

David W. Ross

**ANNUAL REPORT
2005**

**The Congregational Church of Austin
408 West 23rd Street
Austin, Texas 78705-5214**

**Brazos Association
South Central Conference
United Church of Christ**

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AGENDA
The Congregational Church of Austin, A United Church of Christ
Annual Meeting, January 29, 2006. 1:00 p.m.

Items in **Bold** will be discussed and voted upon. Other items **may** be discussed if members of the congregation have questions of general interest.

Call to Order Carol D. Barrett, Moderator

Invocation Rev. Tom VandeStadt

Minutes of the 2005 Annual Meeting Sharon Brown, Clerk

Minutes of the Congregational Meetings in 2005 Sharon Brown, Clerk

Reports Rev. Tom VandeStadt
 Pastor Lynne Lemley
 Financial Secretary Sharon Brown
 Clerk David Ross
 Treasurer

Presentation and Adoption of Budget for 2006

Consideration of request to amend line item for seminary support in 2005 budget

*to \$300 for seminary support.
 + \$200
 Fran Briggs*

Reports of Boards and Committees

Coordinating Council Board of Christian Education Board of Deacons Board of Trustees Mission Outreach Stewardship and Enrollment Nominating Committee Centennial Committee	Carol Barrett Jennifer Howicz Liz Nash Pam Tucker John Goff Dennis Murphy/Sara Ross Doyal Pinkard Don Brown
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"calling the question" Roberts

Action on Recommendations of the Nominating Comm. Doyal Pinkard

Action on Recommendations from the Deacons to amend the by-laws regarding procedures for receiving new members into the Congregation and Report on recommendations for identifying out-of-area members for purposes of achieving a quorum

- Torture declaration
 Adjournment

How receipts of new members recorded & reported on?

Benediction - Blessed Be the Tie That Binds - First Verse #393 (black) All

- Worship time

The Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ
Minutes of the Annual Meeting, January 30, 2005

Moderator Carol Barrett called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. She announced that members should feel free to ask questions about the reports, and she asked that anyone who makes a motion identify himself.

Reverend Tom VandeStadt gave the invocation.

Tom introduced the two UCC commercials that are part of the "God is still speaking" program and said the goal was to present in 30 seconds the most powerful message that viewers would remember. The members applauded after seeing the commercials.

Minutes of the 2004 annual meeting and the 2004 congregational meetings.

Because there were no questions or corrections, the minutes of the 2004 annual meeting and 2004 congregational meetings were accepted.

Reports

Pastor. Tom said that he has a covenant relationship with the boards; he gives and receives guidance and it works well.

Reports from the financial secretary, clerk, and treasurer were accepted.

Presentation and Adoption of Budget for 2004.

David Ross reported that large donations in December left us in better financial shape for 2004 than had been anticipated. The proposal for 2005 is \$184,759, which is a \$6139 increase over 2004. He offered his thanks to his committee and moved the acceptance of the budget.

In response to a question, David said that the items that were scaled back from the initial budget proposal were the minister's salary (7% to 6%), contribution to OCWM, property maintenance, seminary support, and various board items. The figure for the minister's salary is a total, from which Tom will decide amounts to be designated for salary, housing, continuing education, and other items.

Fran Briggs questioned the reduction of seminary support, because the national church does not support seminaries. UCC recommends that 2% of each local budget be given, but that is too large. She described seminaries as the future of the church. Fran moved that, after the budget is balanced at the end of the year, any additional funds be first considered for seminary support. Liz Nash seconded the motion and it passed.

Tommie Pinkard asked about rental income. David explained that, as written on page 18 of the 2004 Annual Report, \$500 per month of rental income goes into the Capital Fund, with the proviso that up to this amount may be transferred back if needed to cover general expenses.

As presented and amended, the budget proposal passed.

Reports of Boards and Committees

The reports from the Coordinating Council, Board of Christian Education, Board of Deacons, Board of Trustees, Christian Outreach, Stewardship Committee, and the Nominating Committee elicited no questions.

Centennial Project Committee

Don Brown described the scope of the new Centennial Project Committee as providing vertical accessibility to all levels of our facility and horizontal accessibility, meaning smooth, safe access—including bathrooms. The committee met with Evan Taniguchi, an Austin architect who is donating his time to help the committee think about exciting possibilities, such as expanding rental space to support CCA's mission.

Nominating Committee.

Doyal Pinkard reported that publicity is now the Deacons' responsibility. The Nominating Committee plans to work with the Coordinating Council to lower the number of officers in Congregational Church of Austin positions. Doyal reported that John Drachenberg is now acting Brazos Association Minister, and Tom will serve as the church representative to the association.

For the Stewardship Committee Lynn Lemley said she will be the third member. Dennis Murphy thought his term on the Stewardship Committee was completed. Carol suggested that the committee meet and agree on its composition.

In response to a question, Doyal noted that Reuel Nash, who is filling Richard Jackson's unexpired term on the trustees, has not yet been elected and is included in the slate to be voted on.

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Doyal moved that their report be accepted. The members voted acceptance.

Vic Appel requested that, in addition to reducing the number of board members, the committee think of ways to increase the number of candidates. Carol said that the Coordinating Council will share the responsibility and report to the membership.

Open and Affirming Committee – Adoption of Statement.

John Burlinson reminded the members of the assignment from the last annual meeting that our church study and reflect on becoming open and affirming and that the committee present an agreed upon open and affirming statement. The committee polled members at a congregational meeting and asked for questions. They held four forums on these issues: gay and lesbian experiences, scriptural consideration concerning homosexuality, medical and psychological aspects of sexuality, and the expectations and consequences for our adoption of the following opening and affirming statement.

Our Vision Statement best describes us:

“We are a people united in Christ,
Singing God's praises,
Seeking God's ways,
Serving God's world,
And sharing life's journey.”

We are open to any who wish to join with us on our pilgrimage and we affirm that ALL persons, of every age, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, status or background, are welcome to participate with us in any and all ways that are in keeping with the spirit of our Vision Statement.

No financial or time commitment is currently attached to this decision. This is not an amendment to our constitution or bylaws but makes a statement that we hope will enlarge the pool of potential members.

In response to a question from the congregation, Carol confirmed that voting on the Open and Affirming Statement would be by members only. The clerk and moderator counted the ballots, which totaled 51 "YES" and 1 "NO." The open and affirming statement passed.

After a motion by Pat Oakes, the meeting was adjourned at 1:40 p.m. The members joined hands and sang "Blest Be the Tie that Binds."

Sharon Brown, Clerk, January 30, 2005.

Minutes of Congregational Meetings 2005

**The Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ
Minutes of the Congregational Meeting, January 23, 2005**

Deacons chair Liz Nash called the meeting to order.

The purpose of the meeting was a vote of affirmation of new members. She introduced Ellie Nash and Becca Zwerling.

As recommended by the Board of Deacons, the voice vote of affirmation joyfully confirmed their membership.

Sharon Brown, Clerk, January 23, 2005.

Congregational Meeting, June 5, 2005

Minutes

Moderator Carol Barrett brought the congregational meeting to order immediately following the Sunday worship service on June 5, 2005. She called on Doyal Pinkard to report for the Nominations Committee on their recommendation for the church delegate to the South Central Conference meeting in Austin June 10-12, 2005. Doyal reported the committee recommended that Lois Drachenberg be elected the church delegate, and he so moved. Paul Deisler seconded the motion. Motion was carried.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned.

Tommie Pinkard, acting clerk.

**The Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ
Minutes of the Congregational Meeting, October 16, 2005**

Moderator Carol Barrett called the meeting to order.

