



2018 Annual Report

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First Congregational Church of La Grange
Unified Calendar
2019

Ministry Teams
All Church
Worship
Church Council
Children/Youth

January	<p>6: Messy Church 13: Junior High Youth Meeting 13: All Teams Meeting in the Dining Room after worship. 20: Congregational Meeting follows worship 23: Church Council Meets at 7 pm</p>
February	<p>8-10: Confirmation Retreat at Tower Hill 10: Junior High Youth Meeting 27: Church Council Meets at 7 pm</p>
March	<p>3: Messy Church 6: Lent Begins 10: Junior High Youth Meeting 10 All Teams Meeting in the Dining Room after worship 27: Church Council Meets at 7 pm 24-31: Member Work Trip</p>
April	<p>7: Messy Church 7: Junior High Youth Meeting 14: Palm Sunday 14: All Teams Meeting in the Dining Room after worship 18: Maundy Thursday Service at 7 pm 19: Community Good Friday Services at 7 pm 21: Easter Celebration 24: Church Council Meets at 7 pm</p>
May	<p>5: Messy Church 12 or 19: Spring Choral Sermon 12: Junior High Youth meeting 19: All Teams Meeting in Dining Room - Third Sunday due to Mothers' Day 22: Church Council Meets at 7 pm</p>
June	<p>2: Messy Church 9: Pentecost/Confirmation/Last Choir Sunday 9: All Teams Meeting in the Dining Room after worship 19: Pentecost Sunday 21-25: 32nd General Synod of the UCC in Milwaukee 26: Church Council Meets at 7 pm</p>
July	<p>No All Teams Meeting in July 7: Messy Church Summer Musical Camp TBA</p>

August

4: Community Worship in Gordon Park
4: Messy Church
11: All Teams Meeting in the Dining Room after worship
28: Church Council Meets at 7 pm

September

1: Messy Church
8: Homecoming/Kickoff Sunday
8: Junior High Youth meeting
8: All Teams Meeting in the Dining Room after worship
25: Church Council Meets at 7 pm

October

6: Messy Church
13: All Teams Meeting in the Dining Room after worship
13: Junior High Youth Meeting
23: Church Council Meets at 7 pm

November

3: Messy Church
10: All Teams Meeting in the Dining Room after worship; Budget Planning for 2019 to be completed and submitted to the office.
10: Junior High Youth meeting
20: Harvest Home Dinner at 6 pm
27: Church Council Meets following Harvest Home - Third Wednesday due to Thanksgiving
24: Community Thanksgiving Service at 7 pm

December

1: Gifts of Gratitude Sunday
1: Messy Church
8: Advent Choral Sermon
8: All Teams Meeting in the Dining Room after worship; Transition of Teams Plan to be completed and submitted to the office.
8: Junior High Youth meeting
15: Children's Musical
18: Church Council Meets at 7 p.m. - Third Wednesday due to Christmas
24: Family Christmas Eve Service at 5:30 pm.
24: Candlelight Lessons and Carols at 10:30 pm

January 12, 2020: All Teams Meeting in the Dining Room after worship.

AGENDA OF THE ANNUAL MEETING 2019

January 20, 2018

I. Call to Order

Doris Bryant, Moderator

II. Approval of the January 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes

III. Business to Be Considered

IV. Financial Overview and 2019 Budget Proposal

Financial Team

V. Election of New Leadership

Nominations Committee

VI. Benediction

Rev. Carly Stucklen Sather

VII. Adjournment

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING 2018

I. Call to Order

Jerry Palmer called the meeting to order at 10:55 AM.

II. 2017 Minutes

Jill Tobin moved that the minutes of the 2017 congregational meeting be accepted.

Linda Lauterbach seconded the motion.

The motion to accept the minutes passed unanimously.

III. 2017 Annual Overview

Dick Lauterbach presented an overview of the financial results for 2017 on behalf of Claudia Byrne, Treasurer.

The endowment balance at the time of the meeting stood at approximately \$1 million.

In 2018, we will reduce the budget by about 64K compared to 2017.

IV. 2018 Annual Budget

Jerry Palmer reviewed the process used to arrive at the 2018 budget, including a synopsis of the congregational town halls held on January 7 and 14, 2018.

Kent Llewellyn made a motion to accept the proposed 2018 budget.

Doris Bryant seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

V. Election of New Leadership

Jerry announced that the next item on the agenda was the election of new leadership.

Jill Tobin presented the slate of candidates, including two recent additions:

Debra Gardner will serve as Member at Large for the Church Council.

Lex Bart will serve on the Worship Ministry.

Jill also listed the positions that remained vacant.

Chris Bryant made a motion to accept the slate of candidates.

Dick Lauterbach seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Benediction

Pastor Carly Stucklen Sather provided the Benediction.

VII. Adjournment

Charlie Cosgrove made a motion to accept the slate of candidates.

JoAnne Konkle seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

John Leininger

Clerk for the Council of First Congregational Church of La Grange

REPORT OF THE PASTOR

What is Going On? The constant in the life of the church is change, change, change.

2018 has been a year of more change. Our congregation is growing and we have many, many new faces, families, and fellow-sojourners amongst us. The increase in the number of families has led to increased need for Sunday School space and family outreach activities. The use of our space is expanding with new space sharing partners and an increase in non-member use of our building. Our financial picture is healthier with more households participating financially, 100% occupancy of our exclusive use space, and over all increased contributions.

2018 has been a year of difficult change. We lost our organist, Jeffrey Arnold, to complications of being hit by a car. We lacked the economic resources to maintain the position of Children and Youth Director; in February, we reluctantly said good bye to Sylvia Miller. We cut the budgets of every ministry and committee so that we would pass a balanced budget and still did not receive the pledges necessary to meet that balanced budget; our ability to reach out and change lives was very limited by economic decisions.

