WEST CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT 2019

LOVE GOD • LOVE OTHERS • MAKE DISCIPLES
The Spirit of God is alive and at work here at West and around the world. Over the next several pages, you will have the opportunity to read reports drafted by our team regarding the last ministry year. We hope you will catch a glimpse of what the Lord did both in and through our ministries during that time. However, there just isn’t space to tell the many stories that are at the center of our life together. The stuff we report here can only give a glimpse of who we really are. We continue to be a community which shares one another’s joys and sadnesses, works to strengthen the spiritual lives of children, youth, and adults, enjoys weekly worship and fellowship, and reaches out to our local community and the world.

As you look through the stats in this report, remember this: every number represents a person, and every person has a story, and every story is a reminder of God’s faithfulness to build His church and a reminder of His continued grace. May this encourage us to continue to seek the Lord with great humility and thankfulness for what He has done. We invite you to offer thanks and praise to God for what has been done and ask Him to reveal to you a glimpse of what is yet to come.
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AGENDA

The Annual Meeting of the West Congregational Church will be held on
Sunday, January 26, 2020 at 12:30PM in the WORSHIP CENTER
To act on the following:

ARTICLE I:  To review and act upon the prioritization of agenda items.*

ARTICLE II:  To act on the recommendation of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to adopt the following revised Bylaw Articles:

Article 5, Section 3  Heritage Members
Article 9, Section 3  SLT Teams

ARTICLE III:  To receive and act on the recommendation of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Membership Ministry Leader to receive 10 new members.
   Joann Bertrand
   Lisa Bowley
   Andrew Gaydos
   Camille Gaydos
   MacKenzie Kennedy
   Michael McAvoy
   Patrick Noonan
   Samantha Noonan
   Cathi Sherar
   Walter Powell (Heritage)

ARTICLE IV:  To receive and act on the Leadership Search Team (LST) Report for the election of Officers and Senior Leadership Team Members-at-Large:

**Officers:**
Moderator: Jonathan Squire  Assistant Moderator: David Low
Clerk: Abby Cunningham  Assistant Clerk: Natalie Simmons
Treasurer: Briana Fitzgerald  Assistant Treasurer: Carol Tudisco

**SLT Members-at-Large:**
Peter Buckley
Elizabeth Steele
Robert Wilson, Jr.

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
   Anita Low, Fifty Plus Ministry
   Bob Wilson, Finance Support Ministry
   Alicia Smith, Hilltop School Ministry
Shirley Paz, Leadership Development Ministry
Carolyn Alexander, Local Outreach Ministry
Abby Cunningham, Membership Ministry
Mike Stevens, Men’s Ministry
Mark Cottrell, Missions Leadership Ministry
Dave Dillon, Property Support Ministry
Todd Becker, Small Groups Ministry
Shirley Paz, Spiritual Formation Ministry
Steve Simmons, Youth Ministry

ARTICLE V: To receive and act on the Proposed Budget for the year 2020.

ARTICLE VI: To receive and act on a proposal to utilize Building Funds for special projects.

ARTICLE VII: 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.
Dear West Congregational Church,

As I read through the annual reports of the ministry areas within our church, my heart is filled with joy and gratitude for what God has done, is doing and will do. In Andrew Purves’ book, *The Crucifixion of Ministry*, he says that the only real ministry happening at any church is what Jesus is doing. As you read through these annual reports, it is evident that Jesus is doing wonderful things in, through and among us. To God be all the glory!

Our high-level goal this past year was to move from being a church *with* missionaries toward a church *of* whole-life missionary disciples. Our spiritual emphasis was “compassion” for the 2018-19 ministry year. We desire to build bridges into the surrounding community and equip the gathered church to live out our faith as the scattered church, sharing Christ on our Frontlines and front lawns. Toward these ends, as a church we agreed to call someone help us on our journey toward becoming a more outward-facing church. On July 1st Mark Cottrell became our Director of Outreach, overseeing whole-life disciple making, local outreach and international missions. Jesus said, “you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and to the ends of the earth,” (Acts 1:8b). It has been delightful to see how our church has responded to this invitation, and witness how God has moved in and through us locally, regionally and globally this past year. It is exciting to see how we are embodying the value of compassion in all areas of ministry, and particularly the ways in which we’ve grown in Local Outreach, Missions and Whole Life Discipleship. We hope to keep this momentum going by sharing the love of Jesus Christ with those in our neighborhoods, our city, the surrounding towns and the world.

While we are on the subject of outreach, Hilltop School has been one of the most effective outreach ministries of our church for over 50 years. Many children and their families have been introduced to Jesus, and our church, because they first walked through the doors of Hilltop School. The highest priority on our strategic ministry plan for our current ministry year has been identify a Director for Hilltop School. God answered our prayers, and we were delighted to introduce Alicia Smith to the church as the new Director in December. I want to acknowledge the Hilltop Board (Mitzi Wilson, Deedee Roberts, Natalie Simmons, Adam Cunningham and Todd Becker) for their perseverance, care and prayerful discernment throughout this process. We are grateful for your passion for God’s children, and sharing the gospel with the greater community through this vital ministry.