The purpose of the meeting was a vote of affirmation of new members. Liz Nash, chair of Deacons, introduced them: Jesse and Lolita Binford, Lincoln and Nancy Binford, Nancy Edison, Cara and Jim Firestone, Will Heimbach, and Brent Malcus.

As recommended by the Board of Deacons, Carol Barrett called for a voice vote, and the members were affirmed with a resounding "Welcome and amen."

Sharon Brown, Clerk, October 16, 2005.

PASTOR'S REPORT

For the past several years, the Coordinating Council has performed an evaluation of my ministry by asking me to submit a self-evaluation of those areas of my ministry highlighted below. The members of the Coordinating Council also evaluate those areas of ministry, compare their evaluation with mine, and then discuss the results with me. This has been a very helpful exercise for me, and I thank the Coordinating Committee for taking the time to conduct these annual evaluations.

This year, for my 2005 Pastor's Report, I submit to you a slightly revised version of my 2005 self-evaluation. I revised it by changing the verb tense in some sentences, updating a few things, and occasionally inserting the phrase, "In 2005." I believe this self-evaluation is an accurate report on my ministry with the Congregational Church of Austin UCC in 2005.

VISION LEADERSHIP

In 2005, I made a concerted effort to help the church envision its place and purpose in God's creation. In my preaching, newsletter articles, and general ministry, I articulated a consistent message based on my reading of the Biblical drama and my encounters with traditional and contemporary Christian theology. Whether I was successful in communicating my vision to the church and whether you share this vision is something you must reflect on and evaluate yourself by asking whether you can identify key elements of the vision I communicated and whether you share it.

One purpose for articulating my own vision and sense of purpose is to encourage church members to reflect on their own visions for their lives and their church. I don't expect everyone in our church to share my vision, but I do expect everyone to have a vision and sense of purpose for their lives and the church, one that is in some way consistent with the Biblical drama, Christian traditions, and contemporary Christian practice.

I strongly believe with Alisdair MacIntyre that "I can only answer the question 'What am I to do?' if I can answer the prior question 'Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?'" This has been the foundation of my vision leadership since I have been in Austin: articulating the story to which I see myself and the church belonging and participating, and encouraging you to discover your personal stories and your church's story within the larger story of God's creation and the Christian church's calling.

PASTORAL CARE

In 2005, I visited a number of people when they were in the hospital or rehabilitation facility, or when they were suffering lengthy illnesses at home. I also met with folks often for lunch or coffee when they were dealing with health issues or some other stressful situation in their lives. I do not consider pastoral care to be the strongest suit in my ministry. Clergy who feel called to a chaplain or counseling model of ministry spend a great deal of time visiting folks at home and making regular hospital and nursing home rounds. Because my calling is more towards the outreach side of ministry, I focused more of my attention in that direction, though I did attend to pastoral care needs when they arose. I want to thank our Pastor Emeritus, Rev. John Towery, for continuing to provide pastoral care to some of our elder members, and Rev. Liz Spencer, who provided pastoral care several times in my absence.

WORSHIP

In the past year, I believe my worship style balanced informality and formality in ways that were suitable to our church and attractive to some visitors. In the worship bulletins, I avoided churchy-sounding language and theological clichés, and I attempted to write prayers and liturgies in contemporary language that reflected what our membership affirms, questions, and/or struggles with in its faith and ministry.

Sermon writing was an on-going challenge for me. In my preparation, I found myself delving into the meaning (or levels of meaning) of the text, but then having a difficult time finding a suitable way of sharing these meanings with the congregation. Unlike many preachers, I use very few sermon illustrations like stories, jokes, or poems. I typically engaged one of the scripture passages, unpacked its language and historical/cultural context, and then basically said, "this is what I think it means and this is how I think it applies to the contemporary church." Throughout the year, I found myself asking whether preaching itself is highly over-rated, and I often wondered how much impact my preaching (or anyone else's) actually has on people's lives.

SUPERVISION-MANAGEMENT

Throughout the year, I supervised our church's Administrative Assistant and Custodian, and I provided the Coordinating Council with evaluations of their job performance. In reflecting on my style of supervision and management, I discovered that it reflects the two sports I have most enjoyed in my life—cross-country running and cycling. Both are highly individualistic yet both demand a commitment to the team or cycling group. In both, I try as hard as I can to do my best so I can improve myself and contribute to the team or cycling group's performance. I expect all the others in the team or group to do the same. When they work hard, they earn my respect. When they don't, I feel let down yet uncomfortable confronting them on their performance. In other words, I expect people to do the best they can, and a situation has to become critical before I'll respond to a staff person's poor performance, as I finally had to this past year with our former custodian.

RECRUITMENT-EVANGELISM

Throughout the year, I worked with the Deacons and Coordinating Council to improve our church's evangelism and membership recruitment. We placed a monthly add in the Austin-American Statesman with three other Austin-area UCC churches, sent postcards to people who have recently moved to Austin, purchased a large UCC banner that went up outside our church, and tried to improve our welcoming ministry. We also purchased a banner instructing people where to park on Sundays, and we met with UT Coop Director, George Mitchell, to discuss possibilities for parking in the Coop's new garage. I made a concerted effort to get to know visitors, and at times took them out to lunch or coffee.

Our church also received some media publicity this past year in the Austin-American Statesman and the Austin Chronicle with Letters to the Editor and articles about the UCC's Open and Affirming stand and our church's participation in the Religion and Labor Network of Austin.

SPIRITUAL/EDUCATION RENEWAL

My continuing education came primarily through reading and attending several local conferences and workshops. I also learned by teaching the Adult Education Bible Study on Sunday mornings, and by leading the Adult Ed. Series on the Sabbath.

LINKAGE TO OTHER RELIGIOUS AND SERVICE ENTITIES

Throughout the past year, I maintained traditional linkages and formed new ones through my outreach ministry. In 2005, Texas Impact and Planned Parenthood hosted public events at our church. Our church co-sponsored and sent participants to the Gay Pride Worship Service, the Texas Freedom Network event in October, and the Central Texas Immigrant Worker Rights Center Anniversary in November.

Through my work with the Religion and Labor Network of Austin, I formed linkages between our church, the Equal Justice Center, and the Central Texas Immigrant Worker Rights Center. Through my work with the RLNA, I helped plan a public event on the UT campus on Moral Values and Politics in which Whit Bodman and I were panelists. I also secured a United Church of Christ Justice Witness Ministry grant (funded by the Neighbors in Need offering) for the Religion and Labor Network.

I maintained good relations with the LifeWorks Street Outreach Program, and I hosted several meetings between LifeWorks, the Renaissance Market vendors, the Austin police department, and the Austin District Attorney's office. I also maintained good relations with the University-area Micah 6 churches and Austin-Area Interreligious Ministries by participating in events sponsored by both organizations.

I maintained very close relationships with the Brazos Association and the South Central Conference. I served as Moderator of the Brazos Association until April of this year, served on the Conference Annual Meeting Planning Committee, and currently serve on an Association task force to revitalize mission outreach in UCC churches. I have formed a good working relationship with the UCC Justice Witness ministries through my on-going correspondence with Edie Rasell, the UCC's Minister for Economic and Workplace Justice.

In a final note to my Report this year, I'd like to thank each and every one of you for the privilege of serving as your pastor. I truly love being the pastor of the Congregational Church of Austin UCC, and I love the ministry that I share with you.

Let's have a faithful and exciting 2006!