2018 has been a year of resilience and resistance. Despite the negative effects of budgets, politics, world events, our community of faith has persisted in our witness to God's extravagant love, lavish grace, and extraordinary welcome. We have landed on our feet and are poised to stride into 2019 with vigor.

Where have we been? And where are we now?

Staff and Administration – Stability amidst change

Our staffing continues to evolve from the "Pre-Alban Plan" configuration. With the end of the position of Children and Youth Director, a cadre of volunteers has stepped forward to help fill the gap. In September we welcomed two Student Interns who during the academic year will help coordinate and empower our children and youth ministries as well as supplement our pastoral care ministries.

In August, we welcomed AnnLaura Tapia as our Organist. AnnLaura comes to us with a wealth of skill and experience as a church musician, chamber musician, and soloist.

Also in August, we re-arranged our office staffing positions; we ended the shared position of Office Administrator. We separated out the office responsibilities into a 25- 30 hour a week Office Administrator position that oversees office operations. We created a 10 – 15 hour a week Office Assistant position that is charged primarily with the coordination of space sharing, special events and external communications (advertising and web presence). We continue to be blessed by the gifts and abilities of Ginger Scarborough, Office Administrator; Gina Dever, Financial Coordinator; and welcomed Margaret Cho as Office Assistant.

Our Nursery Attendant, Erin Bryant, cares for the smallest members of our community four Sunday mornings a month. This allows the parents to be active in worship. Erin will be on maternity leave during January and early February. We need volunteers to step in during this time.

We expanded our outreach while meeting some of our janitorial needs by welcoming special needs students from Lyons Township High School Transitions program. These nine students each spend 2 – 4 hours a week while school is in session in our building vacuuming, dusting, and keeping our pews organized. While this has not decreased our janitorial services expenses, it has given us a cleaner space at no increased expense. And most importantly, we are helping students learn life and job skills they can use toward becoming independent.

Ryan Cox continues to provide excellent leadership of our chancel choir, bell choir, and children's choir. His administration of the Conservatory has brought musical expertise not only to students but to our worship experiences as well. Ryan served first as FCCLG's Interim Music Director in late 2004, and has been our Music Director since May, 2005. In honor of these 15 years of faithful service, the Church Council voted unanimously to offer to him a paid sabbatical in the summer of 2019

where he will expand his comfort zone and repertoire to include a variety of ages and cultures. This will be funded through the Hautau Fund.

These six people – Ryan Cox, Ginger Scarborough, Gina Dever, Erin Bryant, AnnLaura Tapia, and Margaret Cho—are the non-pastoral staff who assist you, the members of this faith community, in doing the ministry God has called us to do. Please make time to thank them for their commitment, engagement, and professional expertise.

Teams and Ministries: Challenging the status quo

Our ministries are fueled by the passions and gifts of our faith community. The Alban Plan calls for the congregation to staff the ministries and committees and for the ministries to be lay-driven. We are still transitioning in this area. Cultural change within any organization takes cooperation and willingness by staff, leaders, and members alike; and it takes about half a generation. We are getting there.

Our ministries and committees that were fully staffed by volunteers were productive and inspirational in their work. They were able to set goals and accomplish them, provide meaningful ministry and experiences for the congregation and the larger community, and helped to fulfill our mission and vision.

Significant ministries and committees were not fully staffed in 2018 leaving the work of these ministries to just a few people and professional staff. The work of the few volunteers has been terrific! But they ended the year exhausted and less energetic for 2019. When finding volunteers to serve in areas of ministry is difficult, we need to ask if the ministry is still meaningful to the congregation and reflects its values, if the ministry has outlived its purpose within the community, or if there is a need to reshape or recreate the ministry in a new form so that it is relevant to the needs and passions of the community. In 2019 we will need to carefully consider how to re-invent and build upon the ministries of Christian Education, Nominations, Stewardship, and Technology so that additional passionate people will be compelled step forward and join the hardworking team members in meeting the growing needs of our community in these areas.

Member Care – Learning to care for one another

One of the most challenging areas of ministry for me in this congregation is the lack of time devoted to pastoral care - which is only 5% of the time and energy in your pastor's portfolio. This means that as pastoral emergencies arise, I am often unable to drop everything and make a visit. While I make an effort to visit our homebound members at least once a year in either Advent or Lent, these times are not always convenient for our elders. Pastoral care by phone and electronic means is not the most effective means to care for a flock.

With that reality, our Called to Care Team takes on the utmost importance. One of our student interns, Marietta Hebert-Davis, comes to us with a wealth of skill, experience, and expertise in pastoral care. Marietta is re-organizing, re-energizing, and renewing our lay driven pastoral care ministries as part of her doctoral studies at McCormick Theological Seminary. It is my hope that with Marietta's guidance and leadership, this team will be ready to fill the gap where I am unable to meet the congregation's needs.

Stewardship of Space – We are 100% at capacity for exclusive use space!

My goal for 2018 was to have 45% of our building expenses covered by our property sharing and special event income. As of this writing (12/27), property sharing and special events have covered **68%** of property expenses.

However, our covenant with School District 105 (D105) will expire on July 31 of this year. Because our Sunday School has grown, we cannot offer a new tenant exclusive use of D105's space. We are actively seeking an exclusive use tenant for two offices and shared use of the educational rooms on the ground floor. These cannot match the income from the expired lease, however. We are

actively working to fill a portion of that deficit with increased special events (weddings, private gatherings, conferences) through marketing and advertising which is paid for by the pastor's officiant fees and funeral honorariums.

The Property Committee and Council hired a consultant to help us develop a 15 year plan for expected capital expenditures over the next 15 years. These will be added to the property budget in these years. Likewise, a portion of the income from property sharing needs to go toward these capital expenditures.

Finances: 2018 is on track to end the year with more in income than expenses.

Because our unpledged giving is significantly higher than budgeted, "close the gap" giving was significant, and some of our ministries significantly under spent their budgets, our income and expenses are likely to balance—or be very close to balancing – at the end of 2018. This is the first time in many years that we have completed a year in the black.

