



**Plymouth
Church**
UNITED CHURCH *of* CHRIST

Annual Report 2021



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**Minutes for the Annual Meeting
Sunday, November 16, 2020**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PLYMOUTH CHURCH
MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY DUE TO PANDEMIC
NOVEMBER 16, 2020**

****DUE TO THE CONTINUING GLOBAL COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE STATE-MANDATED LIMITATIONS ON GROUP GATHERINGS, FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING THIS YEAR, MEMBERS OF COUNCIL DECIDED TO HOLD THE MEETING VIRTUALLY. THE ANNUAL REPORT WAS DISTRIBUTED TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION BY E-MAIL OR UPON REQUEST, BY ORDINARY MAIL BY NOVEMBER 2, 2020 IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION.****

VOTE ON PLYMOUTH CHURCH LEADERSHIP ROSTER FOR 2021

In accordance with the mandates of the Constitution, a vote of all members was held using electronic mail. The slate of proposed candidates listed below was presented and members submitted electronic votes to the Plymouth Church Office email address. To meet a quorum, 75 votes were required to be cast. A total of 86 vote were cast by the end of the day of November 16, 2020. The result of the vote count was 85 votes in favor of the slate of candidates and 1 vote against the slate. The slate of candidates as presented was thereby accepted.

LEADERSHIP ROSTER FOR 2021

Note: Numbers in parentheses denote that this will be the person's 2nd, 3rd Etc. term.

Key: B&G: Building & Grounds; C&Y: Children & Youth; E & G: Evangelism & Growth; P&S: Partnerships and Service; (F): member of Finance Committee

Council President (F)	Brian Grube (2)
Council Vice-President (F)	Mary Bright (2)
Secretary	Vicki Werneke
Treasurer (F)	Juanita Faulx (4)
Asst. Treasurer (F)	Pamela Ford
Council Member@Large	Ros Gauchat (3)
Council Member@Large	Shelli Smith (2)
Council Member@Large	Nicole Lepley (2)
Council Member@Large	Becky Neal
Council Member@Large	Jan Wilkens
Adult Faith & Life Chair	Mendle Adams
Adult Faith & Life Vice-Chair	Joanna Cullinan
B&G Chair (F)	Ron Werneke
B&G Vice-Chair	Hans Hunziker
Caring Chair	Dave Faulx
Caring Vice-Chair	Don Grauer
C& Y Chair	Jeannie Clarkson
C& Y Vice-Chair	Joanna Horn
E & G Co-Chair	Margaret Reuthinger

E & G Vice-Chair	Kevin Anderson
Giving Chair	David Turner
Giving Vice-Chair	Carolyn Jillson
P & S Chair	Robin Johnson (4)
P & S Vice-Chair	Joann Hall (3)
Worship Chair	Amy Holbrook (2)
Worship Vice-Chair	Val McClelland
Personnel Chair (F)	
Foundation Chair (F)	
UCC Living Water Rep.	Pam Beck (4)
UCC Living Water Rep.	Adrienne Brockway (4)
UCC Living Water Rep.	Jeff Pollock
Finance Committee 21	Brian Grube
Finance Committee 21	Mary Bright
Finance Committee 21	Juanita Faulx
Finance Committee 21	Pamela Ford
Finance Committee 21	Personnel Chair
Finance Committee 21	David Turner
Finance Committee 21	Ron Werneke
Finance Committee @ Large21	Marcus Henry
Finance Committee @ Large21	Chris Karr
Foundation Dir 21	Jeff Pollock
Foundation Dir 22	Dick Pogue
Foundation Dir 23	Lalana Green
Foundation Dir 23	Mary Bright
Nominating Committee 21	Wayne Hall
Nominating Committee 21	Hans Hunziker
Nominating Committee 21	Vicki Werneke
Nominating Committee 22	Pam Beck
Nominating Committee 22	Sara Martin
Nominating Committee 22	Mai Moore
Nominating Committee 23	Faye Gary
Nominating Committee 23	Jane Underwood
Nominating Committee 23	Dan Farmer
Pastoral Relations 21	On hold for new Senior Minister
Pastoral Relations 21	On hold for new Senior Minister
Pastoral Relations 21	On hold for new Senior Minister
Pastoral Relations 22	On hold for new Senior Minister
Pastoral Relations 22	On hold for new Senior Minister
Pastoral Relations 22	On hold for new Senior Minister
Personnel Committee 21	Ruth Garwood
Personnel Committee 21	Kenyon Mau
Personnel Committee 22	Jim Holbrook
Personnel Committee 22	Paula Colahan-Sederstrom
Personnel Committee 22	Karen Reich Kolendo

Agenda for the 2021 Annual Meeting

November 14, 2021

- I. Determination of presence of a quorum
- II. Call to Order & Invocation
- III. Call for motion to dispense with reading the 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes which appear in the 2021 Annual Report.
- IV. Call for motion to approve the 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes
- V. Senior Minister's Report
- VI. Treasurer's Report
- VII. Foundation Fund Report
- VIII. President's Report
- IX. Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of Officers
- X. New Business
- XI. Adjournment
- XII. Benediction

President's Report

It's hard to describe the past year (or two) that Plymouth has had without a measure of disbelief. Amazement, really. And gratitude.

Amid a waning pandemic, a terrific new senior minister (and his wonderful spouse) joined our family; our membership grew; we continued to host a school; and we welcomed a new congregation to share our home. Every one of these things is not only an accomplishment for us, but also represents a challenge overcome by us. And that truly is the cause for my amazement and gratitude.

For the last two years, it seems there has been nothing that we could not handle—nothing we could not overcome—if we stuck together. Together in our faith, together with each other, we have faced each new challenge. We have never given up, but instead found a way through.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. (2 Corinthians 4:8-9.)

This is Plymouth's gift. As my time in leadership draws to a close, it is the recognition that Plymouth's resilience is scarcely new, but how it has always been, that provides support and makes me look forward to finding out what's next for us—together.

Peace,

Brian Grube

Submitted by Brian Grube, President

Finance Committee Report

The Finance Committee has overall responsibility for overseeing Plymouth's financial affairs, including developing the annual budget in collaboration with departments, monitoring overall budgetary compliance, overseeing the Treasurer to assure that appropriate financial controls are in place and are being followed, and periodically reviewing the compensation of all Church employees. Finance Administrator Kathryn Kundrat again continued to serve Plymouth ably and patiently this year, and I recommend her report for details of all that was accomplished.

This year the Committee continued the practice of tracking our operating and capital spending separately. To preserve some cash to devote to next year's capital projects, Council adopted a 2021 "operating expenses only" budget last December. As the year progressed, the Committee tracked actual operating expenses against the budget's spending plan by reviewing the monthly *Statement of Activities*. Separately, last December Council approved a list of 2021 capital projects and earmarked funds for those projects. Plymouth accounts for these funds in a special account (80321) shown on the *Statement of Financial Position*. To track actual capital spending, each month the Committee reviews a standalone detailed monthly report on that special account. Finally, the Committee also reviews the monthly Statement of Financial Position to monitor Plymouth's cash and assets..

Spending on operations and capital changed during the year. With Council's approval, we adjusted the original budget to reflect actual projected pledge income, related Partnership and Service gifts to the community and changes in planned spending on insurance and compensation. Council also approved some additional capital spending for live stream projects.

There will be additional 2021 unbudgeted revenue (net of expenses) from tenants Cleveland Clinic Autism Center and Heights Christian Church, as well as from a CARES act loan related to our third quarter expenses which we expect will be forgiven, though the timing on forgiveness is not yet certain.

On behalf of Plymouth, the Committee developed certain agreed upon procedures and again retained Ciuni & Panichi to perform the procedures. The Committee is pleased to report that the auditors found no major issues during their review of the agreed upon procedures.

The Committee also approved new controls on our Automated Clearing House (ACH) payments, described in detail in Kathryn Kundrat's report.

We will be working with departments on the 2022 budget for presentation to, and approval by, Council this November. We will continue to monitor cash and the funding needed for capital projects. We plan to propose adjustments to the 2022 budget in January 2022 to reflect actual pledge income, related expenses and any other new items not considered in the November presentation.

