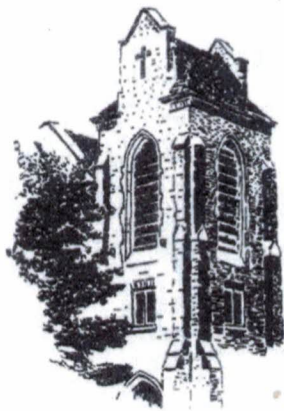


# EPIPHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## 2019 - 2020 Annual Reports Part One

(See also Minutes  
&  
Financial Reports)



MARCH 2021

**Pastor Kevin McLemore**  
**Pastoral Report for 2019 & 2020**  
**March 8, 2021**

I'm writing this report on the eve of the one-year anniversary of when the world seemed to shut down in an effort to contain the COVID-19 virus. We scrambled to use what was a new technology for many of us – ZOOM – to make sure we could gather together on Sunday, March 15, 2020. The lock down continues as of this writing, but our hopes will be that life will return some semblance of normal in the coming 6 months, including a chance to re-gather for in-person worship in early September. Yet so much has been lost: over 525,000 dead, others dealing with long-term effects of the disease; jobs lost; businesses closed up; in-person graduations and schooling that didn't happen, and the fact that our children had to learn in new extraordinary and stressful ways. Little did we know what was coming, and how long it would take to get out of this pandemic (which is still not over). Even our celebration of our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary party was delayed until later this year, though, such delay pales in comparison to the suffering so many have experienced in this country and worldwide. You are receiving a report from me for two years because we assumed that it would be likely quickly over with – and we would have time to catch up with our respective reports. Ah, the best-laid plans of mice and men, as the saying goes...

Still, there was a 2019 and we did ministry during that time, and I'm going to share some highlights with you. Our Mission and Ministries Teams kicked off their existence in January, and most of the teams did produce new ways of engaging each other and the larger world. And yet by early January 2020, we struggled to keep our focus and with the pandemic, most of the teams are in slumber mode until life returns to normal, hopefully by the fall of 2021. I'm thankful for their good work and am looking forward to their ministry in the coming years.

We also had another **Epiphany Winter Retreat in February** focused "**The Suffering of Humans, the Suffering of God,**" during which we explored the question of why we suffer and God's own suffering. We also have a short 5-session study on "**Making Moral Decisions**" after worship during January and February, which (hopefully) helped its participants to know the many sources of Christian ethics and how to respond to a moral dilemma or challenge. Later in the year in March and April we read Johann Hari's book **Lost Connections: Uncovering the Real Causes of Depression**. This study offered an understanding of depression and some of the surprising solutions to those of us who live with it. In June we welcomed the Rev. Laura Everett to speak about her book **Holy Spokes: The Search for Urban Spirituality on Two Wheels**, which was the last part of the congregational portion of the 2017 Clergy Renewal grant we received from the Lilly Foundation. Later in May 2019 we celebrated the musical legacy of our former Musical Director with a concert of his music under the direction of our current Musical Director Philip Seward. Many thanks to Philip and to the choir for this gift of music! Our regular group of Boston University students arrived for their alternative spring break in 2019, but not for 2020 because of the pandemic. We hope to see them in 2022.

Spring is a time when our Confirmation classes lead us in worship on a special Sunday. 2019 was the conclusion of the two-year confirmation framework we've used for years, which had a mixture of first and second year confirmands. In 2019 Natalie Toledo, Jack Rogers, Nicolas Zuluaga, and Even Hartman, led us in worship in April, and later in May, Nicolas was confirmed. In April 2020, Evan and Jack joined the new one-year 7<sup>th</sup> grade confirmands – Alec Beitel, Brian Berquist, Sam Laporte and John Ratke - in leading worship, with Alec, Brian, Evan, Sam and John eventually being confirmed in May 2020. There was no confirmation class for the first time in 2020-2021 because our new Our Whole Lives (OWL) program for 7<sup>th</sup> graders under the direction of Pastor Megan was instituted, with a one-year confirmation class to follow in 2021-2022. The Gloria Heatley Scholarships were awarded to Fiona Groth in 2019, and to Jeb Balderson, Erin Lohman, Henry Lokken, Brody Schwartz, and Mollie Warner in 2020. In the midst of my 9<sup>th</sup> year at Epiphany, it's a blessing to watch all these young people grow into adulthood.

During the summer of 2019 we had our first Vacation Bible School in August with a total of 13 children participating. Hopefully, we can restart it in the coming years. In the fall of 2019, I celebrated my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party with Douglas making Indonesian food for the congregation, the food of my childhood home. Many thanks for the cake and well wishes. Interestingly, we had multiple student filmmakers from Columbia College film in

our sanctuary during 2019, which was a pattern that began a year earlier. We may have a hand in helping out the next Martin Scorsese. Our annual Boo and Brew party happened, and we began our blood drive partnership with Vitalant. Three blood drives were held in 2019, with three more taking place in 2020, and another four scheduled for 2021. The year closed out with Advent and Christmas, and we expected to celebrate our 125<sup>th</sup> in 2020 with various events, including a big party in the fall of 2020.

And we know what happened next – the pandemic short circuited so much, but ministry continued here at Epiphany. We quickly shifted to online worship services and allowed the Common Pantry to use our Fellowship Hall during this time of crisis. The Pantry almost immediately began experiencing three times their normal demand. Thanks to Kathy Engert and others, our Welcome Meal didn't miss a beat, as we shifted to serving meals on a "to-go" basis. We began meeting after worship for a time of fellowship. I shifted the confirmation classes online, and meetings within the church became ZOOM events. Over the past year, one could say that attendance increased with our shift to online worship, especially when we moved from ZOOM to broadcasting our worship services via our Epiphany YouTube channel. A few people across the country join us for worship at 10:30 AM. Admittedly, there were multiple mistakes in sound, picture, and anything to do with this new way of sharing worship together, but I am always amazed that we went from nothing to something to something that was pretty good sometimes, considering everything. Many thanks to Jeff Engert and Fiona Groth for spearheading the switch from ZOOM to YouTube in the summer of 2020 so that we could worship in our sanctuary by the middle of September.