We entered 2018, however, with at \$44,000 deficit that has not been closed. The deficit reflects the four prior years' spending that was higher than income. We must close that gap in the coming years.

Where Are We Going?

I will again repeat the paragraph from my first Annual Report in 2014:

First Congregational Church is literally the cornerstone of La Grange; we are highly visible in a vibrant and healthy neighborhood. We have a mission and vision that is attractive to the community around us. We are blessed with an excellent musical program, well planned children's educational opportunities, and numerous means by which we can make a difference in people's lives.

My 2019 Goals for First Congregational Church of La Grange:

- We will continue to have a positive and hopeful impact on the community in which we live. The message we offer is countercultural; it a message of radical love. We will continue to offer the means by which our members and friends can engage in making a difference in the divided and vitriolic culture around us. We will continue to seek to embody and model a more just and generous expression of the Christian faith than is portrayed in public understanding.
- We will regain 100% occupancy of available exclusive use space and increase the non-member weddings and special events to fill the needs of others in ministry. To do so, we will actively market our space. My goal is for our facility to generate income to match at least 50% of the cost of its maintenance and capital needs in 2019.
- We will plan and plot a celebration for the 20th anniversary of becoming Open and Affirming.
- We will attract friends, retain members, nurture spirits, grow leaders, deploy change agents, and develop partners within to build on this movement of radical love in and beyond La Grange.

As I've said for each of the last five years in this final paragraph: Let's journey forward into this developing and ever changing future together with intentionality and purpose, following the path that God is revealing for our congregation. We indeed have a bright future at the corner of South La Grange Road and Cossitt Avenue.

The Rev. Carly Stucklen Sather

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC REPORT 2018

From our youngest singing sheep to our most experienced musicians, the goal is an enriching music program for all. I am grateful for the energy that the musicians of this church bring to every rehearsal and service and feel blessed to work with them. I am very proud of all of their efforts and look forward to another year of making wonderfully spiritual music.

The Chancel Choir consistently has 15-20 singers per Sunday. While this number could be bigger, the choir continues to sing very well and truly enrich our worship service. The Carillon Handbell Choir has maintained a solid roster of 13-15 ringers, with a couple of very good substitutes if need be. The Children's music programs continue in the form of Ring and Sing and Treble Choir and up to 15 children have been enrolled. The main focus is fun through music that can be used in worship. We've worked with handchimes and singing and can even accompany ourselves if need be.

This year we mourned the death of organist Jeffrey Arnold. He was a truly gifted musician and wonderful colleague to the director and the musicians of the church. The choir, with singers who knew Jeffrey as a teacher, sang a beautiful memorial service. Patricia Spencer came out of retirement and was an immense help during the organist search. AnnLaura Tapia, who had subbed at FCCLG, applied for the position and I am very happy she did. Our collaboration is excellent and she brings excellent musicianship and high energy to our music program.

The musical highlights of the year include: gorgeous Maundy Thursday service; Easter service with instrumentalists from our congregation, First Conservatory faculty, and other professionals as well as David Schrader on the organ; Spring Choral Sermon of Mark Hayes' *Faith, Hope and Love*; celebration of Reformation Sunday with spirituals and gospel music; beautiful service of remembrance on All Saint's Sunday; Advent Choral Sermon of Pinkham's Christmas Cantata; Christmas Eve with choir, bells, instruments and soloists.

Again, two children's musicals were done. Our summer musical camp was a great success. We teach a 35-minute musical play complete with staging and line memorization in 5 days of rehearsal. Our Christmas Musical *Radio J-O-Y* was a great reminder of what really matters during the Christmas season and beyond. Janet Bednar and Amanda Murphy were instrumental in helping with both productions.

Thanks to the Friends of Music many of these services are possible. These gifts help facilitate special services, orchestras and more frequent guest musicians. I cannot thank the Friends of Music enough for their support.

I continue to arrange music, primarily instrumental accompaniments and descants for hymns.

Special thanks go to all of the adult and youth instrumentalists for playing at various services. Thanks also to the many soloists from the Chancel Choir who added their talents to many services. First Conservatory faculty also played beautifully.

Our congregation remains ambitious musically and their willingness to sing and play music from a wide variety of styles is encouraging. The staff has all been wonderful in supporting my efforts to make our music program as strong as it can be.

Ryan Cox

Director of Music

CONSERVATORY REPORT

The First Conservatory of Music has remained a strong presence in the community. While competition in the area is strong, enrollment is increasing. The website and the web portal lessons.com continue to be our biggest source of new students. The Conservatory added trumpet to its roster with Anthony DiMauro and added capacity in the violin/viola department with Emma Strohmusch. The teaching continues at a very high level and the students are responding well. I'm blessed to hear their

progress week after week.

The gifted faculty has continued to enrich the music program at the church by sharing their talents in worship courtesy of the Conservatory. The Conservatory contributes \$1125/month for use of classrooms and continues to provide the piano tuning for all of the church's pianos as well as provide musicians from the faculty for services throughout the year.

Ryan Cox
Director, First Conservatory of Music

First Conservatory of Music		
2018 Financial Report		
Income:		
Tuitions	<u>\$135,858.00</u>	
Total Income		\$135,858.00
Expenses		
Transfer to General Fund for Space Use	\$13,500.00	
Teachers Fees including Worship		
Performances	\$101,394.54	
Piano Tuning	\$1,490.00	
Supplies	\$146.34	
Space Improvements	\$187.44	
Musicians in Worship	\$250.00	
Directors Salary and Taxes	\$6,287.37	
Total Expenses		<u>\$123,255.69</u>
Net Income (Loss)		<u>\$12,602.31</u>

MODERATOR'S REPORT

It has been a pleasure to work this past year with the dedicated members of your Church Council. The members of the Council include Jerry Palmer (past Moderator), Mike Ries (Vice Moderator), John Moellman (Treasurer), Carly Stucklen Sather (Pastor), Claudia Byrne (Clerk), Renee Bryant (an at-large member), and Deb Gardiner (an at-large member). Each member of the Council has contributed in a thoughtful and faithful way in our work. Thank you to each of them.