The outgrowth of our annual spiritual emphasis discernment process this year was to focus more on “friending” as a church. Friendening is a verb. Friendening is active. **Being friended by Jesus enables us to befriend others with Jesus.** Beginning with our annual spiritual retreat’s theme of “God & Me: Friendship with God,” and continuing through our reflections upon the gospel of John on Sunday mornings, we listened to Jesus’ words in John 15:15. “I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, **I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.**” Because Jesus has been passionate, loyal, honest toward us, and invited us into friendship with him, as a church, we are becoming more passionate, loyal and honest people who invite others to join in friendship with Him.
As I read through the annual reports of the men’s and women’s ministry teams, I am struck by how they have incorporated this emphasis into their respective ministry areas. The men have been focusing on “friendship in action” this autumn, and Marge Squire testifies to the power of God found in and through spiritual friendship with one of her co-leaders. And speaking of Marge, I want to recognize the impact of her ministry serving as the women’s ministry leader over the past decade. As she moves toward a new season of ministry at West, we can celebrate that through her, God has developed a network of deepening soul friendships.

I am also very grateful to have had the privilege of serving Jesus alongside Eric Lindahl these past 4 years. Over the past 6 years, Eric and his wife Robin have embodied our core value of Delighting in God as they have led us in inspiring worship services through their passionate love for Jesus and his church. As we prepare to send Eric and Robin with our blessing, though we love them, we must hold them loosely before God’s throne because they belong to Him. Please join me in praying for them as they embark on a new ministry venture. And, let us continue to trust that the same God who has provided them to us for this season, will sustain us and provide for our needs. Recently, after a worship service, a friend came to me and said, “This church worships the Prince of Peace. God has commanded his angels concerning the worship of this church. Their presence preceded Eric and Robin, and they will remain. And West Church will continue to shine the light on the Prince of Peace.” Thank you Eric and Robin for always reminding us that Jesus is at the center of our worship, and shining the spotlight on Him. We love you and will miss you dearly.

Finally, I will end where I began. The only real ministry happening here is what Jesus is doing. Recently, the Senior Leadership Team went on a retreat together and reflected upon the question, “What is Jesus doing at West Church?” Well, the pages of this report are filled with examples! The second question we reflected upon that I will invite you to pray with us about is, “What is God’s preferred future for West Church?” As we look forward together, pray that God will reveal to us his invitation. So that we can continue following Jesus on a lifelong journey together, and help others encounter His love and life changing grace.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your pastor. I love you, West Congregational Church.

With Deep Affection and Gratitude,

Pastor Chris

Lead Pastor
SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

SLT Membership Changes
This year the SLT welcomed Ray St. Amand to the team and based on the recommendation of the Leadership Search Team it looks like the existing team may be continuing for 2020 pending confirmation by the membership.

Lead Pastor and SLT Member Reviews
An annual review of the Lead Pastor was very positive. SLT members-at-large made some suggestions which have been implemented. This fall performance reviews were conducted for the two SLT members whose terms are expiring and for one of the Senior Staff members who are reviewed in alternating years. Peer reviews were solicited for each member, and each one completed a self-review.

Spiritual Retreat & LEAD Retreat
The SLT joined with others for the annual Spiritual Retreat last January and we will participate again this February 8. 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 in March.

SLT Vision & Discernment Retreat
Last July the SLT spent a day at the Adelynrood Conference Center in Byfield to prayerfully and intentionally explore where God is leading West Church, and to practice and experience discernment together. Since then we have been seeking to implement discernment steps into our decision-making process.

Strategic Ministry Plan
Subsequent to the Spiritual and LEAD Retreats, the Lead Pastor and Staff developed a proposed Strategic Ministry Plan (SMP) for the planning year of July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020. After reviewing and editing, the SLT approved the plan. The SLT conducts ongoing quarterly progress reviews with the Lead Pastor to ascertain SMP progress.

Proposed Operating & Missions Budget for 2020
The SLT has reviewed and is recommending a proposed 2020 Operating and Missions Budget. It will be available prior to the Annual Meeting at the Connection Center and via West Connect.

The SLT meets every two weeks to prayerfully consider where the Lord is leading and how we as a church can follow his lead. We have committed to walking with Jesus as individuals first, so that we can then walk with him together.

We are grateful to the Lord for the spirit of unity, joy, and hopefulness that infuses West Church.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Wilson, Chair
Peter Buckley
Eileen Cantone
Shirley Paz
Ray St. Amand

Beth Steele
Phil Williams
Pastor Chris Ziegler

2019 ANNUAL REPORT
Beyond the lists of activities, the true measure of accomplishment is always what and how God works in the lives and circumstances of people. It is with a full and thankful heart that I share a small sample of the myriad ways He has made himself evident through the ministry of spiritual formation and soul care.

Without question, the foremost example of God’s presence and activity is through the leadership of those who facilitate and participate in discipling groups, prayer and prayer workshops, video series, special services, small groups, and in so many other places. Believers who themselves are committed to growth in Christ walking alongside others is at the heart of spirituality. I am grateful and indebted to all who serve God through their time, energy, and love in order to see Jesus magnified. Thank you to ALL who have served in this past year!

Our Spiritual Retreat on Feb 2nd, focusing on friendship with God, was a solid beginning to a year filled with examples of deepening spiritual relationship. Many in our community have told me of renewed thirst for God, maturing faith as they encounter trials or grief, ways they have helped others, and of hearing God better. A wonderful example of learning to discern God’s voice was a SLT retreat last July specifically for the purpose of understanding and practicing discernment.

Our special services for Lent and Advent continue to grow in attendance and in the affect of the Spirit’s moving in souls. Many people use the bulletins from these services for continued reflection through the season.

As I look back over the year (or number of years) I would say that there is an overall maturing of faith seen in the way West embraces spiritual practices that are more than just format, in the way our community worships through loving, and in ways that look simple or small but are, in fact, grace-filled moments where Jesus is primary. Praise God for this Spirit-filled reality!

