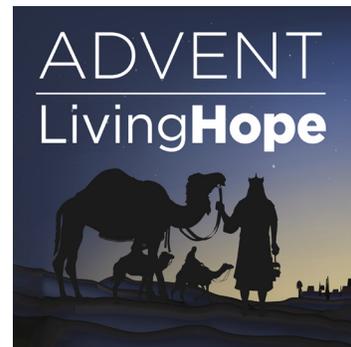
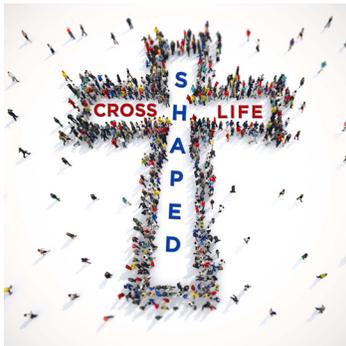




WEST CHURCH 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



LOVE GOD • LOVE OTHERS • MAKE DISCIPLES

We are living in a different world, and as the now familiar saying goes, we are learning to do church differently!

Therefore, not only can we give thanks for the way the Lord has led us and blessed us through the past year but also how He is enabling us to adapt to the new reality we are experiencing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is indeed a testimony to the love, resourcefulness, and commitment of our leadership and you, the West Church family, that the life of our church is continuing to be taken forward. No doubt we shall look back on 2020 and see new kinds of fruit that the Spirit has been growing—the kind that is more often nurtured in times of testing. It may be that God will grow in us a deeper reliance on His strength, a greater compassion for others whose suffering is beyond our capacity to imagine and a fresh admiration for those who serve sacrificially. We may discover a renewed openness to try new things, especially technologies! We might know a fresh determination to make the most of every moment and build more healthy rhythms of service, rest, work, and play into our lives.

We began this year with our Annual Spiritual Retreat focusing on ‘A Satisfied Soul.’ We followed that with our annual LEAD Retreat in early March, where we determined that our focus for our ministry year, would be NEW—Behold, I am doing a new thing, (Isaiah 43:19a). We felt that God was telling us that He was going to do a NEW thing and one of our primary goals was to have a greater online presence. Little did we know how quickly we would be experiencing a NEW thing as well as broadcasting our first online service just 8 days later. We are certainly living out the goal of doing a NEW thing. What other NEW thing might God be prompting us to do for our local area, for our nation and for the world?

2020 had many highlights, some of which have been shared in this Annual Report. Let us hold on to and celebrate those as we look back with thanksgiving. Most of all, may we give thanks and pray for one another as we continue learning to live out the life that Christ has given us for the sake of the world for which He gave Himself up, so that all might share the living hope that the resurrection proclaims.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.

—1 Peter 1:3-4

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AGENDA

The Annual Meeting of the West Congregational Church will be held on
Sunday, January 31, 2021 at 12noon in the WORSHIP CENTER
To act on the following:

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

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

Officers:

Moderator: Jonathan Squire	Assistant Moderator: Ed Platz
Clerk: Abby Cunningham	Assistant Clerk: Natalie Simmons
Treasurer: Briana Fitzgerald	Assistant Treasurer: Carol Tudisco

SLT Members-at-Large:

Eileen Cantone	Raymond St. Amand
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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
- Steve Simmons, Digital Ministry
- Todd Becker, Family Ministry
- Open, Fifty Plus Ministry
- Bob Wilson, Finance Support Ministry
- Alicia Smith, Hilltop School Ministry
- Shirley Paz, Leadership Development Ministry
- Diane Senno, 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
- Open, Women's Ministry
- Todd Becker, Youth Ministry
- Chris Ziegler, Worship Ministry

ARTICLE III: To receive and act on the Proposed Budget for the year 2021.

ARTICLE IV: To receive and act on the Proposed Special Projects budget.

ARTICLE V: 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.

LEAD PASTOR

Dear West Congregational Church,

You may have heard the old joke, “If you want to make God laugh, just tell him your plans.” We may have had plans for 2020, but things didn’t quite go according to our plans! Reflecting upon 2020, I’m reminded of the words of the prophet, Jeremiah:

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the Lord,” (Jeremiah 29:11-14a).

It is an understatement to say that this has been a challenging year. All of us have had to adjust our lives in accordance with the constraints we are facing due to Covid. Many of us have had to cope with fear, sickness, death, sadness and anger while trying to maintain some semblance of normalcy in our households and work-places. And yet, in the midst of it all, God has been with us, loving us through our ongoing circumstances. His plans are better than our plans. For he has said, “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways,” (Isaiah 55:9). His plans are for our good, and His desire is to give us hope. During Advent this year, God reminded us that He alone is our Living Hope in all these things.