Rev. Tom VandeStadt

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT 01/01/05-12/31/05

2005 INFLOWS

Budget-General Fund	
Pledged income for 2005	\$116,959.00
Prepaid 2006 pledging by transferred stock	13,752.75
Non-pledged	14,841.00
Loose plate	3,718.12
Rental income	
Lifeworks—rent	23,800.00
Reformed University Fellowship—rent	2,900.00
McNeely Fund/United Church Foundation	527.46
Miscellaneous	
Safeway/Randall's Good Neighbor	150.04
Back Bay expenses reimbursement	15.00
GE Capital class action suit	<u>9.07</u>
TOTAL—Budget-General Fund	\$176,672.44
Designated income(Local)	
Stained glass window renovation fund	5,000.00
Huston Tillotson Student Fund	2,293.00
Stoves	654.87
Christmas dinner	380.00
Memorials	200.00
Deacons' Memorial Fund	387.00
Front Porch Ministry	260.00
Spring retreat	979.00
Sanctuary Flowers	451.00
American Statesman ads	466.00
Micah 6	<u>120.00</u>
TOTAL—Designated Income(Local)	\$11,190.87
Designated Income(Outreach)	
Tsunami/Hurricane relief	6,725.00
Health Kits for Katrina	101.00
Neighbors in Need	720.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	695.00
Strengthen the Church	275.00
Equal Exchange coffee/chocolate	2,085.00
Back Bay Bike Trip	1,960.00
Back Bay Summer Working Trip	727.00
Christmas Fund(Veterans of the Cross)	800.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	1,392.00
400 Voices	215.00
Palestine Sponsor a Child	<u>382.00</u>
TOTAL—Designated Income(Outreach)	\$16,077.00
2005 TOTAL INFLOWS	\$203,940.31

Income report 2005

Notice that the General Fund income for 2005 was \$176,672.44, which includes 2006 pledge prepayments of \$13,752.75. In 2005, we received \$26,700.00 in rental income (this doesn't include utility/deposit amounts). Note that people have given very generously toward the tsunami and hurricane relief efforts. Of the \$145,181.25 pledged for 2005, we have collected \$138,451.26. This leaves a deficit of \$6,729.99, which I am still in the process of investigating and attempting to resolve. As ever, a few units actually gave a little more than they pledged; this is truly appreciated.

Estimated income 2006

For 2006 pledging, I have now received 46 pledges which total \$166,198.00—an increase of 16 pledge units over 2005! Thank you again! Of this increase in pledge units, 11 are brand new pledgers, and 5 represent a switching of units from the 2005 non-pledging list over to the 2006 pledging list. Consequently, the 2006 non-pledged income should be lower than 2005's amount. Of the 2005 pledging units, 15 units raised their pledge amounts for 2006 to give a total increase of \$6,500. We may see a little over 10% decrease in rental income for 2006 since Reformed University Fellowship has found another place to meet.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynne R. Lemley

January 21, 2006

Clerk's Report — Vital Statistics/Membership 2005

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP, AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2004 **125**

Received 2005 by affirmation of faith or letter of transfer:

**JESSE BINFORD
LOLITA BINFORD
LINCOLN BINFORD
NANCY BINFORD
NANCY EDISON
CARA FIRESTONE
JIM FIRESTONE
WILL HEIMBACH
BRENT MALKUS
ELLIE NASH
BECCA ZWERLING**

TOTAL ADDITIONS 2005 **11**

LOSSES 2005:

JAMES TOMASEK

TOTAL LOSSES 2005 **1**

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP, AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2005 **135**

Marriages:

Funerals and memorial services:

**JAMES TOMASEK
BEE HARRIS POLOME
GEORGE WRIGHT**

Sharon Brown, Clerk, December 31, 2005

TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT
December 31, 2005
David W. Ross

Summary of local budget income and expenses

Income to local budget	\$172,445
Bank of America Interest	\$42
General Fund accrual in Ed Jones & UC Foundation	\$348
Less 2005 local budget expenditures (4 th page)	<u>(\$176,993)</u>
Local budget difference (deficit)	(\$4,158)

These figures are on a cash flow basis, assuming all pledge receipts and expenditures are counted in the year they are received or paid. Prepaid 2006 pledges received in December 2005 account for the some of the income. While we ran a deficit in local expenses of nearly \$4,000, we began the year with a surplus in the general account of more than \$22,000, owing to exceptionally large donations in December 2004. Local income includes checking account interest.

The local budget expenditure of \$176,957 is 96% of the 2005 budget (4th page).

Summary of account status

During the year we transferred our investment accounts from Edward Jones to the United Church Foundation. (The 2004 figures include some corrections from last year's report.)

	12/31/05	12/31/04	difference
CHECKING ACCOUNT	\$27,252	\$44,923	(\$17,671)
General Fund	\$6,216	\$17,891	(\$11,309)
Capital Fund	\$4,924	\$7,891	(\$2,967)
Memorial Fund	\$181	\$525	(\$344)
Pass through items	\$15,931	\$18,983	(\$3,052)

Changes include transfers among the funds - compensated in Edward Jones accounts. The largest pass-through item, \$7,975, is the Sanctuary Windows Fund.

TOTALS (Checking and Edward Jones accounts):

General Fund total	\$18,263	\$22,463	(\$4,200)
Capital Fund total	\$59,216	\$47,236	\$11,980
Memorial Fund total	\$8,519	\$8,367	\$153
Organ Fund	\$5,050	\$4,689	\$361
McNeely total	34,615	30,277	4,338

TOTAL ASSETS (Checking, UC Foundation (formerly Edward Jones), and McNeely funds)

\$141,594	\$132,014	\$9,580
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Changes include substantial appreciation of Edward Jones and UC Foundation funds.

- 2nd page: **Status of accounts details**
3rd-4th pages: **Status of budgeted expenditures details**
4th page: **Pass-through items**

**CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

	Current 31 Dec 05	Previous 31 Dec 04	Change
Assets			
Bank of America			
Checking Account	\$27,251.96	\$44,923.48	(\$17,671.52)
* General Fund	6,215.69	17,524.48	(11,308.79)
* Capital Fund	4,924.30	7,891.30	(2,967.00)
Centennial Fund	1,081.58	1,081.58	0.00
Memorial Fund	181.12	525.00	(343.88)
Deacons' Emergency Fund	2,486.64	2,961.64	(475.00)
Border Ministries	0.00	100.00	(100.00)
Sanctuary flowers	434.63	223.63	211.00
Christmas Fund	390.00	50.00	340.00
Strengthen the Church	0.00	(25.00)	25.00
Micah 6 concert proceeds	399.00	279.00	120.00
Christmas dinner	294.65	35.91	258.74
Palestinian Child fund	361.95	280.00	81.95
Windows	7,905.00	12,100.00	(4,195.00)
Front Porch	177.40	0.00	177.40
Deacons' Memorial Fund	312.00	0.00	312.00
Back Bay bike trip	30.00	0.00	30.00
Equal Exchange	(42.00)	(204.06)	162.06
Lifeworks security deposit	2,100.00	2,100.00	0.00
CD (McNeely Estate)	\$2,886.82	\$2,815.32	\$71.50
Wells Fargo Bank			
CD (McNeely Estate)	\$8,387.74	\$7,324.91	\$1,062.83
United Church Foundation			
McNeely Account	\$23,340.47	\$20,136.74	\$3,203.73
Capital, Memorial & Organ Fund (formerly Ed Jones)	\$79,727.12	\$56,813.87	\$22,913.25
* General Fund	12,047.11	4,938.71	7,108.40
* Capital Fund	54,292.08	39,344.25	14,947.84
Memorial Fund	8,338.34	7,841.83	496.51
Organ Fund)	5,049.59	4,689.08	360.50
General fund total	\$18,262.80	\$22,463.19	(\$4,200.39)
Capital fund total	\$59,216.38	\$47,235.55	\$11,980.84
Memorial fund total	\$8,519.46	\$8,366.83	\$152.63
Organ fund total	\$5,049.59	\$4,689.08	\$360.50
McNeely Fund total	\$34,615.03	\$30,276.97	\$4,338.06
Miscellaneous (pass through) total	\$15,930.85	\$18,982.70	(\$3,051.85)
Total Assets	\$141,594.11	\$132,014.32	\$9,579.79

*Some switching between checking and UC Foundation in the Capital and General accounts has been done.

**CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN
2005 BUDGET vs. EXPENSES**

	Budget	Spent	Difference	Ratio
Pastoral Leadership - Tom VandeStadt				
10 Salary	\$39,019.04	\$39,018.96	\$0.08	1.00
11 Annuity	8,962.67	9,089.19	(126.52)	1.01
12 Health Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00	
13 Family Protection	960.29	973.86	(13.57)	1.01
14 Continuing Education	424.00	424.00	0.00	1.00
15 Housing Allowance	25,000.00	25,000.06	(0.06)	1.00
16 Travel Expenses	1,058.00	1,058.00	0.00	1.00
Pastoral Leadership - Subtotal	\$75,424.00	\$75,564.07	(\$140.07)	1.00
Cooperative Responsibilities				
21 Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)	12,900.00	12,900.00	0.00	1.00
22 Austin Area Interreligious Ministries	600.00	600.00	0.00	1.00
23 Brazos Association Dues	504.00	540.00	(36.00)	0.99
24 Texas Conference of Churches	30.00	30.00	0.00	1.00
25 National Council of Churches	15.00	15.00	0.00	1.00
26 World Council of Churches	15.00	15.00	0.00	1.00
27 Regional Seminary Support	100.00	100.00	0.00	1.00
29 Back Bay Mission	500.00	500.00	0.00	1.00
30 Slumber Falls Camp	200.00	200.00	0.00	1.00
32 Huston-Tillotson College	500.00	500.00	0.00	1.00
33 University Area Partners	100.00	100.00	0.00	1.00
34 Texas Impact	100.00	100.00	0.00	1.00
35 Religious Coalition for the Homeless	250.00	303.84	(53.84)	1.22
36 Micah 6	2,500.00	2,496.00	4.00	1.01
37 Mission Outreach - freeze night staff	1,200.00	516.73	683.27	0.43
38 Religion labor network	500	500	0.00	1.00
Cooperative Responsibilities: Subtotal	\$20,014.00	\$19,416.57	\$597.43	0.97
Local Church Programs				
41 Pastor's Discretionary Fund	200.00	200.00	0.00	1.00
42 Secretary - Salary	13,388.00	13,387.94	0.06	1.00
43 Secretary - FICA & Medicare	1,024.18	1,024.10	0.08	1.00
44 Music for Worship	400.00	122.45	277.55	0.31
45 Musicians	9,000.00	8,600.00	400.00	0.96
46 Choral Director - Salary	5,733.00	5,733.00	0.00	1.00
47 Choral Director - FICA & Medicare	438.57	438.56	0.01	1.00
48 Christian Education	2,000.00	794.92	1,205.08	0.40
50 Office Supplies	3,600.00	3,011.71	588.29	0.84
51 Postage	800.00	382.56	417.44	0.48
53 Electricity & Water	12,500.00	11,004.59	1,495.41	0.88
54 Gas	2,500.00	1,389.33	1,110.67	0.56
55 Telephone	3,500.00	3,156.84	343.16	0.90
57 Property Maintenance	8,000.00	7,515.22	484.78	0.94
58 Janitorial Supplies	500.00	607.99	(107.99)	1.22
59 Janitor - Salary	11,680.00	11,197.66	482.34	0.96
60 Janitor - FICA & Medicare)	893.52	856.62	36.90	0.96
61 SCC Annual Meeting Delegates	300.00	125.00	175.00	0.42

	Budget	Spent	Difference	Ratio
63 Membership outreach	1,800.00	1,783.63	16.37	0.99
64 Pulpit Supply - Speaker Stipends	900.00	700.00	200.00	0.78
65 Nursery Attendants	2,196.00	2,193.00	3.00	1.00
66 Insurance	3,192.00	3,892.26	(700.26)	1.22
66b Workers Compensation	1,800.00	2,231.00	(431.00)	1.24
67 Fun & Fellowship Committee Expense	375.00	42.10	332.90	0.11
68 Archives	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
69 Deacons' Discretionary Fund	500.00	322.96	177.04	0.65
70 Printing - Newsletter & Bulletin	1,600.00	207.74	1,392.26	0.13
73 Outreach discretionary	400.00	278.15	121.85	0.61
Local Church Programs: Subtotal	\$89,320.28	\$81,199.33	\$8,120.94	0.91
76TOTAL	\$184,758.28	\$176,179.97	\$8,578.30	0.95
Petty cash*		700.00		
IRS correction**		112.31		
GRAND TOTAL	\$184,758.28	\$176,992.78	\$7,766.00	0.96

*Petty cash expenditures remain to be distributed among postage, office supplies, etc.

**IRS correction occurs because 4th quarter payroll taxes are paid in January of the following year, which is not taken into account in the above tabulation.

Pass-through items	12/31/04		12/31/05	
Item	Initial value	Income	Payout	Final Value
Deacons emergency*	\$2,962	\$25	\$500	\$2,487
One Great Hour	0	695	695	0
Neighbors in Need	0	720	720	0
Christmas Fund	50	780	440	390
Sanctuary flowers	224	451	240	435
Christmas dinner	36	380	121	295
Strengthen church	(25)	275	250	0
Border Ministries	100	0	100	0
Equal Exchange	(204)	2,085	1,923	(42)
Centennial Fund	1,082	0	0	1,082
Palestinian Child	280	382	300	362
Calvert Fund	0	1,635	1,635	0
Micah 6 concert proceeds plus	279	120	0	399
Tsunami & Hurricane relief	0	6,826	6,826	0
Back Bay Summer Work trip	0	727	727	0
Back Bay Bike trip	0	1,960	1,930	30
400 voices	0	215	215	0
Huston-Tillotson student fund	0	2,293	2,293	0
Front Porch Ministry	0	260	83	177
Deacons memorial fund	0	387	75	312
Melanie Concert Proceeds	0	206	206	0
Kitchen stoves	0	655	655	0
Spring retreat	0	979	979	0
American-Statesman ads	0	466	466	0
Sanctuary Windows	12,100	5,000	9,195	7,905
Lifeworks security deposit	2,100	0	2,100	
TOTALS	\$18,983	\$27,523	\$30,575	\$15,931

2006 BUDGET PROPOSAL

In October 2005, the Budget Committee (Dave Ross, Pam Tucker, John Goff, Jennifer Howicz, and Liz Nash) corresponded by e-mail to assess the proposals of the Boards and Coordinating Council. We proposed a budget of \$198,986, which was distributed to the congregation during the pledge drive. The response to the pledge drive was highly gratifying, and we felt it was unnecessary to revise the proposed budget downward.

Estimated income to the General Fund in 2006:

Pledges 2006	\$162,698
Non-pledged	11,500
Loose plate	3,600
Miscellaneous	1,000
United Church Foundation	500
<u>Rents</u>	<u>29,000</u>
GROSS TOTAL	\$208,298
<u>Transfer to Cap Fund</u>	<u>\$6,000</u>
NET TOTAL	\$202,298

This estimate is optimistic since income for 2005 fell somewhat below expectations. Pledged income fell short of pledges by about \$3,600. Much of the increase in pledges over last year is from newly joined members. Some pledged income has been prepaid in 2005 and has been included in the budget reconciliation for that year. The estimate assumes this will be repeated in December 2006.