Finally, I want to take a moment to acknowledge one of West’s treasured servants. Since I came onto staff in 2007, I have been privileged to work alongside Marge Squire, Women’s Core Ministry Leader. She is not only dedicated, full of energy, smart AND funny, talented and experienced, Marge is, more than anything, truly gifted to love and walk alongside other women. In joy or pain, in burden or blessing, Marge has never shied from coming into a woman’s life with warmth and humor and smarts you don’t get from any book. She knows how to love. I believe the majority of women at West are mature in faith and wise in emotional reality and in love with Jesus through the service and love of Marge. She has developed leaders, facilitated a million meals, led more groups that can be counted, and all the while has been a growing disciple of Christ who showed us all how to honestly and tireless hold onto God’s love. As she transitions out of her Core Ministry position, I humbly thank her for being who she is. Servant-leader, friend, and fellow-follower of our amazing Lord.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Paz
Director of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care
Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in the whole earth! You have set your glory in the heavens. You have made sure that children and infants praise you. 
Psalm 8:1-2a NIRV

Three foundational biblical truths that the WestKids team wants to pass on to kids regardless of their age are: God made us. God loves us. We can trust God. We want to extend the grace and love that Jesus gave to us to each and every child and their family. We also want others to know that no matter where we find ourselves in our faith journey, Jesus loves us and invites us into a forever friendship with Him.

The WestKids nursery team is such a vital part of the overall ministry of West Church to our community. Our nursery staff are sometimes some of the first people that visitors interact with on a Sunday morning or special event and I am so thankful for their faithfulness in serving the church in this way. As a parent and/or caregiver it can be difficult to entrust the care of your child to someone. I am so grateful that our nursery staff understands and cares for each family with loving kindness and the joy of the Lord. I want to extend a BIG thank you to Jenn Clark and family for coordinating the nursery staff in addition to assisting in everything WestKids related. She is an extremely valuable team member and fun to work with! This past year we had some new nursery staff and also some newborns join us for the first time! We look forward to the new year and all that it has in store for us.

**KidsWeek@West**

The theme for the week was ROAR: Life is Wild. God is Good. We had over 100 kids sign up for the week and had a blast together! We learned that no matter what happens in life God is good. Thank you to all the volunteers that came out each night to help communicate the love that Jesus has for us to all the kids and their families. It was clear to me during the week how kids were really connecting with the message that God is good and that he cares about us and the things that we experience in life. This is a highlight of kids ministry at West and something that so many look forward to each year. I am hopeful that we will continue to make an impact for Christ in our community by offering this week of fun and deep faith connection.

**Camp Lincoln & Harvest Party**

God provided a beautiful day for us to celebrate as a community at the YMCA’s Camp Lincoln in June at our Summer picnic! It was an awesome day to be at the lake and enjoy water sports and also ropes/climbing and other games together. It was evident throughout the day that people were enjoying meeting new people and hanging out catching up with friends. The Lord provided an equally beautiful day for our Annual Harvest Party at Rogers Spring Hill Farm in September. These events are important to our community because it gives us an opportunity to fellowship together outside of a Sunday morning. It’s also a great opportunity to invite someone who is curious about Jesus and wouldn’t necessarily find themselves at church on a Sunday. I want to send a BIG thank you to the Rogers family for graciously hosting this event and especially for the tractor rides and apples!
When I reflect on how God is moving in WestKids I think especially of 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! It is incredible to see how God weaves the events of our lives and our spiritual growth together with the invitation to serve. I see this clearly in the lives of our WestKids volunteers. I am both humbled and inspired by their faith and steadfast service.

**Small Groups**

Small Groups are everywhere at West! From Westkids and WestYouth on Sundays to Thursday morning Bible studies and in-home groups, the list is LONG! We have multiple Men’s & Women’s Bible studies, multiple groups that meet to do life together, Co-ed groups, couples groups, singles group, Sunday morning small groups that explore what faith in Jesus is all about, Grief Share, Al-Anon, Crossroads (NEW this year – with a focus on healing from addiction). Whether it’s a book study or focuses on a book of the Bible small groups at West have something for everyone and this is possible because of passionate people willing to facilitate groups! Thank you for stepping into the roles that God has invited you to and walking with others in this way.

I am particularly thankful for my West church family this year. Myself and my family have received the peaceful love of Christ through the people we are in community with at West. Life is lived in community, in relationship, and I thank God for the relationships that I have been given by God through the people of West Church. God’s love seems to unfold before our very eyes each and every time we encounter Christ in a new way or we are comforted by the familiar. The truth is that God’s love has always been there and will remain for all eternity.

Submitted with God-given hope and expectation,

Pastor Todd

*Pastor to Children & Families*
2019 was another amazing year to see all that God has done in and through the many members of the Worship Arts, Worship Support and Connection Ministry teams, our Young@Heart community, and our West family at large. And as worship pastor here the last six years, I’ve been blessed to see God’s hand and His Spirit’s movement on a weekly basis, as our devoted volunteers come together to create and offer impassioned praise and worship, inspiring visuals and sound, welcoming words and smiles, helpful information and assistance, heartfelt compassion and prayer, delicious hospitality, and creative beauty adorning our walls and halls. I’m forever grateful to all the leaders and team members who’ve served week in and week out bringing glory to God through His Spirit of welcome, worship and fellowship at West Church.

The Praise Team ministry members have been ever faithful to help bring fresh, vibrant musical worship to our Sunday mornings and special services throughout the year. From the band and instrumentalists to the vocalists, TechArts servants to Jim and Ellie, we thank God for them!

West Choir continued to meet and practice and pray together, leading worship monthly that had us all raising our voices to the heavens. Easter morning music, our Christmas concerts, and WestCares Choir ministering at Hannah Duston Healthcare Center were highlights of the year. We also debuted beautiful new stoles lovingly stitched by Elizabeth Swan and Ronni Longwell.