The focus of our work this past year has been property sharing and the budget. Through the efforts of Carly and with the help of our new administrator Margaret Cho, we have found new property sharing partners in Galaxy Theater and the Illinois Association of Free and Charitable Clinics. We will continue to work to find a partner to share the space that will be released from the District 105 lease in July.

We have also worked with our Property Committee to assess the capital needs of our buildings through the next 15 years. The Council approved hiring Chicago Project Management and Dan Ruzic to do an assessment of our buildings. We received the report in October and have been able to use the report to both assess our needs going forward and adequately price our space-sharing agreements. The Property Committee will now be able to make annual budget requests based on realistic expectations for maintenance and repairs. In addition, we will be able to adjust the price of sharing space to cover real costs as leases come up for renewal.

Based on that work, the work that Jerry Palmer has done with the Stewardship team and the work of the Council's budget committee, we are pleased to be presenting a realistic and balanced budget to you for 2019.

Doris Bryant, Moderator

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

At the Annual Meeting in January 2018, the congregation approved a balanced budget for 2018 with an expense amount of \$387,643. I am happy to say we met our goal of balanced spending during our church year and ended with a small surplus. This was the stated goal of the Alban Team and it is the first time I can ever remember this happening. Our budget for 2019 is balanced and I expect our spending to also come in balanced or with a surplus as well.

The balance of the invested funds at the end of 2018 was \$1,242,824, of which \$993,690 is the Endowment Fund balance, with the remaining amount in two interest bearing Money Market Accounts. The Endowment Fund suffered a loss of 5.9% in 2018. Taking into account the operating supplemental amount taken out per our constitution the loss was 3.1%. The S&P 500 index was down 6.2% (4.75% including dividends). At the direction of the Ministry of Finance, Schwab managed our portfolio in a conservative manner that allowed us to outperform the index.

We still have financial challenges in our future to insure a strong and vibrant church. It is vitally important we all pledge our support to the church both financially. This will allow us to provide to the needs within the church as well as the community.

I would like to extend a thank you to the Ministry of Finance for their work this year, to Assistant Treasurer Dick Lauterbach, and to Sarah Gottermeyer, who faithfully signs check and assists in the counting of the offering each week.

John Moellman

Treasurer

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Summary of Restricted Accounts will be provided when available.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF RECORDS

Margaret Cho and Ginger Scarborough

Membership as of December 31, 2017	329
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Received by:

Reaffirmation of Faith	5
Restored	0
Transfer	5

Removed by:

Death	4
Letter of Transfer	0
Inactivity	23

Membership as of December 31, 2018	306
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Weddings:		
	Non-member weddings	5
	Member weddings	2

Births	3
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Baptisms:	Children	4
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Adults	0
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IN MEMORIAM

We remember with honor and affection our members who have died during the past year:

Marjorie Duhatchek	March 18, 1926 – December 28, 2017
Robert Jeffrey Arnold	April 28, 1959 – February 6, 2018
Mary Louise Hendrickson	July 4, 1920 – April 26, 2018
Joseph F. Ourada	1923—May 1, 2018

REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

The Ministry of Communications has focused its efforts in 2018 primarily on advertising our beautiful church as a wedding venue in hopes of generating additional revenue. We have updated the Wedding Handbook in pdf form so that it can easily be read online by prospective couples. We are also updating the weddings section on our website to show more photographs of actual weddings while highlighting our diversity and inclusiveness. We have advertised on EnGaygedWeddings.com and are currently the *only* LGBT-friendly church listed in all of Cook County!

We are also in the process of updating events photographs on our webpage. If you have any great photos of our Christmas Musical, All Church Picnic, Messy Church, Summer Musical Camp, Harvest Home, etc., etc., please let us know so that we might include them on our website.

Besides focusing on our website, our team is updating exterior signage and has also purchased two flat-screen smart TVs to be placed near the 6th Avenue and Cossitt entrances (exact locations TBD) that will be able to detail our church's events calendar, slideshows, and other information for people to easily see as they enter our building. Further electrical expenses related to this project will be incurred in 2019.

If you have any great ideas for our team for next year, we welcome your input and/or participation!

Julia Cunningham, Brian Kasnick, Maddie Merker

REPORT FROM THE MINISTRY OF MEMBERSHIP

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

1 Corinthians 12:17

The goal of our committee is not only to reach out and gain new members and friends of FCCLG but to help maintain our current membership. To that goal, in the past year we have:

- Purchased the flag sign to help visitor locate our unlocked entrance for events.
- Continued our mission to get members and visitors alike to wear name tags to make it easier to get to know one another.
- As a committee, we sought out visitors to welcome them and hopefully introduce them to current members with similar interests/lifestyles. We urge all members of FCC to help us provide an extravagant welcome to visitors and members alike!
- Coordinated membership events and mentor new members. Our last event in February saw 12 new members.
- Coordinated the Membership Moment to share with others in the congregation the many diverse stories of membership. Thank you to those who shared: Peter VanKempen, Amy Crumine, Lawrence Bain, Mary Cooper and Brian Kasnik.
- Helped provide the software for the Planning Center, a program designed to help cover all necessary positions for worship, Sunday school, and other volunteer opportunities.
- Purchased our new picture boards in the Founder's Room to be a member photo album and church newspaper of recent events. Please help us by getting your picture taken soon!
- In the coming year, we are planning a program to help us identify when current members haven't attended for a period of time and need a little caring contact.

We are a small committee and were sad to see Joan Burke move to Michigan to be with family. We appreciated her input and send good wishes for her new life.