Non-pledged, loose plate, and miscellaneous are estimated as averages from three previous years (trends are not obvious).

The United Church Foundation income consists of dividends paid from John McNeely's legacy. We are to use only the income from the legacy and not touch the principal until 2034.

Rental income includes LifeWorks rent plus utility payments and is estimated from 2005 income plus \$1,200 increase in LifeWorks rent. We also assume continued rent from the University Christian Fellowship at \$2,400. It is assumed that the trustees will continue transferring \$500 per month of rental income into the Capital Fund.

Proposed Expenditure Budget

The Trustees approved the budget on the following pages for presentation to the congregation. A total of \$199,225 is proposed, which includes small adjustments from the original proposal, in particular an increase the Administrative Assistant's increment to 3%.

**CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN
2006 BUDGET PROPOSAL**

	Approved 2005	Proposed 2006	\$ change	% change
Pastoral Leadership - Tom VandeStadt				
10 Salary	39,019	42,521	3,502	9.0%
11 Annuity	8,963	9,767	804	9.0%
12 Health Insurance	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
13 Family Protection	960	1,046	86	9.0%
14 Continuing Education	424	462	38	9.0%
15 Housing Allowance	25,000	25,000	0	0.0%
16 Travel Expenses	1,058	1,153	95	9.0%
* Pastoral Leadership Subtotal	\$75,424	\$79,949	\$4,525	6.0%
Salary plus housing	64,019	67,521	3,502	5.5%
Cooperative Responsibilities				
21 Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)	12,900	14,100	1,200	9.3%
22 Austin Area Interreligious Ministries	600	600	0	0.0%
23 Brazos Association Dues	504	540	36	7.1%
24 Texas Conference of Churches	30	30	0	0.0%
25 National Council of Churches	15	15	0	0.0%
26 World Council of Churches	15	15	0	0.0%
27 Seminary support	100	100	0	0.0%
29 Back Bay Mission	500	1,000	500	100.0%
30 Slumber Falls Camp	200	200	0	0.0%
32 Huston-Tillotson College scholarship fund	500	500	0	0.0%
33 University Area Partners	100	100	0	0.0%
34 Texas Impact	100	100	0	0.0%
35 Religious Coalition for the Homeless	250	363	113	45.2%
36 Micah 6	2,500	2,500	0	0.0%
37 Mission Outreach - freeze night staff support	1,200	1,200	0	0.0%
38 Religion Labor Network	500	500	0	0.0%
Cooperative Responsibilities Subtotal	\$20,014	\$21,827	\$1,849	9.2%
Local Church Programs				
41 Pastor's Discretionary Fund	200	200	0	0.0%
42 Administrative Assistant - Salary	13,388	13,790	402	3.0%
43 Admin. Assistant - FICA & Med @7.65%	1,024	1,055	31	3.0%
44 Music for Worship	400	400	0	0.0%
45 Musicians	9,000	9,000	0	0.0%
46 Choral Director - Salary	5,733	6,077	344	6.0%
47 Choral Director - FICA & Medicare @7.65%	439	465	26	6.0%
48 Christian Education	2,000	2,825	825	41.3%
50 Supplies - office, janitor, kitchen	3,600	4,300	700	19.4%
51 Postage	800	800	0	0.0%
53 Electricity & Water	12,500	12,500	0	0.0%
54 Gas	2,500	2,500	0	0.0%
55 Telephone	3,500	3,000	(500)	-14.3%

	Approved 2005	Proposed 2006	\$ change	% change
57 Property Maintenance	8,000	14,000	6,000	33.3%
58 Janitorial Supplies	500	0	(500)	-100.0%
59 Janitor - Salary	11,680	11,680	0	75.0%
60 Janitor - FICA & Medicare	894	894	(0)	0.0%
61 SCC Annual Meeting Delegates	300	300	0	0.0%
63 Membership Outreach	2,500	2,723	923	-28.0%
64 Pulpit Supply - Speaker Stipends	900	900	0	0.0%
65 Nursery Attendants	2,196	2,200	4	0.5%
66 Insurance	3,192	4,000	808	0.0%
66B Workers Compensation	1,800	2,250	450	0.0%
67 Fun & Fellowship Committee Expense	375	375	0	-21.1%
68 Archives	100	100	0	0.0%
69 Deacons' Discretionary Fund	500	500	0	0.0%
70 Admin Assistant mileage (formerly printing)	1,600	180	(1,420)	-36.0%
73 Outreach discretionary	400	400	0	0.0%
Local Church Programs: Subtotal	\$89,321	\$97,413	\$8,092	1.8%
76 TOTAL	\$184,759	\$199,225	\$14,667	7.8%

Notes

- * Pastoral leadership set by Coordinating Council - distribution to be determined later
- 21 OCM increase set by Outreach Board
- 29 Back Bay Mission increase set by Outreach Board
- 35 Religious Coalition in lieu of drainage fee. Rate set by City of Austin
- 42 Admin Assistant increase 3% set by Coordinating Council
- 46 Choral Director increase 6% set by Coordinating Council
- 48 CE request by CE Board
- 50 Office, janitor, & kitchen supplies combined by Trustees. Janitor supplies, line 58, deleted.
- 57 Maintenance includes Trustees est., \$10,000, and CE Board request, \$4,000 to address safety concerns.
- 59 Janitor salary remains same - some extra included to allow for extra hours or later raise
- 63 Membership Outreach requested by Deacons
- 65 Nursery Attendants - current rate - CE Board
- 66 Insurance rates going up but not yet known. Use actual paid this year - Trustees
- 66B Workers comp going up but not yet known. Use actual paid this year - Trustees
- 70 Eliminate Printing (now done in house) and create separate Mileage category - Trustees

Report to the Congregation from the Coordinating Council for the Year 2005

Our church is growing – growing in its numbers and in its vision of service to the Austin community.

For church members and visitors, a variety of programs and projects offering opportunities for learning anchor our Christian life together. Regular Sunday morning classes for adults and children were supplemented by after-church adult classes. A retreat for all age groups was held among the karst formations of Slumber Falls in April. Over the common table we asked ourselves question about the nature of anxiety and sought to consciously expand our capacity for unconditional love.

Our version of community building through fellowship begins with the simple act of sharing refreshments after worship and extends through workdays on Mount Bonnell. We had a pricing party prior to the yard sale where we dickered over the relative value of treasures to be sold the next day to help fund the cost of travel for the youth service project – travel to Biloxi to work on community outreach. The annual back-to-school breakfast remains a favorite among scholars of all ages.

The ability of our church to continue to expand its services to others is directly related to three factors – leadership provided by our gifted minister, the energy of our members, and the financial stability resulting from the rent paid by our tenant, Lifeworks, which seeks to meet the needs of the homeless youth drawn to our area by the University. Front porch lunches served to the youth have allowed us to demonstrate in a more tangible way that these young people are of worth. Housing them during freeze nights is another strong ministry offered by churches in the area and we are pleased to be able to offer food and shelter, not the mention the Sox Box – a collection for warm garments and clean underwear to better equip the young people was they go back out on the street.

