy Matthies and had morning devotions led by Larry Stallings. In the end, we helped people who have been out of their homes for 3 years return home, enjoyed meeting and working with the Tiberon folks and shared a unique bonding experience with each other.

# CHURCH CLERK 2019 REPORT

*Denelle Tognozzi, Church Clerk*

Total Active Membership January 1, 2019 333

## Members Received in 2019 by:

**Baptism:** 1

Suzanne DeKozan

**Reaffirmation of Faith:** 21

*Bob Best*

*Maryjane Grotting*

*Susan Olson*

*Jen Bredesen*

*Allie Hole*

*Robyn Pitts*

*Sonia Cuppova*

*Ryan Hole*

*Elizabeth Schultz*

*Marshall Clark-Cupp*

*Gene Koch*

*Gina Scribner*

*Kristina Dillingham*

*Kate MacKillop*

*Debbie Stewart*

*Sam Dowdney*

*Joan Martin*

*Beth Trivunovic*

*Paul Downing*

*Scott McGinnis*

*Leslie Warren*

**Letter of Transfer:** 10

*Loren Bruggemann*

*Larell Fineren*

*Lois Michelsen*

*Michelle Bruggemann*

*Jim Hooper*

*Sandy Rosen*

*Katherine Dowdney*

*Marlene Hooper*

*Sharon Fenneman*

*Lacey Hunter*

**Confirmation:** 6

Marin Broadbent-Bell

Aaron Knuth

Tyler Whitehorn

Johah Gonzales

Charlotte Mitchell

Mariel Wurfel

**Total Members Received:** 38

## Members Removed in 2019 by:

**Death:** 4

Meg Brittain,

Barbara Wilson

Helen Williams

Barbara Zimmer

**Letter of Transfer:** 2

**Moved to Past Member by Leadership Council Vote:** 28

**Removed by Request** 4

**Removed by Request in Prior Years, but not previously accounted for** 8

**Total Members Removed:** 46

**Total Active Membership January 1, 2020:** 325

Funerals / Memorial Services 6

Baptisms: 1

Weddings: 0

## *NOMINATING COMMITTEE SLATE*

---

The Nominating Committee presents for Congregational Approval the following positions

### *Leadership Council*

Michael Ott	Moderator (Officer)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term ending 2021
John Henel	Officer for Finances (Tr.)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term ending 2022
Larry Stallings	Officer for Facilities (Vice Mod.)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term ending 2021
Kathy Bell	Officer for Personnel (Sec.)	2 <sup>nd</sup> term ending 2022
TBD	Member for Faith Formation	1 <sup>st</sup> term ending 2022
Bobbie Johanson	Member for Care & Fellowship	2 <sup>nd</sup> term ending 2021
Linda Roa	Member for Worship & Arts	1 <sup>st</sup> term ending 2021
Joyce Cox	Member for Outreach	2 <sup>nd</sup> term ending 2022

### The Nominating Committee

Brooke Bell	Member	1 <sup>st</sup> term ending 2022
Judy Rice	Member	2 <sup>nd</sup> term ending 2022
Nancy Shimetz	Member	1 <sup>st</sup> term ending 2021
Norma Watson	Member	1 <sup>st</sup> term ending 2021
Roger Wilson	Member	2 <sup>nd</sup> term ending 2022

## **FINANCE RESOURCE AREA 2019 REPORT**

---

*John Henel, Council Officer for Finance (Treasurer)*

---

First of all, I would like to express my thanks to all who served on committees and teams that assisted in the Finance Resource Area (see names below). Your work is appreciated.

I am once again happy to report that the church is on solid ground financially. Complete details of all financial data can be found elsewhere in the Annual Report. Here are a few highlights:

- 2019 ended with a surplus in operating expenses of \$23,168. These funds help us to maintain necessary reserves, which we can use to maintain continuity and stability of our various ministries.
- At the end of 2019, we held approximately \$660,000 in Endowment Funds. The goal of these investments is to preserve principal while utilizing income and dividends for special projects. Read more in the M&E report below.
- We have no debts.
- Pledges, our primary source of Revenue for both local and wider church missions, are fairly strong. Read more in the G&G report below.
- Using some reserves along with other funding, we were able to complete several necessary facilities projects, most notably a \$49,000 repair to rotting beams in the sanctuary building.