But something more important happened last summer, and that was the protest and marches around police brutality and the Black Lives Matter. It was a summer of large-scale protests and, sadly, a few riots and looting, but they all brought to fore the long-ignored (by white people) plight of people of color and their encounters with the police. In the fall of 2020, a Social Justice Committee was created with a focus on how Epiphany could respond both in action and learning. We read the book **Just Mercy** by Bryan Stevenson and we continued our study of this topic in 2021 by looking at the church's participation in white supremacy in Robert P. Jones' **White Too Long: The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity**.

As Christmas 2020 neared, the worship staff considered how we could have a meaningful Advent and Christmas season. It was decided to record our Christmas Eve service so that we could include a lot of song, readers, and simply faces as we anticipated and celebrated the birth of Christ. Filming all the elements of the services took 2 months, and was done under the direction of our incredibly gifted Music Director Philip. We are truly blessed to have a man of his commitment and talents serving our congregation – and I am grateful for his hard work on this project. Before the Christmas Eve service, we held an hour long ZOOM call, where we shared memories and laughed a lot. My hope is that we can laugh and cry together next Christmas Eve.

Pastor Megan also shifted her ministry with families to an online presence, including creating two separate learning moments for our younger and older children. Every Sunday at 9:45 AM, she gathers with her flock and they learned together using the Godly Play curriculum. Pastor Megan is incredibly gifted pastor and her love for children – and families – shows up over and over again. Thank you!

Duane Lahti joined us in September 2020 as a pastoral intern – and he has experienced a pastoral internship like none other in the history of Christendom. He rarely got to meet and visit with many of you in-person, but he's made a noticeable impact in worship and the places where's he been gifted with meeting you online or in-person. I thank him for his hard work and diligence.

Dianne Witkowski, our Office Manager, kept the "trains running" during this time and I am thankful for her dedication to Epiphany. She has been a patient Office Manager...Linda Burnett has continued to clean our church building, and for that I am thankful as well.

As with all of us, this has been a challenging year for me and the staff, in different ways. Doing ministry in this kind of environment was exciting and scary, and missteps were made, and good things were done, even amidst the new challenges. In most years, I unwisely leave a week or two of vacation allocated to me unused, but I took a week in early January to breath a bit and rest. Like some of you, I'm trying to navigate what I can and cannot do – and to forgive myself for what I cannot do during this time. Visitation of people in nursing

homes and hospitals were near to impossible this year, though phone call and ZOOMing were helpful in limited ways. As I speak on this issue with fellow clergy, we find ourselves excited about some new things we have learned – the possibility of this technology we've been forced into using – and sometimes depressed by not being present with our congregations as we have before.

What I remain thankful for is you, the people of Epiphany. Thank you for allowing me to serve you during these challenging times. And I am thankful to God for helping us find news ways of being together in these times.

On to 2021-2022! And celebrating our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in our 126<sup>th</sup> year!

Much peace,

Pastor Kevin McLemore

**Associate Pastor of Faith Formation and Family Ministry**

My last annual report was submitted 2 years ago - just 3 months after I was installed as your Associate Pastor and assumed responsibility for faith formation and family ministry. What a tremendous understatement to say, a lot has happened since then!

First, a review of the program building accomplishments over that first year, including a summary of where we stood as of March 2020. We were in a fantastic position and I want the congregation to celebrate that moment and preserve those accomplishments for the historical record.

Second, I will give an account of how we have adapted to the conditions of the global pandemic. I am proud to say that throughout the year, Epiphany continues to provide safe, socially distanced opportunities for faith formation. Through creative adaptation, our ministry regularly connects with 14 children. We have 2 weekly developmentally appropriate virtual worship gatherings, monthly in-person 7th grade OWL, and even pulled off an intergenerational pre-recorded virtual Christmas pageant.

March 2019-2020  
A Year of Program Building

**Godly Play**

June 2019 - Epiphany partially subsidized my attendance at the North American Godly Play Conference in St. John's Newfoundland. I was selected as a member of the newest class of Godly Play trainers and began preparing for the formal certification program planned for March 2020 in Ft. Worth, TX.

September 2019 - the "Sunshine Room" was reconfigured into an official Godly Play Room by removing clutter, reorganizing supplies, inexpensively sourcing furniture and decor, doing a deep clean, and giving it a coat of fresh paint.

The church made a significant investment in high quality story materials from Godly Play resources and Worship Woodworks.

November 2019 - Our children blessed the room with our first session on Nov. 3rd.

Over the next 4 months, between 3 and 15 children, between the ages of 3 and 15, grew in community and gathered for work and worship. I was the primary story-teller and Kristi Dalby-Jones was the primary door-person. Other adults continued to support the program and gain experience, especially Jeremy Glenn and Jenny Zuluaga.

March 2020 - Five teachers participated in a day-long training to become Epiphany Godly Play mentors: Meredith McDonald, Jana Winch, Barbara Rogers, Kristi Dalby-Jones, and Kathy Groth. Jeremy Glenn was unable to attend the training but committed to future trainings, participation, and support.

These new mentors were scheduled to begin taking greater leadership in the Godly Play program throughout the seasons of Lent and Easter. Instead, there was only 1 more Sunday before we stopped meeting in person.

