

# UNITED CHURCH ON THE GREEN



2024 Annual Report  
Presented at the Two Hundred Eighty-First  
Annual Congregational Meeting  
June 23rd, 2024

In a world where Christianity is too often associated with intolerance, exclusion, and hate, the mission of United Church on the Green is to proclaim Christ through faith, hope, and love. We are a community of many races, ethnic backgrounds, religious experiences, ages, sexual orientations, and gender identities. No matter where you are on your journey of faith, you will have a home here at United Church on the Green.

**UCG Annual Meeting 2024**  
**Sunday, June 23, 2024 – 11:15AM**  
**Agenda**

1. Opening Prayer
2. Moderator's Reflection
3. Approval of Minutes of Annual Meeting June 25, 2023  
Congregational Meeting on October 29, 2023, and  
Special Congregational Meeting on April 28, 2024
4. Acceptance of the 2024 Annual Report
5. Treasurer's Report for 2023-2024
6. Approval of 2024-2025 Budget
7. Approval of Nominating Slate
8. Pastor's Reflection
9. Celebration of Outgoing Leaders
10. New Business
11. Closing Prayer

## UCG Annual Report 2024

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**United Church on the Green, New Haven, Connecticut**  
**280th Annual Congregational Meeting**  
**Sunday June 25, 2023 - Hybrid**

1. Opening Prayer. The 280<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of United Church on the Green was opened at 11:23 AM with an opening prayer by the Rev. Dr. Stephen J. Ray Jr.

2. Moderator's Reflection. Moderator Al Forino said that all of the leaders of the Ministry Teams have submitted reports which are included in the Annual Report Booklet. He then commented on how wonderful it is to be back in the Bradley Room for this annual meeting. Our heartfelt thanks go out to John Sawyer for all his work on the Bradley Room renovation.

3. Approval of Minutes of the Annual Meeting on June 12, 2022, the Congregational Meeting on September 18, 2022, and the Special Congregational Meeting on April 16, 2023. Scott Hawkins made the motion, which was seconded by Jean Blue. The Minutes were approved.

4. Acceptance of the 2023 Annual Report. The motion was made by John Sawyer, and seconded by Ruth Anne Olson. Two corrections were reported by Kathryn Thomas. First, the date of Barbara Ann Titley's passing was January 2, 2023 (see p.15). Second, the Proposed Budget line item 3705 (see p. 28) should read, Member in Discernment. With no other corrections, the report was then approved as corrected.

5. Treasurer's Report for 2022-2023. Highlights of the previous year were reviewed. The reason for the \$65,000 deficit is because of Capital repairs to the Meetinghouse and Parish House, increased insurance and utility cost and the hiring of a new senior minister.

6. Approval of 2023-2024 Budget. The budget for 2023-2024 was then reviewed. The complete budget begins on page 25. Insurance went up \$12,000 because of our claim (Bradley Room flooding). Utilities are up. Salaries are up 5%. A motion was made by Scott Hawkins, seconded by Benjamin Gyadu to approve both the 2022-2023 Treasurer's Report and the 2023-2024 Budget. Discussion continued regarding the ongoing pledging and giving campaign. Currently we have 31 pledging units pledging \$107,000, so right now we are short of our \$155,000 goal. We are expecting to receive approximately \$225,000 as well as somewhere between \$35,000 and \$50,000 in gifts from estates. Kathryn Thomas then asked why the Worship and Music Ministry Team does not have a line item in the budget like the other Ministry Teams. It was explained that it is divided up between line item 5606, Worship Expense and 66100 Music. Both the Treasurer's Report and the Budget were then approved.

7. Approval of Nominating Slate. Benjamin Gyadu, Colleen O'Connor, Cher Balkcom, and Abram Guerra are nominated to fill the four open slots on the Board. Kathryn Thomas and Dennis Titley are nominated once more to be our delegates to the Southern New England UCC Conference. Jean Blue moved that the Nominating Slate be accepted, and Erskine McIntosh seconded. The Nominating Slate was approved. Al Forino then noted that traditionally, the

Board has only one meeting during the summer. The meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month via Zoom.

8. Pastor's Reflection. Rev. Ray began his report by saying how excited he and Susan are to be part of this church. He then talked about two opportunities ahead of us. 1. We will be figuring out what we should be in the post-Covid community. We will begin by remembering the people who were lost along the way, and then, in September we will have an opportunity to take stock. 2. We need to develop a program with significant digital outreach. We need to Live out Loud, and not wait to invite and engage people into a place where they can be accepted and loved. Stephen is looking forward to us embracing that we are still here and that God is sending people to be a part of this community. He then concluded by saying what a joy it is to be here, and thanking the congregation for their warm and generous welcome to both Susan and himself.

9. Celebration of Outgoing Leaders. Jane Jervis, Dennis Titley, Karen Schneider, and Don Bertrand were thanked for their service on the Board. We look forward to them volunteering for other projects in the church.

10. Adjournment. A motion to adjourn was made by Ruth Anne Olson, seconded by Susan Ray, and after unanimous approval, the 280<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of United Church on the Green was adjourned at 11:50 AM.

### **Fall Congregational Meeting Sunday October 29, 2023**

Moderator Al Forino opened the Fall Congregational Meeting 11:47 AM, and the Rev. Dr. Stephen J. Ray Jr. offered an opening prayer.

Since there were no matters for the congregation to vote on, Al felt that this would be a good opportunity to give some information about things that have been going on.

We recently re-signed our lease with IRIS for the use of the Parish House space, which will go through September, 2024. We lease it to them at below-market cost; essentially what it costs in overhead for us to run the Parish House. They are very pleased with that and we have a very good partnership with them.

We received a request from a Yale Divinity School student, Georgia Pappano, who is involved in a research study on how religious folk use their faith to cope with life events. Al asked anyone interested to email him and he will put them in touch with Georgia.

In our bylaws, our members are to be classified as Active or Inactive. The Clerk and the Moderator are required to go through the membership list in consultation with the Senior Minister. The Board has established some criteria, which is, if a member has attended services

or church activities, volunteered in any way for the church, pledged or have made any donation or gift to the church in the past year, that member is considered to be “active”. June and Al have gone through the list and concluded that there are 106 active members and about 40 inactive members. Al emphasized that we are not “kicking anyone off” the roles. It is just a classification. The only difference between active and inactive is that inactive members cannot vote in meetings. And, if you are classified as inactive and want to be considered active, all you have to do is contact the moderator or the clerk, and you will be made active again. We will be sending out letters to those we have deemed to be inactive. If anyone receiving one of those letters responds that they no longer wish to be a member, they now have the option of being classified as a “friend” of the church, or they can ask to be removed from the membership list.

