

Annual Report 2017



westchurch

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Miracles are a retelling in small letters of the very same story which is written across the whole world in letters too large for some of us to see.

C.S. Lewis

Our annual report is not just a recounting of what happened in 2017; it is an attempt to, at least in some small way, share stories and capture some of the miracles that took place. It's a retelling in small letters. Our staff and ministry leaders spent time reflecting, praying and visioning for their respective ministry areas. The following pages are a retelling of when we've seen and realized God was working among us all along, and of praises for His faithfulness.

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AGENDA

The Annual Meeting of the West Congregational Church will be held on
Sunday, January 28, 2018 at 1 PM in the WORSHIP CENTER
To act on the following:

- ARTICLE I: To review and act upon the prioritization of agenda items.*
- ARTICLE II: To receive and act on the recommendation of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Membership Ministry Leader to receive 5 new members.
Kelly Marshall
Robert Marshall
Francellis Quinones
Miguel Quinones
Sharon Ziegler
- ARTICLE III: To receive and act on the Leadership Search Team (LST) and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) recommendation for staggering SLT terms.
- ARTICLE IV: To receive and act on the Leadership Search Team (LST) Report for the election of Officers and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) Members-at-Large:

Officers:

Moderator: Jonathan Squire	Assistant Moderator: David Low
Clerk: Abby Cunningham	Assistant Clerk: Melissa Nickerson
Treasurer: Briana Fitzgerald	Assistant Treasurer: Renee Villafane

SLT Members-at-Large:

<u>One Year Term:</u>	<u>Two Year Term:</u>
Ed Platz	Jason Long
Eileen Cantone	Beth Steele
	Bob Wilson

To confirm Ministry Leaders as presented by the Lead Pastor:

Phil Williams, Administrative Support Ministry
Todd Becker, Children's Ministry
Deedee Roberts, Congregational Care Ministry
Sharon Ziegler, Connection Ministry
Todd Becker, Family Ministry
Eric Lindahl, Fifty Plus Ministry
Bob Wilson, Finance Support Ministry
Tammi McGrath, Hilltop School Ministry
Shirley Paz, Leadership Development Ministry
Chris Ziegler, Local Outreach Ministry
Carolyn Alexander, Membership Ministry
Carlos Paz & Mike Stevens, Men's Ministry
Mark Cottrell, Mission Leadership Ministry
Catherine Rogers, Property Support Ministry

Todd Becker, Small Groups Ministry
Shirley Paz, Spiritual Formation Ministry
Marge Squire, Women's Ministry
Eric Lindahl, Worship & Worship Support Ministry
Steve Simmons, Youth Ministry

ARTICLE V: To receive and act on the Proposed Budget for the year 2018.

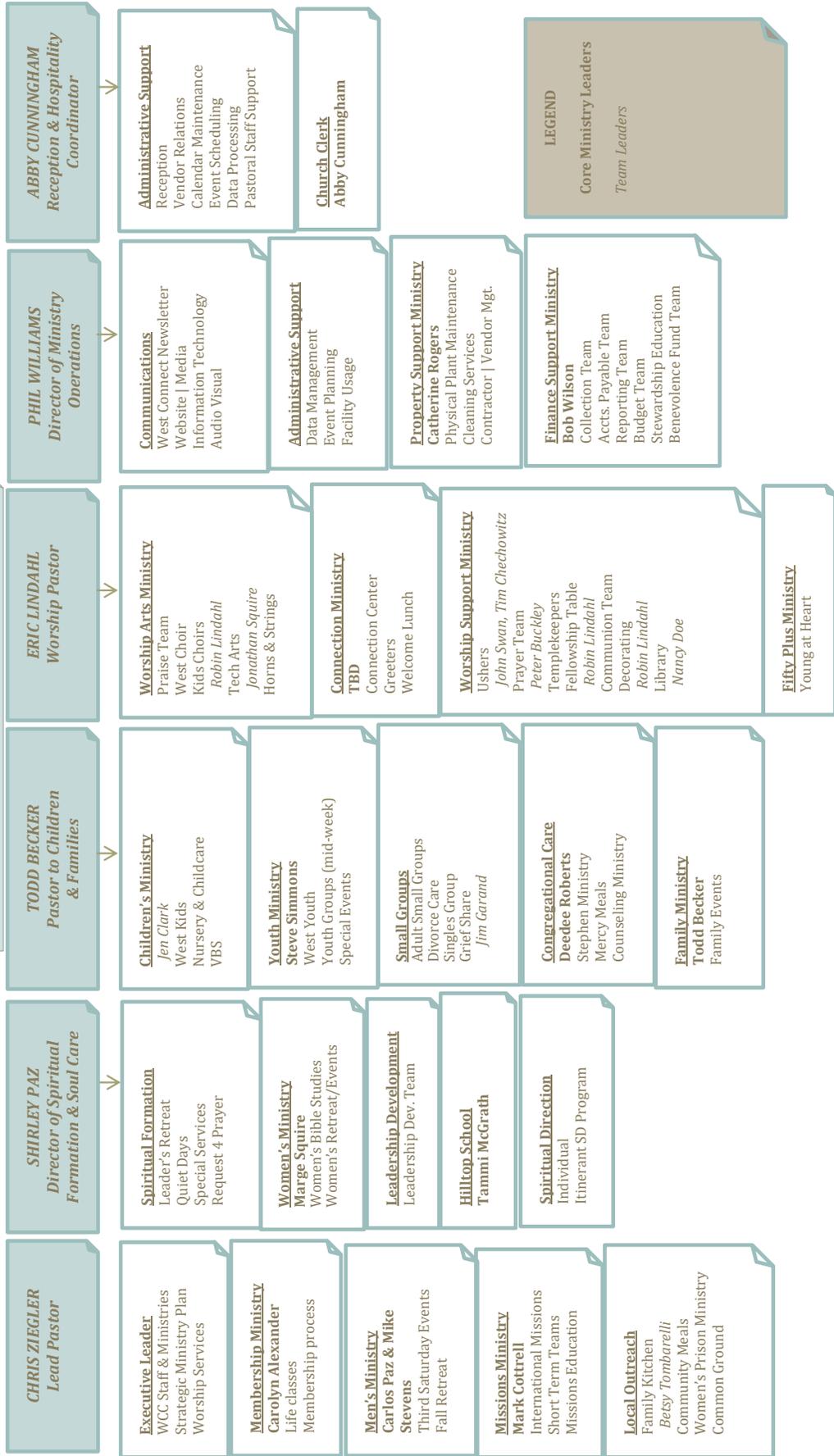
ARTICLE VI: To act on any other business, which may legally come before the church. *

* Anyone wishing to introduce an item not listed above must fill out a "West Church Business Proposal Worksheet". Worksheets are available at the church office and must be returned to the Church Clerk or Moderator before the start of the Business Meeting.

