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ANNUAL REPORT
2006

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

Brazos Association
South Central Conference
United Church of Christ

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Agenda: 1-2

Minutes:
Annual Meeting 2006 3-4
Congregational Meetings 5-10

Reports

Pastor 11-13
Financial Secretary 14-15
Clerk (Vital Statistics) 16
Treasurer 17
Proposed Budget, 2007 18-22

Boards and Committees

Coordinating Council 23
Board of Christian Education 24
Board of Deacons 25-27
Board of Trustees 28
Mission Outreach 29-30
Stewardship and Enlistment 31
Centennial Project Committee 32
Nominating Committee 33-36

AGENDA
The Congregational Church of Austin, A United Church of Christ
Annual Meeting, January 28, 2007. 1:00 p.m.

Items in Bold **will** be discussed and may be 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 2006 Annual Meeting	Jesse Binford, Clerk
Minutes of the Congregational Meetings in 2006	Jesse Binford, Clerk
Reports	
Pastor	Rev.Tom VandeStadt
Financial Secretary	Dennis Murphy*
Clerk	Jesse Binford
Treasurer	David Ross
Presentation and Adoption of Budget for 2007	David Ross
Reports of Boards and Committees	
Coordinating Council	Carol Barrett
Board of Christian Education	Nancy Edison
Board of Deacons	**Betty Bodman**
Review of proposed amendments to by-laws for future congregational consideration: uniform counting of quorum, elimination of Music Committee and replacement with ad hoc Fine Arts Committee - discussion only	
Acceptance of candidates for in-care status	
Board of Trustees	Reuel Nash
Mission Outreach	John Goff
Stewardship and Enrollment	Dennis Murphy/Sara Ross
Centennial Committee	Don Brown
Nominating Committee	**Paul Deisler/Suzanne Bradford**
Action on slate of candidates and correction to action taken on March 20, 2006 when Joe McMillan's nomination to the Board of Trustees was acted upon. The term stated was to be for 3 years; the actual vacancy to be filled was for ~~three~~ two years.	
Presentation and Adoption of Safe Church Policy	**Carol Barrett**

"Austin Sweat Free"
Presentation and possible action
Adjournment — John Goff, Moderator

Benediction – Blessed Be the Tie That Binds – First Verse — All

*Acting Financial Secretary

The Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ DRAFT
Minutes of the Annual Meeting, January 29, 2006

Moderator Carol Barrett called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. She asked what time members would like to have the meeting conclude and most said 2 p.m. She said she would manage the agenda accordingly.
Two discussion items added to the agenda were:

Torture is wrong, to be presented by Tom VandeStadt.
Time for worship service to begin, to be presented by Pam Tucker.

Carol gave the invocation.

Minutes of the 2005 congregational meetings
Fran Briggs moved and John Goff seconded that the 2004 congregational meetings' minutes be approved. The vote approved the minutes as corrected (spelling of "Mälkus" in the October 16, 2005, minutes.)

Minutes of the 2005 Annual Meeting
David Ross requested that the Coordinating Council follow up on resolutions promised in annual meetings. Carol responded that they would do so. After John Goff moved and Robin Rosson seconded the approval, the minutes of 2005's annual meeting were approved.

Reports
Annual reports from the pastor, financial secretary, clerk, and treasurer were accepted without comments.

Presentation and Adoption of Budget for 2006

David Ross commented that estimated 2006 income is uncertain but should be approximately $200,000. On the third budget page, the right-hand column percentages are incorrect, but the dollar amounts are correct. The table just needs updating.
Fran Briggs proposed a budget amendment to raise the seminary support item from $100 to $300, which is 1 1/2% of the wider church giving. It was seconded by Whit Bodman. After discussion in support of the motion, it was approved by a hand vote.
As presented and amended, the budget proposal was also approved by a hand vote.

Consideration of request to amend line item for seminary support in 2005 budget
Fran Briggs moved the expenditure of $50 by amending the seminary support line item in the 2005 budget. The support benefits UCC member students who are able to attend seminary without paying tuition. Whit Bodman seconded the motion. John Moore suggested an amendment to $200. The motion as amended passed by voice vote.
Lynne Lemley added that the $6729 deficit shown on the financial secretary's report has fallen to approximately $1000, a result of more contributions in 2005.

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 were accepted without questions.

Nominating Committee

Doyal Pinkard presented the committee report. As a result of discussion about the Music Committee, Doyal asked Nodie Murphy to share a previous fine arts committee recommendation. John Moore suggested that the Coordinating Council look at the committee structure to see if it affects the by-laws.
Doyal noted that years listed by committee members are calendar years, and blanks indicate vacancies. Whit Bodman volunteered to be historian. Members may call Matt Blackstock with nominations or to volunteer. John Goff and David Ross suggested that some boards could have fewer members. The report, including Whit as historian, was accepted.