Robin and I were again blessed to see God at work in the lives of the children and youth we have the pleasure of making music with, learning together what it means to worship God with abandon. We love hearing how He uses them to touch hearts and inspire souls as only they can. Palm Sunday, Children & Youth Sunday and Christmas were the richer for their gleeful presence.

We gave our WestArts family a thank-you gift this year in the form of the book Unoffendable by Brant Hansen, an excellent book challenging all of us as followers of Christ to become “unoffendable” through constant humility and the desire to love everyone unconditionally. God moved mightily through it as the book was shared with family members and friends, others at West and in the community. It was amazing to see Him move, and we highly recommend it!

Our Young@Heart monthly gatherings were blessed with new faces, good food and fellowship, hymn singing, and varied devotionals. Time with our senior saints is a treasure, and I’m especially grateful for Anita Low for helping lead the ministry, and our ever-faithful team of cooks, servers and centerpiece designers who make our meals together so special.

Donations from Young@Heart, West Choir members and our gospel choir, The Choral Majority, pooled together, have helped sponsor a child in Tanzania through Kulea, funded needed resources for ChildFund children, and supported Wycliffe Bible translations. GO GOD!!
I’ve also been blessed as much as I hope to have been a blessing serving as monthly worship leader for Community Bible Study, at our Friday Fellowship worship gatherings, and at the funerals and weddings of our community. And I’m truly thankful for the musicians who ministered with me, giving their time and talents to bless God and His people.

Robin and I will be forever grateful God brought us to West Church “for such a time as this.” From the start, we’ve felt at home here, and have loved sharing West with guest artists, visiting friends and family. I’ve been deeply blessed working with our staff and leaders, moved and inspired by Pastor Chris, Shirley, Dan and our other preachers, supported by all the groups and teams we’ve led and ministered with, and prayed for and cared for by all of you. Thank you for shining the Light of Christ on us, and for your generous loving support of our new season.

‘Til we see you next time—because we will be back—we pray God’s continued blessing and anointing on West Church. God loves and inhabits West Church for HIS Glory, and we’re excited to see all that He will do through you in the decade ahead. To God be the glory forever! Amen.

Eric Lindahl  
Worship Pastor
Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.
—I Peter 4:10

Whether it’s the Worship Center, “Great Room,” Vestry, WestKids area, Hilltop classrooms or any of our other rooms—West’s facility provides places for people to connect with God and each other. Even the hallways—especially the West Entry Hall—are conduits for connection. God has given West Church a wonderful building and grounds as a platform for multifaceted ministry! These incredible resources provide year-round spaces where people can experience “Cross Shaped Lives.”

Ministry Operations involves overseeing the administration, benevolence, budget, communications, custodial, property and technology. It can be a challenging assignment and that’s why it is so incredibly important to have the support of Abby Cunningham, Reception & Hospitality; Dave Dillon, Property; Jo Ann Jordan & Toni Wellspring, Bookkeeping; Bob Wilson, Finance; Steve Simmons, Technology; Frantz David, Custodial; and the Benevolence Team. We are a blessed congregation! I thank God also for the volunteers—especially the Property Team, Dave Low and Mark Antonucci—who have lent a hand to a number of projects this year!

Some of the accomplishments this year were:
• Church family members helped through the Benevolence Fund
• A new church website
• New giving software for the Collection Team and website
• Refurbished the Vestry and added multimedia capability
• Access control on the West Entry Hall exterior doors
• Lighting controls in the Worship Center

Church facilities are important, however, only as a place where we can be equipped to serve others. I rejoice in the Lord to see the Gospel spread, lives changed, and needs addressed. These accomplishments confirm His presence among us and His ability to work through our efforts. But we are not finished. There is more to be done. And God will carry us forward to our frontline or front lawn—wherever He chooses to use us.

I feel blessed to work at a place I call home—and, especially blessed to serve this community.

Phil Williams
Director of Ministry Operations
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Henry Blackaby says that the Christian leader’s goal is to move people on to God’s agenda, taking them from where they are to where God wants them to be - not to achieve numerical results, do things with perfection, or even grow for the sake of growth alone.

With that in mind, trying to report people being moved on to God’s agenda can be somewhat ambiguous! And so, as I try to report on leadership development, I must admit that what we can see is only a portion of what God is doing in our West community in the area of developing servant-leaders. The work of true transformation and development in spirituality is God’s work. However, as the Leadership Development Team partners with the Holy Spirit, we strive to provide opportunities for leaders to understand, learn, and grow. As we seek to develop servant-leaders, we keep three basic growth areas in mind: Know, Be, Do. What do our people need to Know, who do they need to Be, and how should they Do what needs to be done?

We have rejoiced as we’ve seen God’s hand in people stepping into leadership positions, being willing to serve and grow as God leads. We have been encouraged to have many people participate in development events such as the Global Leadership Summit in August and Gear Up in November. Attendees from each of these training opportunities spoke about how they were inspired, taught, and encouraged in their faith and leadership capacity.

Beside offering development events, the LDT has seen the evidence of God’s work through utilizing West Ministry Leader meetings and through our Spiritual and LEAD retreats... in other words, going where leaders are and dedicating time and energy toward spiritual, emotional and behavioral growth.

We are thankful for all those who lead at West. We truly could NOT “move people on to God’s agenda” without the many, many volunteers, facilitators, small group leaders, Core Ministry Leaders, and unseen workers serving Christ. No matter how small the task or how big the assignment, it is God who enables and leads us all.