Next on the agenda was a discussion on what we have learned from Stephen’s Installation Weekend about our current capacity to host and manage public events, what we learned about our reach in terms of drawing friends and supporters, new and old, and the use of media and how we build on a raised profile. Al then asked for any feedback or suggestions from anyone who attended the events. Angelyn Singer said that we were told to expect between 70-75 people, and we had over 100. Tim Bertaccini said he counted 115 people and we collected \$1050. Angelyn thought it was a great event. The food was phenomenal, and we did a great job serving and seating people during the reception. Everyone stayed a long time. John Sawyer was reminded that our former member, Fred Walker used to complain that we never did anything to promote ourselves. This time we got a professional to design our new logo, and the advertising we did proved what Fred believed 30 years ago, that if you have a professional advertising campaign, you will let people know that you're there. Ruth Anne Olson added that it was an ad in the newspaper for Easter that first brought her to our church. Sue Hartt feels that there are limits to advertising, especially in the newspaper – so few read it anymore - and that word of mouth and social media are important. When the church sends out an email about an event, she feels we have a responsibility to forward it. She thinks that Stephen’s reputation, the power of his ministry, and his presence in the community is what is going to grow this church. Scott Hawkins was away and not able to attend any of the events but he followed it in the media and felt that was a very positive thing. He feels that, as we do more things, as we become more involved, we should promote that, rather than just doing generic advertising. Roger Adams then gave a special thanks to Erskine and Jacqui McIntosh, and Dick Hutchinson, and Colleen O’Connor, who used their contacts with the press to our advantage. Jo Buchanan thought that bundling the three events the way we did gave us a wider audience on Friday night and Saturday afternoon. We do traditionally have a harder time getting people here for “untraditional events” like a Friday night Jazz Vespers (which was terrific, by the way). Al then added that he appreciated that, in our new logo, our church is placed on the right, which is correct for where it is on the Green. Jacqui McIntosh said she has friends who attend Mishkan Israel. Some of them watched online and some came in to the services, and from the service on Saturday, one of her friends who was listening online said she wished our minister was a Rabbi. Another friend commented, “We were able to find the Jazz Vespers service on YouTube. Your new minister is fabulous. Music was terrific. The service was amazing. Thank you very much!” Scott feels we should start promoting the Christmas Eve service now, and not waiting until after Thanksgiving. Dick Hutchinson then added that most churches are not run like businesses and

they don't have the discipline of businesses. He recommends we hire a Marketing Director. He also challenged us to find one or two people to invite to church and start "walking the walk". Erskine McIntosh then said he wasn't sure that one tactic – in any pursuit in life – is effective. Whatever you want to accomplish in life, you can't just go at it one way. Roger then added that what we're marketing is not for numbers, but for our mission of making an impact in our community. David French had the suggestion of reusable grocery bags with our logo, and "Ask me about United Church on the Green". Abram wanted to comment on the capacity. He felt we were at our capacity down here in the Bradley Room. We could probably fit five times that upstairs, but couldn't use the Bradley Room for those numbers. Scott then pointed out that we do have the Great Hall that we could use, which can hold a lot more. June then spoke about our online presence, having watched all three events on YouTube. At the end of the Installation Service, she said there were 48 people watching, which was great. Al then added, regarding David's idea, Justin Zeigler, who used to attend our church, who now lives in Madison, runs a start up company called Very Gay, Very Busy. They make tote bags. He might be somebody to contact. Al then said, regarding the PBS podcast, *Where we Live*. He urged everyone to listen to Stephen on that, if they haven't already done so. He said Stephen was wonderful on it. Al wanted to mention, about the visitors, it moved him to tears to see John Gage again. And while we are talking about advertising, he wanted to point out that there are a lot of different ways to advertise now. Community papers, online. Back when John was here we had an advertising campaign on the local cable television network. They decided where to run it, and which demographics would be best for us. And we took in 20-30 members out of that campaign, most of whom stayed on at least 5-10 years. So it can work in conjunction with our mission. Angelyn was also happy to see John Gage, and when she asked him what he thought of our new minister, he replied, "You hit the jackpot". Susan Ray then shared that they had family and friends come to the Installation service and events, and everyone here was welcoming. They felt very comfortable. She said we all embodied hospitality. She wanted to thank everyone for being so wonderful during that weekend. Her mother and an aunt watched it online. It was wonderful to be able to share that with them. Connecticut Public Radio wrote a wonderful follow up article, so she thinks we are using our connections very well and getting the word out. The other thing is events. We have to be creative and think of other events we can do that we can use these opportunities to "advertise". Julie Peterman brought up the idea of having childcare for special events, and promoting that with the advertising. Lisa agreed with the childcare idea. She also likes the idea of having church T shirts for us to wear around town as conversation starters. She has a library one that says, "Libraries are for everyone" with a rainbow. Erskine then shared that Georgia Morgan showed up to one of the events. She found out about the events through the New Haven Register. Pam Stanton brought up the idea of having a church table at places like farmer's markets and fairs. Angela added that we always have a table at Pride and get a lot of nice feedback. Scott suggested we have an Event planning group. Erskine then talked about the tables that were set up in the Bradley Room. He felt they were a barrier, and when we do this again, maybe we should have 2 tables for those who really need them and leave the rest of the space open for people to move around more.

Stephen then thanked everyone for all their support and for the hard work that went into the planning of the installation. He then talked about advertising as projecting our message into the

world. A significant part of what he believes will be our role is people who feel that no church is interested in them coming. There are very many people who may be a part of our future who have given up on the idea, or who haven't even entertained the idea that a church is desiring to have them as a part and is actively inviting them to be a part. If we don't project our message the world, they won't ever know about it. Also, one of the things that we need to leverage is that our church is people who experience in walking with God and the faith and confidence that that brings. Because very many people who are in their 30's and 40's now, if you think about when they grew up, it was during the period that institutions as such within our society were dissolving. So for them, the idea that an institution can exist for more than 200 years, and exist giving the same message of welcome and hope is something new to them. So we need to leverage that. And once we really begin to see where God is calling us, that we be open to do that. He feels the Jazz Vesper service demonstrated to us that there is an audience for that.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35.

### **Special Congregational Meeting Sunday April 28, 2024**

Moderator Abram Guerra opened the meeting at 11:25 AM with a prayer.

Abram issued a Call for Volunteers for:

Childcare

Narthex Ministry Team

Worship and Music Ministry Team

Building Committee

Faith Engagement Ministry Team

Service and Justice Ministry Team

Endowment report – Treasurer Tim Bertaccini reported that last week we transferred the manager of our Endowment of approximately \$6 million. The endowment is the main source of our income for our Annual Budget. We take approximately \$300,000 to \$350,000 out of the endowment every year to pay for our operating budget. We changed managers last week from the Consolidated Trust Fund, which was a Connecticut Conference investment oversight of which Tim was the Chairperson, to United Church Funds/Beyond Fossil Fuels. This fund has a lot of exclusions. We will not be investing in companies that manufacture arms, that produce alcohol or tobacco products, that are in the pornography industry, or the oil industry. United Church Funds is over a billion dollar fund, and has hundreds of individual investor churches like ours. Tim then asked for questions. Dee White wanted to know if Tim was involved in this new fund. Tim said no, United Church Funds has a professional staff of ten paid members and they handle a billion dollars so Tim feels comfortable that we are in good hands.

Survey on Divesting – Abram passed out cards with a link to a survey for feedback on divesting.

Summer refurbishment and renewal in the Sanctuary – John Sawyer made a motion that the church take \$310,000 out from the organic growth in the value of the Endowment in the 2023 calendar year to fund renovations of the first floor of the Sanctuary, consistent with what he has submitted to the congregation for approval. Angelyn Singer seconded. The motion passed unanimously. John then announced that the renovations would be starting the very next morning, and they promised to be out by Gathering Sunday in September.

Abram reminded the congregation that we will be having our Annual Meeting on June 23, 2024. He then asked if anyone had comments or questions. Pam Stanton asked about the table of books that have been at the back of the sanctuary for awhile. Are they to be lent out? For purchase? Roger replied that they were put there by Marilyn Kendricks when she preached here, but he did not know if she wanted them returned. Abram suggested we could ask, and if not, perhaps they could be the start of our lending library. John Sawyer said that he will schedule a time for him to do a presentation on the budget sometime before the Annual Meeting. Pam Stanton then raised a few issues. One was the starting time for our Sunday service. Abram said he will follow up on that conversation. The second was the color of the wall behind the big screen TV in the Bradley Room. Kathryn Thomas then thanked Abram for the wonderful job he has been doing as moderator.