We gladly seek comments and suggestions to help us attain our committee goal. Please feel free to contact us by phone, email or note left in the membership box in the office.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Donaldson, JoAnne Kunkel, Petra Palmer, Sherri Ries

REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF MISSIONS

The Ministry of Missions allocates funds from our budget to organizations that further the mission of FCCLG; alerts the congregation to specific, current social problems; and provides opportunities for hands-on service work. We promote individual church member contributions to the four national UCC special offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing (in 2018, members contributed \$820), Strengthen the Church (\$236), Neighbors in Need (\$454), and the Christmas Fund (pending in Dec.) for retired clergy and lay persons in need of financial assistance. We are recognized as a Five for Five Church by the Chicago Metropolitan Association of the Illinois Conference of the UCC since we also contribute to Our Church's Wider Mission for basic support of the UCC. Please see the financial report for specifics on our monetary donations.

For 2018, we decided to emphasize the following goals/themes: 1. Poverty- hunger and homelessness (supporting activities: Saturday Meals Program, Second Baptist Food Pantry, CROP Walk, Gifts of Gratitude, LeaderShop school supplies collection) 2. Disaster relief (supporting activities: donations through UCC funds) 3. Social justice- opioid crisis, gun violence, mass incarceration/racism (supporting activities: substance abuse and mental health web page and brochure, membership in the Coalition for a Drug-Free Lyons Township, book discussions and educational activities, socially responsible investing, and arranging a guest sermon Jan. 28 by Daryle Brown of the NEXT Movement) 4. Environmental justice (supporting activities: promoting the work of the Green Team and researching socially responsible investing principles for the Finance Committee.)

Our ongoing projects include supporting the Saturday Meals Program by organizing the laundering of dish towels and aprons on a weekly basis, providing a church liaison to the Saturday Meals Program when they have meetings, and collecting school supplies during the summer for The LeaderShop. The congregation donated approximately 96 Christmas gifts for young children in daycare programs with Casa Central, in addition to warm scarves, gloves, and hats for adults through the Gifts of Gratitude. We saw an increase in CROP Walk participation this year from seven to thirteen walkers from our church that raised more than \$2600! Missions also supports the Second Baptist Church of La Grange's food pantry with member food donations. This food pantry assists local residents without applying strict town/village boundaries on the participants. Mission Moments given once a month during worship service highlight the projects and organizations that the church supports through the Ministry of Missions.

With the assistance of the church office and the technology committee, we created and keep updated both a paper brochure and a webpage on the church website, which provide information on treatment for mental health problems and substance abuse. FCCLG also is a member of the Coalition for a Drug-Free Lyons Township. A Missions member attends monthly Coalition meetings and occasional seminars. We continue to sponsor a Social Concerns Book Club. On February 5, we discussed *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* by Matthew Desmond. On June 4, we read *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* by David Grann. Our most recent book, on October 29, was *Moth Snowstorm: Nature and Joy* by Michael McCarthy, about the large-scale loss of insects due to climate change and other environmental problems.

Our newest endeavor involves cooperation with the Finance Committee to move towards socially responsible investment for our endowment fund. This effort will of course be made while ensuring that our investments continue to provide a good return. Next year we will help plan recognition of the 20-year anniversary of our church voting to become Open and Affirming.

Nancy Heil (co-chair), Dawn Mackie (co-chair), Laurie Braun (secretary), Linda Lauterbach (treasurer), Dawn Fresa, Bobbi Nunez, Diane Kasnick (ad hoc)

2018 Ministry of Missions

Organization	Donation	Focus
Bart's Soup Kitchen	\$400.00	Local
BEDS Plus	\$1,000.00	Local
CASA (court advocates)	\$500.00	City
Casa Central	\$500.00	City
Chicago Theological Seminary	\$750.00	UCC
Common Hope	\$500.00	Int'l
Community Diversity Group	\$200.00	Local
Community Renewal Society	\$1,500.00	City
Doctors Without Borders	\$1,000.00	Int'l
Greater Chgo Food Depository	\$1,000.00	City
Helping Hand	\$500.00	Local
Holy Joe's Café	\$250.00	Int'l
ICP	\$500.00	Local
Night Ministry	\$2,000.00	City
OCWM	\$12,000.00	UCC
Pillars	\$4,500.00	Local
San Lucas	\$1,000.00	City
Second Baptist Food Pantry	\$500.00	Local
St. Leonard's Ministries	\$500.00	City
TEACH	\$500.00	Local
The LeaderShop	\$500.00	Local
UCAN	\$1,000.00	City
UCC Emergency USA Fund	\$1,790.32	UCC
UCC Int'l Emergency Relief Fund	\$1,790.32	UCC
Zackley Group	\$830.04	Local
TOTAL DONATIONS	\$35,510.68	

Budgeted amount: \$35,510.68

REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF NURTURE

"For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

Matthew 18:20

The Ministry of Nurture is responsible for creating fellowship opportunities, welcoming our church community and visitors, and helping to strengthen relationships among us. Our team consists of six members. Our work is greatly augmented by the time, talents, and donations of others who help us in fulfilling our nurturing mission. Thank you to the many people who have assisted us this year.

Flower Delivery specialist Jean O'Brien arranged a liaison with Interfaith Community Partners whereby that group now picks up the altar floral arrangements weekly. The flowers are rearranged and given to recipients of their other services. We were unable to continue our traditional flower delivery to members due to a lack of volunteers. Jean coordinates with Janet Bednar from the Ministry of Worship on an ongoing basis. Many thanks to Janet and the Ministry of Worship for ordering the additional vases that keep the process running smoothly.

Another longstanding ministry of the Nurture Team is the weekly Sunday Fellowship Coffee Hour. Betsy Colombe coordinates this effort to ensure that volunteers have signed up to host each week and that standard supplies are available. The fellowship time after Sunday service allows for us to

interact as a church family, to share the happenings of the previous week, and to strengthen our connections.