Submitted by Shirley Paz
Chair of the Leadership Development Team

Mike Villafane
Phil Williams
Bob Wilson
MEMBERSHIP MINISTRY & CLERK REPORT

In 2019 we hosted one Life@West class, welcoming 10 prospective members who form a slate that will be voted on at the Annual Business Meeting. Though our soon-to-be members range in age and life-experience, they all share a faith in Christ and the desire to worship at West as a member of the West family. It was a blessed experience to gather for Life@West in October—we learned about each other, about the West Staff, and about what it means to be a member in our community. Thank you to our Life@West 2019 alum for being such a wonderful group!

I’d like to thank Pastor Chris, Pastor Todd, and Shirley for sharing at Life@West in such a genuine and thoughtful way. Also, big thanks to my interview team—Carolyn Alexander, Marilyn Allison, Eileen Cantone, Terri Chechowitz, Ellie Gustafson, Ed Platz, Roberta Platz, and Beth Steele—who spent time with each membership applicant and welcomed them warmly into our community.

I’m excited to see what God has in store for West Church in 2020!

Annual Meeting – January 27, 2019
· Elected Officers
· Confirmed Ministry Leaders
· Six new members confirmed
· Approved a budget of $798,154

2019 Membership Statistics
Membership
· Participating Members – 211
· Transitional Members – 5
· Heritage Members – 2
· New Members – 6
· Deceased Members – 2

2019 Baptisms & Dedications
· Baptisms – 8
· Dedications – 1

2019 Average Weekly Attendance
· Sunday Worship Services – 325
· Easter Sunday – 674
· Christmas Eve – 628

2018 Membership Statistics
Membership
· Participating Members – 228
· Transitional Members – 0
· Heritage Members – 4
· New Members – 5
· Deceased Members – 2

2018 Baptisms & Dedications
· Baptisms – 11
· Dedications – 1

2018 Average Weekly Attendance
· Sunday Worship Services – 332
· Easter Sunday – 731
· Christmas Eve – 596

Abby Cunningham
Church Clerk & Membership Ministry Leader
CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTRY

Mercy Meals came to the assistance of two families this year. They were visited and prayed for by caring Christian friends bringing hot meals until their initial need was minimized. I am thankful for Deb Dillon who organizes the meal plan and the people who prepare meals.

Stephen Ministry is going strong with 10 active members, all having care receivers in 2019. This Christian caregiving group has met the emotional and spiritual needs of the West Church family on a one to one basis for over 18 years. This is a ‘quiet’ ministry but very essential for those who are hurting and need the love of Christ.

Visitation and Care Team has officially started. The June training was a success with 12 people in attendance. They will be using the Stephen Ministry book Christian Caregiving - A Way of Life as a resource to prepare them for their caring visits. I would like to thank Pastor Todd for his vision, encouragement and help in forming this team.

The Lord has been at work in the caring relationships the Stephen Ministers have had with their care receivers. It is a joy and blessing to see a caring relationship come to a close because it means the Lord has totally healed and restored the person receiving care. He is present and faithful as the Stephen Ministers meet, listen, encourage, affirm and pray with their care receivers.

He has also been faithful in providing people for Mercy Meals who are willing to not only make a meal for a family but deliver it in a timely manner. Most of the time, they are also making dinner for their own families.

I would like to recognize Terri Chechowitz, Eileen Cantone, Roberta Platz and Bonnie Hamilton for their support and care of others this past year. They have shown love and care for people who desire to be at West but need extra help while attending. They are a constant reminder to me of the Lord’s provision and love for us all.

As we start 2020 I hope to expand the Care/Visitation team and train more Stephen Ministers, Lord willing.

Joyfully submitted,

Deedee Roberts
Congregational Care Leader
The Men’s Ministry had a great year in 2019, with compelling and challenging messages on putting our compassion in action and being active friends, willing to speak Jesus into each other’s lives in good times and tough times. I thank and praise God for His blessings through these events.

Between January and May of 2019, we focused on the theme of “Compassion in Action.” Between September and December 2019, we focused on “Friendship in Action.” Throughout the year we promote and facilitate monthly men’s events, typically the 3rd Saturday of each month. These monthly events, generally breakfasts, have been averaging 40 or more men. We hold an annual Cookout in May and we also have an annual men’s retreat held in the fall.

Team members this year have been Matt Pierce, Mike Talbot, Angel Vargas, Javier Villafane, and Jim Stepanian with his breakfast team members chef Dave Dillon, Richard Boynton, Zach Bohne, and Mike Mcavoy with guest chef Ron Leblanc stepping in for Dave when needed. Under Jim’s strong guidance, the breakfast meals drew men in so we could then feed their souls as well. We accomplished our goals all under the skillful and wise leadership of Pastor Chris as our coach, who has guided and encouraged me tremendously as a ministry leader.

As in 2018, so our goal remained the same in 2019: simply pour Jesus into the hearts and lives of men, using godly speakers, food, fellowship, and fun.

Our breakfast speakers for 2019 included Carlos Paz, Mike Goff, Bryan Page, Dorting-ton Little, Dan Ledwith, David Braxton, Mark Rivera, and Jesus Ruiz. Each brought compelling messages on compassion and friendship in action as we each live out Jesus on a daily basis.

This year for our annual retreat we participated in Camp Berea’s Man Camp in November. It was a jam packed weekend of amazing messages and seminars, awesome worship music, and a huge number of indoor and outdoor events, including 50 foot high rope swing, ax throwing, corn hole tournaments, football, target shooting, pool, foosball, and Frisbee. Around 300 men ages 16 to “very old” from all over New England, New York, New Jersey, etc., came to worship Jesus and have an enormous amount of fun. West Church Men’s Ministry this year wanted to take advantage of a pre-packaged event that would be cost-effective, attract a wider age range of men, have a greater number of fun activities to do, and would allow our team to focus more on spending time fellowshipping with our guys. Man Camp exceeded all these goals and expectations, including bringing in a greater number of young West Church men, and we plan on returning in 2020.