**Our Whole Lives (OWL)**

We offered monthly programming for 9-12th graders. We had 10 participants; 6 youth directly connected to Epiphany and an additional 4 youth recruited from the community. An anonymous donation covered the cost of hiring Dori Davenport-Thexton, an experienced OWL facilitator to provide co-leadership. We planned to meet 9 times. We made it about 2/3rds of the way. We met 5 times in person and 1 additional time on-line in March. The abrupt ending was truly frustrating.

**Additional Milestones in Worship**

March 2019 - Lent-2-Go kits for home devotions and Sanctuary Worship bags

July 2019 - Lord's Prayer Experiential Worship Series

December 2019 - Christmas Shadow Play for our annual all-ages service  
Distributed Illustrated Ministry Advent Family Devotional

### **Vacation Bible School**

August 2019 - Hide and Seek with God: a week-long Vacation Bible School engaging kids in bible stories, crafts, and songs. Afternoon field trips provided opportunities for 10 children to seek God in the world through service and fun. This lay-led program was organized by Douglas Wilson, Kristi Dalby-Jones, Marie Solem, and Jenny Zuluaga in partnership with our sister congregation, Ravenswood UCC. Pastor Kevin, Pastor Jason and our Intern Pastor Veronica lead sessions with additional support from 4 youth (Allison & Lydia Glenn, Lucy Coulter, and Nicholas Zuluaga) This multi-generational experience included 2 lunches provided by the Epiphany and Ravenswood Ladies Guilds.

March 2020-2021  
Ministry in a Strange New Land

After the initial traumatic transition, I experimented with several ways to continue supporting our children and families. Over the spring and summer I narrowed my focus to 2 goals: 1) provide stability and connection for our kids and 2) create opportunities for our children and families to engage the Christian language system while experiencing their existential limits during these unprecedented times.

*By the rivers of Babylon -  
there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion.  
On the willows there, we hung up our harps...  
How could we sing the Lord's songs in a new land? Psalm 137:1-4*

### **Godly Play - Willow Tree Gatherings**

When creating the Godly Play classroom, a guiding principle is to convey care and significance in a space designed for the spiritual explorations of children. The room should convey a level of importance commensurate with the sanctuary. With this principle in mind, I designed individual kits for home use. It is my hope that these materials, assembled with love and care, conveyed an unspoken message of care to our children and families. Material drop-offs also provided a meaningful opportunity for pastoral assessment and support. As we come upon 1 year in quarantine, each family has essentially received a complete miniature set of materials to tell the entire core Godly Play curriculum.

Over 5 deliveries, every family received:

- 1) Holy Family (hand painted peg doll nativity set), People of God (peg dolls of several sizes in 4 different shades), Desert Box, Circle of the Church Year, Underlays in Liturgical Colors, Creation Cards, Risen Christ figure, Christ Candle
- 2) Sacred Story materials: The Ark and the Flood, The Great Family, The Exodus, 10 Best Ways, The Ark and the Tent, The Ark and the Temple, Exile and Return
- 3) Advent - Bethlehem Model, DIY Card Materials, Purple/White Underlay, candles
- 4) Parables - Miniature Parable of the Good Shepherd Box
- 5) Lent - Faces of Easter coloring pages, Illustrated Ministry Lent devotional, Labyrinth coloring page, Pansky craft information and supplies, additional labyrinth materials, instructions and prompts for family storytelling and connection

High quality, open-ended, art materials intended to supplement home supplies.

- multicultural crayons
- Art papers, stencils, water-colors, oil pastels
- 3D items including small wooden blocks, glass pebbles, stones, and string

### **Willow Tree Gathering - Sundays at 9:45 - 4th grade**

Consistent Attendance: 5 kids

On Zoom, we connect through a brief liturgy, followed by a Godly Play story with wondering, and close with a prayer and blessing. The session is designed to be 30 minutes. The children are encouraged to continue working with the story materials or engage in an open-ended art exploration. Ideally, the work time provides the opportunity to keep the children engaged as the family directs attention to the sanctuary worship on either Zoom or YouTube.

### **Willow Tree Gathering - Thursdays at 5:00 - 5th & 6th graders**

Consistent Attendance: 2 kids with regular contact up to 5 kids

This weekday session addresses the developmental differences of our older elementary children. Attendance faces the usual challenges of competing schedules compounded by the additional pandemic issue of zoom fatigue. Still, when asked directly, this cohort repeatedly requests to continue meeting.

### **Our Whole Lives (OWL)**

Beginning in October, we are successfully holding in person 7th grade OWL. We have 4 participants, 3 from Epiphany and 1 from Ravenswood. Approximately every 3 weeks, we meet in the large Ravenswood Fellowship Hall and use masks and other social distancing precautions. Our Intern Pastor Duane is co-facilitating.

### **Virtual Christmas Pageant**

Finally, using the Illustrated Ministry Virtual Christmas Pageant script, a group of 18 children, youth, and adults came together and once again told the old story. Special thanks to Fiona Groth for final editing and production.

### Looking Ahead

Despite tremendous obstacles, our program has successfully maintained. I am in regular, meaningful contact with our core group of families - those who already strongly identify with the congregation. To those families with looser connections, outreach has been limited. This was the year that the cohort referred to as "the baptism families" was expected to begin aging into our Godly Play curriculum. Also, several of our youngest regular in person attendees did not make the transition to digital storytelling.

I can't wait until we are back together again! I worry that when the time comes, everything in our lives will come rushing back with the same ferocity that a year ago it all went rushing out. I pray we make thoughtful choices about our re-entry.

I wonder what seeds have taken root when we were tending other fields?

I wonder what we will keep to plant another year?

I wonder what the harvest will really be?