This has been a year of firsts. This year, for the first time since 1735, we had to conduct worship services online only for a brief period. This was the year that Jesus gently pushed us out the front door of our church and invited us to be the scattered church—online, in our homes, neighborhoods and on our frontlines. We were laser focused in our response to the pandemic—focusing on wellness checks and prayer, crisis care and transitional ministries. We uploaded prayer guides, spiritual resources and services, and the missional footprint of our church expanded digitally to reach people in our local community and beyond. It’s not an overstatement to say that this year we started reaching people that we had never ministered to before because so much of our ministry had to go online. In addition to virtual soul care and support, we were also able to mobilize a quarantine relief team to meet the physical needs of those in our community, delivering groceries and other items to those who were shut in. Due to the grace, flexibility and creativity of our ministry leaders, we were also able to migrate some of our existing programs online while we imagined and implemented new ways to minister to our church and the surrounding community.

It has been truly amazing to see God at work in and through these ongoing circumstances. I am so grateful for the ways He has provided for us financially through your continued radical kingdom-oriented generosity. I am also thankful for His kindness in leading Eric & Robin back home to us.

This coming year, we will continue seeking God together with our whole hearts, and as we do, God promises to us that He will be found. He will manifest His presence in even greater ways as He transforms our lives through the Spirit of Christ. And, through Christ who gives us strength, we will recover and reemerge stronger than we ever were before.

With Deep Affection and Gratitude,

Pastor Chris

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Serving on the Senior Leadership Team this year has been demanding and yet God has met us all along the way. We continue to learn how to be servant leaders who are able to lay aside our opinions and desires in order to listen to each other and to God. We are very grateful for the leading of our heavenly Father through all the turns in the road during this very unusual year. We are also grateful to you, the members and friends of West Church, for your support and encouragement and your willingness to seek God along with us as we worked together to meet the changes and challenges of 2020.

New Leadership: The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) began 2020 with the news that Bob Wilson was planning to step down as chair of the team after 4.5 years in that position. Beth Steele was nominated to become the new chair (with Bob's help). Many thanks to Bob for his faithful and effective leadership on the SLT and in so many roles over the years at West Church.

Team Building: As we began to discuss our plans for the year and beyond, it became very clear to us that our relationship with God and with each other were an important part of our work together. We renewed our commitment by reviewing and signing the SLT covenant, we spent time sharing our perspective, our struggles, and we continued to learn to discern God's voice.

The COVID Dance: As you can imagine, much of our time was spent learning about and discussing the impact of the COVID-19 virus on our church, on Hilltop School, on the members of our congregation and on the community. Plans were drawn up and policies written. Decisions were made about how to handle positive cases that affected church activities. Practices were changed as new information became available. The staff and technical people learned quickly how to livestream the service, thanks to the skills of Steve Simmons. The staff reached out to people by phone and internet and continued their ministry of care and support. We are very grateful for Chris and the staff who tended to all the many details to keep us physically and spiritually well. Despite the effects of COVID on our financial situation, we ended the year with a positive balance. God has provided in amazing ways.

Vision Planning: In January the SLT set a goal of developing a clear vision of the direction in which God is leading the church. Many of our activities over the next months were designed to help us think about, pray about, and discern God's leading.

- We asked the West Ministry Team Leaders (WML), the Senior Leadership Team and the Staff to do an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing West Church in the next 5-10 years.
- We invited Jeremy Stefano to guide us at our annual Spiritual Retreat in February.
- We then gathered the WML, SLT and staff for what we call a LEAD retreat. The purpose of this annual retreat is to pray and discern together the direction God is calling us for the year in order to develop the annual Strategic Ministry Plan. In addition, we also were seeking direction for a long range plan.

The outcome of these activities gave the SLT information, direction and purpose as we considered the vision of the church over the next months. Despite the

interruptions from COVID we continue to work on understanding God's leading for the church in the years to come.

Hilltop School: Hilltop is an important outreach ministry for West Church. The SLT provides support for the Hilltop Board. This year the school has been impacted by closures due to the COVID virus. We have worked with the Board as they considered how to respond to the closures and resulting financial effects.

Human Resource Team: This year the SLT determined that the Human Resources Team would be dissolved. We are very grateful for the work that the Team has done in rewriting the personnel policies and updating the Employee Handbook. Thank you to Brenda LeBlanc, David DesRosiers, Joe McMilleon, and Ed Platz. The few ongoing Human Resource tasks will be carried out by members of the Senior Leadership Team. If needed, an Ad Hoc committee will be appointed to carry out additional Human Resource tasks.

As we looked back at the list of suggestions for change we assembled in March for next year, 2-3 years, and 5-10 years, we found that a number of them had been met as part of our adaptation to life with COVID and our response to current events. We have a "clearer digital presence" and have "equipped people in their cultural moment with a biblically informed view." We have learned to livestream the service. We have increased community outreach and opportunities to serve. We have reached out to younger people and families through Hilltop and WestKids and learned how to share our faith even as our "frontlines" became "front lawns." We developed partnerships with other churches and organizations as we sought strategies. God did all this through the circumstances we found ourselves in. We anticipate with hope the powerful work of God in 2021, whatever challenges we may face!