The Nurture Team is responsible for coordinating the annual Harvest Home dinner. This year Orin and Amy Crumrine took over as kitchen leads. We are thrilled to have them on board, and the 129 attendees of the Harvest Home dinner can attest to the skills of talented chef (Orin) and pastry chef (Amy). In addition, Charlie Anderson, Ron Long, and members of the Saturday Meals Program team greatly assisted by pre-washing dishes. Thanks to the aforementioned and to the many volunteers who made the event a successful fundraiser for the youth and adult work trips. Thank you!

This year Nurture also hosted Potluck Sunday on January 28, Easter Breakfast on April 1, Dinner & Game Night on April 29, and the September 9 church picnic. We hosted several memorial receptions for church members and one for our own beloved organist Jeffrey Arnold.

Please feel free to pass on any suggestions you may have for fellowship events to a member of our team.

Amanda Ries, Chair

Members: Betsy Colombe, Gail Harris-Schmidt, Sammie Hickman, Jenny Kasnick, Jean O'Brien

REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Our church staff continues to be committed to the administration and moral leadership of the church, and we are thankful for their continued service. Please take some time to personally extend your gratitude for their service to our church.

At our Annual meeting in January, Church Council presented a budget that included the elimination of the Children and Youth Director. This budget was passed by the congregation. This decision in no way was a reflection of the quality work that Sylvia Miller had been doing on behalf of our children; it was purely an economic decision. A short time later we bade Sylvia goodbye, wishing her all the best.

Ryan Cox remains faithful in providing leadership for our varied music programs, always bringing out the best in our singers and musicians who grace us with excellent weekly music and special programs. Sadly, we experienced the loss of our organist, Jeffrey Arnold, in February after complications from an auto accident. Under Ryan's direction, an organist search team was formed and we welcomed AnnLaura Tapia to our church in August.

August brought a change in the administrative assistant team, which had been a job-sharing arrangement. We welcome Margaret Cho as our Office Assistant who oversees building sharing and special events, and supports internal and external communications. Ginger Scarborough continues on as our Office Administrator.

We thank the entire church staff for consistently going above and beyond their job descriptions to enable Carly and church leadership to more fully serve our church and the community.

Respectfully Submitted,

Your Personnel Committee

Susan Blazek, Terry Owens, Brian Shannon, Carly Stucklen Sather (Staff Liaison)

REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF PROPERTY

The Ministry followed the success of past years by facilitating repairs and maintenance to the facility as well as some upgrades.

One of the more noticeable upgrades involved the repair, sealing, and restriping of the church parking lot, which will allow for more parking spaces and reduce damage to the paving. Repairs were also made to ones of the boilers and many thermostats were replaced to provide a greater level of

comfort for staff and tenants. The Ministry gratefully accepted the donations of time and money to update the finishes in four restrooms which were in great need. Less noticeable but important has been maintenance and repairs to the building's fire alarm system.

Several of the projects undertaken were geared towards reducing energy consumption in the future. The team took advantage of a substantial grant to replace all of the lamps (i.e. light bulbs) with LED lamps, which is expected to pay itself off in just three years from the energy savings. The team has also contracted to replace the leaky windows and install insulation in the roof of the manse in January 2019 to increase comfort inside and lower the heating bill.

The Ministry conducted the annual Spring work/cleanup day and organized volunteers to clear the planting beds and spruce up the grounds. As in previous years, we were able to rely on volunteers to faithfully mow the lawn each week. Volunteers also cleared snow and salted the walks, driveway, and parking lot.

At the behest of the Church Council, the Ministry contracted to have a 15-Year look ahead for anticipated building repairs and expenses. Many of the pressing recommendations are either underway or planned for 2019, including the tuckpointing the existing masonry. The Ministry is working with the Saturday Meals Program to facilitate an overhaul of the kitchen in 2019 through a grant.

Providing a space for worship, mission, and community activities could not have taken place without so many volunteers outside the committee.

Property committee members are Erik Sander, chair; Orin Crumrine, Dick Lauterbach, and Dave Ries.

REPORT FROM THE SATURDAY MEALS PROGRAM

The Saturday Meals Program is nearing our 20th year of service to the community; the good idea which started small has over the years grown to a ministry known throughout our area for it's simple goal, to serve good meals to anyone in need.

A base crew of about 10 regular volunteers from FCCLG and beyond meet 51 Saturdays to make hot and continental breakfasts, a complete lunch with soup, salad, entree, with potatoes, several side vegetables and dessert. Plus each guest is sent off with a bag meal.

When SMP was created, our goal was to feed the homeless. We still do, but over the years the guest population has changed; we now have the working poor, people who ring you up at Walmart, seniors on fixed incomes, people who are housed, but need help making ends meet, people who need a safe warm spot to meet and socialize. In other words: Just People.

In 2018, we served over 1500 breakfasts, 2500 hot lunches, and 2000 bag meals in the Dining Room. In any week we may feed as few as 18 at breakfast or as many as 65 at lunch. We feed families, couples, singles, and everything in between. Our guests come from La Grange and beyond.

We have been graced by over 260 youth volunteers and 200 adults who help to augment our base volunteers. These volunteers come from various churches, confirmation classes, kids needing service hours, young people wanting to do something nice and giving; and from off the street because they see something happening in the Dining Room. They come from St John of the Cross, First Methodist, St Isaac, and no church at all. We partner with our sister UCC congregation, Union Church in Hinsdale, who make soup. We are an ideal location for community service hours to be fulfilled, as well as Scouting and civic groups to reach out to the community.

We work with BEDS; PILLARS, Aging Care Connections, and other local agencies. We benefit from local business owners who regularly donate food supplies including bread, produce and meats: Paneras, Marianos, and Honey Baked Ham to name a few.

We try to be good stewards of the kitchen and dining room areas. This year we funded the painting of the kitchen and a portion of the restroom remodeling. Using a grant we received in 2017,

we purchased 4 new freezers in 2018. And this year through one of our volunteers, we were connected to a philanthropic organization which asked that we write a grant for funds to be used to update and bring the kitchen into code. Several of us collaborated to write the grant, it was submitted and right now we are awaiting final word...say a prayer for their answer to be yes! SMP is working with Property and as soon as we have the answer, we can share the good news with everyone!