January 2018

JESUS CHRIST – The Head of the Church
 ~ The Congregation ~
 ~ Senior Leadership Team ~
 ~ The Church Staff ~
 ~ Ministry Leaders ~

Senior Leadership Team
 Pastor Chris Ziegler
 Eileen Cantone
 Jason Long
 Shirley Paz
 Ed Platz
 Beth Steele
 Phil Williams
 Bob Wilson - Chair

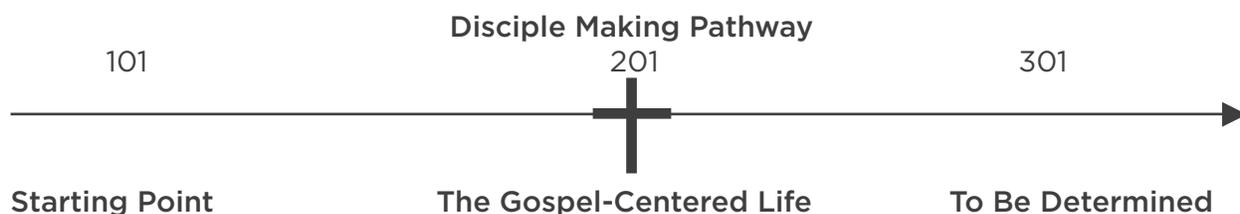


LEAD PASTOR

Dear West Congregational Church,

One of the joys of 2017 was seeing our church grow together spiritually. Our year began with a spiritual retreat in January facilitated by Doug and Adele Calhoun. This was followed by our LEAD retreat a few weeks later, where staff, core ministry leaders, and the senior leadership team processed our reflections from the previous retreat in dialogue with our previous year's strategic ministry plan. After praying together, we discerned a spiritual emphasis for our upcoming year: Humility. Holding this before God, we began to develop our strategic ministry plan for the ministry year July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018 in dialogue with the outcomes of our Natural Church Development survey from 2016. In these ways, God led us to turn our attention toward making disciples who reflect and embody our Savior's humility. Our "Less" sermon series this past fall cultivated the desire for Jesus to become greater as we become less (John 3:30).

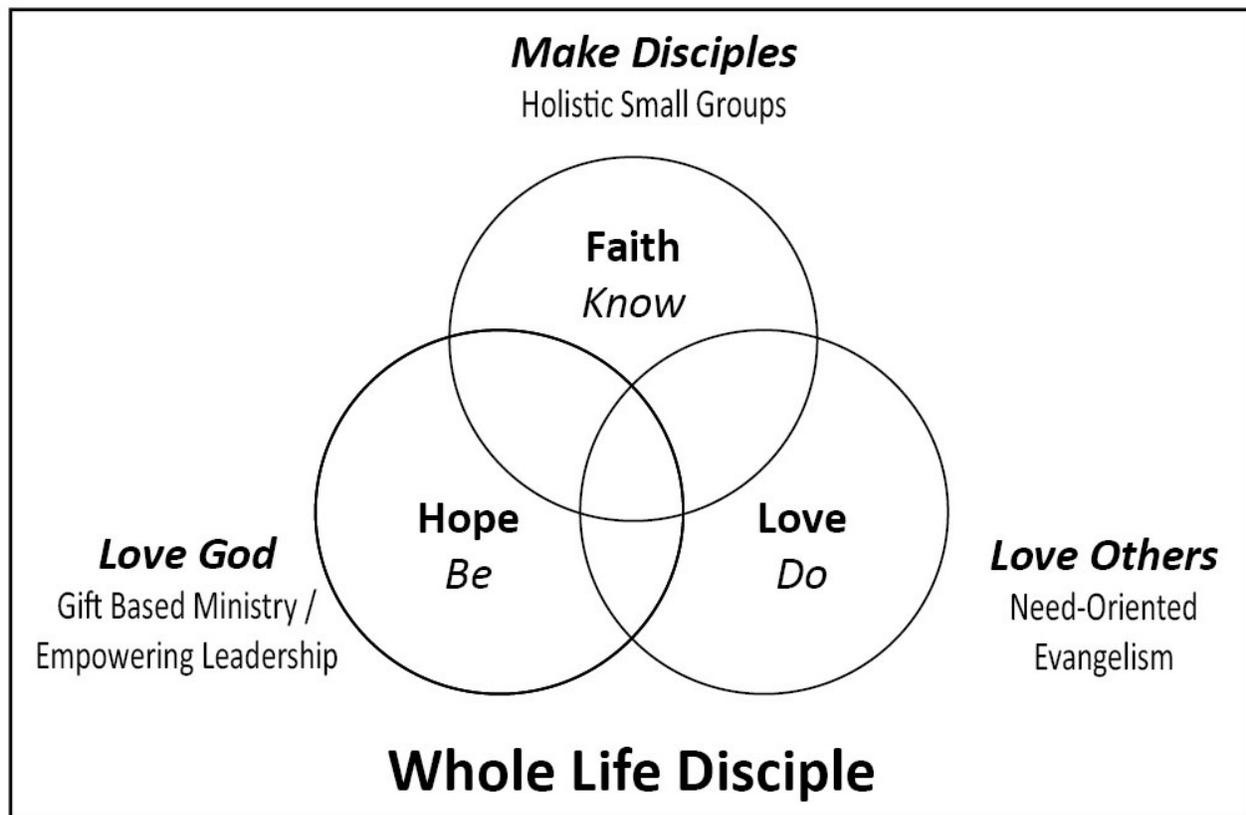
The goal this year is to have a simple and clear disciple-making pathway that can be regularly and easily accessed by friends and members here at West church. Toward this end, we desire to continue making progress toward identifying resources and implementing them across the disciple-making continuum (illustrated below). In 2016 we established Starting Point as our 101, providing a forum where seekers, starters and returners could have conversations about faith in Christ. This year, we piloted The Gospel Centered Life as our 201 to help those who have begun in Christ understand and experience how the gospel shapes every aspect of our lives. This resource is designed to promote transformational conversations among groups of both new Christians and maturing Christians. Multiple small groups have subsequently utilized this resource to enjoy growth in Christ. Going forward, we are looking toward identifying and implementing a 301 resource as a next step toward growth and alignment with Christ on our mission to be and make disciples.



We are also in the process of becoming Whole Life Disciples. As you may recall, Neil Hudson preached here in February 2017, and introduced concepts such as "gathered church" and "scattered church." Both are important. It is in our gatherings with fellow believers that we understand who we are in Christ and how the gospel equips us to live in this world as the scattered church on our respective "frontlines." A frontline is the place where we realize God's calling to engage with non-Christians in the mission of our real lives outside of church gatherings. Our primary vocation (or calling) is to be a disciple, an agent of the kingdom. As Neil wrote, "In sum, whole-life discipleship is not only about releasing people for the sake of God's mission, though, of course, it does include this. It is about recognizing that we can be shaped in the whole of life to grow into maturity as the people of God."¹

¹ Hudson, Neil. *Imagine Church: Releasing Whole Life Disciples*. Nottingham: IVP, 2012. p62.

Where the three components: knowing Jesus, being in relationship with Him in community, and doing what he calls us to do – Where these three things overlap, you have a biblical understanding of a whole life disciple (see illustration below). As you may recall, the sermon series on the book of James during this past spring and summer sought to equip us toward these ends. During 2016 we put special emphasis on loving God, in 2017 and our current ministry year, it has been making whole life disciples. In the upcoming ministry year, I anticipate that we will place more emphasis on loving others as we seek to become a more compassionate, outward-facing church.