## 2019 Music Annual Report

The year began with a full choir celebrating in worship and a focus on singing a variety of music to enhance worship in the season of Epiphany. With the beginning of Lent, the choir began chanting the psalm of the day on Sunday mornings in a style that invited the congregation to join in singing a refrain while individuals or the choir as a whole would sing verses. This technique is ancient in Christian tradition yet also used in modern times in UCC churches as evidenced by its inclusion in *The New Century Hymnal*.

Holy week was especially celebrative beginning with a processional on Palm Sunday while ringing handbells and singing. We followed up with both traditional and contemporary music for Tenebrae on Good Friday. On Easter Sunday we welcomed the return of our trumpet players for a joyful celebration of the resurrection — including the Concertato Hymn: Christ Is Alive.

On May 19, the church celebrated the work of Music Director Emeritus, Joseph Burt, with a service celebrating his music and contributions to worship. Guest soprano and choir alumna, Cheryl Ferguson, returned to Chicago to join the choir in singing many of Joseph's compositions, arrangements, and hymn settings. All in all, the morning included a dozen works by Burt and concluded with a chorale prelude for organ by current music director, Philip Seward, on Joseph's hymn tune, *Kevin*. The hymn was composed for the ordination of current pastor, Kevin McLemore, and also served as the closing hymn for the service on this day.

Summer at Epiphany included not only extra heat, but also many individuals who graciously volunteered to provide special music. Epiphany is blessed to have many folks who enjoy making music and summer is a delight to hear everyone share their gifts with the congregation. On August 4, the church celebrated a musical Sunday with a hymn sing. Several hymns requested by members of the congregation were sung along with introductions including details of how they came to be composed.

The fall began with a celebration for Homecoming Sunday including a concertato hymn sung by the choir and congregation. In celebration of Worldwide Communion Sunday in October, the choir sang another concertato hymn. Continuing the trend in November and December, the choir sang concertato hymns on the first Sundays of those months as well.

To finish out the year, the choir prepared a Christmas concert, sung on the third week of Advent, including a new carol for the group: *The Virgin Mary Had A Baby Boy* which allowed the music program to showcase the talents of tenor and percussionist Jim Golec in the lively anthem. Finally, upon special request, members of the choir consented for the first time to join in *both* services on Christmas Eve to create a special time of Lessons and Carols at both 5:00 and 8:00. All in all, 2019 turned out to be a very good year.

## 2020 Music Annual Report

This year began optimistically with plans for a full choir throughout the winter and spring encompassing the Epiphany season, Lent and Eastertide. By late February concerns about the coronavirus, Covid-19, were growing so that a couple of choir members began to feel uncomfortable. Shortly thereafter, the church decided to close for a time. On March 15, Pastor Kevin McLemore held a service in his office streaming to congregants over Facebook. Due to technical constraints, no music could be included. After a second Sunday in a similar vein, the church was able to move collectively to the Zoom platform which allowed music director Philip Seward and soprano soloist, Justine Scarbrough, to join the service on March 29.

The following week for Palm Sunday, the church was on zoom again with both Elise Kauzlaric and Justine Scarbrough joining in to sing. On Good Friday, Jeffrey Orr volunteered to come along with Justine and Philip for Tenebrae. Easter



Sunday brought Timothy O'Connor together with Justine and Philip and, for the first time in Epiphany history, a streaming license to handle music copyrights on the internet.

For our early outings on Zoom, the instrument of choice seemed to be the piano so that the sound of the organ would not overwhelm the zoom call. Although Philip played the *Toccata* by Charles-Marie Widor on the organ to conclude the service on Easter Sunday, the organ sat quiet throughout the rest of the spring and summer.

As the winter gave way to spring, more became clear about the ability to gather together in worship. Epiphany has been fortunate to enjoy the talents of two soloists augmenting the many volunteers in the choir. Justine Scarbrough finishing up her third year with the church and Timothy O'Connor finishing his second, have continued to contribute to the musical life of the congregation even as we gather via conference call. From mid-April through the end of 2020, these three made music together on Sundays. Throughout the summer, Justine and Tim alternated while Philip played every Sunday. For two Sundays off in early August, he pre-recorded instrumental music and hymns for use while he was away.

As more became known about how quickly singing could pass the virus, the church took further precautions. With Homecoming Sunday in the fall, the church moved onto its YouTube channel so that all worship participants could be together in the sanctuary. In order to accommodate for the health of all, windows would be open each Sunday morning with fans circulating the air near the lectern, pulpit and steps. As a result when the three would sing together, it was socially distanced and in this created airstream.

In the fall, Philip composed psalm settings for the three to sing *a cappella* as a way to re-introduce a somewhat choral sound given the absence of singing. This *Psalms for a Pandemic* included nine psalms, sung one each Sunday between the beginning of October and Reign of Christ Sunday (just before Thanksgiving) finished off with a ninth psalm, a setting of Psalm 150 with the carol *Joy to the World* which was sung to conclude the Christmas concert offered on the third Sunday of Advent.

While continuing to stream live each Sunday, several members of the church contributed to a special celebration of Christmas Eve which included a short musical film, *Gathering*, featuring the story of the hymn *O Come, All Ye Faithful*, reflection on what gathering together means in this year and concluding with a singing of that hymn. The singing merged together all the participating choir members — each filmed individually — then placed together by Fiona Groth. This virtual choir was then joined by several members of the congregation who sent in videos of themselves singing the carol in their own homes. While challenging to assemble, the result was heartwarming during a dark midwinter: surely a touch of Christmas joy to see so many carolers singing together.

This short film was followed by the Christmas Eve service of Lessons and Carols assembled over several weeks in November and December where individuals volunteered to come to the church in a safe, isolated way, and participate by reading, singing or playing handbells. The result was a joyful Christmas celebration during a difficult time. The link to both videos is [here](#).