With gratitude to the members of the Committee:

Brian Grube, President

Juanita Faulx, Treasurer

Christine Bretz, Foundation Chair

Chris Karr, Member at Large

Kenyon Mau, Personnel Chair

Marcus Henry, Member At Large

David Turner, Giving Chair

Ron Werneke, Building and Grounds Chair

Deborah Lindsay, Interim Senior Minister (ex officio)

Kathryn Kundrat, Finance Administrator (ex officio)

Submitted by Mary Bright, Vice President

Treasurer's Report

Plymouth moved inside for services at the beginning of September. Services on the lawn during fair weather keep member's spirits up and allowed fellowship. We continue to wear masks.

Below is a summary of finances. Kathryn Kundrat has managed the accounts and prepared reports. We meet weekly to pay the bills. The church revenue out-paced expenses. Cleveland Clinic's Lerner School started using our church in Qtr. 4 of 2020 and Heights Christian Church now meets in our chapel on Sundays, both providing a boost to income.

As of 9/30/2021

	Actual	budget remaining	annual budget	percent used
revenue	\$618,970	\$277,320	\$896,291	69.06%
expenses	\$563,158	\$272,396	\$835,555	67.40%
Net YTD	\$ 55,812		\$ 60,736	

Plymouth has always been a strong church, full of faithful members. Our financial condition remains strong and we pray it remains so.

Submitted by Juanita Faulx, Treasurer

Foundation Report

The Plymouth Foundation is the Church's endowment that provides important annual support to Plymouth's operations, special activities and various programs authorized by Church Council. The Foundation has both unrestricted and restricted funds that are only available for specific purposes.

The Foundation's investments are monitored and administered by directors who are recommended for appointment by Church Council. Its funds are a portfolio of diverse investments with moderate risk, composed of both bonds and stocks. Contributions to the Foundation are welcome from one's estate plan or to commemorate a significant event such as a wedding or baptism.

The Foundation's annual contribution to the Church's budget is calculated based on 5% of the average of the fair market value of its portfolio at September 30 of the current year and at December 31 of the past 2 years. The portfolio was approximately \$5.7 million at December 31, 2019, \$6.4 million at December 31, 2020 and \$6.6 million at September 31, 2020. The typical Foundation annual contribution to the Church ranges from approximately \$220,000 - \$250,000, depending on the value of the investments at the targeted dates. However, due to favorable stock market results in the past few years and the performance of the Foundation's investments, the 2022 contribution to Plymouth's operating budget will be ~\$308,000.

Submitted by Christine Bretz, Chair

2020-2021 Membership Statistics

November 1, 2020 – October 31, 2021

Summary of Changes in Membership:

Total Membership as of November 1, 2020		414*
	New Members Received	9
	Deceased Members	4
	Members Transferred	0
	Members who resigned	0
Total Membership as of October 31, 2021		419
Total Membership includes:	Members	391
	Associate Members	4
	Student Members	24
Total Membership does not include:	Active Friends	37

* Due to a database error, the 2020 Annual Report incorrectly listed the total membership as 372 as of November 1, 2020.

Additions to Membership:

Members were received as follows:

7 By Letter of Transfer:

<u>New Member</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Officiating Minister</u>
Marilyn Christian	October 24, 2021	Rev. Matthew Bauhof & Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster
Kathryn Marsh	October 24, 2021	Rev. Matthew Bauhof & Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster
Scott Marsh	October 24, 2021	Rev. Matthew Bauhof & Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster
Curtis Reynolds	October 24, 2021	Rev. Matthew Bauhof & Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster
Sigrid Reynolds	October 24, 2021	Rev. Matthew Bauhof & Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster
Betsy Wooster	October 24, 2021	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Rev. Matthew Wooster	October 24, 2021	Rev. Matthew Bauhof

0 By Confirmation

0 by Affirmation of Faith

0 by Reinstatement by Church Council

Losses to Membership:

0 Removed by Letter of Transfer

0 Who resigned Their Membership

3 Due to Death for whom a Funeral or Memorial Service was conducted at Plymouth Church or by Plymouth Church staff:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Memorial/Funeral</u>	<u>Officiating Minister</u>
*Ann Eberhard	January 9, 2021	Funeral at Funeral Home	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
*Diana Geddes	August 18, 2021	Funeral at Funeral Home	Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster
*Anne Cook	October 30, 2021	Memorial Service	Rev. Matthew Bauhof

1 Due to Death (No Service)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	
*Richard McCrea	December 2, 2020	(No Service due to Covid-19 restrictions)

* Plymouth Member

Other Funerals or Memorial Services:

2 Funerals or Memorial Services conducted at Plymouth Church or by Plymouth Church staff for a non-member:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Service</u>	<u>Officiating Minister</u>
Susan Sifritt	July 15, 2021	Rev. Mendle Adams
Joseph Markt	September 5, 2021	Rev. Matthew Bauhof

Baptisms:

1 Received the Sacrament of Baptism

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Service</u>	<u>Officiating Minister</u>
Adaline Raine Marsh	August 2, 2021	Rev. Matthew Bauhof

Dedications:

1 Received Service of Dedication

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Dedication</u>	<u>Officiating Minister</u>
Dahlia Leone Liu	July 18, 2021	Rev. Matthew Bauhof

2 Weddings

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Officiating Minister</u>
Becky Neal and Brian Cesnak	July 24, 2021	Rev. Matthew Bauhof
Mingyao Zhou and Mark Kosower	October 2, 2021	Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster

Fifty + Year Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date Joined</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Date Joined</u>
Maggie Oviatt	10/03/1971	Tom Daniel	10/04/1964
Dick Pogue	10/04/1970	Janet Daniel	10/04/1964
Pat Pogue	10/04/1970	Gus Schrader	03/01/1964
Merrill Mau	05/03/1970	Holly Hitchcock	04/11/1963
Deborah Palmisano	05/03/1970	Martha Forth	10/07/1962
Julia Welsh	05/03/1970	Bob Brucken	05/07/1961
Shelly Anderson	11/23/1969	Christina Webster	03/30/1961
Dick Ogle	05/04/1969	Jim Chaney	05/06/1956
Jeannie Chaney	03/02/1969	Barbara Ginn	03/06/1955
Barbara Hawkins	03/02/1969	Ruth Nowicky	01/02/1955
Helen Reed	03/02/1969	Frank Carpenter	01/03/1954
Beth Sanborn	05/05/1968	Barbara Kacir	04/15/1954
Joni Gray	03/03/1968	Terry Shockey	04/06/1952
David Rodgers	03/03/1968	William Ginn	12/24/1950
Norma Rodgers	03/03/1968	Dick Brubaker	04/10/1949
Bryan Mau	03/23/1967	Carl Gray	03/21/1948
Stephen Murphy	03/23/1967	Marcia Christian	04/14/1946
Gretchen Smith	11/19/1967	Marion Hill	03/25/1945
Fred Stueber	07/07/1966	Rich Gray	04/02/1944
Eva Garden	01/09/1966	Mary Alice Cannon	04/18/1943
Mary Ann Davis	11/22/1964	Joanne Ross	03/29/1942

Senior Minister's Report

“Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.” Isaiah 40:31

There is a short list of days in my life that I remember as momentous, joyful, and full of hope. To that list, I have added Sunday, April 11, 2021, the day when the congregation of Plymouth Church voted to call me to the position of senior minister during a special congregational meeting. This meeting was held by videoconference, due to the covid19 pandemic, and these are the words that I shared with the congregation that day:

“Members of Plymouth Church, I am honored and humbled by your trust. It is a privilege and joy of my life to accept your call to become the next senior minister of Plymouth Church; to minister to you, and to minister with you to one another and to the wide community of our neighbors. Our lives are coming together at a challenging time. I can see that Plymouth Church has the gifts to meet this time with faithfulness to the love of God that we know in Christ, so that this may be a time of spiritual growth, engagement, and strengthening the ties that bind. I am thankful for the ministry of Rev. Matt Bauhof, Jim Riggs, and Leslie Szalay, and I look forward to joining with them, and with all of the dedicated members of the church staff. I also give thanks for the ministry of my predecessors, including Shawnthea Monroe, Jim Antal, and, most recently, Deb Lindsay. I am grateful for all of the members of Plymouth Church, particularly Gloria Sturghill and the members of the Pulpit Committee, who represented the church so well, and Brian Grube and members of Council.”

From April to July, I completed my term of ministry at Wellesley Hills Congregational Church, UCC, and then settled into our new home in Shaker Heights. I began my ministry with Plymouth Church in August and led worship at Plymouth Church for the first time on August 8.