Again at Christmas, thanks to your generosity, we were able to provide gift bags for 51 guests. Continuing his tradition, rock musician Jim Peterik graced us with a concert. As Doris Bryant stated, "[Our guests] felt loved."

The Saturday Meals Program serves people, just people, with dignity, with good food, and with grace. You are all invited to come have a cup of coffee – and a hot meal -- and join us. This is a serious ministry, but it is also some of the most fun we have all week! Thank you to FCCLG Volunteers LuAnn, Sandy, Jerry, Claudia, Carly, Orin and Amy, Nana, Doris, and David. And all the volunteers who make this happen.

And especially thank you, First Congregational Church of La Grange.
 Charlie Anderson and Ron Long, Co-Directors
 JoAnne Konkle Volunteer Coordinator

Saturday Meals Program		
2018 Financial Report		
SMP Fund Balance 12/31/2018		\$13,734.49
SMP Income		
Income from Donations	\$3,426.91	
Transfer from Mission and Outreach	<u>\$4,500.00</u>	
Total Income		\$7,926.91
Expenses		
Food and Supplies	\$9,608.85	
Supplies	\$1,251.15	
Improvements to Kitchen/dining room	<u>\$1,814.80</u>	
Total Expenses		<u>\$12,674.80</u>
SMP Net		<u>\$8,986.60</u>
*Beginning Balance Includes a grant received in 2017 for the purchase of replacement freezers.		

REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF STEWARDSHIP

The Ministry of Stewardship is responsible for an educational effort to encourage our congregation to grow and increase its understanding of faithful stewardship of the resources that God has bestowed upon us.

During our campaign several witnesses spoke to the congregation. These witnesses talked about what the church has meant to them. Also, they talked about their happiness of being in the church and telling their story. A brochure was sent out with pictures and significant information. It also contained a colored pie chart showing a percentage of the total spending by the different ministries. This information was sent out before the congregation prepared to complete their Estimation of Giving Card.

People enjoyed attending two profitable fund-raising events of Trivia Night. Both were well organized by Mike and Amanda Ries.

All members are encouraged to be generous in supporting the church. This will help the ministry of First Congregational Church of La Grange, God's work in our Community, and the World. We will always be thankful and we will always appreciate your support of the church. Our team had another good year.

2019 Pledge Drive Results:

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total</u>
2018 Pledges	77	\$218,086.00
2019 Pledges	98	\$279,809.00
<u>2019 Breakdown</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total</u>
New Pledges	27	\$30,410.00
Increased Pledges	37	\$159,879.00
Decreased Pledges	11	\$22,820.00
No Change	23	\$66,700.00
No Pledge (pledged in 2018)	6	\$0.00
		<u>\$279,809.00</u>

Ministry of Stewardship Team: Kent Llewellyn (Chair), Ted Tomkinson, Jerry Palmer and Rev. Carly Stucklen-Sather

REPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF WORSHIP

The Ministry of Worship strives to ensure that FCCLG is a place where all people feel comfortable to come and worship God, grow in community, and spread God's love outside of our church. The Ministry of Worship members serve as lay leaders supporting the pastoral and music leaders. We continue to discover and implement ways to enrich the worship experience for all. In keeping with this goal this year, we have assisted with Word for All Ages, worked with Pastor Carly incorporating confirmation students into worship service responsibilities, helped facilitate the Thanksgiving Ecumenical service, as well as planning and implementing Christ the King Sunday service. This year also saw the first "come and build the altar" for World Communion Sunday.

Ministry of Worship Responsibilities

Altar Flowers	Plymouth Place bulletin delivery
Greeters	Liturgists
Ushers	Offertory Collection
Candles	Paraments
Communion Preparation	Organ Tuning and Maintenance
Worship Decorations	
Special services throughout the year	

Music Ministry

The music ministry at FCCLG continues to flourish under the direction of Ryan Cox. Please see Ryan's report for details.

Janet Bednar, Chair (Altar Flowers)

Ministry of Worship Members: Lex Bart (ad hoc), Mary Cooper (Head Usher), Ryan Cox (Staff), Bob Klestil (Communion), Jean Tomkinson (Greeters & Liturgists), Tom Pitman (Paraments)

REPORT FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Thank you very much to those who served in ministry positions in 2018, and welcome to the new members who are stepping up for 2019. We rely on the congregation to staff the ministries and committees. We have several open positions to fill for 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Tobin, Chairperson

NOMINATION SLATE-JANUARY 20, 2019

*Indicates a renewing member.

	<u>Term ends</u>
Moderator Michael Ries	2019
Vice Moderator Rene Bryant	2019
Past Moderator Doris Bryant	2019
Members at Large Erik Toman	2021
Historian JoAnne Konkle	2020
Volunteer Coordinator Kerri Mummert	2021
<u>Nominating Committee</u>	
Open	2020
Open	2021
<u>Personnel Committee</u>	
Open	2021
<u>Property Committee</u>	
David Watts	2021
Peter VanKempen	2021
<u>Stewardship Committee</u>	
Open	2018
Open	2020
Open	2021
<u>Ministry of Communications</u>	
Julia Cunningham	2021
Madeline Merker	2020
<u>Ministry of Education</u>	
Amy Crumrine	2019
Nancy Sander*	2021
Chrissy Toman#(completing the term of another)	2020
<u>Ministry of Membership</u>	
Open	2021
Petra Palmer*	2021
Sherri Ries*	2021
Open# (completing the term of another)	2020
<u>Ministry of Mission</u>	
Nancy Heil*	2021
Linda Lauterbach*	2021
Bobbie Nunez*	2021
Laurie Braun*	2021
<u>Ministry of Nurture</u>	
Angela Harrison (completing the term of another)	2020
Elizabeth Colombe*	2021