Our goals for the Men’s Ministry in 2020 are to continue providing messages that draw our men into deeper relationship with Jesus and with others and to draw in younger men who will become the future of Men’s Ministry. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Stevens
Men’s Ministry Leader
WOMEN’S MINISTRY

Again, God has been so faithful to His girls! We have experienced the Lord in amazing ways this past year through Monday night small groups and Friday morning Bible study. On Monday nights, over 30 women attended each week throughout the year. We began our year learning the importance of both emotional and spiritual maturity using Pete Scazzero’s book *Emotionally Healthy Relationships* and then spent the second half of our year with Pricilla Shirer studying *Discerning God’s Voice* which speaks for itself. This year we saw how our groups provide a safe place for women to be transparent with each other and God. They have been places of love and acceptance no matter where our women are coming from.

This year, I would like to highlight Danea Talbot, who has been my partner in women’s ministry since 2005. She has faithfully run the A/V for Monday nights, led multiple small groups, and built worship teams for retreats and special events. Danea has been a tremendous friend to me, bringing me wisdom and balance as she’s spoken into my life and ministry over the years. What a privilege it has been to journey with her in her healing and deepening relationship with God, and now to see how she is being used by God in women’s lives. Watching her grow has brought me great joy.

Here are a few words about Danea’s ministry at West from one of our women.

“You will not find a finer woman anywhere then my dear friend Danea. She fills my heart with joy every day and practices the compassion of Jesus in everything she does. She is generous in both time and heart, and will never miss an opportunity to pray with me or offer me love. God has given West Church a real gift by bringing Danea to you all.

PS - I could listen to her sing forever!”

As I step away from my leadership role, I look back in awe of all that God has done! One of my greatest joys is to walk into West and see the women caring and enjoying one another. I see how He’s put these women together in a loving and fun community, and I’m grateful to have been a part of God’s work.

Always Amazed in His Love for Us,

Marge Squire
*Women’s Ministry Leader*
WESTYOUTH MINISTRY

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

**Deep Freeze Youth Winter Retreat**

A weekend out of the routine for teenagers can be disorienting at first, but a tremendous vehicle for relationship-building and having time to focus on the things that matter. Self-examination and commitment to change habits and accept God’s love and grace are realities to celebrate! This year was no exception. The youth staff look forward to retreat to spend quality time with both students and each other. It’s a definite highlight and momentum builder for the year.

**Backpack Donations**

WestYouth has once again committed to “students helping students” with participation in our Annual Backpack Drive. We attempt to discover, evaluate and serve the needs of Haverhill, as well as the surrounding communities in the Merrimack Valley.

This year we were delighted to send over 50 Backpacks filled with school supplies that West Church and others in the Haverhill community contributed to Golden Hill Elementary School. Principal Bruce Michitson was very happy to know that West Church is passionate about the students in Haverhill, saying, “We really appreciate the help. There are kids who just want to get up, feel safe, go to school and learn. They’re worrying about whether they have a backpack or good shoes or what they’re going to eat. It’s hard to learn when you’re worried about those things.”

**Weekly Gatherings**

Both the mid-week and Sunday gatherings provide a safe place for students to relax, have fun and feel a sense of the wonder of God. They can ask questions, give their own insights and be themselves as they explore their faith in Jesus. WestYouth Ministry Leaders are dedicated to be consistent with the small groups of students who they are responsible for leading.

I’d like to give special recognition to:

- **Gerry Roldan:** Passionate about the spiritual and emotional needs of students in and outside our church walls.
- **Lauren Clark:** Always has a desire to know God more and seeks Him in all she does. She has strong gifts in many areas, including empathy which made an impact in our students lives this year.
- **Richard Ciarletta:** Richard is attentive to the middle school boys, reliable, patient, knowledgeable and has a great influence in these young people’s lives.
- **Olivia Mura:** Olivia is committed to our students and sincerely listens to each of the student’s stories with a sensitive ear. She is growing into a strong youth leader with good insight and an authentic love for the students.
- **Natalie Simmons:** Natalie continues to love and care for our middle school girls. Natalie’s chief desire is to share God’s word with our students and expects great things for them!
Corinne Hennessey: Loves relating to teens and has, from a thankful heart, a desire to give back to a ministry that had much influence in her relationship with God. She truly cares for the high school girls that she leads.

Todd Becker: Todd is a true friend who listens and gives careful wisdom with great respect for God’s Word and how it can impact a student’s life.

I always enjoy seeing or hearing of teens who attend WestYouth spending time together outside of youth group. When students like spending time with each other organically, that’s a sign of true community and something other teens would be curious to be a part of. West Church’s students have a strong community of faith and parents who are leading them in God in such great ways!

One of the plans for 2020 is to consistently encourage students to deepen the relationships they have with each other in order to reach peers that do not not share their faith and values. Inviting others to “check out” what God is about is always a primary goal. Middle school and high school students are moving into a phase of life that can have the “transfer of ownership” of faith in Christ in themselves become a challenging test. They naturally start to reconcile many beliefs and values personally versus their family’s “faith prescription.” Sincerely committing to a faith of their own is crucial. WestYouth staff strive to be present in this tension and create opportunities to aid in the adoption of the student’s own faith pursuit. Practically, this can be fostered by challenging the students to build on ministry ideas, raise resources, invite others to participate and grow a sense of satisfaction as they see their faith worked out in their daily lives through love and service to others.