After a difficult year, I look forward with hope to a better year to come. I am reminded of the hymn, *By Gracious Powers*, with a text by Dietrich Bonhoeffer:

Yet when again in this same world you give us the joy we had,  
The brightness of your sun,  
We shall remember all the days we lived through,  
And our whole life shall then be yours alone.

Submitted by Philip Seward

## **Worship Committee 2020**

The Worship Committee met bi-weekly between March and June of 2020 as Epiphany responded to the pandemic and found ways to continue our community in the virtual setting. Since June we have returned to meeting as the liturgical season shifts. Our seasonal meetings have continued to center on two key ideas: opportunities for interaction/participation worship and experimenting with new ways of worshiping - though, our immediate focus has been providing support and a sounding board to Pastor Kevin and Philip as we continue to navigate worship in this unusual time.

The committee consists of: Pastor Kevin, Pastor Megan, Philip Seward, Virginia Koch, Barb Bolsen, Jana Winch, Kathy Groth, Matt Smucker, and Elise Kauzlaric. If you have thoughts or questions on how we worship, please reach out to any member of the committee. If you would like to join this committee, please reach out to Elise at [elise.kauzlaric@gmail.com](mailto:elise.kauzlaric@gmail.com).

## **Worship Committee 2019**

The Worship Committee continues to meet regularly as the liturgical seasons shift. Our meetings reflect on two key ideas: opportunities for interaction/participation worship and experimenting with new ways of worshiping. This includes reflection on the season that we are exiting as well as ideas for the upcoming season.

The committee consists of: Pastor Kevin, Pastor Megan, Philip Seward, Virginia Koch, Barb Bolsen, Jana Winch, Kathy Groth, Matt Smucker, Jason Frey, and Elise Kauzlaric. If you have thoughts or questions on how we worship, please reach out to any member of the committee.

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## **Social Justice Team**

The Social Justice Team formed organically in June 2020 as a direct response to the killing of George Floyd and BLM protests. The current focus of this group is to provide ways for the Epiphany congregation to engage in and reflect on the history and the future of the church in relation to social justice and equity - in particular, racial equity. Activities since June have included the 21 Day Racial Equity Challenge, engaging with activities with One Northside, reading and discussion of *Just Mercy*, and a current reading and discussion of *White Too Long: The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity*.

The team includes: Pastor Kevin, Pastor Megan, Duane Lahti, Barb Bolsen, Jana Winch, Mary Brown, Douglas Wilson, Beverly Zbinden, and Elise Kauzlaric. If you have any suggestions for congregational activities and action, please reach out to any member of this group. If you would like to join this team, please contact Elise at [elise.kauzlaric@gmail.com](mailto:elise.kauzlaric@gmail.com).

# EUCC 2019 - 2021 Annual Report:

## Building & Facilities:

### 2019

#### CAPITAL PROJECTS COMPLETED: (Based on the Building Reserve Study)

1. Church Building: Stain and refurbish front door & hardware (Bradley side).
2. Church Building: Scrape and repaint Bradley side entry metal railings.
3. Church Building: Replaced existing 50 gallon water heater with new.
4. Church Building: Remove and replaced existing gutter along alley and west side of church.
5. Parsonage Building: Remove and replaced existing gutters, downspouts, fascia/soffits @ garage.
6. Parsonage Building: Remove and replaced existing overhead garage door.

#### MAINTENANCE & REPAIR: (General Church Repair and Upkeep)

1. Painted Women's Toilet Room and Drinking fountain alcove.
2. Church: Patch, Repair, & Paint 'Sunshine Room' ceiling and walls.
3. Church and Parsonage Annual Boiler and Furnace Preventative Maintenance Cleaning/Inspection.
4. Church: Emergency Light Fixture Battery Replacement (80% Completed)

### 2020

#### CAPITAL PROJECTS PROPOSED: (Based on the Building Reserve Study)

1. Church Building: Patch and Repair Roof Leak(s) and Masonry Tuck-pointing (Damen side) (to be rebid).
2. Church Building: Patch and Repair Potential Roof Leak/Moisture Damage in Organ Attic space. (Inspection required to evaluate if ongoing)
3. Parsonage Building: Replace and Rebuild existing wood and masonry front porch and roof structure (New design to reduced overall cost for church review and approval).

#### MAINTENANCE & REPAIR PROPOSED: (General Church Repair and Upkeep)

1. Church: Patch, Repair, & Paint 'Sanctuary' water damaged (4) walls & ceiling (Received Bid - Dido Painting \$6,200)
2. Church: Emergency Light Fixture Battery Replacement (20% to be Completed)
3. Parsonage Building: Paint and repair water damaged ceiling in bedroom adjacent to chimney.
4. Prune Damen and Bradley Avenue Parkway Trees (Call city 311 to schedule).

### 2020

#### CAPITAL PROJECTS COMPLETED: (Based on the Building Reserve Study)

1. Church Building: Patch and Repair Roof Leak(s) and Masonry Tuck-pointing (Damen Avenue side)

2. Church Building: Patch, Repair, and apply new aluminum reflective roof coat at flat roof location.
3. Parsonage Building: Install perimeter roof soffit ventilation grilles and install attic ventilation roof fan.

**MAINTENANCE & REPAIR: (General Church Repair and Upkeep)**

5. Church and Parsonage Annual Boiler and Furnace Preventative Maintenance Cleaning/Inspection.
6. Repair and Replace water supply lines to Church Boiler with new. Remove sludge from Boiler filter.
7. Church: Emergency Light Fixture Battery Replacement (100% Completed)
8. Existing aluminum church pantry windows balance replacement = \$435.00 (was executed by Pastor Kevin on 10/9/2020) Softer Lite Window Company 10/8/2020.
9. Church Building: Gutters and Downspouts clean out (Fall 2020)
10. (2) Electric Air Curtain units installed at Damen Ave. (Common Pantry) and West Church Entry doors.