The past year has been shaped by the covid19 pandemic. In this year, from Advent of 2020, through spring of 2021, the church continued ministries of worship, growth, and spiritual care while engaging in very little in-person contact. The church lawn provided a wonderful setting for periodic outdoor worship services, and, in the summer of 2021, outdoor worship became the primary service each week. Worship services also began to be livestreamed at this time, a practice that will surely continue into the future. During the spring and summer, covid19 vaccines became more widely distributed, allowing us to resume worship inside the sanctuary in September, while observing the precautions of requiring masks, seating in every other pew, and refraining from the practices of passing offering plates, shaking hands, or serving refreshments after worship. Small groups and meetings also began to gather in person once again, though virtual meetings and hybrid gatherings have remained common. Throughout these months, church leadership has sought to mitigate risk and exercise caution. As of this writing, some members of the church are choosing to gather in person, and other members are participating by remote connections. In many respects, the community of Plymouth Church has endured the challenge of the pandemic relatively well, though this is not to suggest that the congregation has been spared from loss, illness, and exhaustion. In the year ahead, the physical and spiritual recovery from this collective trauma, shared by our church and by our neighbors, will be a central focus of ministry.

Throughout the year, the church building and facilities have been well used. The Lerner School of the Cleveland Clinic has continued to rent space for weekday education. And we welcomed the Heights Christian Church (HCC) to begin “nesting” at Plymouth Church in September, including Sunday worship in the Chapel, and a small presence during the week. HCC is in the process of selling their church building, and will continue to meet as a congregation at Plymouth as they discern the best path for the future. The

agreement that began in September has a one-year term, with the option to renew.

This has been a time of transition among the ministers and staff of Plymouth church. Rev. Dr. Deb Lindsay served as interim minister for almost two years, helping to guide the church through the onset and most difficult period of the pandemic. Her ministry was recognized with thanksgiving on her last Sunday, July 11. The main church office was served for most of the last year by Jeannie Clarkson, who provided great service to the church by stepping into a temporary part-time role to cover essential responsibilities. She served in this role until September 2021. During this time, the personnel committee and staff leadership created a position description for an Office Administrator as a half-time role, and Plymouth Church welcomed Linda Watson to the church staff in October!

During the pandemic, and amid staff transitions, the church's ministries benefitted from the work of Sarah Grube, who worked remotely in the area of digital communications. Leslie Szalay, Kathryn Kundrat, Paul Holter, Jim Riggs, and Rev. Matt Bauhof each took on additional responsibilities, as needed, and are still carrying some duties at this time. Looking forward, there are two part-time positions that were not filled when they became vacant during the pandemic: a communications role and a sexton role. As the church moves closer to resuming a full schedule ministry programs, bringing the staff to a complementary level will allow all staff members to give their full strength and energy to the primary areas of their ministries.

Plymouth Church is a community that is grounded in the good news of Jesus Christ, and it is an honor to begin my ministry within this congregation of people who are thoughtful, prayerful, faithful, and courageous. May God strengthen us to grow in faith, and to love and serve others together with joyful hearts.

With trust,
Matt Wooster

Submitted by the Reverend Dr. Matthew Wooster, Senior Minister

Associate Minister's Report

EXHAUSTING AND UPLIFTING

One piece of my theology is the understanding that as people of the resurrection, we are equipped to hold sadness at the same time as celebration. When thinking about this past year, I very much hold exhaustion/sadness/frustration along with celebration/joy/love. This year has been exhausting in too many ways to count. And yet this year has been uplifting and a blessing in too many ways to count.

Decision fatigue, backup plans, balancing safety with connection, not being able to connect in the ways we have always done, not knowing if we should be doing more or if this this new thing will work were constant punches in the gut throughout the year.

And yet, during the valleys, during the moments of extreme frustration and sadness and despair throughout the year, there was always this well of God's love present for me and for our church to draw from. Rev. Deb and Rev. Matt couldn't have been better for our church in each of their moments. Outdoor worship wasn't just good because we couldn't meet indoors, it was good because we experienced God in a new way. Liturgy changed but it provided grace in its simplicity. Members were constantly supportive and loving of our staff. We experienced new members and new baptisms during a pandemic. You all decided to remain financially committed to Plymouth. Music adapted to the risks of COVID and has been beautiful. We experienced anew the joys of worship in the sanctuary again. We have been forced to try new things, new events, new ideas that will remain and bring joy for Plymouth and others for years to come.

Time and time again throughout the pandemic I have been so thankful for this church. I know that not all of you have agreed with every choice and every decision we have made. None of us have. However, you all have collectively decided to remain committed to this church and supportive of the it. Thank you.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Great things about this past year:

- Running virtual youth groups and virtual family nights including: escape rooms, trivia nights, a chopped event, puzzles and all types of games that could be played on a computer.
- An in-person high school service trip which was as filling for the adults as it was for the youth.
- 8 confirmand students participating in confirmation this year.
- A Spooktacular event in which we advertised less than ever, but had our most ever children attend. It appears the event is becoming a part of the greater community.
- A family scavenger hunt that took teams competing for points throughout the city.
- Being able to baptize and dedicate children during a pandemic.
- Youth group in my backyard, gathering around the fire.
- Amazing and inspiring sermons from our seniors during Children and Youth Sunday and Service Trip Sunday.

Questions for the upcoming year:

- How can we integrate our multiple generations more often throughout community life (less children over here and adults over there)?

- How can we make our worship space and service more engaging and inviting to children and youth of all ages? Can we make small adjustments to our language, style, worship space, that will allow children to feel more integrated and included?
- How can we equip our families to do faith formation at home? How can we support our families in the process?
- How do we make church and church activities fulfilling and not just one more activity for families to schedule around?
- How can we get more adults working with and supporting the children and youth at Plymouth?

LIVESTREAM

A project that took a significant amount of my time/energy/brainpower this year was getting our livestream equipment and process up and running as we moved away from a pre-recorded virtual worship. It took time to research equipment, best practices, microphones, cameras, and all the hardware and software needed to make this happen. We tried to balance getting good quality equipment that has enough function for us to expand into, but not so many bells and whistles that we would never use. We settled on a proposal with NPi Audio Visual Solutions and I believe we arrived on a great quality solution for our church to use for many years to come.

As we have begun livestreaming, Plymouth's focus has been to capture good quality video and audio. I believe we have been able to do this so far (with plenty of hiccups along the way) and I am hopeful that our livestream worship product will continue to improve as the years go on. The plan is to add in hymn lyrics and responsive liturgy to the livestream screen as well as graphic and announcement slides. We currently have a three-person volunteer team running the livestream each Sunday and I hope we will expand that team to make the work more sustainable.

VIRTUAL/IN-PERSON

This year I have spent time thinking about the future of Plymouth as both an in-person and virtual community. Going forward, we will continue to be forced to explore Plymouth as both a virtual and physical church. While in-person worship will always remain, I have seen the positive effects that our livestream worship has on members. People can virtually worship, really worship with us, when they otherwise wouldn't have been able to. This has been a gift for our church, and it presents an opportunity to better care for our people moving forward.

When planning events, we now question which audience are we prioritizing, and will we be offering this to one or the other or both? I have been wondering if in the years to come will we have members join Plymouth who have only worshipped with us virtually? And if so, how can we make it so that people in North Carolina feel as connected to us as those living in Shaker? I have seen parents enjoy zoom night meetings because it is easier to attend when they don't have to drive into church and leave their children. Personally, not having to drive to church multiple nights a week has been a blessing. I have seen small groups choose Zoom, because it makes it easier for the group to meet. It is imperative as a community that we continue to put our time/energy/wisdom/thoughts into making both the virtual and in-person experiences meaningful and important for our members.

Submitted by Rev. Matthew Bauhof, Associate Minister

Director of Christian Education's Report

Sunday School

For the 2020-2021 school year, we offered virtual Sunday School programming for kids in pre-kindergarten through 8th grade. I shared pre-recorded videos of the Bible story and created videos doing the activities that went along with lesson. Each quarter I would deliver lesson materials to the children's houses for them to do along with the videos at home. We would also periodically have a live Zoom meeting together.

This year (fall 2021) we are meeting in person, as a one room Sunday School for kids in grades Pre-k through 5th grades. We have had between 4-14 students attend. The lessons have been conducted outdoors to continue to limit exposure risks. However, as the weather becomes colder, we will need to move indoors. Safety remains my top concern and I'm trying to find modified ways to gather for Sunday School. Currently the plan is to use Fellowship Hall, as this is a wide-open space and the children will continue to wear masks, sit spaced apart and we will shorten the time we are together.