As a preacher, I love alliteration (the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of closely connected words). And as I pray about our church, who we are, and where we are headed with Jesus, the words that come to my mind are: Healthy, Humble and Hungry. As we become more spiritually healthy, we will continue growing in the grace of humility, and become increasingly hungry for the advancement of Christ's kingdom.

Thank you for taking the time to read this annual report, for praying for our church, and your own investment in God's ministry to and through this church. Please join me in thanking God for the love that He continues to lavish upon us and display through us. What a privilege it is to love and serve Jesus with you!

Love In Christ,

Pastor Chris Ziegler

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

SLT Membership Changes

This year the SLT has experienced some changes in our membership. In May, Jason Long was selected to fill the unexpired term caused by Phil Williams shifting to a staff role. Then in August, Eileen Cantone was selected to complete the unexpired term of Matt Oosting (one of our original SLT members) who resigned because of changes in his family's work schedules and responsibilities. This Annual Meeting will mark the end of the first SLT term, and all five members-at-large will be reviewed for a possible additional term by the Leadership Search Team who will make nominations to the membership.

Lead Pastor and SLT Member Reviews

The SLT, with the assistance of the Human Resource Team, conducted our first comprehensive Lead Pastor annual review last spring. And this summer we went through our first experience of performance reviews for every SLT member. That entailed developing review questions, a process for collecting and compiling input, and scheduling review meetings with each member. Peer reviews were solicited for each member, and each one completed a self-review. It was a cumbersome process, and we have learned quite a bit that should help us handle it better in the future.

Strategic Ministry Plan

The Lead Pastor and Staff developed a proposed Strategic Ministry Plan (SMP) for the planning year of July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018 which was reviewed and edited by the SLT. The SLT is conducting ongoing quarterly progress reviews with the Lead Pastor.

Whole-Life Disciple Making

Last winter several SLT members attended the Vision New England "Go" Conference in February, and the next day the entire congregation had the opportunity to hear Neil Hudson's message at West Church related to Whole-Life Disciple Making. The SLT followed up on those events with a group study of the booklet "Leading a Whole-Life Disciple Making Church". We continue to explore and plan for the possible implementation of this approach at West Church.

Spiritual Retreat & LEAD Retreat

The SLT joined others for a day long Spiritual Retreat last January, and will be participating again on February 3rd. The Staff, SLT, and Core Ministry Leaders met for our LEAD Retreat last March to discern the Lord's leading and focus for the next year. We will meet again for that purpose this March.

Proposed Operating & Missions Budget for 2018

The SLT has reviewed and is recommending a proposed 2018 Operating and Missions Budget which is forward looking and challenging. It is available at the Connection Center and has been distributed via West Connect.

Systematic Activities

While SLT is still in the development process in many ways, we have begun to get into a more systematic approach for handling our ongoing responsibilities. To avoid having any critical areas fall through the cracks, we have developed a tickler calendar with systematic reminders to help us to schedule our time more effectively.

We have a team that works well together with an emphasis on candor and respect with each other. Our goal, as individuals and as team, is to work toward releasing personal agendas and opinions in order to come to a place of “indifference” to anything but the Lord’s will in our discussions and decisions.

We are grateful for the spirit of unity, joy, and hopefulness that seems to be pervasive during this season at West Church, and we are excited and hopeful about where God is leading us together.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Wilson, Chair
Eileen Cantone
Jason Long
Shirley Paz
Ed Platz
Beth Steele
Phil Williams
Rev. Chris Ziegler

DIRECTOR OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION & SOUL CARE

It's good when things are good!

I thank God for **His** goodness, and for all the ways He made Himself known this past year. As ever, it's a joy and privilege to serve at WCC, and to be able to see and hear the stories of the Father's enormous love, the Spirit's guidance, and Christ's faithful friendship.

The year began with WCC's annual Spiritual Retreat on Jan 28th. Led by Doug and Adele Calhoun, we had strong attendance for the "Growing in Christ" day-long seminar. The benefits and spiritually-developed fruit from that day were evident when our Core Ministry Leaders, staff, and SLT met for the annual strategic LEAD retreat on March 1st. Designed to utilize what God stirs at the Spiritual Retreat to plan a strategic ministry plan, the LEAD Retreat last year took a significant step as leaders communally discerned the Spirit's focus on humility. That led not only to a rich sermon series later in the year, but also to structuring "other-focused" resources and activities.

The value of this was not just in the good outcomes. The value is also that people heard God, heard one another in community, and then followed the direction indicated by the Holy Spirit. This is just one example of how we are growing in our capacity to be a people who listen, discern, and follow.

Other goals for discipling and spiritual formation were reached as a women's discipleship group met for 9 months studying Robert Mullholland's Invitation to a Journey. That group will now reform and add members as part of continued building of a women's discipling program.

As part of the discipling focus, several new small groups were formed, using the material from The Gospel-Centered Life series. The feedback from these groups has been overwhelmingly positive. Thank you to Carolyn Alexander and Ray St Amand for facilitating our initial groups. We plan to use this series in the coming year with additional groups.

Both at Lent and Advent, special services were created to reflect the spiritual emphasis and themes Love Ran Red and Songs for the Savior. As always, Pastor Eric and Robin contribute vitally to these services.

Because the nature of spiritual formation is that it is God who does the forming, my role is often to journey alongside people as they seek and follow Him. I am humbled to see the loving, transforming, and careful work of God in lives all around me. It is with a grateful heart that I serve alongside so many others who unselfishly give their time and energy. Marge Squire, Women's Core Ministry leader; Tammi McGrath, Hilltop Director; the Leadership Development Team (please see that separate report); the SLT; and of course, the WCC staff.

Grace,

Shirley Paz, Director of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care

PASTOR TO CHILDREN & FAMILIES

WestKids/Family Ministry

God has provided so faithfully to WestKids this past year. He continually creates unique opportunities where His truth is heard and experienced by our kids, and certainly not just on Sunday mornings but throughout the week. By partnering with parents, grandparents and caregivers, WestKids exists to resource and empower the spiritual leaders of the home and family so that there are opportunities for faith-building conversations. Thank you to everyone who faithfully prays for our kids and their families and for the children's ministry here at West. The WestKids team is incredibly blessed by what God is doing in the hearts of our youngest.

I am so grateful to God for His provision for this past year has brought even more improvements and updates to our physical space as we attempt to make the WestKids environment attractive to children and their families. Please visit us downstairs if you haven't already and take a look! We are also able to continue to utilize the Orange curriculum along with WestYouth. What we really like about the Orange philosophy of kids ministry is that they believe the church exists to partner with parents in guiding the spiritual lives of their kids and that together we can impact the lives of our kids for Christ. The WestKids team plans on continuing to utilize the Orange curriculum and exploring all that it has to offer in the year ahead along with WestYouth.