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Steele, *Chair*
Peter Buckley
Eileen Cantone
Shirley Paz
Ray St. Amand
Bob Wilson
Phil Williams
Rev. Chris Ziegler

DIRECTOR OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION & SOUL CARE

Without question, 2020 was a complex year. Illness, fear, grief, anger, disruption, loss, isolation, cultural instability, family stress, and church-wide upheaval were only a few of the major traumas faced.

As I reflect back, the only ‘normal’ months were January, when we offered the disciple-making group “Follow;” February’s annual Spiritual Retreat with Jeremy Stefano speaking on the topic, “A Satisfied Soul,” as well as our Lenten service on February 26; and March, when West’s leaders gathered for the annual LEAD retreat. In fact, that LEAD retreat on March 14th proved to be the last group meeting in the building until June. I can still remember seeing the whiteboard notes untouched from that meeting when I re-entered that room many months later.

Along with the rest of the staff, the pandemic and shutdown caused not only a fast descent into confusion about health and safety issues, but also a deep concern for our church community and their physical and spiritual needs. As one who desires to support God’s growth in others’ lives, it was difficult to know how to reimagine the basic goodness of being with others, and to replace our ministry plan.

Calls replaced face-to-face meeting, online Zoom forums replaced small groups and leadership meetings, and Online Worship became Sunday morning worship. By June, when we were cleared to begin greatly restricted in-person events, our Prayer Services became our first “together” worship in the building in months. We also organized several Worship Watch Parties where limited groups could meet out-of-doors and watch the online service together.

Each Prayer Service, following the sermon series on the Spirit-filled Life, focused on one of the Spiritual Gifts listed in Gal 5:22-23. Many attendees found that God spoke meaningfully in that time. The Prayer Services continued until Sept 6th, the last Sunday before we began in-person Worship again.

In November, Spiritual Formation offered another new opportunity called God Among Us. Stretching from Nov 2020 through July 2021, this is a series of prayerful events designed to increase awareness of God’s voice. Three formats form this series, including Prayer Workshops, Reflective Worship, and Learning to Listen group spiritual direction training.

In late November, our Advent Service was held, and on Dec 7th, a well-attended (both in person and on-line) Women’s Night of Worship combined music and times of reflection and personal prayer.

I thank God for His faithfulness and sustaining this year. Although strained and facing critical spiritual and emotional needs, our church community and others to whom we ministered were met with God’s care, grace, mercy, and love. My heartfelt prayer is that God may be found ever more truthful, wise, merciful, and good as we find and follow Him through this continuing time.

In God’s love,

Shirley Paz,
Director of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care

PASTOR TO CHILDREN & FAMILIES

NURSERY | WESTKIDS | WESTFAMILY EVENTS | SMALL GROUPS

*God is our place of safety. He gives us strength.
He is always there to help us in times of trouble.*
Psalm 46:1 NIRV

God Is Our Place of Safety

Throughout 2020 I returned to Psalm 46 again and again, finding comfort and also sobering truth in its verses. With this year being like no other we have ever experienced, God made himself known in many ways both personally and corporately. We serve a mighty God and He alone is our place of safety, He alone is our strength, and He is always there to help us.

WestKids Ministry

Three foundational biblical truths that the WestKids ministry team desires to pass on to kids and their families, regardless of their age are: God made us. God loves us. We can trust God. These have remained consistent this year though the conversations have been very different at times than in years past.

WestKids Nursery

Our WestKids nursery team has remained a vital part of ministry at West Church and continues to serve our guests on Sunday mornings whenever we have held in-person services. As a parent and/or caregiver it can be difficult to entrust the care of your child to someone, especially this year. I am so grateful that our nursery staff understands and cares for every guest 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.

A Year of Firsts

This year was certainly a year of firsts. For the first time ever, I learned how to navigate holding Sunday WestKids virtually. Naturally, there were limitations in communicating this way, however I am grateful that I was able to connect with our families throughout the Spring/Summer. The uniqueness of having virtual WestKids offered many opportunities to tell stories illustrating Gospel truths. The Fall brought us back into being able to safely hold WestKids in-person services as well as WestYouth youth group. The Fall also brought additional ministry duties for me in assuming the programming responsibilities of WestYouth. We have an amazing group of volunteers that is dedicated to and loves our youth. I am so grateful to be able to serve alongside them in this way.

Highlights

One of the highlights of this year was our very first West Church Trunk or Treat in October! We had many participate and decorate their trunks for our community and this is what really made this event a success. Thank you to all who participated! Another highlight was our House Churches on Sunday mornings throughout the Summer months. I am extremely grateful to those who were able to open their homes (and barns) to accommodate people who desired to meet and worship together in this way.

Many of the challenges that we have all faced during 2020 have been new. God has remained faithful throughout, as He always does, and I pray that we continue to grow in Christ together in this next year!