There is currently no Sunday School for the Jr High students. Instead, we are inviting them to help with worship and Sunday School and to come to Cocoa & Christ, our monthly spiritual development gathering.

We believe being in church for worship is an important part of a child's faith development, therefore we continue to not offer Sunday School or other programming on the first Sunday of every month to give families the opportunity to worship and receive communion together.

Children's Church

We were able to meet in person for our 2021 summer Children's Church program called Caring for Creation. We held this program in the Children's Garden during worship Sunday mornings. The kids (and adults) wore masks and it felt relatively safe to be gathering outdoors. We had all ages of kids participate from pre-school through 8th grade. With 4-16 kids each Sunday. With safety on our minds, we didn't want to hold a farmers' market at the end of the growing season, so instead we put the garden produce on a table to give away to church goers, while accepting donations for the Cleveland foodbank. The garden produce is also free to take for anyone using the Free Little Pantry.

Special Events and Programs

- *Back to Sunday School Ice Cream Social* – This year, our Ice Cream Social was a celebration of returning to worship indoors in the Sanctuary, and an opportunity to welcome Heights Christian Church after their first worship in our Chapel. It was a wonderful, shared time with both congregations.
- *Farmers Market/ Children's Garden Give-Away* – The children once again shared the garden produce with the congregation, and we collectively raised \$228 to be donated to the Cleveland Foodbank.
- *Bible Sunday* – We resumed this Plymouth tradition after missing 2020, and we included first graders and fifth graders who we missed last year. We passed out 5 bible storybooks to kindergartners and first graders, and 8 bibles to fourth & fifth graders.
- *Spooktacular* – We are once again planning this as an outdoor only event for covid safety.

- *Advent Wreath Building* - In 2020 we successfully passed out 25 wreath building kits for families to take home and build together. We will offer this again as a take home kit for 2021.
- *Sugar Plum* – For the 2020 event, we took online orders and prepared kits for pick-up. While it wasn't the same as our usual community-wide event, it was good to be able to still offer the crafts for kids and families to celebrate the holidays. We will be offering this as a take home event again this year.
- *Christmas Pageant* - The Christmas pageant was like no other year here at Plymouth! We were able to create a virtual pageant with the children that aired on Christmas Eve. This year we are planning on a simple in-person pageant with narration and masked children acting the parts.
- *C & Y Sunday* – Almost everything was virtual in 2020, and that included the student run C & Y Sunday, and the kids did a fantastic job.
- *Valentines Cookie Baking* – To continue this C & Y outreach program, we asked families to bake goodies at home and make valentines cards to drop off at the church. A few volunteers then made deliveries to some very grateful church members.
- *Jr Egg Hunt* – We were able to offer an outdoor Jr. Egg Hunt for our families with young children on Easter Sunday. It was wonderful to see many families back in person after being completely virtual all year.

Looking Ahead

Even as the pandemic continues, we have seen many signs of progress and hope that things are continuing in the right direction. While things aren't "normal" as they were pre-pandemic, we are finding new ways to connect and to be together. We worshiped together outside on the lawn all summer and moved indoors (fully masked) beginning in September. The nursery is now open every Sunday 9am – 12pm. Our monthly Jr High & Senior High program, *Coffee & Christ*, are running once a month. And we started a new monthly program called *Playtime at Plymouth* for an opportunity for young families to gather for fellowship and playtime for the kids. Sunday School continues in-person, and we are planning an in-person Christmas Pageant. These things that we can continue to do together help to create a feeling of normalcy in a still not back to normal times.

Thanks to our Volunteers and Nursery Staff

We are excited to welcome back Karen Sommers to the nursery and happy to welcome our newest nursery staff worker, Jodi Moran. Special thank you to the many volunteers involved in C & Y; our Sunday School teachers, Coffee & Christ leaders Keith Szalay & Justin Caldwell, our Sugar Plum coordinators Shelli Smith & Jan Wilkens, the Spooktacular volunteers, the Christmas Pageant volunteers and participants, the C & Y Department including Jeannie Clarkson, Joanna Horn, Gloria Sturghill, Carolyn Jillson, Janet Wilkens, Shelli Smith & Matt Bauhof.

Respectfully submitted,
Leslie Szalay

Submitted by Leslie Szalay, Director of Christian Education

Minister of Music and The Arts Report

As I reflect on this past year, creativity and challenge are two words that stick with me. Advent 2020 saw creativity as we lit the front pillars of the church representing Advent candles and several folks built a stable for folks to pray and to light candles. For the first time in my 40 years as an organist, Christmas Eve was like no other. On a cold and snowy evening two outdoor services were held. At the stable we heard the Christmas story read and we sang *Silent Night* as snow fell around us. For me, January 2021, began by sitting in the darkened sanctuary as the mourning bell tolled 400 times marking 400,000 lives lost to Covid19. A month later a sign with 500 flags marked the sad moment of 500,000.

Due to Covid19 restrictions, the choir did not meet in person. Virtual rehearsals and recordings were done as well as Zoom meetings to check in. Virtual partnerships continued with First Baptist and Lakewood Presbyterian Church. The Plymouth Ringers met in small groups (4-5 ringers) to record simple pieces to be offered during worship. Soloists of the choir offered many recorded pieces for worship as well. While the Organ Scholar program was technically placed on hold, Katherine Johnson was able to record some pieces for worship and Plymouth continued to pay her an honorarium for her work.

Easter Day was held outdoors on a beautiful morning. Having never worshiped outdoors on Easter, it was a reminder we needed sunscreen! Creativity blossomed with the hanging of butterflies in the sanctuary for online worship. June saw a return to weekly worship outdoors. Gratitude is expressed to sound engineer, Austin McMaken for his amazing sound enhancement. In July we bid farewell to Interim Minister, the Rev. Dr. Deborah Lindsay in a moving service of gratitude for her ministry and her leadership during this challenging time.

Bells rang again in August, this time, however, in celebration as Plymouth welcomed the Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster and his wife, Betsy. I was filled with joy to be released from my role as Acting Staff Administrator! I am grateful to the church leadership, the staff, and the congregation for your trust in me and for your support. A highlight of the summer was spending a week retreat in beautiful Portageville, NY with former organ scholars, Kyle Ballentine and David von Behren. We brainstormed, shared our Covid experiences, and made plans for our individual music programs. And we laughed a lot which was medicine for the soul.

A Choir Task Force (Lee Makela, Lia Bendix, and Mitch and Molly Warmbein) was formed to begin discussions on how to safely bring the choir back and to seek data from choir members. Currently we are viewing our planning in two-month increments given the Delta variant. Again, we are using creativity to explore new ways of being. In exchange for some weekly rehearsal evenings off, the choir is holding a Saturday workshop. We are gathering each Sunday to lead hymns and responses, but not necessarily singing an anthem each week.

For the fall, worship consists of a featured ensemble each week—Plymouth Folk Revival, Plymouth Ringers, Instrumentalists, Soloists, Plymouth Choir, and/or The Sunday Choir. I am profoundly grateful to these groups for their willingness to be open to new possibilities. The Plymouth Ringers has resumed weekly rehearsals. The Psalmist said, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” And so it is when Johnny Cash, Taizé, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart are held together in one worship service. Amen!

Our Organ Scholar program has resumed with Sol Rizzato holding this position. He is a master’s student at CIM. I continue to work with our community music groups as slowly concerts are beginning to emerge

with audience members masked.

The Rev. Dr. Matt Wooster inspired us this past Sunday with a sermon about this liminal time in which we live. It remains a challenging time with many unknowns. "Singing in the Ruins" was the title of his sermon. As we sang on Sunday, "Ever singing, march we forward, in the midst of strife..." I remain grateful for the many ways creativity is seeing us through these days. Gratitude to ALL of you, to my colleagues, and to the God of every generation who does not leaves us alone, but rather walks with us.





Submitted by James P. Riggs, Minister of Music and The Arts

Finance Administrator's Report

2021 was a year of steady progress supported by the conscious practices of flexibility and adaptability. As things changed, and then changed again, we regrouped, reconsidered, and persevered. Leadership, staff, members, and all the church played a huge role in our success: thank you all!