One of the highlights of the year was VBS week in June. The theme for the week was that we are all Created by God & Built for a Purpose. Not only did we have a great group of kids that came out each night but we also had an amazing group of volunteers! Throughout the week I was incredibly blessed by the stories that our leaders shared about how the kids were really experiencing the truths of God that we were focusing on together each day. As a result of the relationships that were built and strengthened during this week several families began attending WestKids on Sunday mornings. The parents and their kids are such a blessing to our community of faith here at West!

God provided a way for us to celebrate as a community at the YMCA's Camp Lincoln in June at our Summer picnic! It was a beautiful day to be at the lake and enjoy water sports and also ropes/climbing and other games together. We celebrated baptisms as a community and enjoyed sharing a meal with one another. It was evident throughout the day that people were enjoying meeting new people and hanging out and catching up with friends. Similar to this all church event, we as a church, also enjoyed the Harvest Party in September at the Roger's Spring Hill Farm. A BIG thank you to Steve Rogers and family for providing an opportunity for all that came to be outside enjoying God's creation and celebrating all that He has done.

This year's Christmas Eve service was also a highlight of 2017. Our kids and youth gave so much of their time and talent in practicing the nativity story and presenting it to the community. It was so encouraging to see young people telling us about the birth of Jesus, worshipping and leading us in worship, on one of the most special nights of the year!

Every time I reflect on how God is moving in children's ministry I can't help but think

about our amazing group of volunteers who generously and faithfully give of their time, talents and gifts to our kids. This is not only on Sunday mornings but throughout the year as we call on volunteers for special events. God brings together certain people for His ministries in the church and I feel as though I have some of the best. Thank you team! I would like to especially recognize our WestKids team that makes providing WestKids during our second service possible! We have a great group of young people who serve and I am so happy to be able to serve with them. We've welcomed these new members to our WestKids leaders team this year and they have made a great impact on the families that attend. I'm so grateful for how God draws people together to serve and how he utilizes their unique talents and gifts to create something special in our leadership team.

As we move into this new year I am very hopeful in our ability as a team to continue to minister to children and their families. Our shared hope is that the gospel would impact their lives not just on a Sunday morning but throughout the entire week.

WestKids - Nursery

Our nursery and childcare ministry is sometimes unseen yet it is so vital to West Church. Sometimes, our nursery team members are the first people a family sees and interacts with on a Sunday. Thank you to our faithful nursery volunteers who care so well for the youngest at West church. A BIG thank you to Jenn Clark and family for coordinating the team members for the nursery and ensuring that our youngest are well cared for and looked after. We have enjoyed the collaboration that we have had with Hilltop school as we looked toward improving the physical space in the nursery this past Fall. I believe our nursery is a very welcoming space that's inviting to the families that utilize it.

In the coming year we are looking forward to continuing to add team members and also provide improved training and team building opportunities. Our nursery team is a wonderful gift to the children and families at West and I am looking forward to the new year and all that it brings.

Todd Becker, Pastor to Children & Families

WORSHIP PASTOR

WORSHIP ARTS | WORSHIP SUPPORT | CONNECTION | FIFTY PLUS

2017 was an amazing year in the life of West Church. Praise God for the great things He hath done! The moments that stand out, when God displayed His boundless love for us in irrefutable ways, create a beautiful photo album of blessing and provision I'm honored to share with you.

Steve Simmons is a gifted musician, but decided last year to step off the praise team ministry. Even the few hours of music time required, he felt he needed to focus on WestYouth. That's just as God planned it, as He provided another gifted musician in Nick Noseworthy, right on time. ~ So we praise God again for the great things He hath done among His people!

After years of lovingly serving our senior saints, our Young@Heart cooking team needed to step down last year to be with their families. Just as God planned it, as He provided Dave and Debbie Dillon, right on time. An extra blessing as they already serve on multiple other teams at West, and are a joy to be around. ~ So we praise God again for the great things He hath done among His people!

When Lisa Couture felt God call her to decrease participation in multiple West and regional ministries in order to increase quality time with her family ("I'd visit, but then run out the door to another prayer group and pray for them. He wants me to slow down and be Christ with them."), He provided Connection Ministry founder Sharon Ziegler, right on time. ~ So we praise God again for the great things He hath done among His people!

When a member of the Fellowship Table team couldn't get to the annual team gathering, Robin Lindahl and the team took the gathering to her. ~ The joy of sharing worship songs and tears at the marriage ceremony of praise teamer Cherie Burton and Mark Botsch. ~ Receiving an email from Deb Berlin saying she'll continue as leader of the Communion Set-up team instead of stepping down, "until God calls the next leader to take over." ~ When back pain had me sidelined, Zach Herrick (and Jim and Helen) prayed for me every day for weeks, and underwrote an inversion table that's saved me. ~ What a beautiful picture of growing faith and family to see WestYouth up front "shepherding" our younger WestKids in the Nativity Play. ~ The sweet fellowship shared at the West Choir Bonfire hosted at Rich and Doreen Ciarletta's home. ~ Hearing of emotional and even physical healing from attendees of our Friday Fellowship community worship and prayer gatherings. ~ Brother Bill Moline always saying "Yes" to enhancing our worship with his tenor sax and "electronic oboe", even with international travel and family commitments. ~ Celebrating the season with old and new friends at our annual Advent Wreath Making, ably aided by Betsy Tombarelli, Kelly Brigham and Zach Bohne. (Special thanks to Catherine Rogers and the Rogers family for the annual gift of wreath-making greens and holiday wreaths that adorn our doors.) ~ Robin and I will never forget the outpouring of love and care from you all in the passing of my mom. ~ Celebrating the life and faith of Stillman Haynes and other West saints this past year.

My faith walk was deeply enriched by each of the excellent sermon series of 2017 and Pastor Chris's inspired illuminations of the Word. At the core of the Worship Arts, Worship Support and Connection ministries is the Sunday morning experience, and it's a joy and privilege to work closely with Chris and our staff team, who bless me with encouragement and their many talents in crafting times of worship that glorify our awesome God. Abby Cunningham and Phil Williams create beautiful graphics for our teams and events, and Roberta Platz was a joy to work with in her short time with us.

Heartfelt thanks to all our teams and leaders: Jonathan Squire, Zach Chechowitz, Drew Morgan and Mei Wu and the Praise team, Jonathan Squire and the TechArts team, Lisa Couture, Sharon Ziegler and the Connection team, John and Elizabeth Swan, Tim Chechowitz and the Usher team, Peter Buckley, April Gustafson and the Prayer team, Deb Berlin and the Communion team, the whole Young@Heart team, Robin Lindahl and the Fellowship Table and Decorating teams. Thanks also to worship center "Chairman" Rob Seuss, helping hands Ron LeBlanc and Zach Bohne, our stage crew Todd Hopkins, Lou Martone, Jim Stepanian and friend, and Matt Pierce for the custom carpet donation. And special thanks to all our guest artists throughout the year and especially in our Christmas concerts, Ellie and Jim Gustafson who are a joy to work with and learn from, Debbie Dillon for her help in the office, and my wife, Robin, for everything.