Steve Simmons
Youth Leader
It was a year of transitions at Hilltop, and we have so much to be thankful for!

We are so grateful to the teachers and staff at Hilltop who kept things running smoothly during the summer and into the fall with a lot of uncertainty in their midst.

We are so grateful to Nancy Dickey who faithfully led the team as our Interim Director from May well into November. We are thankful for our consultant, Jean Eastman, who filled in so many gaps, and answered so many questions for teachers and parents, and cleaned out so many closets!

We are grateful to the community and leadership at West who gave us a lot of space, support, and grace as we let some things fall to the wayside as we dealt with transitions.

But mostly we are grateful to God because when the time was right—He brought us our new Director, Alicia Smith. We are excited to move into the future with Alicia at the helm, relying heavily on God’s leading, her training and gifting, and her love for little children!

The future looks sunny at Hilltop and we are looking forward to increased collaboration with different groups at West as we continue to reach out to families in the greater Haverhill community.

The Hilltop Board

Mitzi Wilson, chair
Todd Becker
Natalie Simmons
Deedee Roberts
LOCAL OUTREACH:

It’s my delight to give a praise report on the good things God has done through this ministry during 2019!

Women’s Prison Ministry

Mary Lou Noonan joyfully reports that she and Pam Brown have an average of seven women in their Bible study each week. Most of the women have come to the knowledge of saving grace in Jesus! She gives praise to God for His mercy demonstrated in these women’s lives. She is thankful for the support of West (which includes providing Bibles for the women) and she covets, most of all, continued prayers for these women.

Family Kitchen

In 2019 the Family Kitchen distributed over 40 tons of food. An average of 156 families received food each month. Betsy Tombarelli and her dedicated team of volunteers faithfully serve these precious families every Wednesday night, providing welcoming hugs, love, smiles, compassion and prayer.....oh, and groceries too! This team is focused on providing not only food for the body, but also food for the heart and soul. The Family Kitchen receives many food donations from you, the West Church family. Each week, canned and dry goods fill up the Family Kitchen shopping cart in the West Entry Hall. Thank you for your generosity!

Community Meals

Steve Simmons and 6-7 WestYouth volunteers serve every two months alongside the community meal staff at the Citizens Center in Haverhill. Their goal is encourage folks who visit and show them respect and love in spite of their circumstances. Most folks are very grateful for our presence there, and we have opportunity to pray and build relationships. This time of service gives the WestYouth students a new perspective on what needs are in the area and a practical way to help both physically and spiritually.

Fostering Hope Merrimack Valley

West Church has recently started to find ways to bless the children, families, and the social workers that are part of the foster care system in the greater Haverhill area. In October, West Church donated all the hay bales, corn stalks, and pumpkins for a sibling harvest party. This was a special event for siblings within the foster care system living in different homes to be able to spend time together, build memories and have some fun. West Church also purchased Christmas gift cards ($100 each) for 5 teenagers living in group homes within the foster care system that do not normally receive anything at Christmas time. There are so many ways the church can be involved—please contact Mark Cottrell if you have a desire to help foster kids and their families through this special ministry.

New Partnerships in 2020

At the end of 2019 new and renewed relationships were formed with several more local ministries: Pregnancy Care Center (PCC), Leaving the Streets Ministry (LTSM) and Amirah, Inc. Stay tuned for more information on opportunities to serve, or speak directly with Joanne Tecce (PCC) and Miguel Quinones (LTSM) who will serve as liaisons on the Leadership Team. For information about Amirah, contact Mark Cottrell or Shirley Paz.
Serve Days
Last year the Local Outreach Ministry Leadership Team organized three Serve Days—January, April and October. Each one offered multiple opportunities for the “scattered church” to be out and about in the local community, spreading God’s love in acts of service and songs of praise. I greatly appreciate the commitment from the Leadership Team: Jim Herrick, Diane Senno, Mike Villafane, Miguel Quinones, and Dave Pulzetti who serve as liaisons to each local ministry and team captains on Serve Day. I also want to extend a very special thanks to Eric and Robin for joyfully leading the WestCares Choir, which they created specifically to provide a special opportunity to bless local nursing home residents with the gift of song & praise on Serve Days!

The three Serve Days accounted for over 500 hours given by 120 West Church volunteers who chose to “make serving their team sport” on one or more of the Serve Day Saturdays. Because of that generous gift of time and service, the ministries of Common Ground, Habitat for Humanity, Lazarus House, UTEC, and Serving Together, Haverhill were able to continue or complete work on a wide variety projects, including: organizing storage rooms, painting walls, caulking windows, raking yards, cooking and serving meals, setting up computers, hammering nails, hanging sheetrock and setting up a sewing room.

To God be the glory for all He has done and will continue to do in our local community through this ministry!

Carolyn Alexander  
Local Outreach Ministry Leader

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH:

Missionary Support
In 2019, West Church was able to send financial support to 15 overseas missionaries and their families. West Church supports missionaries working in Asia, Africa, Central America and the Middle East where they evangelize, plant churches, and translate the Bible into new languages. It is a privilege to partner with them as they expand God’s kingdom in different parts of the world. We have had the opportunity over the past year to interview some prospective mission partners that are reaching out internationally in unique ways and hope to add them to our list of supported people in the coming year.

Missionary Visits
This past year we were able to have some of our supported missionaries visit on Sunday morning. In May, newlyweds Jonathan and Susanna Ciccarone shared with us about their calling to reach people in the Middle East. Ralph Leo surprised us with a visit in August and updated us about his life on the Arabian Peninsula and his ministry activities across the Muslim world.