After a prayer the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 AM.

**MODERATOR**

**Abram Guerra**

*(please see insert)*

**SENIOR PASTOR**

**Rev Dr Stephen G Ray**

I write this report with great joy, celebrating my first year as the pastor of United Church on the Green! This has truly been a great year and a tremendous honor.

When I started in June 2023, I committed to living with you as pastor and congregation for a time before venturing to suggest significant changes in our life as a congregation, if any were needed. I wanted to become acquainted with the rhythms of the church's life and get to know you as individuals and as a congregation. The journey has been enlightening and more than I had hoped for. Along the way, we have made innovations to reflect who it is that we have become in the season past Covid and who God is calling us to be in the years to come. The following reflections include some of my learnings, areas of advance, and challenges that face us in the coming year.

Changing Landscapes

The most significant thing I learned was that the post-Covid landscape of both church life and the larger reality of New Haven were ones of faded memories and needful reinvention. By this I

mean that both the innerworkings of church life at UCG and our relationships within New Haven have fallen a bit fallow. We as an institution did not recall as vibrantly the necessary tasks and roles that undergird a healthy church life. Additionally, the turnover of leadership and staffing of many area nonprofits (i.e., New Haven PRIDE) and in government meant that many partners with whom worked closely in the past have but vague memories of UCG.

These observations—gathered my first months at UCG, formed the basis for innovations which I led in church. The goal has been to strengthen the internal church life and broaden the ecology within which it unfolds in public.

### UCG Church Life

My reflections on the church life of UCG are drawn my experiences in my pastoral role. As pastor I:

- preached 47 Sundays over the past year
- participated in ministry teams meetings regularly throughout the year and supported their activities
- led 2<sup>nd</sup> hour programming about church identity, sermon feedback, and new member exploration
- maintained regular schedule of member and friend visitation
- provided counseling for members and friends of UCG
- oversaw staff activities in support of the life of UCG
- participated in the activities of New Haven Association, SNECUCC, and national church
- maintained a regular schedule of meetings and collaborations with community partners

My first impressions of UCG were confirmed throughout this year. We are a strong church with a dedicated core of members who support the life of the church in multiple ways. While we have struggled with living into the new structure of team ministries to organize the church's life, we have made significant progress in utilizing it to enhance our communal life. Our worship life has been vibrant and a source of encouragement. It has been enriched by the range of music offerings from the choir and in the congregational song. We have been blessed with new members and a growing group of in-person and on-line attendees.

### UCG in the Community

Beginning with my installation in October, we gathered a team of church members to form media and rebranding teams. The goals were to create occasion specific advertising that would lead to a more general presence in local media. As a part of this process, we engaged the congregation in two 2nd hour programs around the church's identity and our public face. From these meetings and other informal conversation emerged a reinterpretation of the UCG logo which added colors of the rainbow to the silhouette of the church. This logo forms the backdrop for all of our stationary and public communication.



We are currently beginning a major advertising campaign using social and print media to enhance the public profile of UCG. In addition, during this past year we engaged the services of Coco LePere to work as our outreach coordinator.

### Conclusion

In sum, this has been a learning year for me and for the church. As we are discovering the contours of our life together living into God's calling, we can do so with the confidence that God is with us. The opportunities before us to strengthen our church and enrich our relationships within our city and our other partners remain vast. We have but to live forward with courage and hope.

Respectfully Submitted  
Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray Jr.  
Senior Minister

**OPERATIONS DIRECTOR**  
**Jack Russell**

During the 2024 fiscal year, we continued to improve and integrate the Church's resources of people, facilities and finances in support of our ministries, missions and programs.

### Human Resources

This year we welcomed our new Senior Clergy, Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray, Jr. to our administrative team composed of Church Administrator, Nicole Atchison, Music Director, Caesar Storlazzi, Financial Secretary, Nancy Lupi, Facilities and Maintenance Manager, Will Henton and Operations Director, Jack Russell. We also welcomed our new Digital Media Administrator, Maxim Schmidt. Our administrative team works flex-time, primarily remotely and are on-site weekly as needed for our required responsibilities and activities. We also employ the services of on-call Video Techs to help produce our live-stream Sunday worship services and a part-time Sexton Assistant, Raymond O'Connor who assists Will Henton. Our Sunday Childcare Assistant is Rebecca Baisden who supports Rev. Ray on Sundays.

### Media and Communications Team

Our Media Team led by Rev. Ray includes John Sawyer, Maxim Schmidt, Jack Russell and our media consultant, Jeanne Criscola. We meet regularly to direct a multi-project rebranding campaign involving new messaging strategies and graphic designs. Thus far we have created new exterior banners and signs, display ads for social media, a pride t-shirt, sandwich board panels and printed handouts. We continue to work on new designs for our website, weekly E-newsletter and Sunday bulletins.

### Financial Operations

The 2024 fiscal year operations closely followed the approved operating budget which projected income of \$682,122 and expenses of \$696,321. The proposed budget for the coming 2025 fiscal year is \$738,785 in revenue and \$744,210 in expenses. Budget details are listed in the budget section of this Annual Report. Our Finance Committee meets monthly to review monthly operations and endowment performance. This year they adopted a strategy to fund our major capital projects using a portion of the annual endowment net capital gain. The plan sets aside 50% of the net annual income (after the draw for operations) into a designated Capital Repairs and Improvements Fund within the endowment. In April the endowment assets were transferred to the national (UCC) United Church Funds Management Program. The UCF is the leading provider of socially responsible, values-aligned investment management services for United Church of Christ Churches and Ministries. Our access to our funds for transactions, reports and daily monitoring has been greatly improved by this move to new management.

### Capital Repairs and Improvements

#### -Meeting House Sanctuary Floors

The newly created expanded open floor area in the Sanctuary was finished this year. It provides better space for activities in front of the pulpit. Two ADA accessible pews were also created along with a space for our “Pray Ground”. The history of the various woods that have been used in the floors over the last centuries is in full view. The floors were made with several types of wood including red pine and Douglas fir. Some new wood was needed and was sourced from re-milled historic yellow pine.

#### -Meeting House Bradley Room

The work to restore the Bradley Room was completed this year and a second handrail was added to the stairwell connecting it with the Narthex. The HVAC system was upgraded with a new central control unit and programming adjustments.

#### -Meeting House Sanctuary Walls

The Finance Committee and Board approved a capital repair project to repair the plaster and repaint the first-floor walls and ceilings under the balcony. The work is being done in three stages with each section “tented” to contain dust. The front (pulpit) wall will require scaffolding. The work should be completed by the end of this summer.

### -Narthex & Pulpit Lighting

The three hanging lanterns in the Narthex are being rebuilt to provide more illumination for the floor and ceiling. Additional LED fixtures will be added to each lantern to supplement the center “candle” light fixtures. The wall sconces on the first floor of the Sanctuary have been removed for the plaster/painting work and will be refinished. The six large black stage lights in the Sanctuary balcony which illuminate the pulpit and performance area will be replaced with a custom-designed, dimmable, focused LED track system mounted on the exterior ledge of each balcony.

### Facilities Utilization

Our partnership with Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services which involves their rental of a large portion of the Parish House is working extremely well for both organizations. IRIS is using certain PH spaces for their educational programs. These spaces include the two former Nursery School classrooms, the teacher’s work room and program office, and three of the office spaces on the second floor. IRIS uses the Great Hall, Lounge, Lobby and kitchen weekdays from 8am to 6pm. UCG reserves the right to use these facilities for our own programs on weekends and weekdays after 6pm. UCG continues to maintain our own (four) office spaces for: Pastor, Operations Director, Church Administrator and Staff Meeting Room. The rental rate charged is less than commercial market rates but does cover our (actual) expenses to maintain the spaces.

