



# THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church of Christ, 36 Main Street, New Milford, CT

## 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes

Sunday, May 21, 2023

1. **Welcome** – Leslie Schlemmer, Council Chair, welcomed all at 11:08 am.
2. **Opening Prayer** – Reverend Dave Buchan offered a prayer for the meeting.
3. **Summary of 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes** – Recording Secretary, Joan Vill, summarized the 2023 Annual Meeting minutes. A motion to approve the minutes was presented by Jeff Gammonds and seconded by Jeff Vill. The minutes were approved based on in person and on-line ballot results: 37 yes 0 no
4. The question brought up by the two dissenting votes regarding the Teams list involves nonmembers as Team members.
5. **Deacon Update** – Head Deacon, Sharon Millard, provided an explanation of the role of Intentional Interim Minister for the congregation.

“The way a congregation chooses to use its interim time will shape congregational growth, identity, and health. The interim time provides an opportunity for a congregation to clearly answer the questions: “Who are we?” And “Who is God calling us to be in the future?” To openly and candidly address these questions, a church is best served by the assistance of an Intentional Interim Minister.

An intentional interim minister helps a church discover where God is leading them and how to prepare themselves for their next settled pastor. In this process, the Intentional Interim Minister helps the church self-evaluate and determine what they are looking for in a settled pastor. An Intentional Interim Minister isn’t there to maintain the status quo, but to guide the church in addressing their issues and making changes where they are needed.”

6. **Investment Update** – Dave Elmore presented an update on the Investment funds, The (5) accounts are up a few percent which the committee feels is positive given the unsettled environment. Dave shared possible ideas for using the generous “undesignated” bequest money from Charlotte Bostwick: music, possibly outreach, or the Investment Fund to use earnings for future needs. No questions were received from the congregation.
7. **Stewardship Update** – Mike Curley and Jon Case provided the Stewardship update. At 52 pledge units (~\$123K) for 2023, we’re in “pretty good shape”. Members were reminded to sign-up for iGive, a similar service that will make contributions to designated charities based on goods purchased through the site. No questions were received from the congregation.

**8. Ad Hoc Lift Update** – John Wittmann provided received to fix the lift (aka elevator).

- Our best efforts to remove the existing lift with a group of church volunteers has failed.
  - We discovered that the steel superstructure is all one piece and not in segments as we had hoped
  - We couldn't identify a way to unbolt it and get it through the door to the lift
  - We also believe that the lift was installed and then the wall with the door to the lift was constructed afterwards
  - So we reluctantly gave up and I called the company who will be installing the new lift to ask them to reinstate the removal option on our contract
  - That additional cost is \$5,000 and we have that well worth it expense covered
  - Bullock Access, the lift company, has filed with the State of Connecticut for the necessary permits to replace our lift. While the state inspects elevators and not lifts the permit process is still necessary to notify the state of our intentions
  - Our local building department has jurisdiction over lift inspections so we'll file with them
  - Once the state permit is in Bullock's possession, they will order our custom-made lift
  - The lift has to be fabricated to fit our existing shaft
  - Our existing doors will be reused and door assist mechanisms will be installed to help them open easily
  - The malfunctioning door locking mechanisms will be replaced as those are one of the many reasons why the lift is out of service
  - Lift company owner Cliff Bullock will be coming back to re-measure for the new lift to be absolutely certain of the dimensions
  - When he's here we'll meet with the demolition company that will be cutting up and removing the old lift
  - The existing plan of having the new lift ready for our November public event is still a go and I'll be updating you along the way similarly like I did for the roof project
  - One last item remains to make Fellowship Hall ADA friendly albeit once the lift is replaced it is extensively ADA compliant
  - Bathroom automatic door openers can be installed, similar to push buttons or bars you'll see in public places on main doors and bathrooms
  - The cost 3 years ago was approximately \$3,500 from our contractor Eagle Electric.
- There is not a definite timeline yet, but trying to have the lift complete for the November church event.

**9. Presentation of 2023 Nominations** – Leslie Schlemmer presented the slate of nominees for 2023. A motion to approve the slate was raised by Jan Wittmann and seconded by Jeff Gammonds. The slate of nominees was approved. The minutes were approved based on in person and on-line ballot results: 35 yes 2 no

**10. Old Business** – None

**11. New Business** – None

**12. Adjourn** – Motion to adjourn Jeff Gammonds, second Dave Eherts at 11:17 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Vill, Recording Secretary