2020, the first year of the pandemic, ended on a stable note. Our total pledge contribution was slightly above budget with overall income at about 80% of projected, due to quarantine restrictions. Expenses however dropped as well, and we only spent about 75% of our budget. This resulted in a small surplus of \$19,618 at year end.

2021 began with our youth collection raising \$645 for the "Souper Bowl" which was donated to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. We followed that with a fantastic Pledge Campaign that exceeded our goal of \$585,000. The final total pledged for 2021 was \$597,710. An Easter collection raised \$3510 for the Samaritan Fund which was being distributed to grateful recipients who needed a hand.

In addition to our regular duties, staff made time for a several important efforts. We all took online courses in Realm and exchanged ideas, resources, and user features. This allowed us to better use our existing features and to implement new features. We also all participated in an important health care application, Formfire. Staff entered health history to the app which the website then scrubs of identifying info and rates. This allows many more insurance companies to bid for our healthcare plan. This helps to keep a high level of benefits while controlling costs. It also allows us to have a reasonable estimate of our costs in time for the 2022 budget process.

July brought our Agreed Upon Procedures Audit which was successfully completed with one notation of a small discrepancy (\$108) in PNC's reporting of accrued interest. It was determined that the interest, which was posted to the account on the first of the month, should be posted to the account on the last day of the prior month. PNC made the change and there is no longer a discrepancy.

Also in July, the Foundation structure, which dated back years, was changed to conform to modern business practices. This was a long and complicated process and a great accomplishment!

August brought some "new hires" along with lots of payroll and benefits forms. We once again welcome an Organ Scholar to join us for the September to May season.

Our existing relationships with tenants Les Delices and Cleveland Clinic Lerner School for Autism grew to include Heights Christian Church. We are grateful for our ability to support these groups and for the income they provide. We worked hard to identify which expenses would increase (e.g. Utilities, IT Services, Instrument Tuning and Maintenance, etc.) and made our best "best offer" for a rental rate that would cover those expenses.

Our 2021 Budget included several "one time" expenses under Council. These were associated with the search for the new Senior Minister, the Transition Team and moving expenses for our hire.

The most exciting moment of the year occurred after Matt Wooster suggested that I investigate the CARES Act Employee Retention Credit. It did not appear to apply in our case, as we were truly blessed with sustaining support from member pledges. However, I decided that I must do my "due diligence" and see if we might benefit. The result was a \$30,536 credit for the third and fourth quarters of 2020. It will take

some time for the IRS to process our refund. I will also apply for the credit in 2021.

September 2021 year to date financials are used, along with the yearend totals from 2020 and 2019, to calculate the rolling three-year average, 5% Foundation draw available for 2022. Investments have grown to the point where we will have \$46,000 more in Foundation draw in 2022, than we had in 2021. Keeping the draw at 5% allows us to maintain our Foundation as a source of income, without depleting or “using up” this valuable support.

Finally, Finance continues to focus on procedures for Capital Projects approved by B&G and their proper oversight and funding. Finance also approved a “Positive Pay” system through PNC which allows us to view each Automated Clearing House (ACH) online withdrawal before money is withdrawn from our bank account. We use ACH for payroll, online fees, and employee benefits. Each approved deduction has a profile restricting the amount and/or frequency allowed. The ACH is paused for review if it doesn’t meet the assigned parameters. This is an important safeguard for our account.

Special thanks to Brian Grube, Council President
Juanita Faulx, Treasurer
Mary Bright, Finance Chair
Christine Bretz, Foundation Chair

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathryn Kundrat

Submitted by Kathryn Kundrat, Finance Administrator

Facilities Manager's Report

September 24th, 2021, is the 3rd anniversary of my service to the congregation of Plymouth Church. I remain grateful for the opportunity to assist you, The Congregation. You are traversing even more transitions: return to worship in the Sanctuary during a world-wide pandemic; hosting Heights Christian Church in the Herr Chapel, as they prayerfully discern the path forward for their congregation; a lease renewal by the Lerner School of Autism; and the new tenure of Reverend Dr. Matthew Wooster, the 13th called senior minister of Plymouth Church

As 2021 progresses, I look for familiar signs and I see them in your (masked!) faces as we return to worship and in person meetings, albeit, cautiously. The rhythms of the of the Church continue to change, swaying like a vessel on rough seas, with periods of calm, enough to catch our collective breath, before we continue our way forward, resolute despite the inexorable tide that we often face. The end of 2021 marks the conclusion of ninety-eight years of worship in the Sanctuary.

Elsewhere in this Annual Report, the activities of the Building and Grounds Committee who guide me to accomplish goals on behalf of the Congregation, have been presented. But consider just a few things that are planned for 2022:

1. Exterior repainting of the Sanctuary, North Facing Elevation
2. Added live streaming equipment for the Sanctuary & Chapel, to share God's spirit in our worship
3. A plan for Capital Projects & Renovation for the Building, as it approaches a Century of Service

The Building & Grounds Department continues stewardship of the Church in its role with the Congregation, the greater communities of Shaker Heights and Northeast Ohio, and partners including: Les Delices, the Cleveland Chamber Music Society, the Cleveland Classical Guitar Society, the Boy Scouts of America- Troop-15, the Art of Tai Chi, Heights 12-Step, the Friday Women's 12-Step, the Lerner School for Autism, and now Heights Christian Church

I thank Rose Munn for the continuing care she shows to the Congregation & building. I remain ever grateful for the expertise, acumen, wisdom, and guidance that resides within the B & G Department. They are resolute in their service to all of the Congregation.

Please recall the prayer I shared with you when I began in service to Plymouth Congregation:

"This is another day, O Lord.
I know not what it will bring forth, but make me ready, Lord, for whatever it may be.
If I am to stand up, help me to stand up bravely.
If I am to sit still, help me to sit quietly.
If I am to lie low, help me to do it patiently.
And if I am to do nothing, let me do it gallantly.
Make these words more than words and give to me the Spirit of Jesus. Amen."

Submitted by Paul Holter, Facility Manager

Pulpit Committee Report

Following our commissioning at Church on January 12, 2020, the members of the Pulpit Committee first met with Nayiri Karjian, General Minister of the Living Water Association, to get an orientation into the search process. This 17-month process, starting in person and continuing over Zoom after the pandemic started, reviewing over 60 profiles from candidates around the country, Zoom interviews with candidates, watching many, many sermons online, and lots of discussions before and afterward, led us to unanimously agree that Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster would be the perfect fit for Plymouth. Here are just a few of the comments from the Committee:

“Matt comes to us with much experience not only from a Minister standpoint, operationally but also has ties to Cleveland, demonstrating get excitement for the role, Plymouth Church and Cleveland. From my experience with him, he is eager to listen, learn and grow with us collectively in this newly changed world. He is eager to support creative new ways to Minister due to the pandemic, unbelievably interested in putting solutions in place to create a more equitable world and embraces the Plymouth Church team wholeheartedly.”

“One thing that stood out to me was Matt’s thoughtful approach during the process. He didn’t come with the standard answers, but really took time to think about the question before answering. He took the time to learn about Plymouth and we’re happy about the plans he has to move Plymouth forward.”

“I saw the committee members feeling more and more comfortable with him, as we realized he would be the right fit for Plymouth.”

“The pulpit committee unanimously recommends Matt and I look forward to him being here at Plymouth and watching our relationships with him grow and flourish. This is certainly an exciting time for our church.”

“Matt is an exceptionally fine preacher and possesses a quiet confidence, inner strength and calmness, qualities that will serve our congregation for years to come. It is with great enthusiasm that we recommend Rev. Matt Wooster as Plymouth’s next Senior Minister.”

After wondering what would be the best way for the congregation to meet Matt, since we couldn’t meet in person, a marathon day of Zoom “Meet and Greets” introduced him, and at the special meeting of the congregation on April 11, he was voted in as our new Senior Minister. He and his wife Betsy are from Northeast Ohio, they have family here, found a home in the Onaway neighborhood and starting on August 8, Matt jumped in to start his ministry with us, moving Plymouth into the future. We learned a lot during the process, especially how to be flexible and pivot to a new way of thinking and doing.

Members of the Pulpit Committee

Devan Bhatia – Is a sophomore at Shaker Heights High School (Go Raiders!), enjoys golfing and listening to music in his free time.

Cindy Chapman – Joined Plymouth in 2002. Cindy is married to Wai Sung and they have three children. Cindy is a professor of religion at Oberlin College and was recently awarded “Best Book Relating to Hebrew Bible” in 2017 by the Biblical Archaeology Society.