### Facilities Rental Protocols and Procedures

Given the new cultural and economic landscapes that have arisen post-pandemic, our facilities rental program needs to be revised. We are working to establish guidelines, policies, protocols and controls which support community organizations while protecting our physical assets and our facilities usage needs. With enhanced A/V and live-stream capabilities, expanded performance space in the Meeting House Sanctuary and a renovated Bradley Room we need to rethink the parameters by which outside groups use our spaces. John Sawyer, Maxim Schmidt, Will Henton and I (our Facilities Team) are reviewing all rental policies, processes, documents, restrictions and behavioral guidelines for hosting outside groups going forward. We are also reviewing the various responsibilities that UCG staff members have within this revised program. In general terms, we are seeking to find the right balance for usage of our historic buildings in support community organizations’ events and activities without negatively affecting our own programs and assets. The goal of this evaluation process is to determine the scope and limitation of our facilities usage strategy.

Respectfully Submitted, John I. Russell

**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC**  
**Caesar Storlazzi**

We have come to the end of a fruitful year under Pastor Stephen's welcoming leadership. What a wonderful year it has been! All of us on staff are looking forward to the next program year as a time to renew our commitment to United Church and its dedicated congregation.

Here's a quick look at *The (Musical) Year in Review*:

- As always, our UCG choir has dedicated themselves to making beautiful music each week of the program year, helping us all come closer to God with sounds that help us when words fail.
- Here are the various folks that sang with us this past year:
  - Sopranos: Nicole Lam and Kathryn Thomas
  - Altos: Julia Blue Raspe, Judy Carlson, and Jean Welty
  - Tenors: Alex Whittington, Seiyoung Kim, and Dennis Titley
  - Basses: Connor Reese and Dan Rausch
  - Several wonderful subs that joined us from time to time.
- We are blessed by the presence of all of our choir members. Our paid quartet functions as the backbone of our choir, and our talented volunteers add to the harmonious sounds we make at our worship services. In the past year, we said good-bye to Alex Whittington in February as he took a position in Westport, and to Seiyoung Kim who embarks on a career in opera, starting at the Glimmerglass festival. We are indeed lucky that Nicole, Julia, and Connor will return in the fall. We will be searching for a new tenor during the summer and fall.
- In talking with staff about how I felt about the past year, what gave me joy, I focused on our special services. Christmas Eve, Easter and Pentecost were wonderful times of musical sharing and prayer, and I felt relaxed and confident as I led the various musicians during these special services.
- We have been able to continue our tradition of having several jazz services during the year, and we are thankful for Arti Dixson and Jim Andrews, and their artful playing.
- UCG was able to support the annual Bach in the Subways event once again, along with the New Haven AGO Chapter. We were able to live-stream the event to share the event with a wider audience.
- UCG also generously shared its facilities with the local AGO chapter, by hosting the AGO's fall dinner, and our Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza event.
- We have been able to continue our partnership with Yale's Institute of Sacred Music and we are once again hosting student lessons and recitals during the Yale Organ Week, June 24-28. UCG has close ties to the ISM and the Divinity School, and it is good to continue these positive relationships.
- Our organ continues to function well after all the various repairs to the organ over last summer and fall. The details of these repairs can be found in last year's Annual Report. We continue to monitor the organ carefully, and make mechanical adjustments as needed in

consultation with Joe Dzeda, our organ curator, and Mark Brombaugh, our former music director/organ builder. We continue to be grateful that all these repairs were able to be done without cost to UCG.

- This year marked the last full season that Kathryn Thomas and Dennis Titley have sung in choir. In addition to the many roles they have undertaken in their years here at UCG, they have given almost forty years of their time to UCG in song. We will all miss them (I will miss them!) but their contributions will never be forgotten.

These are only some of the highlights of the past year, and I am sure that I have forgotten something important! We continue to be in a season of rebuilding after Covid, and one of our main priorities next year will be growing the choir, and the music program, at United.

It is my hope that we continue to work together, singing along the way, as we truly become the church we wish to be, and are called to be.

Respectfully submitted,  
Caesar Storlazzi

## **CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR**

**Nicole René Atchison**

### New Members

Two Members joined our Congregation on June 2nd, 2024

Scott Azevedo

Brodie Lewis-Azevedo

### Deaths

This past year, we lost two of our dear family members:

Carolyn Copeland Belt on July 25, 2023, and

Christiana Alkire on March 22, 2024

We enter the new fiscal year with 165 members on our rolls

## **FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

**Nancy Lupi**

The Finance Committee meets once a month to review all the financial data before the financial reports are presented to the Stewards Leadership Team on the first Thursday of each month.

These reports consist of:

1. Profit & Loss Statement to Budget
2. Profit & Loss consolidated
3. Profit & Loss comparison to Prior Year
4. Balance Sheet -Statement of Cash Position
5. Endowment Report

All donations and Pledges received via mail are deposited on a weekly basis. UCG has in place solid internal controls for all monies received and tracks all donations and pledges to the appropriate Giver and classifies these donations/pledges to the intentions of the Giver.

Giving Reports are distributed three times a year:

1. In January to report prior calendar year giving for income tax purposes
2. In May to report fiscal year (Jul-May) pledge giving
3. In November to report annual giving prior to calendar year end

All employee payroll information and payments along with all other operating expenses are the responsibility of the Financial Secretary which are approved by the Operation Director  
Parishioners may contact me at any time to obtain any information regarding their giving status.

Respectfully Submitted

Nancy Lupi

Financial Secretary

## **DIGITAL MEDIA ADMINISTRATOR**

### **Maxim Schmidt**

My name is Maxim Schmidt, and I am the Digital Media Administrator for United Church on the Green as of November 2023. My role here is to oversee our A/V department and facilitate all of our technology, including: our A/V equipment, including our audio system and livestreaming equipment; our website; our social media; photo and video documentation of UCG and related programming; video editing of livestream footage and marketing pieces. I also manage our livestream and audio technicians, Dom DeGennaro and Matthew Innamorato, as they utilize our livestream and audio equipment for Sunday services and rentals.

Within my last seven months here, a lot of changes and points of growth have come to the A/V Department:

- Changes in staffing – myself being hired in November of 2023; hiring of technician Matthew Innamorato in March 2024; letting go of technician Sherron Williamson in April 2024
- Addition of a fourth livestreaming camera, located in the front of the church facing the congregation & organ
  - Reset of camera presets to incorporate more/better camera angles, aiming to provide a more visually-dynamic livestream experience
- Conceptualizing, scripting, filming, and editing United's first Easter commercial, which was then also reworked into a general use trailer of what UCG represents (currently on view on the website)
- More thorough documentation of UCG's services and programs through video and photography
- Developing a rebranded online & social media presence in collaboration with the UCG Media Team (Reverend Ray, Maxim Schmidt, Jack Russell, John Sawyer, and Jeanne Criscola)
- Multiple visits from AV-I (our contracted A/V service company) to provide general maintenance to our equipment as well as a full audio retuning of the upstairs Sanctuary
- Upkeeping the UCG website (both in terms of weekly updates & long-term readjustments) as well as creating an ongoing inventory of recommended changes & adjustments to improve the overall functionality
- Implementing new software as needed – ie. Lightworks for video editing

We have a number of aspirations for the upcoming year, including:

- A complete rework of the UCG website to bolster functionality and user-friendliness
- Development of a new, updated rental policy, currently being drafted in collaboration with Jack Russell and John Sawyer, with discretion from the Leadership Board and Reverend Ray
  - Ongoing development of additional video 'packages' for renters – from raw video/sound recordings to pre-templated edited videos/sound from their event
- Continuing documentation of UCG practices, specifically zeroing in on our Children's Ministry, Ministry Teams, rentals, and community outreach, to provide better visual evidence of the important work we do here on-site and in our greater community

- Continuing development of a more immersive experience for our online participants, including: continuing to strategize around making the livestream more visually dynamic; continuing to strategize around potential improvements for Virtual Coffee Hour; introducing interactive livestreaming of our Second Hour programming
- Continuing to expand our social media and website presence in developing even more targeted campaigns towards audiences that will spark overall growth (both in terms of attendance and our larger community impact)
- Implementing new technology in the Narthex that can more regularly display what we are currently doing at UCG – ie. a screen with a regularly-updated slideshow of images, upcoming programming, our mission statement, etc
- Potentially implementing new technology outside of the building to draw attention from the greater community to spark further interest – ie. large scale projection on the Elm St side of our building

We are eager to explore and to continue to develop these new projects and cannot wait to see what the next year has in store for us!