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

The amendment is for the membership to rely on Deacons to meet and educate prospective members. The church will still use current litany to welcome new members. Pat Oakes asked for verification that Deacons will meet and assess candidates for membership. The response was that we put our trust in all the boards of the church. After discussion concerning the covenant of joining the church and a failed motion to table the by-law change motion, Doyal Pinkard moved that the bylaws be adopted in original form as presented by the Deacons. Whit Bodman, John Goff, and Barbara Burnham offered friendly amendments that resulted in each place "a rite" appears being changed to "the UCC rite." The amended recommendation passed. John Moore asked that job descriptions for boards be kept up-to-date and well-read.
Liz Nash explained the need for a quorum defined by members who can reasonably attend congregational meetings. The Deacons suggested that it be defined as members within a 100-mile radius. The by-laws require 35% of members for a quorum. Deacons will meet in February to discuss the idea and will give 30-days' notice before a congregational meeting on the subject.

"Torture is Wrong" campaign

Tom VandeStadt was contacted by Don Bob and Bonnie T. Moore, who want faith communities in Austin to display "Torture is Wrong" banners on buildings. They will give us a black banner with white letters for at least a month. Reuel Nash moved that CCA support the program and hang the banner. Ben White seconded it and it passed.

Parking time in Co-op garage

Pam Tucker reported that the new University Co-op garage will have 400 spaces and open in August. A committee of Trustees and Tom VandeStadt are negotiating for CCA members to use some of the spaces. George Mitchell, president of the Co-op said that CCA parking until 1:30 p.m. was too late, because of spaces needed for the Co-op's patrons. Members shared various responses concerning availability of parking time and possible change of time to begin worship service. Doyal Pinckard moved that the Trustees have permission to represent the members as being flexible. Rambie Briggs seconded it and the motion passed.

After motions by Pat Oakes and Matt Blackstock, the meeting was adjourned. The members joined hands and sang "Blest Be the Tie that Binds.

Sharon Brown, Clerk, January 29, 2006.

The Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ
Minutes of the Congregational Meeting, January 29, 2006

Moderator Carol Barrett called the meeting to order at 11 a.m. As part of their faith journey, Alex VandeStadt and Becky Nash completed confirmation studies and are ready for membership. As affirmation of their membership, Carol Barrett led the members in saying, "Welcome and Amen."

Pat Oakes moved that the meeting be adjourned, and it was.

Sharon Brown, Clerk, January 29, 2006.

Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ
Meeting of the Congregation March 26, 2006.

The Moderator Carol Barrett called the meeting to order at 12:19 PM. She asked Paul Deisler, speaking on behalf of the Nominating Committee, to place before the congregation a slate of names in nomination for various Board and Committee memberships.

Paul Deisler explained that as of the Annual Meeting in January 2006 four memberships were still unfilled. He then presented the following slate of nominees for three of the unfilled memberships for the vote of the congregation, as follows:

- Joe McMillan, for a three year term on the Board of Trustees
- Ben White, to fill a 1-year vacancy on the Board of Deacons
- Fran Briggs, for a three year term on the Enlistment and Stewardship Committee

Additional nominations were invited from the floor. Hearing none Paul Deisler asked for a motion to approve the slate. Pat Oakes so moved. Paul Deisler called for a vote by a show of hands.

The slate of nominees was adopted unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 12:21 PM, there being no further business.

The Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ
Minutes of the Congregational Meeting, May 7, 2006 DRAFT 2

Moderator Carol Barrett called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. and thanked the Centennial Committee and Trustees.
She explained that the agenda for the meeting would be
--why the Centennial Committee began and what it will do
--Tom's invocation to us
--detailed presentation of the project
--motions presented by Trustees for us to vote on.

In response to a voiced preference, Carol said we will try to hold the meeting for only 45 minutes.

Don Brown, chair of the Centennial Committee, reviewed the church's history from its creation in 1901 through the construction of its first building in 1906 at the corner of 9th Street and Colorado Street, to its move to 23rd Street on construction of the current sanctuary in 1923.

Don explained that two years ago the committee was created by the Trustees with the concurrence of the Coordinating Council to propose a project to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first building's completion.

The proposed Centennial Project would not simply be a construction project, but an undertaking designed to further the church's mission by making the facility accessible and attractive and exercising good stewardship over the facility's integrity.

Tom noted that the top priorities out of the visioning process four years ago were:
--to establish mission outreach, which has been done
--to focus on Christian education, which is being done
--to make the church accessible, which is now beginning

He then gave an invocation for us in considering the proposed project.

Don distributed several laminated copies of the proposed project's floor plans, both inside and outside, and copies of the project summary and architects' feasibility report. He recognized the Centennial Project Committee members: Pam Tucker (not present), Tommie Pinkard, Vic Appel, Rambie Briggs (not present), Dennis Murphy, and Don Brown --- all having proceeded with Tom's thoughtful guidance. He also introduced David Wilson, the project architect working for Evan Taniguchi, both of whom have worked closely with the committee for over a year.