In Grace and Love,

Pastor Todd
Pastor to Children & Families

DIRECTOR OF MINISTRY OPERATIONS

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

—Numbers 6:24-26

2020! What a year it has been! COVID-19, social distancing, masks, and quarantine all became common phrases. Attending church has been interesting as well. Our services had to go fully online for a while. That was quite the learning curve. We had to purchase new equipment (a camera, software, and hardware) and Steve Simmons transitioned to Digital Ministries with Pastor Todd now hands-on with student ministry. In the span of one week our Sunday experience was online, and soon after we were able to offer ministry to children and students. Many of our groups are now meeting online. Equipment, supplies, and protocols were put in place to disinfect the church campus. A special thanks to Frantz David for his faithful and diligent service.

We were finally able to open the doors again But that even looks different Chair rows are further apart than normal and greeting each other is just not the same. It may sound like I am complaining, but I am not. God is still on the throne and I believe that West Church has done pretty well with all of these transitions.

Things were looking a bit bleak on the financial front in late November when we were more than \$90,000 behind in giving. However, by God's grace, your generous giving, being frugal with our budgets, and access to the Federal PPP Loan/Grant program, we are in a strong financial position as we enter 2021.

God remains faithful! And you, His people, remain faithful as well. I have been blessed to hear stories about how our church has continued to love and serve through faith and good deeds.

Some of the accomplishments this year were:

- Navigating the Commonwealth guidelines and mandates regarding COVID-19.
- Equipment and protocols to disinfect the church campus on an on-going basis.
- Working with Steve Simmons, Jonathan Squire, Drew Morgan, and Pastor Chris to provide an online worship experience.
- Communication to the West Church family regarding the changing policies and procedures for online and in-person services.
- Setting up registration processes for services and groups to meet the requirements of the Commonwealth.
- Applying for and receiving a Federal PPP Loan—and the work involved to convert that loan into a grant. I am especially thankful for Toni Wellspring, our church bookkeeper, and her expertise and assistance in making this a reality.

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

Phil Williams
DoMO

CLERK REPORT

Annual Meeting - January 26, 2020

- Elected Officers and three SLT Members-at-Large
- Confirmed Ministry Leaders
- 10 new members confirmed
- Approved a budget of \$765,221

2020 Membership Statistics

Membership

- Participating Members - 216
- Transitional Members - 1
- Heritage Members - 2
- New Members - 10
- Deceased Members - 2

2020 Baptisms & Dedications

- Baptisms - 0
- Dedications - 0

2020 Average Weekly Attendance

- Sunday Worship Services - 562*
- Easter Sunday - 2,152**
- Christmas Eve - 462*

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

*Average attendance includes online viewers

** Online only

Abby Cunningham

Church Clerk & Membership Ministry Leader

CONNECTION MINISTRY

Dear West Church,

Well, 2020 was a challenging year for connection! We began the year as usual, with a robust team of volunteers, rotating through hosting the Connection Center and greeting. Newcomers were welcomed with a warm smile, a handshake, and an information packet. They were also invited to a Welcome Lunch; a time of food and fellowship. At the lunch, newcomers met the WCC staff and heard more about our Mission and Core Values. All of this seems like a lifetime ago!

In mid-June when we began to meet in-person again, we were living in a different world. As you know, everyone was required to wear a mask, sanitize their hands, and register online or fill out form if they were not registered. These requirements have changed the responsibilities of the Connection Center. Now we are checking lists and counting church attenders. We are sanitizing pens and wiping down counter tops—none of which we could have imagined a year ago. However, an unexpected blessing has been that we have the privilege of greeting every person by name as they check in with us. And we hope that in a small way that helps everyone feel more connected.

Respectfully submitted and smiling behind my mask,

Sharon Ziegler
Connection Ministry Team Leader

CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTRY

*What a wonderful God we have - He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the source of every mercy, and the one Who so wonderfully comforts
and strengthens us in our hardships and trials.*

—2 Corinthians 1:3 Living Bible

This has been an unusual year for Congregational Care. It's hard to care for others when you can't sit close and hold their hand, give them a hug or sit in their kitchen and listen, talk, and pray over a cup of coffee. However, our Stephen Ministers found ways to care that were appropriate for the times we live in: meeting outside in warm weather, using tele-care, texting, and sending cards. We have 10 Stephen Ministers and 7 of them presently have care receivers.

Mercy Meals, led by Deb Dillon, has 13 people willing to bring meals to our West families. Last year they were able to provide 3 families with meals. They not only brought meals but the love and grace of Jesus. I would like to thank Deb for her commitment to this ministry and her willingness to organize and provide meals.

The Visitation and Care team has 10 caregivers. Cindy Parolisi is our administrator. We had a slow start this year because of Covid but hope to be up to speed by this summer. I would like to thank Bob Kinsman and Dave Dillon for their willingness to be available to meet with an elderly man who needed comfort.

This year I have felt the strong presence of the Lord in our ministry. When things were stripped away by the pandemic we found our strength in Jesus and His ability to care for us. We also found our need to care for one another was vital and necessary. Three of our Stephen Minister's care receivers went Home to be with Jesus this year. Some caring relationships had been together for a few years. We celebrated the joy of their homecoming but also mourned with the care givers. Our Lord was there with us also strengthening and comforting us.