## **MINISTRY TEAMS + TASKS FORCES**

### **Buildings and Grounds**

As Operations Director Jack Russell has already described the building tasks completed in the 2023-2024 program year, I will talk about what we know is coming for the 2024-2025 program year. Note that, with one building from the early 1960s and one from the early 1800s, there is a high probability of them needing repairs that are unknown as of this date.

1. Meeting House
  - a. Sanctuary
    - i. Lighting work:
      1. Narthex - Adding new lights to the three fixtures pointing up toward the ceiling, having the effect of increasing the level of light in the Narthex.
      2. Sanctuary
        - a. Adding new lighting to better illuminate the pulpit and the new performance space. We are currently working with a lighting designer to test a couple of approaches.
        - b. Replacing the lighting in the pulpit arch. This is being done in parallel with the current restoration project.
        - c. Refinishing and rewiring the wall sconces on the first floor removed as part of the current restoration project.
    - ii. Restoration work
      1. Repainting the first-floor sanctuary windows. This entails the contractor removing the window sashes and shutters from the window frames and taking them to their shop in Bethany for renewal. At the same time, the window frames will be refinished on-site. This will be done one window at a time.

2. Scraping, sanding, and refinishing the pews, including sanding and revarnishing the unpainted surfaces.
3. Repainting the first-floor columns.
4. Repairing and repainting all first-floor doors not done in the 2023-2024 work.
5. Repainting the pulpit and supports, the platform under the pulpit, and the pulpit stairs.
6. Steeple
  - a. The eight top windows in the steeple are disintegrating and need to be repaired or replaced. John Cusick has removed one on the back of the steeple, replacing it with plexiglass. We had originally hoped to have new, single windows made to fit the space, but John's investigation discovered that it would cost almost \$200,000 to pursue this option. John then priced getting new windows made at a local millwork shop (\$116,000) or repairing the windows in his shop (\$96,000). We believe having the new sashes made is a preferable solution to this problem. According to Chris Wigren, Deputy Director of PreservationCT, replacing these windows with anything not conforming to the originals would be a problem. This work should be done as soon as possible, as we find little pieces of these windows on the patio outside the front entrance regularly.
  - b. John Cusick also noted, on inspection, that a significant amount of the steeple repair work done 25 years ago is failing. He has applied temporary patches where possible, but the core problems remain. At some time in the future, these problems will need addressing.
  - c.

## 2. Parish House

a. No known Capital repair work is needed to the Parish House during the upcoming year. Once again, it has been my pleasure to be so deeply involved with both the buildings and Jack Russell over the program year ending this month, and I look forward to continuing it over the upcoming year. My thanks also to George Lindsay and Dale Richards for their assistance over the past year.

Respectfully submitted,  
John Sawyer, Chair

### Congregational Care & Connection

The purpose of the CCC Ministry Team is to encourage and support communication between members and friends of United Church on the Green. We extend our mission to welcoming guests.

Our weekly after-church coffee hour helps us stay connected. Dale Richards, with the able help of George Lindsay and contributions from our wide range of excellent cooks puts on a welcoming spread each Sunday.

Thanks to June, we have a regular coffee hour zoom meeting for our far flung congregants like David Sackrider and Al Forino. This is a wonderful opportunity to visit with far flung friends as well as anyone who is unable to make it to church.

The team also plans coffee hour and food for other celebrations, including Gathering Sunday, Christmas Pageant Sunday, Mardi Gras Sunday, and congregational meetings.

Working with the minister, the team also keeps up with news of congregation members who may need an encouraging contact, good wishes or congratulations. Our accomplished Sunday greeter, June Richards, has helped us keep track.

The CCC committee under the leadership of Rev. Ray has found a program useful for keeping track of interested visitors. We want to extend a big welcome and to answer any questions about the church.

When a congregation member needs special assistance or visits, the CCC committee has tried out a new way to request help. Dale sends out a news report and requests to everyone on special email list with needed specific assistance like meals or rides. Thanks to all the generous responders!

Many thanks to all of those on the CCC Ministry Team: Dale Richards, June Richards, Sue Hartt, Jean Blue, Abram Guerra, Lisa Guerra, CoCo LePere, Al Forino, and Dan Rausch.

CCC and You Haiku  
Congregational  
*(You can be a part of it)*  
Care and Connection

Respectfully submitted,  
The Congregational Care and Connection Ministry Team of 2023-2024

### **Faith Engagement and Fellowship**

In February of this year, the Ministry Team got a new name. The former name, "Faith Formation," was outdated, and it sounded a bit authoritarian. Also, we needed a term that would better reflect the broad approach we take to exploration of faith's role in our lives. Also, the name change can be seen as a part of an ongoing church-wide project to refine our understanding of UCG's mission and the ways we communicate it to the community.

During the 2023-2024 program year, a significant development was the hiring of a part-time child-care teacher for Sunday mornings, Rebecca Baisden, who has added continuity and educational expertise to the Faith Engagement program. The aim of the program is to provide, through activities suited to the children's ages, experiences of being part of a loving, inclusive

community. The Children’s Gathering during worship services is likewise a time when children can experience the church as a whole family, of which they are beloved members.

United Church continues to participate with several other local Protestant congregations in a collaborative youth group named Oasis. Oasis—through weekly meetings, camping trips, summer programs, and more—offers acceptance, friendships, fun, and occasions to think about life. UCG pays a share of the staffing and other costs for the group, and we also subsidize expenses as needed for our youth to participate in activities.

Weekly online Bible study, started in 2021, remains an important piece of UCG’s Faith Engagement program for adults. In addition, FEMT instituted a twice-monthly book group, beginning with discussions of *The Great Dechurching* by Jim Davis and Michael Graham. The next book was *The Other Side of Prospect* by Nicholas Dawidoff, and currently the group is delving into is *Awake to the Moment: An Introduction to Theology* edited by Laurel C. Schneider and Stephen G. Ray, Jr.

And Second Hour has again become a popular time for Faith Engagement topics, with regularly scheduled “Sermon Engagement” discussions with Rev. Ray and a quarterly cycle of three presentations on “This Is United Church”, culminating in a meeting with prospective members. (On June 2 the church welcomed two new members.) Further, there have been occasional special presentations, notably one on the Lord’s Prayer led by Jon Blue.

Many thanks to the people who have served on the FFMT this program year: Rebecca Baisden, Jo Buchanan, Lisa Guerra, Coco LePere, Chris Maursky, Julie Peterman, and Rev. Ray.

Respectfully submitted,  
Roger Adams, FEMT Team Leader

### **Members in Discernment**

The purpose of this committee is essentially to “walk with” members of United Church who have made the decision to follow the path towards ordination.