In beginning his summary of the proposed project, Don said that members have repeatedly expressed the desire for improved accessibility for disabled and to make the church inviting to outsiders.

He explained that the project consisted of a number of components that are clustered three stages:

Stage 1: Accessible restroom on main floor
Kitchen that more adequately serves the Fellowship Hall
Construction of a safe, much improved wheelchair ramp
Movement of garden wall to front sidewalk to create more inviting entry
steps with more gradual rise to steps
Correction of water penetration problems

Stage 2: Improvement of church's exterior appearance and signs

Stage 3: Vertical access, including elevator to serve all levels in Towery Wing and with additional lifts to provide access to Appel Room.

He reviewed each stage as members asked questions and expressed concerns, ideas, and support.

Stage 1. Cost estimates are on page 1 of summary. Phase 1 costs are $63,000 plus an architect's fee of 5-10% and 10% contingency amount = $80,000.
The plan includes:

an accessible restroom where the kitchen currently is;
a larger kitchen;
a smaller, more efficient nursery;
correction of water penetration solutions in choir room, around front entrance, in Appel room, and at other locations;
an access ramp from the parking spaces to the play room;
removal of the hazardous raised area to the west of the Towery Wing;
and for water problems and accessibility, moving of the garden wall south to the sidewalk to create a more gradual incline the front entrance.

Paula Fracasso raised a concern about graffiti on the proposed extended wall. Betty Bodman suggested that vines would make it look more attractive. David Wilson said the plantings area will be seven feet wide with a fence and guard rail for safety along the top of the wall.

Stage 2: Enhancement of the church's appearance and signs for which the project summary indicates a total cost of $50,000 to $62,000.

Stage 3. Installation of an elevator to serve all levels of the Towery Wing and of lifts to provide wheelchair access to the Appel Room. The project summary indicates a total cost of $72,000. An extended space outside of the current playroom will house the elevator. It will go down to the choir room. To access the Appel room from there a person would then take a lift to the cave level and proceed through the cave to another lift to the Appel Room. This may need more discussion whether a better solution for access to the Appel Room can be found.

With Evan Taniguchi's help, the Centennial Committee met with the city's historic preservation officer to learn the advantages and disadvantages of historic designation for all or part of the church's buildings. No decision was reached on pursuing historic designation for the church. Some committee members were concerned with being able to change the building or even to sell it at some far distant point. It was recognized that the cost per use of an $80,000 elevator could be high if only wheelchair occupants were to use it, but could be much more reasonable if it proved useful to a larger number of people who find it difficult to climb stairs.

Doyal Pinckard suggested that we focus on Stages 1 and 2, because they address current needs.

Liz Nash said the play area needs a see-through door for the safety of the children.

Reuel Nash presented the Trustees motions:

Motion 1: The church empowers the Trustees to proceed with Stage 1 of the Centennial Project with the following provisions:

1. The estimated costs are $63,750 plus architect fees and permits.
2. The Trustees will allocate the balance of the Windows Fund (~$6700) and a minimum of $10,000 from the church Capital Fund.
3. Pledges will be solicited from the Congregation.
4. The Trustees will proceed with the project when they determine that sufficient funds have been pledged.

Motion 2: The church empowers the Trustees to proceed with Stage 1 of the Centennial Project with the following provisions:

1. The estimated costs are $49,930 plus architect fees and permits.
2. The Trustees will allocate a minimum of $10,000 from the church Capital Fund.
3. Pledges will be solicited from the Congregation.
4. The Trustees will proceed with the project when they determine that sufficient funds have been pledged.

Motion 3: The church empowers the Trustees to proceed with Stage 1 of the Centennial Project with the following provisions:

1. The estimated costs are $55,000 plus architect fees and permits.
2. The Trustees will allocate a minimum of $10,000 from the church Capital Fund.
3. Pledges will be solicited from the Congregation.
4. The Trustees will proceed with the project when they determine that sufficient funds have been pledged.

Motion 1 discussion: Dennis asked about the $10,000 contribution from the Capital Fund and about the total of the fund. Reuel said that the church may need to have AC repairs and other problems at any time, so the Trustees felt that at least $30,000, half of the Capital Fund, should be reserved for such costly and pressing repairs.

David Wilson, in answer to a question, said that construction of phase 1 could take two months. Plumbing repairs with the drains in the patio can be done at the same time.

Whit Bodman asked what amount the Trustees would like to have at the end of the project. Reuel said $30,000.

Don asked if the Trustees first motion is compatible with creating a fundraising committee. Reuel replied that it is and that they need to know the timing of the pledges.
Dennis said that we need to do the first phase as quickly as possible and should take $30,000 from the Capital Fund to give it a kick start. He asked to amend the motion with that action. Doyal seconded the amendment.