Our children are engaged in community service as well. Fundraisers have been organized to sell baked goods and chocolate roses to the congregation to help fund relief to Tsunami victims and to financially sponsor a Palestinian child in school, Hala. And there is the ever-present food basket in the back of the church each Sunday for food donations distribute though the Micah 6 pantry. Adults joined with the children in several evenings of merriment and outreach – decorating cupcakes, making and filling baskets for Shoal Creek patients, and stuff plastic bags with grooming items to create Health Care Kits for Church World Service for distribution to hurricane victims.

On behalf of the Coordinating Council, a special word of thanks to those who serve on Boards, Commissions, Task Forces, or Committees. Our rich and meaningful collective life together would not exist without you.

Sunday morning worship enriches our life through the preaching of the word, the celebration of music, and the original liturgical material prepared by Rev. Tom VandeStadt. Sermons are now posted on the web for those who are eager for a chance to reflect on the pastor's message. In worship, in prayer, in the expression of joys and concerns, while sipping coffee, or repairing, painting or replanting our garden, the church is alive and welcomes you as a vital part of its ministry. To paraphrase a thought that Rev. Tom offered in the August 21, 2005 bulletin, daily we present ourselves in all that we do to God. We ask God to open us to receive God's gifts.

Carol Barrett, Church Moderator

Annual Report of the Board of Christian Education

The Board of Christian Education is responsible for providing the congregation and visitors an education in Christian history and faith and for promoting spiritual and moral growth through education.

In the classroom, we continue to engage both the elementary and middle/high school children in lively curriculum. We also support Tom in the adult education and confirmation classes. And we continue to provide professional childcare for infants and preschool children during the service and fellowship hour.

The Board is preparing and implementing new Safety Policies and Procedures for the Sunday School classrooms and the nursery. An interim set of policies is currently in place, and the final project will be presented to the Coordinating Council within the next few weeks. The policies include requiring Assistant Teachers each Sunday for the children's classes, a "floater" to check on the classes during the church service, and a wireless pager system for the nursery worker to summon assistance when needed.

There were also many activities outside the classroom. The Sunday School children, under the tutelage of Nancy Edison and Vic Appel, learned about fostering and caring for outdoor plant and animal life when they replanted the courtyard garden. They got to observe caterpillars enjoying their new home of parsley and even saw a couple of cocoons. The kids really seemed to enjoy the project and the church grounds benefited from the floral makeover!

In April, the Board hosted a Spring Retreat at Slumber Falls. Co-leaders Whit Bodman and Cecile Adam led congregation members through *The Narrow Ridge*, a program designed to move people toward personal wholeness by examining the dynamics of choice, courage and anxiety. There was also a youth program, based on the book *Seasons of the Spirit* and included activities such as introduction to the Labyrinth.

We continued with seasonal Family Nights, in which members of the congregation gathered together for fun, fellowship and some sort of project. In April, we made Easter Baskets for patients at Shoal Creek Hospital, and in October we decorated cookies and cupcakes. Funds raised from the bake sales went to Tsunami relief and continued support of the Palestinian Child Sponsorship project. Working with the Board of Christian Outreach, the children also spent a Sunday putting together backpacks as part of the 400 Voices project for children in Kosovo.

We ended the year with the Christmas pageant, entitled *The Gifts of Christmas*. The children worked very hard and performed beautifully. The production, written by one of our church members, truly reflected the spirit of Christmas by including the congregation, who donated four baskets of food and clothing to help the modern-day "Maria and Joey." These gifts were used in real life to help our Christian Outreach ministries.

We look forward to Christian Education activities in the upcoming year, which will include a middle/high school youth trip to Houston, confirmation of two youth members, new adult education programs and new family/intergenerational activities.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DEACONS

The Board of Deacons has responsibility for several areas of the church's ministry including worship, pastoral care, fellowship, publicity, and outreach to visitors and to those who want to join the church. Our task is to reflect the presence of Christ through as we do this day-to-day work of the church. I will report on our activities this year in each of our areas of ministry.

Worship

We provide support and guidance to Tom Vandestadt for our weekly worship services and for special services during the liturgical year. As Tom asks us, we discuss and offer our thoughts about the worship service. Our board regularly recruits ushers, we set up and serve communion, and we rotate the job of communion steward (who prepares communion and cleans up afterward) among the board members. Graylin Grissett, after no longer being able to attend board meetings on a regular basis, has continued to contact and schedule ushers for us through the whole year. We are grateful to you, Graylin, for doing this important but unseen job.

This year, we continued our church's tradition of holding an Easter Sunrise Service open to the community on Mt. Bonnell. For the first time, we were cut short by rain which started as soon as the mike was set and the service began. Many from the community had come, so we did have a short service that blessed the group gathered there with Melanie Wilkenson's singing. At the same time, the rented amplification system was rushed down the hill to keep it from being damaged. Lots of leftover donuts and juice came down the hill, too! We hope next year will bring a return to a dry, lovely sunrise as we celebrate the Resurrection in this special place.

As in the past, we offered poinsettias at Christmastime and Easter lilies for Easter worship to the congregation to brighten the sanctuary. These could be purchased in memory of someone, in honor of someone, or to the glory of God.

The music ministry also falls under our purview, but Nodie Murphy makes it easy (as in no work) for us. We did find out at the end of the year that a music committee exists that needs new members, so that will be a task to support the music ministry that we will renew. All of the church rejoices in the choir's singing, the trio's gifts, Nodie's leadership, and Melanie's voice (when she is with us). This year, we also had the privilege of hearing one of the church's new members, Cara Firestone, during the Christmas candlelight and Christmas day worship. She shared her glorious voice with us. Thank you, Cara.

Pastoral Care

The Deacons' major initiative in this area was the continuation of special midweek worship services and luncheons as an outreach to those who have a difficult time getting to worship, inviting at the same time those who regularly attend. Following a successful Advent worship and lunch last year, we continued with one in Lent and one again in Advent. Tom led worship, Liz Spencer arranged a lunch provided by SouthernCare Hospice, and Florence Castle provided her lovely music. It has been great to see and spend time with old friends, as well as providing opportunities for those who can't get to church on Sunday to meet some of the newer members. Our appreciation goes, too, to Pat Oakes and John Towery for reaching out to many of the people we wanted to bring to the church and for helping arrange for rides. In addition, our appreciation goes to all those who helped with rides.

We also provide care by spending money from our Deacons' Emergency Fund to help members or others close to the church with personal emergencies such as rent crises, medical costs, short term provision of a place to stay, etc. We usually do this on a confidential basis with the approval of the board. As in the past, we did disburse money from this fund during the year. Our appreciation goes to all who donated to support this work that always serves an urgent need.

The major, day-to-day pastoral care of the church is handled by Tom Vandestadt. He shares many pastoral concerns that are not confidential with the board, and we are grateful for his work. We are also grateful for John Towery's ongoing visitation of long-time members – a gift of caring and concern.

Fellowship

Tommie Pinkard, Pat Oakes, and Comfort Tyson have done the major work of making sure we have food and hospitality after worship this year. Some of us know, too, that Lynn Lemley is very supportive of this Fun and Fellowship work as she quietly provides punch supplies. This Fun and Fellowship Committee often has to step in when there is no one signed up to host the Fellowship time, and they also work hard when there are special occasions like potlucks. Thanks so much to this group! The Deacons are now trying to support their work by providing paper cups and plates for our after worship time. After discussion and thought, we realized that one reason people hesitate to sign up to provide refreshments is the often long commitment after church to wash dishes while everyone lingers and visits. We don't want to hurry our time for fellowship, but we do want to let our hosts get out to eat lunch.