Andrew Cleminshaw - Joined Plymouth in 2008, has been an usher, a member of the nominating and pastoral relations committees, and a Christmas pageant angel wrangler. He is married to Kendalle Cobb

and they have one daughter, Catherine.

Tom Cullinan - Joined Plymouth Church in the spring of 2017 and was married to Joanna May Cullinan the following year. A life-long Clevelander, Tom teaches Improv in his spare time and was a member of the Hospitality and Ushers team at his former church.

Ann Eberhard – Joined Plymouth in 2002 and this was the eighth church she was part of. She was the archivist at Plymouth, sang in the choir, was a member of the ArtsPlymouth committee and belonged to four Christ Care groups.

Amy Grube - Is a pediatrician and married to Brian Grube. They have three children: Sarah, Samuel, and Luke and joined the church in 2013. She has previously served as the Partnership and Service co-chair and a member of the bell choir.

Kate Molyneaux – Is a junior at Solon and loves to swim. She spends her days “at” school, swimming, working part-time and hanging out with her sisters.

Mai Moore - Joined Plymouth Church in 2010, has served on Council as E & G Lead and various other roles including Usher, Sunday School Teacher, Youth Group Junior High Lead, and Nominating. She also developed EYEJ, a non-profit that started at Plymouth focused on amplifying youth voices and has a 16-year-old daughter – Yumi Ndhlovu.

Dick Pogue – Joined Plymouth in 1970 with his wife Pat. They have three children, and love Plymouth and the city of Cleveland. Dick has spent his career as a lawyer at Jones Day and is involved with civic organizations all over the city.

Beth Sanborn - Beth Sanborn and her husband Mitch have four children and two grandchildren. Beth grew up in the church (a member for 50+ years) and in the past assisted with Church School and Fellowship Programs, and now cares for those with special needs.

Gloria Sturghill - Joined Plymouth in 1997, is a member of the Chancel Choir, C&Y Department and Youth Groups. Lives in Shaker and is learning, along with her sister, what you have to do to take care of a house built in 1937.

David Turner - Joined Plymouth in 2016 but has been a member of the bell choir since 2014 and also serves on the ArtsPlymouth Committee. He just got married to his husband this past August. David works in fundraising for Playhouse Square downtown and served on the search team at his former UCC church in Cincinnati.

Robert Woolfrey - Joined Plymouth Church in 2012. He is married to Tanya Woolfrey and they have two young children. Robert and Tanya are both musicians in The Cleveland Orchestra.

Submitted by Gloria Sturghill, Chair

Adult Faith & Life Department Report

The Department believes that our name is best expressed as 'Faith in Life'. We are happy to report that our assessment of Plymouth Church's vitality of faith is expressed in the biblical phrase 'by their works you shall know them'. Despite the loss of beloved members of our church family due to the pandemic, the 'work of the church' has continued. Our lay and professional leadership has guided us through the rough times of congregational retrofitting our weekly worship on internet platforms to on the lawn meeting to healthy compliance gatherings in the sanctuary.

The Lenten in home meal delivery and zoom technology allowed us to continue to share one another's anxieties and hopes. Online clergy led Book discussions and film discussion gatherings help us deal with issues of equity and justice. Our commitment to Black Lives Matter anti racism was challenged and enlarged by the online presentations of both Deborah Plummer and Austin Channing Brown.

During this time of evaluation and discernment, 'Faith in Life' has considered the following aspirational issues and has begun the process of addressing them.

This coming year we intend to develop an integrated post pandemic therapy component to our activities that is based upon a survey of membership's needs and desires.

We acknowledge that the existing groups can be more accessible to members and guests. We hope to cooperate with these groupings by developing promotional on-line and printed materials. We will also identify and recruit in church and community resource persons for these groups.

We intend to provide more opportunities for additional Adult Bible and/or Issues study and discussion groups as interest indicates.

We have organized 'Faith in Life' into a committee structure with Department leadership to coordinate our efforts.

Submitted by Mendle Adams, Chair

Building and Grounds Department Report

We are grateful that we were able to return in person for outdoor services in June, July, and August. The expansion of the livestream and audio capabilities have been a blessing to the congregation broad and wide. Future projects will expand these capabilities & service. Returning to the sanctuary in September was a blessing as well. The Lerner School has renewed their contract with Plymouth Church and are contributing financially to small projects needed in their leased space, including installation of electrical wiring for AC units.

IN November 2020, the B & G Department voted to conduct a seasonal experiment by eliminating standard chemical lawn treatment practices. No pesticides or herbicides were used on the lawns of Church grounds. Normal pest control chemicals are still in use, inside the building. Additionally, B & G has engaged Bartlett Expert Tree Service to treat the oak trees for oak wilt disease, trim the dead limbs, and provide cable support as needed to maintain these trees on the grounds.

There are many everyday projects that have been done that keep the lights on, the place comfortable and clean, the trash collected, and the building secured. Despite the continued pandemic and supply delays, we have been able to accomplish several major projects:

- Sanctuary exterior painting – east elevation
- New hinges and kick plates installation waiting on hardware delivery, should be done by the time of the Annual Meeting
- Office door replaced
- Hardware delivery delays, should be done by the time of Annual Meeting
- Building thermostat and controlling software replaced
- Removal of excess liturgical furniture
- Seal coat and restriping of the parking lot, with more designated handicap parking spaces
- Carpet in front of chancel in the Sanctuary was replaced

High priority still remaining:

- Sanctuary Electric Panel Replacement
- Fellowship Hall Electric Panel Replacement
- Sanctuary carpet replacement
- Sanctuary Exterior painting – north elevation
- Circulating pumps replacement
- Sanctuary/Chapel audio system(s) upgrades

Thank you for your continued support of Plymouth Church. It has been my pleasure to serve as Chair of the Building and Grounds Department this year.

Submitted, Ronald Werneke, Chair

Green Building Initiative Report

Our committee works with the Building and Grounds Department to foster environmentally conscious practices throughout Plymouth Church's property. We have appreciated the cooperation and support of Plymouth's Facility Manager, Paul Holter, in these efforts.

During the past year, we have focused on our churchyard and gardens, minimizing the use of pesticides and herbicides on our lawn and garden beds. Many volunteers have worked with us to weed the gardens manually and to add to the planting in the Joyce Cherry Memorial Garden around the Peace Pole. We appreciate the guidance of Ann McCulloh, landscape designer, in selecting plants for that garden and the beds at the Main Church entrance. Robin and Bill Menges did the planting of the Centennial Garden at our front entrance, and volunteers have weeded those beds as well.

Submitted by Charlene Nevans, Co-Chair

Caring Department Report

Annual report of the Caring Committee of Plymouth Church of Shaker Heights UCC

As it did in the previous year, the Covid Pandemic has severely curtailed the activities of the Caring Committee. We have not met in person this year and many of the members are not set up for Zoom. I have scheduled an in-person meeting to coincide with the October lunch program. It is my understanding that the individual ministries within Caring continue to function based on the expenditures I have approved over this year.

Two areas of immediate concern are the Food ministry and the 50 Plus recognition event. The Food ministry has not been successful in finding volunteers to prepare and deliver meals. In discussion, we have concluded that individuals are reluctant to risk exposure from the contact necessary in this effort. After discussing the problem, we concluded that the best way to resolve this problem is to provide those needing food support with gift certificates that they could redeem through no-contact delivery services such as Door dash etc. This will also allow the recipients to choose meals that appeal to them and meet their needs. To do so will require additional funds for the Food ministry which is currently budgeted at \$50. I will be making this request at the September Council meeting.

Plymouth usually honors the 50 plus members with a reception in November, held in the church parlor. Last year, the event was cancelled and a donation equal to the cost of the reception, was made in the name of the 50 plus members. My concern is whether the 50 plus members will be comfortable attending an indoor event where food is served. With that in mind, I have asked Leslie to develop a contact list of the 50 plus members to establish a consensus of how many would attend. When I have the list, I will contact those people and get a

It is my hope that that in the near future the situation will improve to the point that all Plymouth ministries can operate successfully again.