2018 FINANCIALS AND 2019 BUDGET

Budget Committee, Church Council

2019 Proposed Budget				
2018 Financial Report				
Account Number	Account Name	2018 Budget	2018 Actual	Proposed 2019
<u>Income</u>				
4.1001	Church School Offering	\$400.00	\$150.57	\$300.00
4.1005	Contractual Property Sharing	\$42,000.00	52,024.53	\$39,483.71
4.1011	Endowment Income		In Transfers	In Transfers
4.1015	Event Receipts	\$600.00	\$7,067.50	\$5,000.00
4.1021	Fund Raising Events	\$3,500.00	1,614.40	\$3,000.00
4.1025	Investment Income - General Fund	\$25.00	-\$7,489.44	\$0.00
4.1031	Loose offering	\$3,400.00	\$4,982.80	\$5,500.00
4.1035	Miscellaneous Income	\$200.00	\$2,631.00	\$0.00
4.1042	Money Market Income	\$0.00	\$9,435.30	\$0.00
4.1045	Pledges-Prior Year	\$0.00	\$360.00	\$0.00
4.1051	Pledges Received	\$265,000.00	\$247,658.92	\$279,809.00
4.1055	Unpledged Contributions	\$30,000.00	\$47,008.45	\$30,000.00
Total Income		<u>345,125.00</u>	<u>365,444.03</u>	<u>363,092.71</u>
<u>Expense</u>				
5.1001	General Administration	22,610.00	\$21,627.32	\$22,610.00
5.2001	General Personnel	220,783.00	\$211,656.41	\$220,783.00
5.3001	General Property	91,556.64	\$109,235.18	\$114,755.00
5.4001	Ministry of Communications	1,275.00	\$414.46	\$1,340.00
5.5001	Ministry of Education	3,400.00	\$4,736.52	\$3,600.00
5.6001	Ministry of Membership	425.00	\$472.73	\$500.00
5.7001	Ministry of Missions	40,010.68	\$39,607.15	\$34,516.07
5.8001	Ministry of Nurture	1,063.00	\$876.55	\$1,200.00
5.9001	Ministry of Stewardship	485.00	\$464.84	\$500.00
6.1001	Ministry of Worship	<u>6,035.00</u>	\$5,614.33	<u>\$7,450.00</u>
Total Expense		<u>387,643.32</u>	<u>394,705.49</u>	<u>407,254.07</u>
Transfers	From Conservatory Fund	\$13,500.00	13,500.00	\$14,850.00
	From Endowment Allowance		<u>29836.03</u>	<u>\$30,122.90</u>
Total Transfers			<u>\$43,336.03</u>	<u>\$44,972.90</u>
Net Income (Loss)			<u>14,074.57</u>	<u>811.54</u>

Notes:

1. Pledges Received are not an estimate; this is what we received as of 1/2/2019 in 2019 pledges.
2. First Conservatory contributes to the general fund is 38% of the amount paid by our tenants and is in addition to the income from tenants. It cannot be put into the rental amounts because it is a transfer of funds within our organization and not from a separate entity.
3. The line item next to Ministry of Missions includes the SMP number as well as the calculated figure. See the details of this calculation below.
4. Event Revenue assumes a 10% Increase on all non-member fees and contracts. It assumes 4 Non Member weddings, and 4 Non Member Events.
5. See computations of Endowment Allowance, Mission Team Budget, and Contractual Property Sharing below:

Transfer from Endowment Computation

Date	1/1 Principle Balance	Deposits	12/31 Balance less cash deposits	12/31 Balance
2016	\$880,787.73		\$965,439.88	\$965,439.88
2017	\$965,439.88		\$1,042,753.60	\$1,042,753.60
2018	\$1,042,753.60		\$993,690.00	\$993,690.00
Three Year Average				\$1,004,096.74
Spendable as transfer		3.00%	2019	<u>\$30,122.90</u>

Contractual Property Sharing Computation

D105	7 months @ \$3014.93	\$21,104.51
IAFCC	6/30 Renewal	\$4,347.00
Galaxy	6/31 Renewal	\$1,000.00
TEACH	10/31 Renewal	\$7,332.20
KinderMuzik	Renewal 2/2019	\$900.00
Tiny Toes	Renewal Overdue	\$900.00
Spiritual Directors and 12 Step Groups		\$3,900.00
Total Contracts		<u>\$39,483.71</u>

Missions Computation

Church School Offering	\$150.57
Loose Offering	\$4,982.80
Pledges Prior Year	\$360.00
Pledges Received	\$247,658.92
Unpledged Income	\$47,008.45
	<u>\$300,160.74</u>
10%	\$30,016.07
Saturday Meals	<u>\$4,500.00</u>
Total Missions	<u>\$34,516.07</u>

STATEMENT OF MISSION

As people of the First Congregational Church of La Grange, both individually and collectively, we declare our mission to be as follows:

To love, worship, and serve God.

To increase our awareness of and thankfulness to God.

To become more sensitive to the needs of our local and worldwide neighbors and to strengthen our commitment to help meet these needs.

To grow in Christian love and fellowship and in our living of the ways taught by Jesus.

To educate and nurture children, youth, and adults in the heritage and application of the Christian faith.

To encourage others to share our pilgrimage of faith and to adopt this Statement of Mission as a guide for their lives.

OPEN AND AFFIRMING STATEMENT

Adopted by First Congregational Church of La Grange on May 16, 1999

We, the members of First Congregational Church of La Grange, affirm our regard for the worth and dignity of all persons as beloved children of God.

We welcome persons of diverse racial and ethnic heritage, socioeconomic circumstance, gender, age, physical and mental ability, marital status, faith perspective, and sexual orientation to join our congregation and participate fully in its life and ministry.

We condemn all acts of discrimination and violence, and advocate in word and deed for justice and inclusiveness.

We welcome all families, traditional and nontraditional, as they strive to function within principles of love, justice, faith, and commitment.

We join together to celebrate our common life as children of God and to serve a hurting world.