Currently UCG has one active Member in Discernment (MID): Bryan Bower. Bryan recently received his Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in New York, and he has been accepted to the Master of Sacred Theology (STM) there, which entails an additional year of study.

We also began this program year (July 2023 to June 2024) with three additional MID’s: Shawna Hart, Rene Guo, and Wai Wa Wu.

Shawna Hart is currently employed in St. Paul, Minnesota as a Hospital Chaplain. Last fall she transferred her membership from UCG to the church she has been attending in Minnesota, and

she transferred her MID status and program to the Committee on Ministry of that church's Association.

About the same time, Rene Guo decided to withdraw from the MID process. He has been studying in Scotland and has discerned that his call from God is not in the direction of ministry.

Wai Wa Wu graduated from Yale Divinity School in May 2022. However, due to health issues and the expiration of her student visa, she returned to Hong Kong and has not been able to come back to the United States since then. It is difficult to pursue Christian ministry in China at present, but Wa remains committed to serving others.

The MID Committee had four members at the start of this year: Dennis Titley, Kathryn Thomas, Al Forino, and Roger Adams. However, after years of faithful service, Dennis, Kathryn, and Al have moved out of Connecticut, so the Committee needs to be reconstituted.

Respectfully submitted,  
Roger Adams

### Service and Justice Ministry Team

*"You shall love your neighbor as thyself"* Mark 12:31.

This year to meet our commitment for service and justice at a national, regional and local level, United Church on the Green took on projects and causes that represent the interests of social justice and community action that are important to our congregation. During the 2023 and 2024 year our congregation participated in the following projects:

- Purchased and filled backpacks for IRIS.

- Distributed water at the New Haven Pride Parade

- Collected money to support Maui relief.

- Made Donations to Columbus House, New Have Pride Center, New Haven Christian Community Action, Downtown evening Soup Kitchen and Silverlake Conference Center.
- Prepared meals and provided companionship for the guests from Abraham's Tent for a week in Wallingford

- Collected winter clothing for IRIS

- Helped to resettle a Yale Divinity student from Beirut.

Service and Justice also continued to participate and support the causes of CONECT including Clean Slate legislation, mental health services, education equity and affordable housing in the state of Connecticut.

The Service and Justice task force is proud of our efforts to assist marginalized communities in New Haven and looks forward to the opportunity to expand our vision under the guidance of Reverend Stephen.

Many thanks to Leslie French, Cher Balkcom and Reverend Stephen for their committed involvement in Service and Justice. And a huge thanks to each and every one of you who volunteered your gifts to better our community.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jeff Hopper, Service and Justice Chair

### Worship + Music Ministry Team

We began the 2023-2024 church year with Roger Adams, Scott Hawkins, Candy Mayer, Ruth Anne Olson, June Richards, Kerry Snyder, and Kathryn Thomas comprising the Worship & Music Ministry Team. Scott has continued to act as our primary “Digital Deacon”, with Kerry and Roger providing backup. June warmly welcomed all who walked through our doors, whether a long-time attendee or a first-time visitor, and ensured whoever was reading scripture had . While unable to attend Wednesday night meetings, Candy has been wonderful, finding both fresh and familiar voices to read scripture each week. For any who might hesitate to join this ministry team because they don’t want to commit to meetings, remember that there are many ways to serve.

We were joined at our regular Zoom meetings by our new Senior Minister, Rev. Stephen G. Ray Jr., Music Director Caesar Storlazzi. Dale Richards regularly attended our meetings, providing a needed link between our ministry team and Congregational Care & Connection. Our moderators (Al Forino and Abram Guerra) also joined us whenever they could. And in April we joyously welcomed Darnell Ray to our ministry team.

As has become our custom, summer worship services were held downstairs in the air-conditioned Bradley Room. This not only makes coping with the inevitable hot humid summer weather easier for those who attend worship, but it also gives us the opportunity to do worship a bit differently. It also allows those amazing folks who oversee our after-worship collation to be present for the entire service.

Our first full year with Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray, Jr. as our new Senior Minister has been one of exploration, growth, and renewed hope. Stephen came to us with an open heart, a warm smile, and many new ideas. He has sought to incorporate his vision for the future of United Church while honoring the traditions of the past. As the year has progressed he has increasingly involved the congregation in the readings and liturgy of each service, sharing the leadership of the worship service with all. We all look forward to the time in the service when he speaks to the children, especially when he connects all the children present with the congregation.

We on the Worship & Music Ministry Team have gladly supported Stephen’s innovations, learning from his experience and sharing our own perspectives on the place of this congregation both in the life of our community and in the larger society in which we live. We look forward to yet more growth in the year ahead.

We moved back upstairs for “Gathering Sunday” in September, reveling in the sound of the organ and the return of our choir. Plastic communion cups were replaced with re-usable glass cups. A bit more work for us as we clean up from communion, but *so* much better for the environment! We even found specially designed trays that make it easy to run the cups through the dishwasher and double as storage trays.

It was decided to remove the large boards that housed *all* the name tags issued over the years. The boards had the effect of making the narthex seem smaller, the space crowded. June

applied her organizational skills, setting up a single table with the name tags most often used. During coffee hour she collects name tags and returns them to the table. All the other tags are still available, just stored away until needed.

Winter brought challenges with parking bans, which led to the creation of a standard policy to handle worship when New Haven prohibits on-street parking. We also set up a 'texting tree' to notify folks when this happens.

We continue to seek new voices to share in the life of this church. From welcoming all who walk through our doors to opening the meaningful act of serving communion beyond this ministry team, we seek to involve everyone who wish to participate.

Finally, as leader of the Worship and Music Ministry Team since its inception, I am stepping down as of this meeting. It has been my honor and joy to serve United Church on the Green over the years. I will continue to support this congregation, but for now that support will be from afar. Thank you all for the trust you have placed in me.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathryn Thomas

### YardBirds

The Parish House Garden is lush and blooming. The plants have weathered the winter, and it's time for the usual spring weeding and mulching. The garden thrives due to Will Henton's watering and care.

You may notice two bushes planted last season: a Crape Myrtle to the left as you approach the front door and an Otto Luyken Cherry Laurel at the right corner of the building. Also, some creeping succulents were added in the "back" of the Parish House, the side facing the parking lot.

We're always looking for additional 'Birds. If you're interested in gardening, speak with Karen Schneider or Roger Adams. No experience needed. The current flock includes Al Forino, Carol Gjellstad, Sue Hartt, Will Henton, George Lindsay, Jacqui McIntosh, Julie Peterman, Susan Ray, and Karen Schneider. Many thanks to them for their work.

Respectfully submitted,  
Roger Adams

**TREASURER**  
**Tim Bertaccini**

**Revenue and Expenses**

As of the end of May 2024, we are running a deficit for this fiscal year of \$37,034. This is slightly higher than the projected deficit of \$14,197. The deficit is due to unforeseen expenses in repairs and maintenance to our buildings and other expenses related to the hiring of our new senior minister.

**Endowment Performance and Draw Analysis**

Our annual endowment draw as been based on a 5.5% draw on its value over a 36 month rolling average which yields \$330,452. The endowment as of May 31<sup>st</sup> was \$6,201,143 which represents a significant increase over last year. The total return was over 8.6% for the year which protected us from inflation. The budgeted draw for next year is \$370,000 which represents a 6.0% withdrawal to cover increased expenses.