David Ross said rumors are that pledges could be gathered quickly. Whit voiced preference for the original motion. Pat Oakes noted that the motion states "a minimum of $10,000," so additional funds can be added to any phase. Dennis remarked that the bulk of the Capital Fund is from when the church considered moving. The congregation voted to use funds for capital improvements, so it is logical to use it to do the project quickly.

Paula suggested that we step forward in faith and she supported Dennis' motion.
The amendment passed.

Motion 1 passed as amended to state that $30,000 from the Capital Fund will be earmarked for Stage 1 of the Centennial Project.

Motion 2 discussion: Whit suggested eliminating any amount of funds from motions two and three. Marilyn Vaché moved that at least $5000 should be included to "feed the pot" and inspire contributions for the completion of Stage 2. Motion 2 passed as amended.

Motion 3 discussion: Doyal moved to amend the motion by changing $10,000 to $5000 for the amount of Trustees' allocation from the Capital Fund for Stage 3. Dennis voiced opposition to changing the amount. Betty asked for clarification of $6000 for repair and maintenance. David said that $10,000 to 15,000 is voted in each annual budget for maintenance. The $6000 in question, from LifeWorks' rent, is placed in the Capital Fund, which is maintained separately.

[Further background provided by David: When the Congregation approves the budget at the Annual Meeting, we allocate about $8000 to $14000 for maintenance as part of the local operating expenses. This year the amount is $14000, which includes proposed security and safety upgrades of the upstairs Sunday School area requested by the Board of Education. The Capital Fund is maintained separately from the local budget. The Trustees allocate $6000 per year of Lifelworks Rental income to the Capital Fund.]

The amendment for a minimum allocation of $5000 from the Capital Fund in phase three passed. Motion 3 passed as amended.

Pat moved that the meeting adjourn and it did.

Sharon Brown, Substitute Clerk, May 7, 2006.

The Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ
Minutes of the Congregational Meeting, August 20, 2006

Moderator Carol Barrett called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. and led the applause for the Joyful Noise Orchestra. She asked Dennis Murphy, representing the Board of Deacons, to explain the purpose of the proposed amendment to the church's bylaws.

Dennis said that the core of the change is to define what constitutes a quorum. The church's approach has been to keep on the membership roles many people who live far away but do not want to be removed. In order to have a feasible quorum present, a quorum will now be based on 25% of members within a 100-mile radius of the church. If members from more than 100 miles away are present, they certainly may vote.

The proposed wording is:

At a meeting so announced, the number of members that constitutes a quorum is equal to at least 25% of the number of members with their primary residence within a 100-mile radius of the church. That number will be based on an official count of the membership conducted by the Clerk. The primary residence of any member present at the meeting shall not be a factor in the determination of a quorum.

Fran Briggs called the question, and debate was thereby closed by a voice vote. The amendment to the bylaws presented by Dennis Murphy was approved by a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Sharon Brown, Substitute Clerk, August 20, 2006.

The Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ
Minutes of the October 8, 2006 Congregational Meeting — Draft

Following the service at 12:25 PM, Carol Barrett, Moderator, called the meeting to order for one item of business. She then called upon the Nominating Committee.

Paul Deisler, Secretary of the Nominating Committee, reported for the Committee that Lois Drachtenberg, having faithfully served as the church's Delegate to the Executive Committee of the Brazos Association, had had to vacate that position for reasons of health. Paul Deisler then placed the name of Victor Appel in nomination to the post to serve the rest of the term until its completion as of the Annual Meeting in January, 2008.

Carol Barrett called for other nominees. There being none she then called for a vote on the nomination before the congregation whereupon Victor Appel was elected unanimously to the position of Delegate to the Executive Committee of the Brazos Association.

There being no other business a motion to adjourn was made by Pat Oakes and the meeting was adjourned at 12:26 PM.

Jesse Binford, Clerk, January 17, 2007.

PASTOR'S REPORT

As pastor, I have the privilege of working with all the Boards and Committees of the church. Each has its own set of responsibilities, each has its own "personality," and I enjoyed working with each one this past year.

With the Deacons, I helped plan and carry out the worship ministry of our church. Of special significance were the "special" services: Easter sunrise, the weekday Lenten and Advent services/luncheons, the service recognizing lifetime achievement, and the Christmas Day Service preceding our Open Door Meal. This year, the weather cooperated for our Easter Sunrise Service, and we enjoyed the participation of Rev. Emilee Whitehurst, Executive Director of Austin Area Interreligious Ministries.

With the Deacons, I also helped plan and carry out our church's caring and welcoming ministries, which included visitation to folks in hospitals and rehab facilities, meeting with prospective new members, and hosting the new member orientations. In addition to these ministries, the Deacons and I supported the formation of an Interfaith Care Alliance "Care Team" consisting of Dan Jeffries, George Hetrick, Cecile Adam, and Marylin Harris. Thanks to Betty Bodman and all the Deacons...I enjoyed working with you very much!