~ So we praise God again for the great things He hath done among His people! ~

Eric Lindahl, Worship Pastor

DIRECTOR OF MINISTRY OPERATIONS

I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now ...
- *Philippians 1:3-5*

I am continually reminded of the breadth of ministry that happens each and every week as so many volunteer to teach, care for and serve others. There IS power in community—especially God’s community—when we come together to serve Him by serving others.

Much of my ministry is about making sure the infrastructure is in place so that others may do ministry. It would not be possible to do this without those who assist me, especially Abby Cunningham, Reception & Hospitality; Catherine Rogers, Property; Jo Ann Jordan, Bookkeeping; Bob Wilson, Finance; Steve Simmons, Technology; Frantz David, Custodial; and the Benevolence Team. A special thank you to Roberta Platz who filled in for Abby during her maternity leave—you are a blessing!

Some of the major accomplishments this year were:

- LED Lighting Conversion throughout the church (already saved \$3,470)
- New administrative phone system
- New Internet and WiFi system
- New Access Control System
- Refurbished Brick Church lobby and Lower Level classrooms
- Groundwork for the new church logo which will be rolled out in January 2018

We are truly blessed as a church family. God brought each one of us to this family for a reason. My prayer for us this coming year is that no matter what life brings our way, may we all still continue to grow, be challenged, be inspired, and be encouraged by the presence of the Holy Spirit at work through the gift of one another. And, may we continue to testify of God’s goodness in both word and deed to those around us, living out the presence of Jesus Christ in our church family AND on our own personal frontlines.

I am grateful that I get to serve you and feel blessed to work at a place I call home.

Phil Williams, Director of Ministry Operations

MEMBERSHIP MINISTRY

13 New Members*

8 completed the Membership process in the Spring/Summer

- attended the one day Life@West Membership Class on May 13
- Congregational vote at special Business Mtg on July 30
- received into Fellowship September 10

5 are still completing the Membership process

- attended the one day Life@West Membership Class on October 21
- Congregational vote at Annual Mtg on January 28, 2018
- to be received into Fellowship February 11, 2018

The feedback from the “pilot” one-day Membership Class held in the Fall of 2016 was so positive we decided to go with that format for both classes in 2017.

The most important goal of the Membership class is to communicate to each person that becoming a Member of West Church is not really our primary concern! Rather, the heartfelt desire of Staff & Leadership is to know where people are in their spiritual journey with Jesus, even/especially if that place is one of seeking Him and finding out how to begin a journey with Him. The Membership class offers a safe place to do just that. One of the participants wrote the following in an evaluation of the class: “To hear that West Church is primarily interested in each person’s spiritual state and personal relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ rather than in the number of members meant a lot to me. We are of one heart and mind and I am so grateful that God lead me to West Church.”

Another high value of the Membership class is allowing participants to get to know the Staff. One participant wrote on the evaluation, “It was great that Chris, Todd and Shirley were able to spend so much of their time in leading each of the three sections of the class.” Another person said, “I loved the size of the class because it felt like an intimate conversation with all the (staff) presenters.”

I am so grateful to God for calling/leading these 13 individuals to make the choice/reaffirm their choice to follow Jesus and journey with Him in community with other believers at West Church. My hope continues to be for each Member of West - New & Old - by God’s grace, to “joyfully partner with God in the work He is doing in and through this local body by sharing and using [their] God-given gifts, talents and abilities.” (WC Bylaws, Article 5, Section 1)

Joyfully submitted,
Carolyn Alexander, Membership Ministry Leader

* This is the number of people who completed Life Classes in the 2017 Calendar year. It is different from the number of people voted into membership in the calendar year, as noted in the Clerk’s Report on page 29.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTRY

What a wonderful God we have - He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of every mercy, and the one Who so wonderfully comforts and strengthens us in our hardships and trials. And why does He do this? So that when others are troubled, needing our sympathy and encouragement, we can pass on to them this same help and comfort God has given us. - 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

This has been a busy year for Congregational Care. God has provided three new Stephen Ministers. Ray St.Amand, Barbara Metheny and Chris Seuss were commissioned in June and joined our ministry team. Ten of the twelve Stephen Ministers have care receivers who they meet with regularly. There are many reasons why people need care but only one answer for total healing - Jesus. The Lord is faithful and is at work in the lives of these hurting people.

Our Mercy Meals team was also busy providing meals and care to five families this year. These dedicated people bring not only food but Christ's love and concern for those in need. The Lord has provided the right people to fulfill this need.

Our Nursing Home/Homebound ministry team has been visiting those who are unable to come to West.

I would like to recognize Deb Berlin for her many years of service (16) as a Stephen Minister and Leader. She has shown compassion, patience and love over the years to her many care receivers. She has also helped in teaching the Stephen Ministry training classes and continuing education. She is grounded in God's Word and has been a wellspring of wisdom for other Stephen Ministers.

When I think of a story that captures the heart of how God is working through this ministry I'm reminded of a comment from one of our Mercy Meals recipients. She spoke of how helpful it was for her to know that her family was taken care of during a difficult time. She also loved the fellowship, care and sympathy that were shown to her.

Looking ahead to 2018 I would like to continue to engage more people in visiting and caring for those who come under the Nursing Home/Homebound ministry. I would also like to train more Stephen Ministers and hope to start the process this fall.

Respectfully submitted,

Deedee Roberts

MEN'S MINISTRY

It is always a joy to share this year end report because it causes me to take time to reflect on how wonderfully God has worked in the lives of men at West Church. Mike Stevens and I, Carlos Paz, thank God for a year of eventful ministry among us. As I write I am reminded that for two years now I have not had to lead the men's team or its widespread ministry on my own, I have had the great advantage of Mike Stevens working at my side. His insight, his maturity, and his solid spirituality have proven to be a great blessing. Thank you, Mike, for being such a team player, and for being willing to take on so many small and large projects on your own while I have been serving in the foreign mission field.

The breadth of our men's ministry consists of promoting two important endeavors; the annual men's retreat held in the fall, and the 3rd Saturday events which normally take place from October to May of each church calendar year. From all appearances, both the retreat and the 3rd Saturday events proved to be a blessing to our men. And I would add that approximately 60 men attended our retreat the last weekend of this past September. Our speaker, Mark Rivera, of Riverside Church in Haverhill, was dynamic, effective, and very engaging. We not only received solid biblical teaching, but Mark was able to draw men into very thoughtful and provoking conversation. The men expressed their appreciation for this part of the retreat. It made it all the more personal, practical, and beneficial to them. We expressed our deepest appreciation to Pastor Mark Rivera.

The 3rd Saturday events followed a theme entitled "Just Do It." We picked up on the theme from our previous year's retreat, which presented a theme of "Just Be It." We met for our breakfasts and were blessed to have good attendance for all of these monthly events. The greater blessing was that we heard some very good speakers from our New England surroundings. We were more than challenged by their messages. Attendance seems to fluctuate from mid-thirties to mid-fifties. The weather seems to influence this one way or the other.