As we look forward to this new year, I hope to train new Stephen Ministers and expand the Visitation and Care team.

Joyfully submitted,

Deedee Roberts
Congregational Care Leader

MEN'S MINISTRY

This year has been particularly challenging given the pandemic but some good things still happened in Men's Ministry.

In January 2020 we met for breakfast with over 40 men and listened to David Heckendorn, West Church missionary at Harvard Graduate School International Students Ministry, talk about the value of friendship and its many attributes, using several excellent examples from the Bible.

In February at our breakfast we once again hosted a solid number of men and were privileged to hear Mark Cottrell talk about his time on the mission field and about friendships and outreach. His stories are always exciting and relevant.

For March we had our speaker lined up and the team preparing for the breakfast event, then everything shut down due to the pandemic. We were unable to host food events or any event of size from that point through May, when typically we have our annual BBQ event.

For the fall we wanted to find some way to get the men back together without causing issues or jeopardizing anyone's health. So we focused on two events: a Men's Football Tailgating event and our annual retreat, once we heard Berea was able to host Man Camp.

The Men's Football Tailgating Event in October was a huge success (except for the Patriots' performance!). This was an entirely outdoor event complete with barbecue grills, huge TVs, corn hole boards, pickup trucks, and an impressive amount of meats and other food items (given we asked everyone to bring their own meals.) No one went home hungry. This event was a fantastic time to fellowship together after too long apart. We even had people come who had never been to a West Church Men's event. This is where the rubber meets the road in ministry. Men's hearts were encouraged, strengthened, and the Kingdom moved forward a little bit. Strengthened men strengthen their home and families. I'd like to especially thank Matt Pierce, Mike Talbot, and Javier Villafane for all their work in making this event happen, and I'm thankful for Pastor Chris, who came up with the original creative idea, who encouraged us the whole way, and who enjoyed this awesome event together with us.

In November we again went to Camp Berea's Man Camp. Just a bit different, having to wear masks and use sanitizer everywhere but Berea really knew how to make camp very safe but not overbearing. As last year, we had great messages and seminars, awesome worship music, and many mostly outdoor events, including ax throwing, corn hole tournaments, football, target shooting, and more. Over 100 men from all over New England came to worship and have fun. Several of our men who attended confided to me how much they needed this time at Berea together with the guys.

Thanks to our team members 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. Thanks also to Pastor Chris as our coach and encourager.

Mike Stevens
Men'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

WestYouth attended the last weekend Deep Freeze meeting before the pandemic! Looking back on this weekend, there were many new faces this year and we enjoyed being together as a youth group and as the larger group of students seeking God. Youth Retreat is a highlight because it allows for invaluable amounts of time to spend with students. The youth staff look forward to retreat probably more than the students do!

2020 Backpack Donations

In 2020 WestYouth has again committed to “students helping students” with another year devoted to 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 would have seemingly drawn low numbers of donations, but thankfully our generous God allowed for over 100 backpacks, school supplies, and gift cards for families in need. Over \$3,000 in monetary donations were given by many in the surrounding area. Leaving the Streets Ministries was orchestrative in aiding in distributing these school supplies to local students. There are also plans to donate to Haverhill Public Schools. West Church and others in the Haverhill community contributed to Stoklosa Middle School in Lowell as well. Jose R. Rodriguez, one of the school’s social workers, was very happy to know that West Church is passionate about the students in Lowell. “...Thank you so much for helping some of our students and families during the holidays. They were so thankful and grateful for the gift cards they received,” Jose said.

Thanks and Recognition

Gerry Roldan, Richard Ciarletta, Olivia Mura, Corinne Hennessey, and Todd Becker remained committed to student ministry as much as was possible during this unusual year! With the shift to Todd overseeing the ministry, we’ve had leadership consistency and that is crucial in a student’s life, especially with the pandemic changing a lot of what we’re all accustomed to. All the youth leaders possess a natural care for students that was shown through their “being present” in the lives of students no matter how we were gathering.

This year was transitional for many reasons for all of us. Continuing to strengthen and influence relationships with students is still a passion I have. Teenagers are facing unique challenges, shifts in educational strategies, loneliness, depression, and anxiety. It’s cliché, but now more than ever, teenagers need the constant, rooted strength, peace, and wisdom that only God can give.

As the need for more digital means of communication has arisen, I’ve felt the desire to contribute to that effort here at West. My heart for students remains, but the area of Digital Ministry allows me to exercise gifts in areas of technology and strategy that I have developed over the years. West Church supporting this effort has been very meaningful. My prayer is that we can develop both evangelism and discipleship through this means. Giving others the opportunity to “host” digital gatherings and create solutions for the people of God to connect is a major goal.

Steve Simmons

HILLTOP SCHOOL

It has been quite the first full year to be director of Hilltop School, and I am so thankful for the opportunity to serve here.