With the Christian Outreach Board, I helped plan and carry out the outreach ministries of our church. In particular, I devoted time and energy to organizing freeze night shelter, the Christmas Day Open Door Dinner, and the sale of Equal Exchange Coffee and Chocolate, the proceeds of which were sent to Back Bay Mission. I made two trips to New Orleans, one to bring over $1,000 worth of Home Depot cards and tools donated by church members, and a second in my capacity as the South Central Conference's Disaster Network Coordinator. I continued my involvement in the Religion and Labor Network of Austin and Texas Impact, helping to plan and participate in a number of their events, some of which our church hosted. Thanks to John Goff for his leadership and for organizing the Front Porch Lunch, to Tommie Pinkard for representing our church on the Micah 6 Board, and to all the members of the Outreach Board for a productive year and for supporting my outreach passions. Thanks also to all of our freeze night, front port lunch, and Christmas Dinner participants.

With the Trustees, I participated in decision-making regarding the building and the finances. In particular, I spent a bit of time on the parking issue, initiating and participating in several meetings with the UT CO-OP, University Presbyterian Church, and University Baptist Church. Our chair, Reuel Nash, sent a proposal to the CO-OP in early January, and I'm hoping the CO-OP will accept it thereby alleviating some of our parking problems. Thanks to Reuel Nash and all the Trustees, to our new B & G guy Linclon Binford, and to David Ross, Lynne Lemley, and Dennis Murphy (our money folks)....I enjoyed working with you as much as I enjoyed working with the Deacons.

I worked the Centennial Committee developing plans for the renovations, a major new development in the life of our church in 2006. I cannot adequately thank all the members of the Centennial Committee who spent hours working with the architects, David and Evan, negotiating with the contractors, and keeping up with the day-to-day developments of the project. Special thanks to Don Brown, who was tireless and gracious in all his efforts, to Rambie Briggs, who began working to develop a closer relationship with LifeWorks, to Sharon Brown, who helped organize everyone who

wanted input on the colors and appliances, and to everyone who participated in some way, shape, or form to make our renovations a reality.

My involvement with the Christian Education Board was less than it was with the other Boards, in part because of meeting schedule conflicts, and in part because much of its work deals with the youth Sunday School program which I cannot participate in because it occurs during worship. However, to the extent that I did participate in the work of the Christian Education Board, I can say that the members of this Board have my utmost respect and support because in some ways their work is the most difficult in the church. This past year, they planned and carried out an on-going week-to-week program for our youth, recruited and trained people to participate in it, and developed new policies to ensure the safety of our young people. No easy task! My involvement in Christian Education focused mainly on leading the adult discussion group before worship, and co-leading a series with Whit Bodman on Jesus' identity. Thanks Whit...I always learn much from you. Thanks also to Liz Nash, Sunday School Superintendent, Doyal Pinkard, Christian Education Chair, Jen Howicz, who worked for countless hours on the Sunday School Safety Policy, all the Board Members, all the teachers, and all the folks who participated in the programs.

Toward the end of the year, I worked with the Nominating Committee, which is charged with recruiting members to serve on our various Boards. I made some suggestions and helped recruit a few people. Thanks to Matt Blackstock, Suzanne Bradford, and Paul Deisler, who is one of the hardest working and most responsible people I have ever met.

I want to express heartfelt thanks to Nodie Murphy, the Trio, and the Choir for their role in leading worship, attracting people to our church, and offering folks a place to share their spiritual gifts. Heartfelt thanks as well to Carol Barrett for her leadership, support, and advice as Moderator. Carol did a fantastic job for three years, and she was a real colleague in ministry to me at the Congregational Church of Austin UCC.

Finally, thanks to each and every one of you. As you may have heard me say: we don't *go* to church, God calls us to *create* the church, and we do so by investing our time, talent, and resources into the church. Thanks to each and every one of you for investing your lives into the church. May Christ's grace, God's love, and the Holy Spirit's power continue to guide us in this on-going creation we call the Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ.

Turned water into wine.

Transformation as a sign of God's presence in this world.
One of the most visible and dramatic transformations has been to our building. Handicap accessible entrances and first floor bathroom, better kitchen facility, more aesthetically pleasing nursery and fellowship hall, water drainage issues, more beautiful garden.
Incredible financial support and personal participation.

The membership of our church is constantly evolving. Spoke to a member who was unable to worship with us much throughout the year but came towards the end of the year and said he way a lot of new people he did not know. We have welcomed a number of new people into the life of our worship, entered into covenant with new members, integrated new folks into our church's ministry through the Boards, the choir, freeze night, the renovations, Micah 6, the new Interfaith Care Team.

In conversation with some an interest in bringing some kind of transformation to our church by facilitating some deeper spiritual dialogue amongst ourselves.