But the most exciting goings on are the men's Bible studies that meet on various nights and Thursday mornings and Saturday mornings. Some of the small groups are coed. And we are fine with that. We are concerned mostly that our men at West have an opportunity to be engaged in a small group, living out their faith with other men and women in community.

Mike Stevens and I would like to thank Pastor Chris for his leadership and input in all that we do to execute ministry among our men. We also enthusiastically thank our team members for their loyal support and solid input, as well as the hard work they have done often behind the scenes to make our ministry come together. Especially, we thank the men who cook for the 3rd Saturday events. They are led by Jim Stepanian. Bless you guys. We could not do it without you. Most of us are not served bacon as part of a healthy diet, but thanks to you, we can go whole hog once a month. Pun intended! Ha.

I, Carlos Paz, would also like to report here that I will not be continuing as the men's team leader after our year end event in May or June of 2018. My responsibilities have grown in Honduras and Nicaragua, and I am being called to spend more time there in

the years to come. But I am confident that Mike Stevens and Pastor Chris, along with our loyal men's team, will enable this ministry to grow and thrive in the months and years to come. Bless you all. I have been richly blessed to have been a part in the lives of such good men at West Church. Thank you all for allowing me to serve, and for being encouragers along the way.

Respectfully submitted,

Carlos Paz
Mike Stevens
Men's Ministry Co-Leaders

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

I would like to thank the many women who have faithfully lead bible studies and small groups, praying and encouraging the women of West Church as they seek to go deeper with God. I am always amazed at how God builds beautiful relationship and friendships among the women of West.

We are looking forward to the start of Discipling Groups which will be facilitated/led by trained women leaders, initially using the resource *Life Together in Christ* by Ruth Haily Barton. This year leaders will be invited to participate in a 9 month journey of study, prayer, and the exercise of group spiritual direction. The first group of trainees will be led by Shirley Paz, with Marge Squire shadowing.

Also, I look to identify a Team Leader and to build a team for the purpose of Women's Events. Either one-time or on-going events, having an intentional component of out-facing welcome and/or first serve. For example, Monday night studies, a brunch, service project, etc.

Marge Squire, Women's Ministry Leader

WESTYOUTH MINISTRY

God is working in and through WestYouth. A few examples of his faithfulness and provision are:

Back Pack Donations

WestYouth Students are devoted to making a difference in the community. We attempt to discover, evaluate and serve the needs of Haverhill, as well as the surrounding communities in the Merrimack Valley.

The excerpt below is from one of our Youth Leaders, Gerry Roldan. He summarizes the need for this fundraiser,

“Our desire is to help the least fortunate students in our community and surrounding communities. Imagine a student receiving one of these backpacks, the smile and impact it can have on a child’s life. I can speak for myself growing up to a single parent-my mom couldn’t afford school supplies for us. Now, we can make a difference for students that can’t afford school supplies.”

With outside and church member donations we were able to give over 70 backpacks to both Tilton School in Haverhill and the Wetherbee School in Lawrence!

Deep Freeze Youth Winter Retreat

This year was a great experience at our annual Youth Winter retreat. We had a great time of spiritual and emotional healing as the group of students found safety and love amongst each other. That allowed for great trust to develop and a sense of solidarity. Two students had made decisions to follow Jesus for the first time!

Walk for Water

Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico on September 20th, and some of the island’s residents are still lacking access to electricity and clean water. Water Mission is currently responding to the dire need for safe water in the following ways:

We are working with the EPA and FEMA to address the needs of over 200 rural communities in Puerto Rico that have water systems managed by the Department of Health.

To date, we have successfully provided safe water in 39 communities, and we continue to complete installations on a weekly basis.

Having successfully installed over 1,100 solar-powered water pumping systems, we are implementing solar-powered solutions in many communities, rebuilding systems that are more resilient and sustainable than they were before.

Through the youth’s efforts WestChurch was able to raise over \$1200 for this relief effort!

As I look back on all that took place in and through WestYouth in 2017, I would like to give special recognition and thanks to:

Gerry Roldan: Unrelenting commitment to our students and the community!
Helen Lacourse: Her energy, faithfulness and ability to draw in students!
Richard Ciarletta: For his continued influence, wisdom and patience with our middle school boys!
Meghan Lescarbeau: Caring, informative and kind to all of our students at WestYouth
Natalie Simmons: A dynamic, loving presence to our Middle School girls. Wise discernment and graciously challenges the girls to “raise the bar”!
Todd Becker: His leadership is very much appreciated. He always has time to listen, care for and give guidance to any situation.

Our students serve regularly at the Community Meals that the church provides to our Haverhill friends in need. Bill, one of the Community Meals leaders, gave each one of our students a gift card and told us that we were the “best group” that serves there between all of the ministries!

One of our main goals and vision for 2018 is to raise and develop students to have compassion for others, recognizing needs, taking action to help serve those needs, while building relationships with friends and neighbors in the community in order to make disciples of Jesus! The emphasis is to help students build a ministry, raise resources, build a team, and see this vision through!

Steve Simmons, Youth Pastor

HILLTOP SCHOOL

Another year has past, God has been so good to Hilltop School, the families, the children and the ever faithful staff. It has been 49 years of God's amazing Grace! We are looking forward to celebrating 50 years of God's wonderful work that he has done through Hilltop School, next year.

A new security system has been installed on the front doors. The Hilltop area can no longer be accessed unless a code has been issued. Each Hilltop family has a code. Also the children are checked in and out through the ipad, Tadpole childcare program. Tadpole notifies parents as the child is dropped off and when the child is dismissed. Tadpoles sends a daily report about the child's activities throughout the day, as well. Another security camera has been installed and new cable run to all the existing cameras, to the new system.

Hilltop has cell phone, which is helping with better communications with staff and families. Anyone is able to text a message to Hilltop's cell at 978-971-1080, with a question or concern.

Our toddler program is growing. Hilltop now has two toddler rooms. One room has 1 & 2 yr olds and the other has 2 & 3 year olds. They are very busy rooms!

I would like to give special recognition to all my teachers. Specifically, Carol Boynton, whose dedication to Hilltop School for over 35 years is remarkable! She is the first to arrive at Hilltop school each and every morning at 6:30am! Her love for the families and children, and her co-workers at Hilltop is very humbling. She is a treasure, for which Hilltop would be lost without her! However, all the staff play a very important role at Hilltop each in their own special way. They are all generous, flexible and loving. We consider each other as family. 'Sisters in Christ'.

Faithfully submitted by Tammi McGrath, Director

MISSION LEADERSHIP MINISTRY

In 2017, West Congregational Church (WCC) was able to send financial support to 15 overseas missionaries and their families. It is exciting to be able to partner with them as they expand God's kingdom in different parts of the world. WCC supports missionaries working in Asia, Africa Central America and the Middle East where they evangelize, plant churches and translate the Bible into new languages. Two new missionary families were added to our list this year; the Pothens working in India and the Najjars in the Middle East.

This past year we had the opportunity to have a number of our supported missionaries visit WCC. Ralph Leo, as a guest speaker, delivered a dynamic message to us in February. In March, we hosted the Turners and had the pleasure of listening to their many stories of God's miracles in their ministry. We then had Emmanuel and Allison Pothen come and share about their exciting work in India with Influence International.