Submitted by Dave Faulx, Chair

Children and Youth Department Report

As COVID persists, we continue to adapt how we fulfill our mission to provide religious education and faith formation to Plymouth's children and youth, from birth through high school graduation. We have a robust department, with myself as Chair, Joanna Horn as Vice Chair, and Carolyn Jillson, Gloria Sturghill, Shelli Smith and Jan Wilkens as faithful member of the department. Leslie Szalay and Rev. Matt Bauhof are our staff leaders.

Sunday School: Leslie provided **Sunday School** at home lessons for families in the spring. Summer Children's Church resumed outdoors with masking, and the fall has been outside as a one room schoolhouse with Leslie and another adult. We continue **Coffee and Christ** once a month for Sr. High students with Keith Szalay leading and started a monthly **Cocoa and Christ** for Jr. High students, with Justin Caldwell leading. (see Leslie's report).

Youth Groups: Rev. Matt Bauhof has creatively adapted Senior and Junior High youth groups to a mix of online, outdoor, and indoor activities (see his report).

Our Whole Lives (O.W.L.): We followed the national UCC guidelines to not hold OWL classes online. In an abundance of caution, we have not held any OWL classes since March 2020.

Confirmation: We have been following an alternate year format for **Confirmation**. 2021-2022 will be a new Confirmation class for 9th and 10th graders.

Events: We held **Spooktacular** on Oct. 24th 2020 as an outdoor event with socially distanced Trunk or Treat cars, a walking dinosaur, games, a lawn maze, and lots of candy! Both Plymouth families and neighborhood families attended. **Sugar Plum Workshop & Advent Wreaths** were re-created in November and December of 2020 as virtual events, where Plymouth members and the greater community pre-ordered wreath kits and craft activities and then picked them up in the church parking lot. Leslie Szalay created a virtual **Christmas Pageant**, which was delightful! We held **Children & Youth Sunday** as a virtual worship service online, and it was a moving experience to hear how the pandemic has changed life for our teens. Easter service was held outside on the lawn, so we were able to have a socially-distanced **Jr. Egg Hunt** before worship. We recognized our **graduates** on June 6 at an outdoor worship service.

Service Activities: Instead of delivering **Thanksgiving** baskets, we raised \$3425 and donated gift cards to Miles Park School and Mound School, both in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. We also used some of this money to replenish the **Little Free Food Pantry** on the Plymouth property, including buying shelf stable milk. The department sponsored a church-wide fundraiser in the fall of 2020 to contribute \$500 to **SAMS (Shaker African-American Moms Support)**. We collected \$645.00 during the Souper Bowl collection, which was donated to the **Cleveland Foodbank**. Our **Valentine Cookie** event was changed to families baking cookies and making Valentine cards that were brought to the church and distributed to homebound and older Plymouth members. Youth participated in the **Doan Brook Clean Up** as an outdoor, socially distanced activity. Matt Bauhof led a **service trip** in June with 13 youth and 6 adults at Bellwether Farm in Ohio. (see his report).

Family & Community Support: We were unable to hold any Plymouth Parents meetings or Parents Night Out (PNO) this year. C & Y sponsored an outdoors **Ice cream Social for Homecoming Sunday** in Sept. 2021, along with Heights Christian Church. We provided Bibles on **Bible Sunday** to kindergarten, first grade, fourth grade and fifth grade students to include students from last year who did not receive Bibles.

Two big changes that were developed over the past year is how the Children & Youth Dept. will welcome families with children and how we will improve the safety of our children.

Welcoming Families: We are reaching out to guests with children by phone or email. We also developed a defined system for recognizing four stages in the life of our children and youth: birth, baptism (or dedication), confirmation, and graduation. At birth, we will give a food delivery gift card, handwritten note and a baby blanket made by the Knitting Ministry. For baptism/dedication, each family will receive a book and handwritten note from the department. For Confirmation, youth will receive a prayer shawl from the Knitting Ministry and a journal. And for graduation, each student will receive a gift card and a book. We want parents and families to feel nurtured by the church.

Safety: We are striving to make the education wing more secure as we go back into worshipping in person. The nursery doors will be locked on the outside, which will not affect exiting the nursery. We would like to have an intercom system and there will be a new sign-in system that uses stickers/labels for both parents and children. We will continue to do background checks on adults that interact with our children and youth. We will also follow the rule of 3: 1 adult and two children or two adults and one child.

We are grateful that our department has been able to continue the majority of our regular activities throughout the pandemic, albeit in new and creative ways. Our goal has been to keep Plymouth families actively involved in the church.

Submitted by Jeannie Clarkson, Chair

Evangelism & Growth Department Report

Plymouth's Evangelism and Growth Department is tasked with developing and implementing programs and projects to attract, identify, inform and encourage potential members to join the church and to live out their gifts as active members of the church.

Pandemic considerations continuing since 2020 brought the church to gather and continue its ministry through prepared videos, outdoor settings, and live streaming online; church meetings and programs were outdoors or online experiences through website links or zoom links.

Advertising and Publicity / Online Presence / Website -- Plymouth's reliance on the internet during 2020 and 2021 compelled E&G to review data that emanates, to seek out more specific data, and to explore offerings that can engage viewers as participants. E&G has updated the website with consideration for those who may know us primarily through our internet presence: Virtual Guestbook encourages and allows virtual guests to sign up for regular church emails thus opening participation options; Facebook/social media presence: staff and congregation actively invite and promote events and participation; all are encouraged to comment. Ads on Google, Facebook allow the option to connect to the church website. Additional banners and outdoor signs are in use as statements to the community about Plymouth's message as well as events. Rev. Matt Bauhof is hands-on regarding website, technology and advertising. Kevin Anderson and Jonathan Kraft offer valuable insight, expertise and encouragement in this area.

New Member Orientation and Induction – New members have been inducted in 2021 on two occasions. Pat Schinabeck works with the ministers in addressing the needs of potential members by preparing opportunities to meet and to learn more about Plymouth and the United Church of Christ, arranging dinner with a minister, and personally engaging in contact with newcomers. Paul Qua arranges signage around the building to familiarize potential members with church history and leads a familiarizing tour. Weekly Guest Reports from the church office are an important and welcome element to the success of this effort.

Fellowship -- E&G provided or joined with other departments to provide family oriented online activities in winter months over zoom. Jonathan Kraft and Rev. Matt Bauhof opened us to this type of at-home-but-together fellowship.

Church Picnic – With an eye toward anticipated and realized unique summer outdoor celebrations (Rev. Lindsay in July and Rev. Wooster in August) the Annual June Picnic did not occur due to Covid concerns. Picnic funds were used in support of outdoor tents on Homecoming Sunday, the start of the church year.

Culling (Reclamation) of Membership Rolls – This important project was a necessary and enormous undertaking in 2020 with outdated rolls being updated. Inactive members were contacted and many elected to remain as members and appreciated the personal outreach led by Mendle Adams. After serious discussion the Department tabled this task for 2021 aware that necessary support would be difficult during the pandemic.

Evangelism (general) -- E&G makes available to the congregation Advent Devotionals developed by the UCC. Members are encouraged to submit personal writings regarded as Advent Devotions to appear in church bulletins, weekly email, or website.

Connection Groups/ Coffee Hour/ Social Hour -- In 2021 Connection Groups have served in different ways. Primarily known as the organization of members to set up and serve at a popular coffee hour time of fellowship following Sunday worship, it was designed and serves as so much more. Carefully crafted as a group of differing ages, backgrounds and years of membership, each Connection Group is encouraged to plan activities together or may be called upon to participate in the life of the church in another way. During 2021 while worship was online occasional “coffee hours” were set up online. With summer outdoor worship bottled water and prepackaged snacks were available and designed to be a temporary option. With the return of indoor worship in September and pandemic concerns continuing we were met with another concern: the summer plan was to be temporary and we were committed to remember our role as stewards of earth. Plastic packaging could not continue, nor could full fledged traditional coffee hour as long as the COVID19 Advisory Team advises against drinks and treats indoors. At this time Connection Groups, coordinated by Vicki Werneke, are reimagined as service groups who may deliver flowers, write notes to those unable to attend services, contact new members and strengthen our connections to each other in other meaningful ways.

Submitted by Margaret Reuthinger, Chair

Giving Department Report

The Giving Department wanted to continue the success of the 2021 Annual Campaign. For the 2022 Annual Campaign we increased our goal to \$600,000 and shortened the window of the overall campaign. Council and Lead Givers were given their pledge forms mid-September with the main appeal starting October 10th ending October 31st.