My own ministry changing and evolving. Transformations—rlna evolved and became an independent entity from the Equal Justice Center (which one of ourt newst members bill beardall directs). Spent more time this year visiting with folks and meeting with prospective new members. Took on a new ministry woith the UCC disaster network. These transformations occur, I hope, I believe, with our hearts, our minds, our wills attuned to, our spiritual eye and ears open to the kingdom of God Jesus preached, lived, revealed, disclosed, manifested, and calls us to enter into, receive, see, and live. The transformation of our church is really the transformation of human life.
May we continue to turn water into wine in 2007.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT
01.01.06 – 12.31.06

2006 IN-FLOWS

Budget-General Fund:	
Pledged income for 2006	151,360.79
Prepaid 2007 pledged income	14,229.20
Non-pledged income	13,251.00
Loose plate	3,791.75
Rental income (LifeWorks)	27,150.00
McNeely Fund	819.25
Miscellaneous	
Safeway/Randall's Good Neighbor	176.88
Refunds/Reimbursements	3,344.89
Total – Budget-General Fund	**214,123.76**
Designated Income (Local):	
Centennial Fund	58,725.00
Sanctuary flowers	623.00
Christmas dinner	665.00
Freeze Night	50.00
Equal Exchange	1,900.00
Calvert Foundation	1,250.00
T-shirts	830.00
Memorials	6,094.00
Front Porch Ministry	745.00
Nodie's Musical Slush Fund	301.65
Micah 6	25.00
Total – Designated Income (Local)	**71,208.65**
Designated Income (Outreach):	
Neighbors in Need	965.00
Christmas Fund	390.00
OCWM	960.00
Palestinian Child	987.33
Back Bay Mission	50.00
400 Voices	660.00
Strengthen the Church	265.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	2,120.00
Wil Brown	100.00
CROP Walk	50.00
New Orleans Re-Building	1,815.00
Total – Designated Income (Outreach)	**8,362.33**
TOTAL 2006 IN-FLOWS	**293,694.74**

Includes $536 retreat expenses + $6,000 to Capital

About 2006 In-Flows:

This has been an extraordinary year for our church in many ways, not least in terms of the financial support our members and friends have given its various ministries and projects. In total, giving during the year increased by $89,012.64 or 50.4%% over the preceding year. A large fraction of that ($58,725 or 66%) was money contributed to the Centennial Fund, but pledged giving increased by $34,401.79 or 29.4% (not even counting the 2006 pledges that were paid in 2005) and with only four relatively minor exceptions, giving designated for specific ministries, both local and outreach, showed increases too. Thank you one and all for your faithful and very generous support of our church!

About 2007 In-Flows:

At least in financial terms, moving from history (2006) to prophecy (2007) means moving from fact to opinion, and the latter is all I can offer here. That said, I think we should look to the year ahead with confidence. The giving that has been pledged for 2007 ($155, 606) is virtually identical to that pledged for 2006 ($155,805), and the church will continue to host LifeWorks in 2007 and benefit from its monthly rental payments (the lease agreement is due to be renewed in August). The only real unknown in the outlook for 2007 concerns the next phase of the Centennial Project and when the fundraising for it will begin. Regardless of the timing, however, the Centennial Project is sure to attract ample support from our members and friends, and there is also a reasonable chance that the next phase of the work will be partially funded by grant money secured by LifeWorks. Overall, my opinion is that General Fund and Designated Income giving in 2007 will be comparable to our experience in 2006, and that all of us together will provide whatever support is required to see the Centennial Project through.

Dennis Murphy
Acting Financial Secretary

CLERK'S REPORT: VITAL STATISTICS/MEMBERSHIP 2006

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP ON DECEMBER 31, 2005: 133

LOSSES 2006:

ADAMS	Jaimie
ADAMS	Michael
BROWN	Hulen
BROWN	Wilmer
FOSTER	David
FOSTER	Kathi
HALLADAY	Mary
HAMPTON	Kristen Galle
HARKER	Jen
HARKER	Ken
HARRIS	Lana
HARTER	Nicole
JENQUIN	Brita
LEWIS	Loretta
MCCOY	Mark
MURPHY	Ned
MURPHY	Seth
PUTZ	Andrea
PUTZ	Karl
SCHEEL	Weldon B.
SEEHAFER	Margaret
SIMPKIN	Ellen
SPENCER	Rev. Liz
ZWERLING	Becca

TOTAL LOSSES: 24

RECEIVED BY AFFIRMATION OF FAITH OR LETTER OF TRANSFER IN 2006:

BERARD	Linda
BORRERO	Diane
GORDAN	Cora
HETRICK	George
JEFFERY	Dan
MILES	Don
PHILLIPS	Betty
PHILLIPS	Rev. Hudson (Bill)
TAPIA	Tina

TOTAL GAINS: 9

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP ON DECEMBER 31, 2006: 118

Jesse Binford, Clerk, December 31, 2006

TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT AND BUDGET PROPOSAL
December 31, 2006 -- David W. Ross

SUMMARY

Financially, this has been an extraordinary year for *The Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ*! We have set records in most areas of income and program expenditures. Here is a summary of how our funds have evolved. Details are given in the following three pages. The final two pages detail the proposed budget for 2007. We have both a checking account and investments with the United Church Foundation (UCF), where our share values have increased substantially.