The Deacons also hosted a workday this year to straighten up our Fellowship Hall, as well as the Corliss Gaspari Library. We did this to make these two rooms more welcoming and usable. And we succeeded both in having a nice morning working together and in our cleaning, clearing out, and straightening up tasks. Better lighting and new paint are still on the agenda for the Fellowship Hall, but these will wait until after the Centennial Committee plans for renovating the building are in place. We are also trying to give the organ in the Fellowship Hall a new home to free up the space it occupies. Dennis Murphy has now taken on this task: we hope his efforts work and we thank you, Dennis, for taking this on.

Publicity

Our publicity work entails getting the word out about our work and ministry to the wider community. This year, we have publicized the church in four ways. First, we have run a joint monthly ad in the *Austin American Statesman* with other area UCC churches. We have also continued our mailings to new members in the Austin area, and will continue to do so until the postcards we printed for this effort run out. We purchased a banner through the UCC "God is Still Speaking" campaign which now graces the 23rd Street side of the building. It lets those who pass by know about the ministry of our church. Our newest publicity initiative is to run a monthly ad for our church in the *Austin Chronicle*, a newspaper we feel reaches many folks who would be likely to consider attending a church like ours. We anticipate having the funds to continue running a monthly *Chronicle* ad in 2006.

Outreach to Visitors and New Members

This year, Steve Domingue reinvigorated our ministry aimed at welcoming visitors by recruiting new members for our welcoming committee, discussing how to do this work with those who have agreed to serve, and scheduling members to be present to greet visitors before

worship. We have offered a better, more intentional welcome to our visitors recently, thanks to Steve's work. We are also in the process of revising our Visitor Cards placed in the pews to make these cards more useful. Our steady stream of visitors has continued this year, reflecting an upsurge in interest in our ministry. This interest has been due, in part, to the publicity the United Church of Christ received around its "God is Still Speaking" advertising campaign. It is also due, we believe, to our recent decision to become Open and Affirming, as well as to our presence (mainly Tom's hard work) in the Austin community in the area of justice issues.

It has been a great joy to welcome several new members to our church this fall, and to have more who are ready to join. New members who are enriching all of us include Jesse and Lolita Binford (who have returned after many years in Florida), Lincoln and Nancy Binford, Nancy Edison, Will Heimbach, Cara and Jim Firestone, and Brent Malkus. In addition, Becca Zwerling and Ellie Nash joined last January. Our group waiting to join includes several adults and two confirmands. As the Deacons have met with these friends before their decision to join, we have gotten to know each other, shared about the church's ministry and structure, shared about the United Church of Christ, and discussed the promises and affirmations that new members make when joining the church. All of the Deacons have felt blessed by our discussions during these meetings and by the gift of these new members as they have joined.

Parking and Membership Issues

The final two areas that have been part of our work and attention this year involve parking and bylaws changes regarding membership. Early in 2005, the Cadeau let us know we could have exclusive free use of their lot (except for their contract parking) on Sunday mornings. However, we have not successfully been able to take advantage of this offer. Sharon Brown spent a great deal of time thinking through what signs would be appropriate, how to post them, and getting bids. The first sign she posted outside the parking lot was quickly stolen. Reuel Nash also spent a couple of Sundays asking those not part of the church to park elsewhere. Finally, Sharon bought a banner for us to tie to our fence at 23rd and San Antonio directing people to park in the Cadeau lot, and several of us are parking in our alternate location about two blocks away to free up room. We all hope the current negotiations regarding the new Co-op parking building bear fruit for us. Many thanks to Sharon for all her work on this, and to Tom for putting out the parking information banner on Sunday mornings.

A major effort, too, went into discussing (both with Deacons and at Coordinating Council) and preparing a by-law amendment clarifying the process of joining the church. This amendment would bring in new members who have met with the Deacons and agreed to the covenant and purposes of the church, but would end our current practice of having the congregation vote to welcome or approve new members. We made this recommendation because people sometimes feel uncomfortable with the vote, and because of confusion over the requirements for notifying the congregation in advance. The congregation was just short of a quorum for this vote during our scheduled meeting for this purpose in October. Therefore, consideration and voting on this amendment has been postponed to our January, 2006 Annual Meeting. The Deacons have also recommended to the Coordinating Council that the church change its count of members, for purposes of establishing a quorum only, to those residing within 100 miles of the church in order to count those who might within reason be expected to attend. The Congregation may be asked to vote on this latter change sometime in Spring, 2006.

Our board rejoices in the ministry of this church and in our time together this year. As we end our work this year, we send Rev. Liz Spencer off to her new call to ministry in Lexington, Missouri with our prayers and best wishes.

**Respectfully submitted,
Liz Nash, Chair, for the Board of Deacons
Steve Domingue
Ben White
Liz Spencer
Jim Howicz
Graylin Grissett (part of the year)
Tom Vandestadt (ex officio)**

Annual Report of the Trustees for 2005

The members of the Board of Trustees are responsible for the care and custody of all of the property of the Congregational Church of Austin (CCOA), including the building maintenance and repair, financial obligations, care of monetary assets, formulating the annual budget, hiring, and conducting all business affairs of the church.

From a financial perspective, we have a mixed report. We managed to stay under budget by a little over eight thousand dollars. However, we ran a deficit for 2005 by nearly four thousand dollars—we spent more than we brought in for local income. This makes the 2006 budget a huge challenge: it is an increase of about 12.9% over the expenditures of 2005. I want everyone to understand the importance of leasing our office space and Appel room space. We are receiving over \$24,000 per year from this rental, without which we would have to dramatically modify our budget. We continue to put \$500/month into our capital fund from our rental income, and, additionally our assets have appreciated. From these two sources, our financial assets have increased by about \$9500. For specifics, please see the treasurer's report.

Activity Highlights:

- 1) A major project of restoration of the rotting wood around the sanctuary stained glass windows has been completed with the outpouring of financial support by the congregation.
- 2) Trustees have established a simple "investment strategy" for stock and other monetary donations and our existing financial assets. CCOA has moved the majority of our assets to the United Church Foundation, an associated ministry of UCC with socially responsible investing. The assets are invested in an equity fund and in a fixed income fund.
- 3) The Building & Grounds "committee" has been re-established and has been functioning to get all of the little and big projects done. Trustees have authorized B&G to spend up to \$300 without trustee authorization as long as the maintenance budget is not exceeded. A few of the items that B&G has completed are: repair of the sprinkler system; repair of the wheelchair ramp; waxing of the nursery and Sunday school rooms; installation of fire extinguishers; establishing regular maintenance of A/C filter change and pest treatments; fixing the rest room lights, locks and leaks; removal of the graffiti/tagging in the alley and north side of the building; repair of the HVAC as needed.
- 4) While we cannot take credit, we do want to report that we have two new stoves in the basement kitchen thanks to a member who donated the purchase and installation of the stoves.
- 5) A water penetration analysis has been done by trustees with the assistance of Evan Tanaguchi. Recommendations from the report will be implemented as soon as practical.
- 6) Parking has continued to be an issue for our members. The Centennial Committee has been able to secure the use of the Cadeau lot for Sunday mornings at no charge, but we still have additional needs on Sunday and on weekdays. There has been a recent petition to install parking meters on San Antonio and we may also get metered spots on 24th in front of our building (instead of a "no parking zone"). It remains to be seen whether meters will help our parking problems. Finally, the Co-op is building a 390 space parking garage diagonally across the street from our building. Trustees, Coordinating Council and Centennial Committee are in negotiations with the Co-op to try to obtain parking that we can afford.
- 7) At the beginning of 2005, we employed Melodi as our custodian. Not too long prior to her employment, she was homeless. Although she no longer works for us, the last we heard is that she was attending ACC classes, so perhaps CCOA provided some help to get her back on her feet. We currently employ Victor for custodial and maintenance work. Victor has been a great asset and helped us get many things done that have been needed for some time.