Last year, one of the final lines of the Hilltop annual report said:

“The future looks sunny at Hilltop...”

I will be honest, this past year has not contained the amount of “sun” we would have hoped for. In fact, at times, it seemed quite dark. There was, however, a great Lamp shining light to our path as Hilltop School made its way through the pandemic-infused darkness of 2020. That is really the best way to express how the heart of God worked through our ministry this year; amidst the challenges, Hilltop School was never without the light of God before us. This year taught us at Hilltop—staff and families alike—to trust step by step the guidance of the Lord, by walking in His light. We are here, one year later, standing (albeit, a little weatherworn) on the promise of God that His grace is sufficient enough for us, and that His power is made perfect in our weakness.

Going into 2020, Hilltop School was buzzing and busy. We had a great start to our year, with many plans for the year ahead. In March, that all changed and we shut down the facility with Governor Baker’s orders. What did not shut down was the outreach to our families. Staff was quick to come together and adapt classroom plans to online plans; we offered a host of virtual opportunities for children to continue to engage with each other and with their teachers. We kept the lines of communication open to our families, with surveys being sent out to ensure they had what they needed, and to let us know if there was anything we could be doing for them in that time. The virtual opportunities strengthened our social media footprint, which was launched at the beginning of 2020.

The preparation and planning to re-open at the end of the summer and operate under the required state-given guidelines and regulations was immense, but staff returned to the building at the beginning of August to prepare, plan, and train. We re-opened our doors on August 27th to 18 children and their families and we have grown slowly since then to 25 children. We still have space available for this year and are already planning for Fall 2021 enrollment. While we continue to operate under stringent health and safety regulations, the staff continues to press on in quality, God-centered care and education for the children; it is truly an impressive feat, and God is clearly at the helm of this ship.

I think it goes without saying that special recognition from this past year goes to the Hilltop staff. Without their hard work, flexibility, devotion to Hilltop, love for children, and most of all, their deep faith, Hilltop would not be where it is today. They responded to the crisis back in March and committed to carrying the children and their families through no matter what, and they stepped out in immense faith as we tackled our late summer re-opening. I continue to see this faith spring up in their hearts and lives, and I am deeply grateful for them. It is a great honor to lead such a team.

Our dreams and goals for Hilltop over the coming year is to grow, both in size and

numbers, and in impact. Because of the pandemic, Hilltop was challenged to meet an abundance of needs in creative ways. As the future looks a little bit brighter (and perhaps, maybe, even a little sunnier?), I hope that we can take the lessons we have learned from this past year and use them as we start to fire up at all cylinders again. We hope to continue to teach and care for children, and at the same time make lasting, meaningful connections with their families, expressing the love of Jesus to them through intentional interactions. We hope to respond to the needs of our West community by partnering with fellow ministries at the church. We hope to collaborate more with our city of Haverhill, by creating opportunities for them to see who we are and how we can bring God's light from the top of the hill further into the community.

Hilltop School continues to stand only on the foundation of the Lord, and we trust in His leading for 2021. We have seen Him in the days gone by, and we are confident that we will see Him in the days to come.

"I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living." Psalm 27:13

Faithfully,

Alicia Smith
Director, Hilltop School

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

LOCAL OUTREACH:

The Local Outreach Ministry of West Church faced many challenges this year, but despite the obstacles, West Church was able to serve people and ministries in Haverhill and surrounding communities. It is wonderful to see Gods love expressed in so many ways.

Family Kitchen

In 2020, the West Church Family Kitchen did not miss a single Wednesday night food distribution! Betsy Tombarelli and her hardworking team of volunteers had to be flexible and innovative as they were required to transform their food distribution into an outside drive-thru operation. This ministry was able to provide much needed groceries to between 60 and 90 families every week during these tough times. Unfortunately, the traditional hugs and kisses that often go with handing out the food could not happen but, every package of food was loaded into trunks of cars by the volunteers with love and a smile.

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. Whenever a special request goes out for certain items, the need is always met. Thank you for your generosity!

Quarantine Relief Team

A team was formed in the spring to help people unable to leave their homes to buy groceries or other essential items. When the request for volunteers went out, we had 26 people from West Church step up and ask to join the team! The supply of volunteers greatly exceeded the need. Although we did help several people during the next few months, not everyone was called upon to serve. I would like to thank each person who volunteered for the Quarantine Relief Team. It was such a blessing to see so many of you willing to serve others.

Fostering Hope

West Church has continued to be involved with Fostering Hope through their Family Support Initiative. The Family Support Initiative identifies families within the foster care system that may have a specific need and communicates that need to area churches willing to help. During this past year, West Church has provided groceries to many local families. This included diapers and wipes to single mothers. In one situation, West Church provided a baby gate to a young mother who needed one. In this way, West Church supported children and families within the foster care system while sharing the love of God. West Church also purchased Christmas gift cards (\$100 each) for 8 teenagers living in group homes within the foster care system. These children do not normally receive anything at Christmas time.