Local Budget The Local Budget is administered through the General Fund. We began the year with $18,242.80. Total contributed income (see Financial Secretary's report) was *$207,587.76, and accrual, including interest and dividends was $56.30. Expenditures were $195,395.54, for a surplus of $12,248.52. Expenses were 98% of the budget (2nd and 3rd of the following pages). The closing balance was **$30,491.32**.

Does not include $536 interest

Capital Fund We began the year with $59,216.38. Income consisted of *$6,000.00 (a portion of the Lifeworks rent). We transferred $30,000.00 to the Centennial Fund and spent $13,358.81 toward needed refurbishment of the porch roof and masonry. Accrual in the UCF was $2,847.88. The closing balance was **$24,705.45**.

Centennial Fund We began the year with $1,081.58 plus $6,705.00 that remained from the Sanctuary Windows Fund. Income consisted transfers of $30,000.00 and $7,500.00 from the Capital and Memorial Funds, respectively, donations of $58,725.00, and accrual in the UCF of $2,747.35. Expenditures so far have totaled $65,979.98. (See the Centennial committee report.) The closing balance was **$40,778.95**.

Memorial Fund We began the year with $8,519.46, received donations of $1,600.00, transferred $7,500.00 to Centennial, and spent $414.21 on choir folders (Weldon Scheel memorial). Accrual in the UCF was $179.44. The closing balance was **$2,384.69**.

Organ Fund We began the year with $5,049.59 accrued $515.93 in the UCF, and closed with a balance of **$5,565.52**.

McNeely Funds The legacy from the McNeely estate is kept in a small CD and a UCF fund, which together began the year at $34,615.03. We received $819.25 in dividends from the UCF into the Local Budget (John McNeely's "posthumous pledge"). Additional UCF and CD accrual of $2,421.91 led to a final balance of **$37,036.94**.

Miscellaneous Pass-though Items As detailed on the 3rd of the following pages, we began the year with a balance of $6,945 in designated or pass-through funds. We took in $19,787 and doled out $18,158, for a final balance of **$8,574**, some to be paid out soon.

*The Local Budget and Capital income totals add to give the Financial Secretary's total.

BUDGET PROPOSAL FOR 2007

In October 2006, the Budget Committee (Dave Ross, Gail Christeson, Sara Ross, Jennifer Howicz, and Betty Bodman) assessed by e-mail the proposals of the Coordinating Council and Boards and proposed a budget, amended by the Trustees, that totals $223, 957. The detailed proposal and further explanation is given in the 4th and 5th of the following pages.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

	Current	Previous	Change
Assets	**31 Dec 06**	**31 Dec 05**	
Bank of America			
Checking Account	$ 34,535.21	$27,251.96	$7,283.25
* General Fund	$5,998.89	$6,195.69	($196.80)
* Capital Fund	$7,565.49	$4,924.30	$2,641.19
* Centennial Fund (Windows fund added)	$11,031.60	$1,081.58	$9,950.02
Windows	$0.00	$7,905.00	($7,905.00)
* Memorial fund	$1,366.91	$181.12	$1,185.79
Deacons' Emergency Fund	$1,846.64	$2,486.64	($640.00)
Sanctuary flowers	$524.63	$434.63	$90.00
Christmas dinner	$964.65	$294.65	$670.00
** Palestinian Child fund	$402.52	$361.95	$40.57
Front Porch	$0.00	$177.40	($177.40)
Micah 6 concert proceeds plus	$0.00	$399.00	($399,00)
** OCWM special appeal	$960.00	$0.00	$960.00
Nodie's Music fund	$301.65	$0.00	$301.65
** Christmas fund	$350.00	$390.00	($40.00)
** NIIN	$50.00	$0.00	$50.00
Deacons' Remembrance Fund	$188.83	$312.00	($123.17)
** Back Bay T-shirt sale (was Bike trip)	$70.00	$30.00	$40.00
** Equal Exchange	$666.00	($42.00)	$708.00
** Lifeworks security deposit	$2,100.00	$2,100.00	$0.00
CD (McNeely Estate)	$2,961.07	$2,886.82	$74.25
United Church Foundation			
McNeely Account (formerly Wells Fargo in part)	$34,075.87	$31,728.21	$2,347.66
Capital, Memorial & Organ Fund	$77,963.04	$79,727.12	($1,764.08)
* General Fund	$24,492.43	$12,047.11	$12,445.32
* Capital Fund	$17,139.96	$54,292.08	($37,152.13)
Organ Fund	$5,565.52	$5,049.59	$515.93
* Centennial Fund	$29,747.35	$0.00	$29,747.35
* Memorial Fund	$1,017.78	$8,338.34	($7,320.56)
General fund total	$30,491.32	$18,242.80	$12,248.52
Capital fund total	$24,705.45	$59,216.38	($34,510.94)
Centennial fund total (includes Windows)	$40,778.95	$8,986.58	$31,792.37
Memorial fund total	$2,334.69	$8,519.46	($6,134.77)
Organ fund total	$5,565.52	$5,049.59	$515.93
McNeely Fund total	$37,036.94	$34,615.03	$2,421.91
Miscellaneous (pass through)) total	$8,429.92	$6,944.27	$1,628.05
Total Gross Assets	**$149,535.19**	**$141,594.11**	**$7,941.08**