**2021**

**CAPITAL PROJECTS PROPOSED: (Based on the Building Reserve Study)**

4. Church Building: Patch and Repair Potential Roof Leak/Moisture Damage above church chancel. (Waiting for bid from Lindholm Roofing)
5. Parsonage Building: Replace and Rebuild existing wood and masonry front porch and roof structure (New design to reduced overall cost for church review and approval).

**MAINTENANCE & REPAIR PROPOSED: (General Church Repair and Upkeep)**

1. Church Building: Painting & plaster work for Sanctuary east, north & south walls = \$10,600 Dido Painting 10/07/2020 quote.
2. Church Building: Painting & plaster work for Sanctuary west wall = \$4,000 Dido Painting 10/07/2020 quote.
3. Parsonage Basement: non-load bearing masonry wall. Rebuild with common brick = \$2,500 Casey Tuckpointing 11/10/2020 quote.
4. Existing aluminum church offices, meeting rooms, and basement windows (excluding sanctuary) preventative maintenance and balance replacement = \$2,860.00 Softer Lite Window Company 9/3/2020 estimate: (Gerry applied spray lubricant to window track which greatly improved window operation)
5. Prune Damen and Bradley Avenue Parkway Trees (Dianne to call city 311 to schedule).
6. Replace doorbell at courtyard entry door with new. (Jeffry to investigate wireless options).

## **The Welcome Meal Program**

We have completed our 18<sup>th</sup> year of providing dinner to neighbors in need on Wednesdays. We started 2020 serving a sit-down dinner to about 42 guests weekly in the Fellowship Hall. This usually involved a dozen volunteers, catering from First Slice, and donations for dessert. Last March, we quickly pivoted to provide safe take-away meals and coffee outside in the courtyard. For the time being we will continue providing to-go dinners each week.

First Slice cooks and packages dinners into individual containers for us. We still provide the same quality of meal which includes salad or soup with bread, an entrée, two vegetables and dessert. Examples are:

- Mixed green salad, pulled pork, roasted potatoes, corn, and apple pie; and,
- Chicken soup, tilapia, rice, mixed vegetables and cookies.

We bag each meal with utensils and a bottle of water. Coffee is offered to neighbors too. With the to-go service, we start preparations around 4pm and are ready by 5pm to distribute meals until we run out. Demand for the meal has fluctuated a lot through the year. We are currently ordering 50 dinners each week and distributing them within an hour.

For safety reasons, we have limited the number of volunteers needed each week. Usually only 3-4 people bag and distribute the meals and coffee. Everyone wears masks and we ask that our guests do too. We have additional volunteers who pick up meals at First Slice and deliver meals to a couple of homebound neighbors.

The Welcome Meal greatly benefited from the help of:

- Penny Johnson, Trudy Zbinden, Kathy Engert, and Jeffry Engert for their past and current support of the program;
- First Slice for providing the nourishing meals that are ready to hand out;
- Our hosts Carol Jones, Marnie Schwartz, the Hale family, and the Zbinden-Toledo family who provided dessert and beverages;
- Regular volunteers including Jim Christian, Chris Lokken, Pastor Kevin, Ricky Corcoles, and Chris Pentaris.

The Welcome Meal costs have slightly increased to about \$5.50 per dinner. Our annual costs will run about \$15,000 this year. The largest expense (75%) is for the food provided by First Slice. Other expenses include kitchen supplies and beverages. Dessert is an in-kind donation and not included in this cost.

Last year, we participated in Giving Tuesday. Bev and Marnie put together a short YouTube video. With everyone's help, we were able to raise nearly \$10,000 in November and December. Approximately \$1,800 was also received through regular online donations in 2020. We ended the year with nearly \$19,000 in our account and are happy the program will be funded through 2021. Additional fundraising efforts are being explored in 2021.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy Engert, Jeffry Engert, and Marnie Schwartz

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## WOMEN' GUILD

The Women's Guild did not meet in 2020 .  
Due to the Covid pandemic and the closing of the church.

We made donations to Epiphany in memory of:

Rose Chinnow \$50.  
Bruce Dieball \$25.  
Tariq Asghar \$25.  
Frank Lewandowski. \$25.  
Lewis Trammell \$25.

I keep in touch with all the members regularly and we look forward to the day we can safely meet again.  
Fondly

Pres . Sue Klosa  
773- 472-7910

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**EPIPHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
MILESTONES**

**2020**

**Membership transfer**

Edward and Judith Humphrys – From St. Johns UCC, Dayton Ohio

**Deacons**

Installed May 17, 2020

Brown, Mary Beckman  
Glenn, Jeremy  
Louis, David  
Zuluaga, Jenny

**Confirmations**

June 7, 2020

Beitel, Alec  
Berquist, Brian  
Hartman, Evan  
LaPorte, Sam  
Ratke, John

**Deaths**

Jeffery Bowman – July 24, 1966 - May 28, 2020

**2019**

**New Members**

November 17, 2019

David Lewis  
Thekie Lein  
Marty White

**Confirmations**

May 5, 2019

Zuluaga, Nicolas Fernando

EPIPHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
MILESTONES

Weddings

June 8, 2019

Susan Peterson & Jeffrey Orr

Dedication to God

July 14, 2019

Isabella Romasanta, daughter of Emily & Ray Romasanta

October 27, 2019

Andrew Dunbar, son of Molly & Christian Dunbar

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**The Constitution and By-Laws**  
**Epiphany United Church of Christ**  
**2008 West Bradley Place, Chicago Illinois**

*Revised & Approved - November 2020*

**PREAMBLE**

In obedience to the Word of God, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Cor. 14:40), we members of this congregation, covenant ourselves to the following rules and regulations:

**ARTICLE I**

*Name*

The name of this church shall be Epiphany United Church of Christ, located in Chicago, in the State of Illinois.