Women's Prison Ministry

Mary Lou Noonan reports that she and Pam Brown have been able to continue their prison ministry. They are excited to have a new volunteer joining them from Gordon Conwell Seminary, who has a Masters of Divinity and a desire to serve. Some women in the group have moved on with new-found or renewed faith in the love of Jesus Christ and the power of prayer. They are planning to begin a new study soon using Max Lucado's "Unshakable Hope." Please continue to pray for their ministry and the women.

Serving Alongside Local Ministry Partners

Last year, the Local Outreach Leadership Team (LOLT) organized a “serve day” event in January and two “serve morning” events in November. Each one offered opportunity for West Church people to be out and about in the local community, spreading God’s love in acts of service, partnering with local ministries. This past year we were able support and serve alongside the ministries of *Common Ground, Leaving the Streets Ministries, Lazarus House, Habitat for Humanity, Pregnancy Care Center, and The Haverhill Boys and Girls Club*. Our volunteers completed all sorts of jobs; they painted ceilings, hung drywall, hauled trash, washed floors, served meals and pulled weeds. Every act of service, no matter how small, was an expression of God’s love.

I would like to thank all the members of the LOLT: Jim Herrick, Joann Tecce, Mike Villifane, Miguel Quinones, and Ken Reese. Thank you for being the connection for us to these local ministries. I would also like to thank Dianne Senno for stepping into the role of team leader of the LOLT after the departure of Carolyn Alexander. I look forward to working with Dianne and the team as we continue facilitate service opportunities.

INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH:

Missionary Support

In 2020, West Church was able to send financial support to 16 overseas missionaries and their families. West Church supports missionaries working in Asia, Africa, Europe, Central America, and the Middle East. Our missionary partners evangelize, plant churches, serve refugees, run a hospital, 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 were able to add the support of two more missionaries this past year. Laura Fazio works in Sicily ministering to refugees. David Heckendorn serves with Intervarsity in outreach to international graduate students at Harvard.

Missionary Video Updates

Unfortunately, we were not able to host any in-person missionary visits to the church this past year, however, we did enjoy receiving videos from a number of them. During our worship services, we were able to share video updates from Laura Fazio, David Heckendorn, Emmanuel and Leslie Pothen, and Ralph and Tara Leo. It was wonderful to hear about their ministries and pray for them as a congregation.

Operation Christmas Child

Operation Christmas Child was a great success this past year with 257 shoe boxes collected from within our church. Despite all the obstacles, West Church was once again generous with their donations. West Church also received and packaged over 800 boxes from other churches as the regional collection location for Operation Christmas Child. Many thanks to Mary Lou Noonan and everyone who volunteered to help with the collection week.

I am so blessed to be able to work alongside a great group of people on the MLT: Ellie Gustafson, Brianna 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, pray for our missionaries frequently and reach out personally at the local and global level wherever and whenever God may call.

WHOLE LIFE DISCIPLESHIP:

God Space Study

In the fall, a small group study using the video series and book *God Space* by Doug Pollock was offered. We had 9 people attend the study. During the 6-week course, we learned ways to engage with non-believers in our lives, allowing space for spiritual conversations without being intimidating or offensive. The study helped us realize that connecting with others and talking about Jesus Christ is easier than we thought.

This Time Tomorrow

This past year we have continued with “This Time Tomorrow” interviews with people from the congregation. Our interviews are held during the worship services. 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 pray for each person who shares, essentially commissioning he or she for the important ministry in his or her every day lives. It has been a blessing to be able to learn about and pray for people in a wide range of contexts. I am amazed at the way God is using the people of West Church to build his kingdom!

In the spring I hope to offer another small group study focusing on evangelism and how we can reach the people in our lives with the love of Christ.

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 2020:

- Resealed the rear and front parking lots and restriped.
- Removed dead trees at rear of church and Broadway cemetery.
- Replaced drop ceiling in the worship office.
- Replaced motor in HVAC system for the Worship Center.
- Replaced fire/smoke detector in HVAC system in attic.
- Purchased electrostatic disinfectant spray guns.
- Purchased and installed sneeze wall for worship team area.
- Assisted the Family Kitchen with installation of AC in pantry and kitchen.

Future Projects:

- Repair Vestry ceiling
- 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

2021 PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET

2021

	Jan - Dec 20	Budget	\$ Over	% of Budget	Proposed	Difference
INCOME						
Operating Contributions	691,562	725,000	(33,438)	95.39%	700,000	(25,000)
Operating-Hilltop Payment	9,872	24,000	(14,128)	41.13%	10,000	(14,000)
PPP Grant	100,677	0	100,677			
Parsonage Rental Income	16,200	16,200	0	100.0%	16,200	0
TOTAL INCOME	818,310	765,200	53,110	106.94%	726,200	(39,000)