**Summary**

Our budgeted income was on target but our expenses were over budget because of increased maintenance costs for our buildings and expenses related to the hiring of our new senior minister (installation and benefit expenses). For next year we have budgeted a stretch pledging goal at \$160,000. This year we will most likely come in just over \$150,000. Our core group of members continue to be very faithful but that group has continued to decline in number. Overall due to rising expenses, this resulted in raising the endowment draw to 6% (\$370,000) for next year to help cover the potential deficit.

<b>United Church on the Green Budget Overview</b>			
<b>Budget Category</b>	<b>FY2024 Budget</b>	<b>FY2024 Projected Year End</b>	<b>FY 2025 Proposed Budget</b>
Revenue	\$682,122	\$690,000	\$738,785
Expenses	\$696,319	\$725,000	\$744,201
Net Operating Result	(\$14,197)	(\$35,000)	(\$5,416)

**SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS**

PROPOSED BUDGET

Budget Narrative

Narrative of Changes in the United Church Budget  
2023-2024 Program Year vs. 2024-2025 Program Year

1. Total budget expenses have increased by \$47,891 (6.8%) from last year to \$744,201. The following table shows the details of this increase:

Line Item	2023-2024 Budget	2024-2025 Budget	\$ Increase	% Increase	Cause
General Administration	\$23,300	\$26,700	\$3,400	14.6%	Consultants, Software, Postage
Communications	\$7,630	\$12,000	\$2,370	31%	Advertising
Salaries – Professional	\$296,537	\$327,164	\$30,609	10.3%	3.4% COLA, Sr Min. Health Care, Seminary Intern
Salaries – Administrative	\$177,177	\$187,377	\$10,200	5.8%	3.4% COLA, Sunday Childcare

2. Total budget income has increased by \$56,663 (8.3%) from last year to \$738,785. The following table shows the details of this increase:

Line Item	2023-2024 Budget	2024-2025 Budget	\$ Increase	% Increase	Cause
Endowment Draw	\$330,542	\$370,000	\$39,548	5.8%	6.07% Endowment Draw to cover increased expenses
Annual Giving Campaign	\$155,000	\$160,000	\$5,000	.03%	Stretch goal
Building Usage	\$87,450	\$91,747	\$4,297	4.9%	3.4% increase to IRIS lease, additional building usage

3. Net Income has gone from a \$14,197 budgeted loss for 2023-2024 to a \$5,425 budgeted loss for 2024-2025. This budgeted loss is .73% of the budgeted income, so this is, in principle, a fully balanced budget.



UCG FY2025 Operating Budget

Approved by Finance Committee 4-4-24 JIR

	5152 - VIDEO TECHS	\$ 3,000
	5103 · COMMUNICATIONS - Equipment	\$ 1,000
	<b>Total 5100 · COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>\$ 12,000</b>
	<b>5300 · BLDG &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>	
	5301 · ALARM SYSTEMS	\$ 3,500
	5310 · Commercial APPRAISAL	\$ 225
	5320 · EXTERMINATOR PH & MH	\$ 2,000
	5330 · INSURANCE POLICIES	\$ 41,662
	5340 · MH ELECTRIC	\$ 10,800
	5350 · MH GAS	\$ 8,000
	5360 · MH GEN'L REPAIRS/ REG MAINT	\$ -
	5360.1 · FURNITURE / EQUIPMENT-M/H	\$ 500
	5360 · MH GEN'L REPAIRS/ REG MAIN	\$ 5,000
	<b>Total 5360 · MH GEN'L REPAIRS/ REG MAINT</b>	<b>\$ 5,500</b>
	5361 · MH WATER/SEWER	\$ 1,500
	5362 · PH ELECTRICITY	\$ 9,600
	5363 · PH GAS	\$ 9,500
	5365 · PH GEN'L REPAIRS/ REG MAINT	\$ -
	5365.1 · FURNITURE / EQUIPMENT-P/H	\$ 500
	5365.2 - YARDBIRDS	\$ 150
	5365 · PH GEN'L REPAIRS/ REG MAIN	\$ 10,500
	<b>Total 5365 · PH GEN'L REPAIRS/ REG MAINT</b>	<b>\$ 11,150</b>
	5367 · PH WATER/SEWER	\$ 4,400
	<b>Total 5300 · BLDG &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>	<b>\$ 107,837</b>
	<b>5400 · FAITH FORMATION</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
	5409 · UCG Faith Formation Programs	\$ 200
	5408 - CTUCC Federated Youth Group	\$ 2,000
	5401 - BOOKS/CURRICULUM	\$ 200
	5403 - CLASSROOM SUPPLIES	\$ 200
	<b>Total 5400 · FAITH FORMATION</b>	<b>\$ 2,600</b>
	<b>5600 · WORSHIP PROGRAMS</b>	
	5602 · FLOWER EXPENSE	\$ 2,500
	5603 · GUEST PREACHERS	\$ 1,000
	5605 - Clergy Search Expenses	\$ -
	5606 · WORSHIP EXP	\$ 2,000
	<b>Total 5600 · WORSHIP PROGRAMS</b>	<b>\$ 5,500</b>
	<b>5800 - CONGREGATIONAL CARE/CONNECTION</b>	
	5801 - Care & Conn Events / Supplies	\$ 100
	5801 - Minister's Disc / Parish Relief	\$ 1,500
	<b>Total 5800 - CONGREGATIONAL CARE / CONN</b>	<b>\$ 1,600</b>
	<b>5700 · FINANCE</b>	

UCG FY2025 Operating Budget

Approved by Finance Committee 4-4-24 JIR

	5701 · BANK & CREDIT CARD FEES	\$	3,000
	7402 · INTEREST ON ENERGY LOANS	\$	3,500
	<b>Total 5700 · FINANCE</b>	\$	<b>6,500</b>
	<b>6100 · MUSIC</b>		
	6110 · CHOIR	\$	24,000
	6120 · CHRISTMAS SERVICE	\$	2,250
	6130 · EASTER SERVICE	\$	2,250
	6150 · WORSHIP GUEST ARTIST	\$	3,000
	6167 · WORSHIP SUB ORGANIST	\$	2,500
	6190 · MUSIC EXPENSE OTHER	\$	500
	6191 · ORGAN MAINTENANCE	\$	2,800
	6192 · PIANO TUNING	\$	500
	6193 · SCORES-MUSIC	\$	1,150
	<b>Total 6100 · MUSIC</b>	\$	<b>38,950</b>
	<b>6300 · WELCOME &amp; HOSPITALITY</b>	\$	<b>-</b>
	6310 · COFFEE / Brunch/Annual Mtg	\$	900
	<b>Total 6300 · WELCOME &amp; HOSPITALITY</b>	\$	<b>900</b>
	<b>6400 · SALARIES-PROFESSIONAL</b>		
	6401 · DIRECTOR MUSIC-SALARY	\$	41,972
	6402 · OPERATIONS DIRECTOR		
	6402.1 · Healthcare Operations Director	\$	6,977
	6402.2 · Retirement-Operations Director	\$	5,233
	6402 · OPERATIONS DIRECTOR - Other	\$	64,776
	<b>Total 6402 · OPERATIONS DIRECTOR</b>	\$	<b>76,986</b>
	6405 · SENIOR MINISTER SALARY	\$	70,555
	6850 · Digital Media Administrator	\$	22,257
	6851 · Digital Ministry Expenses	\$	-
	6452 · FICA for PROF SALARIES	\$	10,803
	6454 · CLERGY HOUSING SUPPORT	\$	34,751
	6455 · RETIREMENT SUPPORT-SR MINISTER	\$	14,743
	6451 · Dental/Vision	\$	2,614
	6451B Life/disability Insurance	\$	1,058
	6459 · Sr Clergy Family Healthcare	\$	30,648
	6460 · Sr Clergy FICA Offset	\$	8,056
	6456 · Sr Clergy TRAVEL & CONT ED	\$	6,204
	6458 · Seminary Intern	\$	5,000
	6457 · WORKERS COMP-PROF	\$	1,500
	<b>Total 6400 · SALARIES-PROFESSIONAL</b>	\$	<b>327,146</b>
	<b>6700 · SALARIES-ADMINISTRATIVE</b>	\$	<b>-</b>
	6702 · FINANCIAL SECRETARY	\$	46,450
	6703 · FRONT DESK ADMIN-P/T	\$	33,065