The MLT, alongside the WCC youth "water walk" fundraiser and donations from the WCC church body was able to financially support the efforts of Water Mission in Puerto Rico. In response to the hurricane disaster, Water Mission is repairing and constructing water treatment systems to provide safe drinking water to numerous remote villages in Puerto Rico.

Another highlight was to be able to personally travel to Guatemala with Pastor Chris and Phil Williams to participate in the celebration of Otto De La Cruz's 25th anniversary celebration of his church planting ministry. Pastor Chris was the keynote speaker at the event which was attended by the many pastors and members of the over 40 churches Otto has started throughout Guatemala.

I am so blessed to be able to work alongside a great group of people on the MLT; Ellie Gustafson, Dave and Anita Low, Brianna Fitzgerald, Jason Long and Judy Durant. I would like to thank them for all their hard work and enthusiasm for missions at WCC.

Lastly, I would ask the WCC body to continue to give generously, to pray for our missionaries frequently and to reach out personally at the local and global level wherever and whenever God may call.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mark Cottrell, Ministry Leader

PROPERTY MINISTRY

Property Team Members: Catherine Rogers, Richard Boynton, Jim Stephanian, Billy Spohr, Bob Wilson, Phil Williams

Projects completed for 2017:

- Siding on the parsonage
- Replaced the front door on the brick church with glass doors
- Painted classrooms in the lower level.
- Painted administrative office
- Painted the windows on the outside of the brick church
- Painted the walls in the front hall of the brick church.
- Replaced the rug in the front hall of the brick church.
- Fixed screens in a few of the windows
- Bought new kitchen double door freezer
- New key pad installed to the front and side glass doors
- New economical LED lighting throughout the entire church
- Refinished the Worship Center Floor

Future Projects for 2018

- Repoint brick church
- Larger heater unit in second floor of WEH
- Replace lightning system in Cry room

I want to thank Phil Williams for all his support and hard work this past year on the organization and the improvement of the church building.

I also want to thank all the volunteers and the members of the church that always step in and help when things are needed.

Catherine Rogers, Property Team Leader

FINANCE SUPPORT TEAM

Collection Team

We continue to be blessed by the faithful service of our Collection Team, very well led by Richard Ciarletta. These are the behind the scenes folks who count the offerings, record your giving, and make deposits to the bank. This year the team has been supplemented by some new volunteers, Leigh Mura and Alan Felenchak. Our continuing faithful volunteers are Sue Nutter, Gene Boudreault, June Burton, and Lynn Greenlay. Thanks gang!

We continue to seek additional volunteers who can assist during the first service hour so that we can get all our teams on a bi-weekly schedule.

Bookkeeper & Treasurer

Our part-time bookkeeper, Jo Ann Jordan, continues to serve us faithfully and accurately. She handles all the accounts payable, payroll, and recordkeeping tasks, in addition to monthly financial reporting to the staff and ministry leaders. She has also been working diligently to scan all financial documents so that we can eliminate a ton of stored paperwork.

Our Treasurer and Assistant, Mitzi Wilson and Linda Mahoney, will both be stepping down after many years of service. Thank you!

Financial Peace University

Last Winter we had our 7th Financial Peace University group, and our 8th group begins on January 28th. Mitzi Wilson is the facilitator of the 9-week program. Over the past six years FPU has had a significant impact in the lives and finances of many people at West Church and beyond.

Budgets & Financial Reporting

Special thanks to Phil Williams who has now taken on oversight of the entire budget preparation process! After 30+ years, it was one area in which I have “burned out.” Phil has also published Monthly Contribution updates in West Connect e-newsletter.

Financial Position

Thanks to the continuing generous financial gifts of so many, and to the faithfulness and grace of the Lord, we are in a positive financial position. We have met our budget needs for 2017 and have a carryover to allow ministry to continue at full levels for 2018.

Special Recognition for Linda Mahoney

Linda has been intimately involved in West Church finances for the last 25 plus years! For many years she was the volunteer bookkeeper and treasurer, handling all the behind the scenes financial record keeping and reporting. Her innumerable hours of service and attention to detail deserve special recognition and thanks. While she never seeks public recognition, I can't let her step back without a special word of thanks and appreciation for her dedication to West Church and to the Lord in this special ministry to us all. And I am especially grateful for the opportunity to work with her over these many years. Thank you, Linda,!

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Wilson, Ministry Leader

CHURCH CLERK

Annual Meeting - January 29, 2017

- Elected Officers
- Confirmed Ministry Leaders
- Eighteen new members confirmed
- Approved a budget of \$785, 932

Special Meeting - July 30, 2017

- Six new members confirmed

2017 Membership Statistics

- Membership*
- Participating Members - 227
 - Transitional Members - 2
 - Heritage Members - 5
 - New Members - 26
 - Deceased Members - 1

2017 Baptisms & Dedications

- Baptisms - 6
- Dedications - 4

2017 Average Weekly Attendance

- Sunday Worship Services - 349
- Easter Sunday - 783
- Christmas Eve - 539

2016 Membership Statistics

- Membership*
- Participating Members - 207
 - Transitional Members - 43
 - Heritage Members - 4
 - New Members - 18
 - Deceased Members - 3