Looking forward, trustees will be working on continuing to address our water penetration issues (roof, Appel Room windows and stairwell drain, choir room stairwell drain, downspouts, front landing, and the north side of the building). Trustees will continue to work with the Centennial Committee to implement accessibility to our building including parking. We will try to coordinate between Lifeworks and Rambi Briggs to develop a proposal to Austin Community Foundation for funding to make improvements to the Lifeworks leased facilities. Other unfinished issues include working with the Coordinating Council to develop guidelines for annual review raises; finding additional storage space; and finishing up the repair of the termite damage in the fellowship hall.

The Board of Christian Outreach has worked throughout the year to develop, promote and sustain ministries that bring our members into contact with our local and world-wide community.

Ministries of assistance to the homeless/economic underclass

The Congregational Church of Austin has had a long-standing interest in ministering to the homeless youth who are very much a part of the community in which our church resides. Renting much of our building to the Lifeworks street outreach program is a major part of that ministry, providing a place where the youth can get counseling, medical attention and a safe place to hang out and wash their clothes. We participate in this ministry directly by hosting and staffing the Freeze Night shelter and Front Porch Lunches. The shelter operates when the night time temperatures dip below freezing. Organized by Lifeworks staff who we pay, we open our basement up as shelter and church volunteers cook and serve a hearty meal. Front Porch Lunches have been served every first Thursday of the month, but with a surfeit of volunteers we have opted to serve both the first and third Thursday. Meals consist of sandwiches, fruit, snacks, milk and juice, and we typically serve about 20 guests each time. Presently the lunches are supported by donations from our members.

Several members of our church also volunteer for work at the Micah 6 good pantry, which operates out of the University Baptist Church. Micah 6 is a recent organization of the University area churches, and the food pantry is the first joint venture. The pantry is going very well and serves a large number of working poor in our community.

This summer about 10 members and youth spent a week at the Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS, working in the summer heat to refurbish a house for a poor family. Back Bay Mission is one of the premier UCC mission programs, and our church has supported it financially and participated in its organization for some time. Last spring our pastor even participated in a bike-ride fundraiser, pedaling the entire distance from Austin to Biloxi. Back Bay Mission's work will be even more critical as the Biloxi community tries to rebuild in the wake of the Katrina hurricane, and we will continue and strengthen our support.

Ministries of economic justice

Over the past year the Outreach Board has taken on an entrepreneurial task of selling "fair trade" coffee and chocolates to our members, with tremendous success. These items are purchased from workers cooperatives in South America, which eliminates the middle man and returns to the farmers and growers a fair price for their items. We've attached a \$1 "profit" to these items so that we can build up a fund by which to address additional items of economic justice. Having built the fund to over \$500, we decided to use that money to make new Congregational Church tee-shirts. A contest ("what would Jesus wear") and professional graphics assistance from Linda Berard led us to a winning design. We have purchased shirts from the Nueva Vida Women's Sewing Cooperative in Nicaragua via the Presbyterian Church, thus extending our fair-trade purchasing. With Reuel Nash leading the older youth, we will silk-screen the design onto the shirt and sell them to the congregation.

Our pastor has become closely involved with the Religion and Labor Network in Austin. This organization advocates for workers rights in our community. Several issues have been hot items this year: (1) day laborers and the response of the city to the inadequacies of their 51st street

center, (2) denied wages to immigrant laborers by contractors, and (3) the Cap-Metro drivers' labor dispute. Tom had done a great job keeping the membership informed of these issues and is seeking ways for us to become more involved.

Ministries to children of the world

The Outreach Board has worked closely with Christian Education to find ways that our own Children can participate in outreach ministries and connect in a Christian manner with the world around them. We continue to sponsor a young Palestinian girl, helping her to attend school that serves both Muslim and Christian Palestinians in East Jerusalem. Letters and pictures continue to be exchanged between her and our Sunday School classes.

Last Fall we participated in a "400 Voices" project drive for school supplies, which were delivered to a school in Kosova struggling to rebuild after the devastating Balkans war. The congregation was extremely generous in donating school supplies, which the Sunday School children organized and packed into backpacks for the children of the Trepca school, along with a letter from us with photos. Dita Dauti, an Austin resident and native of Kosova who began 400 Voices, came and talked with the children and showed them photos of the children and the school. She has recently visited there and will bring back letters from the children of Kosova.

Mt. Bonnell cleanup ministry

Our church continues to hold semi-regular clean-up days at the Mt. Bonnell park, where we also hold Easter sunrise service every year. To us this is an important ministry to God's own creation. Our last clean-up was in December, and will hold another on the Saturday before Easter.

Stewardship Committee

The Congregation responded warmly to this year's theme of "Purposeful Giving". The enlistment committee would especially like to thank Jennifer Howicz, John Goff, Liz Nash and Pam Tucker for their presentations on behalf of the boards of Christian Education and Outreach, Deacons, and Trustees.

Briefly, this years campaign resulted in:

- 44 pledges, up from 34 last year.
- \$162,698 of pledged income, \$20,000 more than this time last year.
- No necessity to revise the boards' wish lists! This year, reality and vision coincide.

The stewardship committee is very grateful to the entire congregation for its support and for getting involved in our church's *Purposeful Giving*. We can all now move forward in the task of being a truly Christian Church. Thank you!

Sara Ross, Lynne Lemley & Dennis Murphy,

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

To be handed out

CENTENNIAL PROJECT COMMITTEE

The year 2006 marks the centennial of the congregation's first church building (constructed at the corner of Colorado Street and West Ninth in 1906). About 18 months ago, with the support of the Coordinating Council, the Board of Trustees appointed a committee to recommend a project to recognize and celebrate the centennial.

The Committee's charge is to a) identify an appropriate project and (b), if the congregation agrees, work with the Stewardship Committee, the Trustees, and the Coordinating Council to design and conduct a fundraising campaign to enable the project to be carried out.

The Centennial Project Committee, composed of Rambie Briggs, Vic Appel, Dennis Murphy, Tommie Pinkard, Pam Tucker and Don Brown, began meeting in September, 2004. Recognizing that the Vision Project had shown that the congregation placed great importance on making the church facility accessible to all who are physically disabled or handicapped, the Committee agreed that the foremost candidate for a Centennial Project should be to make the current buildings accessible to all.

After several months of conversations, the Committee drafted a statement of the possible project's scope and purpose and discussed it with the Coordinating Council and the Trustees, both of which provided further guidance and requested more specific information about the project, its estimated cost, and ways to fund it.

After further discussions among committee members and with Evan Taniguchi, a highly-respected Austin architect, the Trustees approved a contract with Mr. Taniguchi to prepare a preliminary design and cost estimates for a project with three possible stages that could extend over several years:

- 1) Improvement of access and attractiveness by ramp, parking, signs, and the patio and garden area;
- (2) Creation of one or two restrooms, a better kitchen, and a crib/changing/nursing room in the space now occupied by the kitchen, children's toilets, hallway, and nursery in the Towery Wing;
- (3) Install an elevator for vertical accessibility from the choir room level to the third floor (would not provide improved vertical access to Appel Room) and install a lift to provide vertical accessibility from Fellowship Hall to Appel Room (through the current location of the library).

The architect's feasibility analysis is expected to be completed in March and brought to the Trustees and Coordinating Council later in the spring. If approved by them, a project of one, two or three stages will be presented to the congregation for discussion and to determine whether to move ahead. In the meantime, Committee members, Trustees, and the Coordinating Council will welcome comments and advice.