UCG FY2025 Operating Budget

Approved by Finance Committee 4-4-24 JIR

	6704 · HEAD SEXTON	\$	70,870
	6706 SUNDAY CHILDCARE EXPENSE	\$	4,000
	6705 · SEXTONS-P/T	\$	16,947
	6750 · FICA EXPENSE-ADMINISTRATIVE	\$	12,045
	6751 · WORKERS COMP-ADMINISTRATIVE	\$	4,000
	<b>Total 6700 · SALARIES-ADMINISTRATIVE</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>187,377</b>
	<b>7000 · OUTREACH</b>		
	7001 · OUTREACH COMMITTEE	\$	16,500
	<b>Total 7000 · OUTREACH</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>16,500</b>
	<b>7300 · WIDER CHURCH</b>		
	7302 · NEW HAVEN ASSOC DUES	\$	300
	7307 - Black Religious Scholars Group	\$	300
	7306 - SNEUCC Participation	\$	-
	7305 - Minister in Discernment Exp	\$	-
	7303 · SNEUCC PROPORTIONAL GIVING	\$	10,000
	<b>Total 7300 · WIDER CHURCH</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>10,600</b>
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>744,210</b>
	<b>Net to Operations</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>(5,425)</b>

NOMINATING SLATE 2024-2025

*This year's new nominees are shown in **bold Italics***

UCG Officers:

Term expiring June 2026

Moderator ***Abram Guerra***

Treasurer ***Tim Bertaccini***

Assistant Treasurer ***John Sawyer***

Term Expiring June 2025

Clerk ***Angelyn Singer***

United Church on the Green Leadership Board:

Term expiring June 2025

Cher Balkcom

Colleen O'Connor

***June Richards***

Term Expiring June 2026

***Benjamin Gyadu***

***Christine Maursky***

***Julie Peterman***

Delegates Southern New England Conference UCC:

Term expiring June 2024 (serving temporarily)

Abram Guerra

Susan Parris Ray



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323 Temple Street (Parish House)  
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[www.unitednewhaven.org](http://www.unitednewhaven.org)  
[@unitednewhaven](https://www.facebook.com/unitednewhaven)



**MODERATOR**  
**Abram Guerra**

Not everything went as expected since June of 2023, but United Church on the Green is vibrant with signs of growth and renewal. I think we can start to say that we have emerged from the pandemic—though we remain vigilant about the health and safety lessons we’ve learned. We still mourn and grieve what has been lost, even as we renew our commitment to the spirit of love and care that drew each of us to United Church on the Green in the first place.

While some repeat that we are living through unparalleled times, I am recognizing parallels every day. The global march of fascism is something many lived through in previous generations. Plagues and pandemics, wars and rumors of wars... The more things change, the more they stay the same, perhaps. I am constantly reminding myself of the song of Whitman:

*...What good amid these, O me, O life?*

*Answer.*

*That you are here—that life exists and identity,*

*That the powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse.*

As much as our politics, economy, and culture is in turmoil, even as the ecological climate of our planet continues to strain under the pressure of human consumption and the hunger to meet projected financial returns, there is ALWAYS room for you to contribute your own unique identity, to contribute a verse—The great unfinished symphony of human struggle continues, and our community of hope, peace, and love has never been more needed.

This year, our Pastor and Senior Minister, Stephen, has worked tirelessly to lead us through a full year of worship and ministry work (taking only three of 52 Sundays off in that year!), and we have enjoyed the fruits of our reverend’s labors through his new liturgies, provocative reflections, and strong partnership with Caesar Storlazzi and the choir, staff, and Worship & Music team.

We have enjoyed a year in the newly refurbished Bradley Room, full of food and fellowship, but also with deep conversations about who we are and how we tell United’s story as we live our faith out in community. Along with the church staff and the leaders and members of our ministry teams, we are rebuilding our connections to the community we serve, organizing with congregations statewide to improve the lives of our neighbors, and nurturing the tenderest among us by reinventing our Children’s Ministry, and so much more.

I hope you are as proud of our church as I am, and that your hope and love for this community grows with each passing week. I really do feel the Digital team and the creative process we've engaged in have delivered such a powerful new way of describing who we are to the world: The place for you. You who yearn for justice. Who dream of a better world. A place to dare to be you, in a community that shares your values and wants to support you.



There are so many to thank and acknowledge, because it takes a whole village to keep our church running. Every week I hear positive comments about the feast coordinated by Dale Richards and George Lindsay. Dale and I keep agreeing that we should also have more modest coffee hours from time to time, but the congregation just has so much joy to share.

Special honor is due to the many people that carefully steward and account for the resources of the church. First among those are Tim Bertaccini and John Sawyer, our Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, as well as Jean Blue, June Richards (our outgoing Secretary), and the entire staff: Nicole, Maxim, Nancy, Will, Raymond, Rebecca, Coco, and of course Jack—thank you! This church exists each week because of your diligent efforts.

With the Bradley Room fully renovated, we turned to renovating the auditorium upstairs, repolishing and upgrading brass light fixtures, repainting and resurfacing walls, and ultimately bringing new life into the beautiful space that we enjoy most Sundays. We've also spruced up the Narthex, and will continue to evolve and adapt the setup of the Children's room to meet the needs of our littlest congregants. We've also begun promoting our spaces to new potential renters, building on our success partnering with IRIS.

We also said farewell to some dear friends: Al Forino who has resettled in Buenos Aires with his husband Eric; Kathryn Thomas and Dennis Titley will be making their home in Vero Beach. It is bittersweet, but we know the next chapter will bring blessings, and we will still see you via YouTube and periodic visits to New Haven. While it won't ever be the same at United without

you, we are focused on gratitude for your hard work building up the congregation for many years, and have high hopes for the full life that lies ahead.

In sadder news, we experienced the loss of our dear sister, Christiana Alkire, another victim of the sickness of gun violence that plagues all corners of our Nation, but it hurts so much more when it strikes so close to home. We all send our love and prayers for Maria and Josiah, Christiana's mother and son.

I'd like to thank Jeff, Cher, and the rest of our service justice team, and all the congregants who have volunteered time, talent, and treasure to serve and improve our community. We continue to advocate for and with our partners at CONECT, Abraham's tent, Silver Lake, and so many more. I'd also like to thank Roger, Julie, and the rest of the Faith Engagement team for providing so many opportunities for our congregation to learn and grow in our faith. I have gotten so much out of the weekly bible studies (though I attend less consistently than I would like to!) and out of the regular book discussion meetings. I especially appreciated our discussion of "The Other Side of Prospect," which shined so much light on the grim realities of poverty and violence—and the failures of our criminal legal systems in New Haven.

We look forward to meeting new friends and forging new bonds of partnership as we continue the work of our ministry in the coming year, holding out the love and welcoming spirit of our God to the neighbors he will send to us. Thanks be to our Creator for the abundant life he offers us through his Son.

In love and peace,  
Abram N Guerra,  
Moderator



Submitted on behalf of the Leadership Council of United Church on the Green:

Benjamin Gyadu  
Cher Balkcom  
Chris Maursky  
Colleen O'Connor  
Julie Peterman