Honduras Short-Term Mission Trip
We had several people from West Church travel on a short-term mission trip to Honduras in August. The team, lead by Dave Puzetti and Kay Spofford, worked with a ministry led by Pastor Eric Sanchez with Missions Door to the indigenous Lenca people located in the southeastern part of Honduras. The team worked on the construction of a multipurpose building to be used for pastor training and other ministry activities to expand the gospel among the Lenca population.
Operation Christmas Child

Operation Christmas Child was a great success this past year with 335 shoe boxes being sent. Many thanks to Anita Low and Mary Lou Noonan for leading the event!

I am so blessed to be able to work alongside a great group of people on the Missions Leadership Team: Ellie Gustafson, Dave and Anita Low, Briana Fitzgerald, Judy Durant, and MacKenzie Kennedy. I would like to thank them for all their hard work and enthusiasm for missions at West Church.

Lastly, I would ask the West Church congregation 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.

WHOLE LIFE DISCIPLESHIP:

Fruitfulness on the Frontline Study

In the fall, a small group study using the book *Fruitfulness on the Frontline* was offered in parallel to a sermon series following the same material. We had 16 people complete the study. It was exciting to see the group recognize how each of us is uniquely being used by God to expand his kingdom wherever he has placed us. It was encouraging and liberating to learn that being “fruitful” was not confined to a narrow set of evangelistic activities but to a wonderfully wide group of ways we can show God’s love.

This Time Tomorrow

Along with the Fruitfulness on the Frontline sermon series, we started to conduct *This Time Tomorrow* interviews with people from the congregation during Sunday morning worship. We ask three simple questions: *What will you be doing this time tomorrow? How do you see God working where you are? How can we pray for you?* These interviews are a great way for us as the gathered church to celebrate how God is using all of us during our regular lives as the scattered church. We also pray for the person, commissioning them for the important ministry they do in their everyday lives. It has been a blessing to be able to learn about and pray for people being fruitful in a wide range of contexts and we hope to continue with regular monthly interviews. There has been excellent feedback from the congregation about how encouraging it is to hear from “regular” people being used by God.

In the spring we will offer another small group study on *God Space* by Doug Pollock. The goal will be to help us as a church learn to connect relationally with non-Christians and share Christ with them in effective ways.

Mark Cottrell
*Director of Outreach & Missions Leadership Team Leader*
PROPERTY MINISTRY

Team Members: Dave Dillon, Deb Dillon, Richard Boynton, Doug Pearson, Billy Spohr, Bob Wilson, and Phil Williams

Projects completed for 2019:
• Refurbished and painted the Vestry
• Installed access control on the West Entry Hall exterior doors
• Installed monitors in the Library & Vestry bringing our multimedia rooms to 6
• Replaced gas range/griddle/ovens in the church kitchen
• Replaced blower motor for the West Entry Hall furnace
• Replaced a circulation pump on the Brick Church boiler
• Replaced the lighting controls in the Worship Center
• Repaired the storm drain in rear parking lot
• Repaired gutters, soffit, and fascia on exterior of Worship Center & office wing
• Repainted Library and Communion Kitchen
• Repaired a short in the fire alarm system
• Replaced emergency lighting
• Replaced range in the Parsonage
• Assisted the Family Kitchen with replacement of a freezer

Future Projects:
• Repair Vestry ceiling
• Reseal the rear and front parking lines, and reline
• Remove dead trees at rear of church and Broadway cemetery
• Rework storage areas in the church
• Repoint brick church
• Replace heater unit on the second floor of WEH

Thanks to all the volunteers and the members of the church who always step in and help when needed.

Dave Dillon
Property Team Ministry Leader
# West Congregational Church
## Operating + Mission Budget 2020

### Operating & Missions Income/Expense

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>$ Over Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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### Expense

#### 4005 - STAFF COMPENSATION

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<td>98.55%</td>
<td>765,200</td>
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### Net Operating & Missions Income

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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### OUTREACH Income/Expense (Cell Funds)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>$ Over Budget</th>
<th>% of Budget</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total 49861 - OUTREACH Expense</td>
<td>22,747.74</td>
<td>45,000.00</td>
<td>(22,252.26)</td>
<td>50.55%</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NEW MISSIONARIES:

David Heckendorn - *InterVarsity*

David is starting a new evangelistic outreach to international graduate students at Harvard University. There are over 10,000 international graduate students and researchers connected to Harvard and over half come from countries closed to the Gospel and/or missionaries. Engaging these young scholars, who are typically selected at the highest levels of their countries, for Christ is an ideal way to send the Gospel to the nations through these culturally/linguistically appropriate emissaries.

Laura Fazio - *Assemblies of God World Missions*

Laura currently lives in Sicily, Italy among African and Middle Eastern refugees at Casa di Refugio (House of Refuge) in the city of Caltanissetta. Her responsibilities include teaching children, clothing distributions, hosting women’s events, and building relationships with the families in the community. Serving these refugees allows Laura the opportunity to share Christ with them, many who come from countries where they may never had any exposure to the Gospel.
NON-BUDGETED FUNDS 12/31/19

BUILDING FUND

Purpose: For major property related projects that exceed the resources available through the Operating & Missions Budget.
12/31/2019 Balance: $69,948.
** Designated for Main Boiler: $29,000.
Available Balance: $40,948.

Major projects currently under consideration by the Property Team include repair, reseal, and relining the church parking lots, repair the Vestry ceiling, tree removal, and rework storage areas. Future projects 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.
12/31/2019 Balance: $118,970.
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): $112,344
Family Kitchen: $10,840
12/31/2019 Balance: $134,663

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 Common Ground and 10% to the Haverhill Salvation Army to meet needs of people in the broader Greater Haverhill community. Balances in this fund are not published.