**ARTICLE II**

*Purpose*

The avowed purpose of this church shall be:

- to worship God,
- to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the Sacraments;
- to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the Church Universal;
- to render loving service toward humankind, and
- to strive for righteousness, justice and peace.

The people of Epiphany United Church of Christ in Chicago, Illinois, desire to be a welcoming and open place to all who seek God and Christian fellowship.

We confess that the Church Universal has not always welcomed gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons and in fact has denied them a place in the Christian community. As one local congregation, we wish to challenge this historic wrong by declaring Epiphany to be an open and affirming church in the United Church of Christ.

We believe that God shows no partiality to people of a particular sexual orientation. Rather, God bestows love equally on all people. We affirm the lives, the worth, the relationships and the spiritual gifts and ministry of people of all sexual orientations.

**ARTICLE III**

*Polity*

1. This church shall be a part of the United Church of Christ and it shall sustain that relationship to the United Church of Christ described in those portions of the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ adopted July 4, 1961 (and as thereafter amended) relating to local churches.
2. The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject, however, to laws of the State of Illinois relating to not for profit corporations.

**ARTICLE IV**

*Faith and Covenant*

1. Faith – this Church acknowledges as its sole head, Jesus Christ, the son of God, and the Savior of Humanity. It acknowledges as sisters and brothers in Christ, all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word of God in the Scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world. It claims as its own faith of the historic church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant reformers. Among these we include: "The Augsburg Confession", "Luther's Catechism" and "The Heidelberg Catechism". It affirms the responsibility of the church in each generation to make this faith its own, in accordance with the teaching of our Lord and practice

prevailing among Evangelical Christians. It recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion (also known as The Lord's Supper).

An expression of this faith is the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith:

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit,  
God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God,  
and to your deeds we testify:  
You call the worlds into being,  
create persons in your own image,  
and set before each one the ways of life and death.  
You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin,  
You judge people and nations by your righteous will  
declared through prophets and apostles.  
In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior,  
you have come to us and shared our common lot,  
conquering sin and death  
and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit,  
creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,  
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages,  
tongues, and races.

You call us into your church  
to accept the cost of joy of discipleship,  
to be your servants in the service of others,  
to proclaim the gospel to all the world  
and resist the powers of evil,  
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,  
to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust you  
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,  
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,  
your presence in trial and rejoicing,  
and eternal life in your realm which has no end.  
Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

## ARTICLE V

### *Membership*

1. In accordance with the gospel covenant which binds "all faithful people into unity," membership is for those who have been baptized, and either confirmed, or have made public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, or by reaffirmation of faith, or by letter of transfer or certification from a Christian Church. Members under the age of 18 will have the same duties and privileges as those over 18; however, they will be unable to vote on congregational matters. They are encouraged to join and serve with committees or engage in any other church activities.

#### 2. Admission of Members

A. Persons desiring to become members of this congregation must present themselves to the Pastor and familiarize themselves with the Constitution of this church and shall make application to the Church. Application is to be made on a form supplied by the Congregation. This form shall become a permanent part of the church records. Applicants shall, on the first convenient occasion, present themselves at the altar to be publicly received and welcomed and to have their privileges and responsibilities of membership explained to them.

i. Persons may request Associate membership in this congregation by

presenting themselves in the same manner and undergoing the same procedures as persons seeking full membership in more than one (1) congregation at the same time. Associate members have the same right, responsibilities and obligations as do other members in good standing.

B. Some of the privileges and responsibilities that members shall pledge to abide are as follows:

- i. Regular attendance at the church worship service and the celebration of the Lord's Supper;
- ii. To live the Christian life;
- iii. To share in the life and work in the church;
- iv. Regular contributions to the church's support and benevolences;
- v. To seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the membership and the community.

### 3. Letter of Transfer or Certificate of Release

Any member may, upon request, be granted a Letter of Transfer or Certificate of Release. If, because of a change of faith or for other reasons not involving unchristian conduct, a member requests in writing to be released from their membership obligations, the church shall patiently endeavor to secure their continuance in its fellowship. But, failing in such effort, the church may grant the request and terminate their membership. Such a request shall be approved by the Pastor and the Church Council, and the Pastor or Recording Secretary shall issue the appropriate Certificate of Release.

### 4. Retaining Members

A member who, despite spiritual care and encouragement, has not attended worship services or contributed in any way to the support of the congregation for a period of two years, (e.g. by volunteering time for church related projects, financially, by communicating with the Pastor, etc.), by recommendation of the Church Council (or an appointed Membership Committee), may, with proper notification, be removed from the Membership Role and placed on an inactive list, which indefinitely suspends membership rights. They may be restored to their former membership through Section 2 above.

## ARTICLE VI

### *Governing Body*

The governing body of this church shall be the membership assembled in the church meeting.

1. For normal church action, other than as set forth below in Article VI, section 2, the quorum required is 15% of the voting members. A majority of the votes cast shall be the decision of the church. (A majority is one more than half the votes cast.)

2. Constitutional changes can be made only at annual meetings. The quorum required is 20% of voting members. The action of the Church shall require a two-thirds affirmative vote. Also, public announcements of the present text and/or text of proposed constitutional changes is to be made at least four (4) weeks prior to the annual meeting unless the Congregation approves a shorter period at the annual meeting. Proxy votes can be used when requested.

## ARTICLE VII

### *Council*

1. The Church Council shall be the executive body of this Church. It shall be composed of the Pastor and at least 9 members. Only persons over the age of 18, who are members, will be eligible to be nominated for Council membership. Five members shall constitute a quorum.