EXPENSE	SALARY DETAIL NOT PUBLISHED					
STAFF COMPENSATION	429,807	447,207	(17,400)	96.11%	425,075	(22,132)
STAFF REIMBURSEMENTS	1,837	5,450	(3,613)	33.7%	4,750	(700)
WORSHIP ARTS MINISTRY	9,514	7,700	1,814	123.56%	14,000	6,300
SMALL GROUP MINISTRY	159	800	(641)	19.91%	800	0
CONGREGATIONAL CARE	132	700	(568)	18.85%	700	0
CONNECTIONS MINISTRY	384	1,350	(966)	28.42%	1,350	0
MEMBERSHIP MINISTRY	0	200	(200)	0.0%	200	0
WORSHIP SUPPORT MINISTRY	1,533	5,100	(3,567)	30.06%	3,750	(1,350)
WOMEN'S MINISTRY TEAM	637	1,200	(563)	53.11%	1,100	(100)
MEN'S MINISTRY TEAM	150	2,050	(1,900)	7.32%	1,650	(400)
FAMILY MINISTRY TEAM	718	2,000	(1,282)	35.92%	2,000	0
YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM	6,329	8,500	(2,171)	74.46%	7,500	(1,000)
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	650	2,000	(1,350)	32.5%	1,000	(1,000)
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEAM	6,690	9,500	(2,810)	70.42%	9,000	(500)
SPIRITUAL FORM & SOUL CARE	1,456	3,000	(1,544)	48.54%	2,600	(400)
MISCELLANEOUS MINISTRY	2,599	5,200	(2,601)	49.98%	7,650	2,450
OFFICE SUPPORT TEAM	13,756	16,657	(2,901)	82.59%	15,650	(1,007)
COMPUTER / TECHNOLOGY	13,754	9,900	3,854	138.93%	10,000	100
PROPERTY SUPPORT TEAM	140,752	158,900	(18,148)	88.58%	164,700	5,800
FINANCE SUPPORT TEAM	6,609	5,200	1,409	127.09%	6,700	1,500
LOCAL OUTREACH TEAM	7,444	9,107	(1,663)	81.74%	9,000	(107)
INTERNATIONAL MINISTRY	55,500	63,500	(8,000)	87.4%	63,500	0
TOTAL EXPENSE	700,411	765,221	(64,810)	91.53%	752,675	(12,546)

CARRYOVER						
Prior Year Carryover	21	21		100.0%	117,920	
Needed to Balance Budget					26,475	
Reserve					91,445	

OUTREACH (Cell Funds)						
OUTREACH Expense	38,162	45,000	(6,838)	84.81%	45,000	0

2021 PROPOSED MISSION BUDGET

MISSIONS SUPPORT	Budget 2020	Requested Budget 2021
5050 · John & Brooke Bryant	3,000	3,000
5060 · Stuart & Sindia Foster	3,000	3,000
5070 · Sally Isaias	3,500	3,500
5090 · Humberto del Arca	2,500	2,500
5100 · Otto de la Cruz	2,500	-
5100 · Victoria (de la Cruz) Pierce	-	2,500
5110 · Nelson Juarez	2,500	2,500
5140 · Ralph & Tara Leo	6,000	6,000
5160 · Chet & Fran Matheson	3,000	3,000
5180 · KULEA	5,000	5,000
5210 · Soderbergs - Wycliff	3,000	3,000
5220 · Turners	3,500	3,500
5483 · Coombs	500	500
5486 · Dailey	500	500
5489 · Draper	500	500
5492 · Davis	500	500
5496 · Emmanuel & Leslie Pothen	4,000	4,000
5497 · Johnathan Ciccarone	3,000	3,000
5498 · Mike & Lesly Najjar	3,000	3,000
5499 · David Heckendorn	3,000	3,000
5501 · Laura Fazio	3,000	3,000
Total 5005 · MISSIONS SUPPORT	55,500	55,500

TEAM EXPENSE		
5620 · Guest Speakers	2,000	2,000
5630 · Short Term Miss. Stipend	4,000	4,000
5660 · Special Projects	2,000	2,000
Total 5600 · TEAM EXPENSE	8,000	8,000
GRAND TOTAL	63,500	63,500

NEW MISSIONARY:

Victoria (de la Cruz) Pierce - *Missions Door*

Victoria has been leading short-term teams for over 15 years to various countries of the world. She is taking over as the Missions Door missionary in Guatemala for her retiring parents. Victoria is passionate about seeing nationals respected and loved as equals, which is why she believes leading teams under the direction of nationals is so beneficial. She loves to watch different cultures work together and learn from each other, and she loves being a bridge between North American churches and churches in the majority world. For Victoria, it's powerful to see God moving in people's lives through these teams as they experience and learn from other cultures. She also serves as an advocate for children's educational projects in Central America.

NON-BUDGETED FUNDS 12/31/20

BUILDING FUND

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

12/31/2020 Balance: **\$55,440.**

** Designated for Main Boiler: \$29,000.

Available Balance: \$26,440.

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.

12/31/2020 Balance: **\$144,487.**

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): \$124,635

Family Kitchen: \$9,616

12/31/2020 Balance: **\$140,035**

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.