We wanted to implement some minor changes to the campaign this year including a redesign of the pledge form and offering in person Realm giving help each Sunday during the campaign season. With the Rev. Dr. Wooster starting in August 2021, we wanted to keep the campaign simple for a smooth transition.

The committee wants to thank Kathryn Kundrat for all her support in the church office. We also want to thank the members of Plymouth Church for their support and generosity as Plymouth continues to grow and strengthen our ministry in the community, even amid a continuing pandemic.

Submitted by David Turner, Chair

Worship Department Report

No Report Submitted

Partnership & Service Department Report

Plymouth Church is a very generous church, both with both our money and our time. We set aside 10% of our annual pledges for distribution to organizations in the Cleveland metro area and our national and association churches. We also organize and encourage service opportunities within the church, the community, and our partner organizations.

Distribution of Funds

There are many needs in our community. To discern the most effective way to distribute the funds, we have established criteria: 1) the 501c3 organization must be located within or service the Cleveland Metro/Cuyahoga County area, 2) a member of the church is a liaison to the organization, and 3) the grant request is for a specific program, and not for normal operating expenses. There are five areas that the organization and the request must effect as well: 1) education, 2) environment, 3) homeless or disenfranchised, 4) hunger, and 5) LGTBQ+ community. We added 6) COVID-19 Relief in 2020. Most of our partner organizations impact more than one area.

We also support the Living Water Association and the UCC National Office with substantial gifts. And we support the scholarship funds to the universities our ministers attended and a chapel organ retreat to honor our minister of music.

This year we had \$59,771 to distribute.

Here is the breakdown of what we supported.

- Fifteen grant applications were received, and fourteen were funded.
- Three universities that our Plymouth ministers/staff attended.
- The National and local offices of the United Church of Christ.

UCC National Office \$8,000
Living Water Association \$14,000
Heartland Conference \$1,000
McCormick Theological Seminary \$500
The Portageville Chapel \$250
Methodist Theological School of Ohio \$1,000
Community Service Alliance 2,880
DNA Rising \$1,500
EYEJ \$2,500
Family Promise \$5,000
Fostering Hope \$2,500
Habitat for Humanity \$2,500
Nature Center of Shaker Lakes \$500
Rainbow Terrace Learning Center \$3,141
Salvation Army \$2,000
Thea Bowman Center \$3,500
UCC ONA \$2,000

The church, throughout the year, also participated in several special offerings and service opportunities.
Submitted by Robin D. Johnson, Chair

ArtsPlymouth Report

Mission Statement: ArtsPlymouth is dedicated to presenting arts events for the spiritual enrichment of the congregation of Plymouth Church and the community it serves.

ArtsPlymouth hosted concerts by the Cleveland Chamber Music Society, the Cleveland Classical Guitar Society, BlueWater Chamber Orchestra and Les Delices (Artist in Residence) culminating with an amazing sold-out concert by Chanticleer. That was the last in-person concert held a week before the shut down due to Covid19. Concert Hosting activities were coordinated by David Turner. Volunteers served as hosts welcoming visitors to Plymouth Church for these events.

The ArtsPlymouth Scholarship program is still in need of some revision and updating, so no money was awarded this year. The fund continues to increase as planned.

Following the lockdown in March 2020, many things changed. ArtPlymouth strove to respond and to support the congregation and community in a new paradigm.

Since Plymouth Church could no longer host concerts in person the committee approved a donation of \$750 to each performing group to support their ongoing work.

- ArtsPlymouth declined to take its May 2020 draw from the Foundation following the guidance of the Finance Committee.
- ArtsPlymouth supported the work of the Sacred Garden Team, who created an outdoor space for meditation and reflection. There were Saturday morning offerings in the garden including various music, Tai Chi, yoga, and prayer.
- Following all safe practices including masks and seating in social distanced circles, ArtsPlymouth hosted a July 2020 outdoor concert with Les Delices. Many in the neighbors expressed how wonderful to experience live music again.

ArtsPlymouth hopes to offer 1-2 virtual concerts this coming year.

No concerts are being held during the fall of 2020. Les Delices is filming a virtual concert season and they are now renting office space at Plymouth.

The ArtsPlymouth team is a working team – each team member shares in various tasks to make ArtsPlymouth a vital presence at Plymouth Church and in the community. Team members include: Ann Eberhard, Pam Ford, Noel Nilson, Karen Reich, James Riggs, staff, Kathy Smyth, David Turner, Jane Underwood, and Jan Wilkens.

Submitted by Karen Reich Kolendo, Secretary

Plymouth Church Leadership Roster for 2022

This roster represents the elected and appointed leadership of the church. It assumes that the recommendations of the Nominating Committee (the nominees for the fall 2021 Annual Meeting and those nominated for appointment by Council) will be accepted. It is included in the Annual Report to add to that report's comprehensive portrait of the congregation and not to preempt the election or appointment process.

Note: Numbers in parentheses denote that this will be the person's 2nd, 3rd Etc. term.

Key: B&G: Building & Grounds; C&Y: Children & Youth; E & G: Evangelism & Growth; P&S: Partnerships and Service; (F): member of Finance Committee

POSITION	FINAL
President	Mary Bright
Vice President	Val McClelland
Secretary	Vicki Werneke (2)
Treasurer	Juanita Faulx (5)
Asst. Treasurer	Jennifer Gerard
At Large	Ros Gauchat (4)
At Large	Jan Wilkens (2)
At Large	Richard Merte
At Large	Sara Martin
At Large	Richard Woolfrey
AF&L Chair	Mendle Adams (2)
AF&L Vice	Alissa Wible
B&G Chair	Russell Lamb
B&G Vice	Hans Hunziker (2)
Caring Chair	Dave Faulx (4)
Caring Vice	Jay Horner
C&Y Chair	Carolyn Jillson
C&Y Vice	Joanna Horn
E&G Chair	Margaret Reuthinger (2)
E&G Vice	Kevin Anderson (2)
Giving Chair	David Turner (2)
Giving Vice	Reggie Williams
P&S Chair	Robin Johnson (5)
P&S Vice	Joann Hall
Worship Chair	Amy Holbrook
Worship Vice	Beth Baker
Living Water	Faye Gary
Living Water	Vicki Werneke
	(Only have 2 delegates now)
Finance Comm	Mary Bright
Finance Comm	Val McClelland
Finance Comm	Juanita Faulx
Finance Comm	Jeri Gerard

POSITION	FINAL
Finance Comm	Kenyan Mau
Finance Comm	David Turner
Finance Comm	Russell Lamb
Finance Comm	Gloria Sturghill
Finance Comm	Chris Karr
Found Dir 21	
Nominating (term to end of 2022)	Pam Beck
Nominating (term to end of 2022)	Mai Moore
Nominating (term to end of 2022)	Sara Martin
Nominating (term to end of 2023)	Need to Fill
Nominating (term to end of 2023)	Faye Gary
Nominating (term to end of 2023)	Jane Underwood
Nominating (term to end of 2024)	Betsy Kaufman
Nominating (term to end of 2024)	Jeannie Clarkson
Nominating (term to end of 2024)	Megan Hensley
Pastoral Relations for Rev. Wooster (3 yr term)	Amy Grube
Pastoral Relations for Rev. Wooster	Kendalle Cobb
Pastoral Relations for Rev. Wooster	Tom Cullinan
Pastoral Relations for Rev. Wooster	Gloria Sturghill
Pastoral Relations for Rev. Wooster	Beth Sanborn
Pastoral Relations for Rev. Bauhof (3 yr term)	Nicole Lozier
Pastoral Relations for Rev. Bauhof	Cindy Chapman
Pastoral Relations for Rev. Bauhof	Doug Powell
Pastoral Relations for Rev. Bauhof	Joanna Horn
Pastoral Relations for Rev. Bauhof	Ramona Wiles
Pastoral Relations for Jim Riggs (3 yr term)	Norma Nelson
Pastoral Relations for Jim Riggs	Alissa Wible
Pastoral Relations for Jim Riggs	Brian Shields
Pastoral Relations for Jim Riggs	Robb Forward
Pastoral Relations for Jim Riggs	Charlene Nevans
Personnel (term to end of 2022)	Paula Colahan-Sederstrom
Personnel (term to end of 2022)	Karen Reich Kolendo
Personnel (term to end of 2023)	Kenyon Mau
Personnel (term to end of 2024)	Jane Underwood
Personnel (term to end of 2024)	Mary Powell