2. The Church Council shall organize itself each year, electing a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, and Treasurer. It shall form or appoint such boards or committees, not restricted to Council Members, as will serve to further the purpose of the church.
3. Church Council members shall be elected by a majority vote cast at a congregational meeting. They will be elected for three years. In order to provide continuity, not more than four (4) Church Council member terms should terminate in any one year.
4. Nominations for the Church Council members shall be made by a committee appointed each year by Council. Public notice of such nominations shall be given to members at least two (2) weeks before the election. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the meeting at which the election is held.
5. On the second Sunday following the annual congregational meeting, during the service, the Pastor shall install the newly elected and/or re-elected Church Council member(s).
6. Vacancies on the Church Council shall be filled by the Council until the next annual meeting, and then such vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term, as set forth in sections 3, 4 and 5 of Article VII.
7. The Church Council shall be the policy-making body and shall transact the business of the Church, make provision for the determining and raising of the current expense budget as well as for Our Christian Wider Mission and Benevolences, and provide for the auditing of financial accounts and for the adequate support of the staff. It shall keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings, be the custodian of all Church records, and report to the Church at its regular and special meetings. All acts and deliberations of the Church Council are subject to the will of and revision by the governing body.
8. The Church Council shall instruct officers on all fiscal matters, including the payment of bills and monthly review of bills paid and expenses incurred by the Church Council.
9. The duties of the Church Council shall be to maintain and operate the church property ensure that adequate repairs are made to keep the facilities in good condition, and provide insurance within the scope of the church. Church Council may authorize for maintenance or capital improvements (not included in the Annual Budget) up to \$5,000.00 (yearly aggregate). Any expenditure in excess of said amount, as well as any borrowing, requires the approval of the Congregation at a special meeting or the Annual Congregational Meeting.
10. The Church Council shall meet at least once every month (with the exception of either July or August) for the transaction of such business as may properly come before it. Special meetings are subject to the Pastor's or President's call.
11. Church Council members shall not serve more than two consecutive three-year terms.

## ARTICLE VIII

### *Pastor*

1. It shall be the responsibility of the Search Committee, appointed by the Church Council, to seek a candidate for a vacancy in the office of Pastor.
2. As soon as a pastoral vacancy occurs, it shall be reported to the Conference Executive.
3. In filling a vacancy or in securing supply ministers for the period of vacancy, the Search Committee may seek the counsel of the Conference Executive.
4. The Search Committee may request the Conference Executive to secure relevant information about any Pastor whom it wishes to consider for the vacancy.

5. Any Pastor may confer with the Conference Executive concerning a pastoral vacancy. At the Pastor's request, their name shall be submitted by the Conference Executive for the consideration by the local Search Committee.
6. The Search Committee shall present to the church the name of the candidate it recommends to fill the vacancy. A two-thirds vote of the members present and voting constitutes a Call.
7. In the Call, the terms of the relationship shall be stated, including the agreement of the church to participate in the Pension Fund of the United Church of Christ, the Ministers' Health Insurance Program, and other terms agreed upon by the candidate and the Search Committee. The Pastor, the church, and the Conference Executive shall each receive a copy of the Call.
8. When a Pastor accepts a Call to this church, the church at the Pastor shall join in requesting the Association to arrange for a service of installation. A report of this service shall be signed by the proper officer of the Conference and copies shall be sent to the Secretary of the United Church of Christ and to the Council for Church and Ministry.
9. The Pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period. In order to terminate this relationship, three months' notice shall be given by either party. The procedure shall be in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ.
10. When either party decides to terminate the relationship, the termination shall be by the action of the Church, and notice of such termination shall be sent by the President of the Church Council to the Conference Executive for appropriate action.
11. Caring discipline of the Pastor shall be in conformity with the Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ.
12. The Church may at its discretion, choose an Associate or Assistant Pastor.
13. In case of the death of the pastor, if he or she leaves a surviving spouse or children, they shall be entitled to his or her regular salary for at least three months after his or her death. The parsonage or other dwelling place shall be provided for them for at least three months after the death of the pastor.

## ARTICLE IX

### *Property*

1. The Church Council may, in the church's name, sue or be sued, acquire by purchase, gift, devise, bequest or otherwise, and own, hold, invest, reinvest or dispose of property both real and personal for such works as the church may undertake and may purchase. The Church Council may, in the church's name, own, receive, hold, manage, care for and transfer, rent/lease, mortgage or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer and convey such property for the general purposes of the church. The Church Council may, in the church's name, receive and hold in trust both real and personal property, and invest and reinvest the same and make any contracts for promoting the objects and purposes of the church. The President and two other designated Council Members shall act as legal representatives of the church.
2. Upon dissolution of the church, its assets and all properties and interests of which it shall then be possessed, including and devise, bequest, gift or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust, or otherwise made before or after such dissolution, shall be transferred to the Illinois conference of the United Church of Christ.

## ARTICLE X

### *Church meetings*

1. The Annual Meeting of the church shall be scheduled in the month of November. Every congregational meeting must be announced in church two Sundays prior to the meeting. At the Annual meeting the proposed

annual budget, along with written reports from the Church Council, the pastor, officers of the church and all church organizations, are to be submitted.

2. Special church meetings may be called by the Church Council or by a petition to the Council signed by not less than 25% of the members. The Church Council shall call such meetings within three weeks from receipt of the petition, and adequate notice of such meetings shall be sent to the membership by the Secretary.

ARTICLE XI  
*Rules of Order*

*Robert's Rules of Order* shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by this Constitution and/or By-Laws.

***Revised November 2020***

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**Epiphany  
United Church of Christ**

2008 West Bradley Place

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