Looking forward to 2020, we plan to combine the Memorial & Endowment and the Finance Committee into a single Finance Committee, with Judy Bowman to chair.

Read more in the section reports that follow for topics in the Finance Resource Area.

### ***Budget Team – John Henel, Treasurer***

***2019 Members: Pastor Ben, Kathy Bell, Jennifer Halleck, Julie Reimer, John Henel***

This committee begins meeting in the Fall to produce the budget for 2020. Through Leadership Council representatives, all functional areas, program areas, and committees are solicited to provide input to the budget. With Julie Reimer taking over the Bookkeeper position from Jennifer Halleck, she also joined the Budget Team.

While a little more predictable than in recent years past, we do have an aggressive goal to support two full-time and one half-time ministers. At the time of writing this report, pledges have fallen a little bit short of supporting this goal. Accessing some Reserves may be needed on an interim basis to provide this support.

The Proposed 2020 Budget can be found in the last pages of this Annual Report.

***Gratitude & Generosity Team (Stewardship) – Pastor Benjamin, Lead Minister***  
***2019 Participants - Lorinda Bradley, Kristen DelMonte, Keenan Foster, Patty Foster, Bobbie Johanson***

With the theme “Finding the Way,” a small and focused crew steered this year's Pledge Drive in support of our church 2020 local ministry and wider mission. The drive was divided into three stages - leadership, public, and follow up. On Sunday, October 13, the pastors, Leadership Council, and the G+G Team made their “leadership” pledges and packets were distributed to all households. In the following weeks during worship, witnessing stewards shared why they support the church financially and pledge cards were received. Despite canceling worship on October 27 because of the Kincade Fire the public phase concluded on November 10. Our bold goal was to expand our pastoral ministry by funding 2.5 full-time positions. We asked for pledges from 250 households totaling \$375,000 toward local ministry and \$39,000 toward wider mission. The result of the drive was 140 pledges totaling \$350,000 and \$36,500.

***Memorial & Endowment Committee – John Henel, Leadership Council Officer for Finances***  
***2019 Members: Nathan Knuth (Chair), Judy Bowman, Jim Jenkins, Brian Purcell, Patty Raney.***

After losing value in 2018, as did investments in general, Endowment Funds made a good rebound in 2019. Gains of approximately \$110,000 in 2019 resulted in a year-end balance of about \$660,000 in Endowment and Memorial Funds.

Through meetings and email, the committee was pleased to provide funding for these grant requests in 2019, totaling approximately \$4,500:

- Lightweight folding tables
- Rainbow flag for Pride Parade
- Men's Retreat kickoff and support
- Updated main church sign on Gravenstein Highway, adding Lacey
- Addition of second defibrillator (AED) on campus in Memorial Hall

M & E is grateful to have received Memorial Gifts in honor of these people in 2019:

- Jeff & Jean Boal (anniversary celebration)
- Jim Murakami
- Dorothy Rowden
- Joseph Turner
- Helen Williams
- Babetta Wilson
- Barbara Wilson
- Barbara Zimmer

*Finance Committee – Judy Bowman, Finance Committee Chair*  
*2019 Members: Judy Bowman (Chair), Laura Pearsall, Jim Jenkins.*

The focus of this committee for 2019 has been to understand the budget and the reporting so that we can provide input regarding the setting of guidelines around spending and reserves. The contributions of all members are greatly appreciated.

We met numerous times throughout the year spending time gaining knowledge and reviewing current processes. We completed and presented a policy for the "Operating Reserves" that was approved by council. This will help going forward to set guidelines regarding reserves, the access to them and expenditure requests.

Looking forward to 2020, as Memorial & Endowment is combined with Finance, we expect to service grant requests, update the M&E Guidelines, and address other policy issues related to finance.

***PROPOSED BUDGET 2020***

---









*END OF YEAR REPORT 2019*

---