2016 Baptisms & Dedications

- Baptisms - 8
- Dedications - 0

2016 Average Weekly Attendance

- Sunday Worship Services - 320
- Easter Sunday - 751
- Christmas Eve - 440

Brianna Fitzgerald
Church Clerk

2018 PROPOSED BUDGET

Operating Budget

	2017				2018	
	Jan - Dec	Budget	\$ > Budget	% Budget	Proposed	Difference
INCOME			(##) Under			
3005 · Operating Contributions	717,168	705,000	12,168	101.73%	725,000	20,000
3010 · Operating-Hilltop Payment	21,385	17,500	3,885	122.2%	21,385	3,885
4996 · Parsonage Rental Income	15,000	15,000	0	100.0%	15,000	0
TOTAL Operating Income	753,553	737,500	16,053	102.18%	761,385	23,885
EXPENSE	SALARY DETAIL NOT PUBLISHED					
Total 4005 · STAFF COMPENSATION	453,241	459,901	(6,660)	98.55%	468,545	8,644
Total 4100 · STAFF REIMBURSEMENTS	3,752	5,450	(1,698)	68.84%	5,450	0
Total 4148 · WORSHIP ARTS MINISTRY	4,989	7,750	(2,761)	64.37%	7,700	(50)
Total 4240 · SMALL GROUP MINISTRY	9	1,200	(1,191)	0.78%	1,200	0
Total 4246 · CONGREGATIONAL CARE	763	1,300	(537)	58.67%	800	(500)
Total 4284 · CONNECTIONS MINISTRY	1,136	1,400	(264)	81.18%	1,500	100
Total 4289 · MEMBERSHIP MINISTRY	350	400	(50)	87.55%	400	0
Total 4291 · WORSHIP SUPPORT	5,026	4,675	351	107.52%	5,100	425
Total 4300 · WOMEN'S MINISTRY TEAM	983	1,000	(17)	98.33%	1,000	0
Total 4325 · MEN'S MINISTRY TEAM	644	1,000	(356)	64.41%	2,000	1,000
Total 4349 · FAMILY MINISTRY TEAM	1,357	2,000	(643)	67.87%	2,000	0
Total 4388 · YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM	8,109	9,500	(1,391)	85.36%	9,500	0
Total 4475 · LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	3,062	3,900	(838)	78.52%	3,900	0
Total 4500 · CHILDREN'S MINISTRY	13,929	16,000	(2,071)	87.06%	16,000	0
Total 4610 · Spiritual Formation/Soul Care	3,069	2,700	369	113.67%	2,700	0
Total 4665 · MISCELLANEOUS MINISTRY	6,275	11,050	(4,775)	56.79%	10,650	(400)
Total 4700 · OFFICE SUPPORT TEAM	20,333	18,665	1,668	108.94%	21,262	2,597
Total 4765 · COMPUTER / TECHNOLOGY	8,108	9,500	(1,392)	85.35%	9,900	400
Total 4800 · PROPERTY SUPPORT TEAM	151,115	152,950	(1,835)	98.8%	156,600	3,650
Total 4900 · FINANCE SUPPORT TEAM	4,392	4,250	142	103.35%	5,600	1,350
Total 4950 · LOCAL OUTREACH TEAM	6,833	6,841	(8)	99.89%	6,814	(27)
Total 4960 · INTERNATIONAL MINISTRY	64,500	64,500	0	100.0%	65,500	1,000
TOTAL EXPENSE	761,978	785,932	(23,954)	96.95%	804,120	18,188
Net Ordinary Income	(8,425)	(48,432)	40,007	17.4%	(42,735)	
CARRYOVER						
Prior Year Carryover	48,432	48,432		100.0%	40,007	
2018 Misc Transfer	0	0		0.0%	2,728	
TOTAL CARRYOVER					42,735	

Detailed Mission Budget

	2017				2018	
	Jan - Dec	Budget	\$ > Over	% Budget	Proposed	Difference
5005 · MISSION SUPPORT						
5050 · John & Brooke Bryant	3,000	3,000	0.00	100.0%	3,000	0
5060 · Stuart & Sindia Foster	3,000	3,000	0.00	100.0%	3,000	0
5070 · Sally Isaias	3,500	3,500	0.00	100.0%	3,500	0
5090 · Humberto del Arca	2,500	2,500	0.00	100.0%	2,500	0
5100 · Otto de la Cruz	2,500	2,500	0.00	100.0%	2,500	0
5110 · Nelson Juarez	2,500	2,500	0.00	100.0%	2,500	0
5140 · Ralph & Tara Leo	6,000	6,000	0.00	100.0%	6,000	0
5160 · Chet & Fran Matheson	3,000	3,000	0.00	100.0%	3,000	0
5170 · Robert & Nancy Sabean	3,000	3,000	0.00	100.0%	1,000	2,000
5180 · Kulea	5,000	5,000	0.00	100.0%	5,000	0
5200 · Carlos Paz - MAG	6,000	6,000	0.00	100.0%	6,000	0
5210 · Soderbergs - Wycliffe	3,000	3,000	0.00	100.0%	3,000	0
5220 · Turners	3,500	3,500	0.00	100.0%	3,500	0
5483 · Coombs	500	500	0.00	100.0%	500	0
5486 · Dailey	500	500	0.00	100.0%	500	0
5489 · Draper	500	500	0.00	100.0%	500	0
5492 · Davis	500	500	0.00	100.0%	500	0
5496 · Emmanuel & Allison Pothen	4,000	4,000	0.00	100.0%	4,000	0
5497 · Johnathan Ciccaroni	-	-			3,000	(3,000)
5498 · Mike & Lesly Najjar	3,000	3,000	0.00	100.0%	3,000	0
5520 · Camp Fireside	2,000	2,000	0.00	100.0%	2,000	0
Total 5005 · MISSION SUPPORT	57,500	57,500	0.00	100.0%	58,500	(1,000)
5600 · TEAM EXPENSE						
5610 · Missions Awareness Week	-	500	(500.00)	0.0%	0	500
5620 · Guest Speakers	1,828	2,000	(172.06)	91.4%	2,000	0
5630 · Short Term Mission Stipends	2,658	3,000	(341.61)	88.61%	3,000	0
5640 · Missions Education	400	500	(100.00)	80.0%	0	500
5650 · Conferences	193	1,000	(807.46)	19.25%	1,000	0
5660 · Special Projects	-	-	0.00	0.0%	1,000	(1,000)
Total 5600 · TEAM EXPENSE	5,079	7,000	(1,921.13)	72.56%	7,000	0
TOTAL EXPENSE	62,579	64,500	(1,921.13)	97.02%	65,500	(1,000)

NON-BUDGETED FUNDS REPORT - 12/31/2017

BUILDING FUND

Purpose: For major property related projects that exceed the resources available through the Operating & Missions Budget.

12/31/2017 Balance	\$ 58,459.
** Designated for Main Boiler	\$ 29,000.
Available Balance	\$ 29,459.

Major projects currently under consideration by the Property Team include pointing up the masonry and bricks of the brick church, and replacement of the furnace heating the 2nd floor of the Worship Center.

*** At a Special Business Meeting on 3/23/2014 the church authorized up to \$29,000 from the Building Fund for replacement of the main heating boiler in the brick church when needed.*

RESERVE FUND

Purpose: To provide a buffer for unexpected events or expenses, or a significant decline in income.

12/31/2017 Balance	\$ 120,229.
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The current balance would fund operations for 7-8 weeks in the event of a crisis, to allow time for adjustments to be determined and implemented. Why? In 2003 West Church experienced a decline in income to the point that weekly contributions had to be deposited before paychecks could be distributed to staff. The situation resulted in adjustments to the budget and staff reductions.

MISCELLANEOUS FUND

Purpose: Primarily intended to track “in and out” funds. For instance, if the Men’s Team plans a retreat, the registration fees collected are deposited into this fund, and then payments for the retreat expenses are paid out of it. Many of our Ministry Areas have line items within this Fund. The Miscellaneous Fund may also be used to self-finance specific expenses to avoid leasing fees and finance charges (i.e. copier replacement, and LED Bulb Replacement Project). In addition, other designated monies may be tracked within this fund. Some of the more significant line items include the following:

Cell Antenna Fund (Verizon Wireless payments)	\$ 90,297.
* Special Projects Fund	\$ 12,368.
12/31/2017 Balance	\$ 130,498.

** Special Projects are funded by extra contributions by donors for approved projects.*

BENEVOLENCE FUND

Purpose: To collect and distribute money to meet the unexpected and overwhelming financial needs of people in the West Church community. This fund is anonymously administered by a volunteer team with oversight by the Pastoral Staff. Income and expenses are periodically reviewed by the SLT (without identifying names of recipients). *10% of the funds collected are donated to the Haverhill Salvation Army to meet needs of people in the broader Greater Haverhill community.*

Balances in this fund are not published.