*Some switching between checking and UC Foundation in the General, Capital and Centennial and Memorial accounts has been done.
Items committed to particular designated entities also count as liabilities. With these subtracted, **Total Net Assets are **$144,936.67**

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN
2006 BUDGET vs. EXPENSES

	Budget	Spent	Difference	Ratio
Pastoral Leadership - Tom VandeStadt				
10 Salary	$42,821.64	$42,821.56	$0.08	1.00
11 Annuity	9,495.03	9,495.08	(0.05)	1.00
12 Health Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00	
13 Family Protection	1,017.33	1,017.33	0.00	1.00
14 Continuing Education	462.00	462.00	0.00	1.00
15 Housing Allowance	25,000.00	25,000.08	(0.08)	1.00
16 Travel Expenses	1,153.00	1,153.00	0.00	1.00
Pastoral Leadership - Subtotal	$79,949.00	$79,949.05	($0.05)	1.00
Cooperative Responsibilities				
21 Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)	$14,100.00	$14,100.00	$0.00	1.00
22 Austin Area Interreligious Ministries	600.00	600.00	0.00	1.00
23 Brazos Association Dues	544.00	544.00	0.00	1.00
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	300.00	300.00	0.00	1.00
29 Back Bay Mission	1,000.00	1,000.00	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	363.00	362.88	0.12	1.00
36 Micah 6	2,500.00	2,496.00	4.00	1.00
37Mission Outreach - freeze night staff	1,200.00	909.75	290.25	0.76
38Religion labor network	500.00	500.00	0.00	1.00
Cooperative Responsibilities: Subtotal	$22,067.00	$21,772.63	$294.37	0.99
Local Church Programs				
41 Pastor's Discretionary Fund	$200.00	$199.73	$0.27	1.00
42 Secretary - Salary	13,790.00	13,789.92	0.08	1.00
43 Secretary – FICA & Medicare	1,054.94	1,054.84	0.09	1.00
44 Music for Worship	400.00	365.00	35.00	0.91
45 Musicians	9,000.00	8,768.00	232.00	0.97
46 Choral Director - Salary	6,077.00	6,077.00	0.00	1.00
47 Choral Director - FICA & Medicare	464.89	464.88	0.01	1.00
48 Christian Education	2,825.00	1,280.94	1,544.06	0.45
50 Supplies - office, janitor, kitchen	4,300.00	3,499.53	800.47	0.81
51 Postage	800.00	1,257.77	(457.77)	1.57
53 Electricity & Water	12,500.00	12,592.17	(92.17)	1.01
54 Gas	2,500.00	1,994.36	505.64	0.80
55 Telephone	3,000.00	2,653.93	346.07	0.88
57 Property Maintenance	14,000.00	14,033.75	(33.75)	1.00
59 Janitor - Salary	11,680.00	9,990.01	1,689.99	0.86
60 Janitor - FICA & Medicare)	893.52	764.24	129.28	0.86
61 SCC Annual Meeting Delegates	200.00	138.00	162.00	0.46
63 Membership outreach	$2,723.00	$2,701.09	$21.91	0.99
64 Pulpit Supply - Speaker Stipends	900.00	300.00	600.00	0.33
65 Nursery Attendants	2,200.00	1,826.00	374.00	0.83

	Budget	Spent	Difference	Ratio
66 Insurance	4,000.00	6,764.97	(2,764.97)	1.69
66b Workers Compensation	2,250.00	1,930.00	320.00	0.86
67 Fun & Fellowship Committee Expense	375.00	287.16	87.84	0.77
68 Archives	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00
69 Deacons' Discretionary Fund	500.00	364.53	135.47	0.73
70 Printing - Newsletter & Bulletin	180.00	171.30	8.70	0.95
73 Outreach discretionary	400.00	307.68	92.32	0.77
Local Church Programs: Subtotal	$97,413.34	$93,576.79	$3,836.56	0.96
76TOTAL	**$199,429.35**	**$195,298.47**	**$4,130.88**	**0.98**
IRS correction**		($102.93)		
GRAND TOTAL	**$199,429.35**	**$195,395.54**	**$4,033.81**	**0.98**

**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	**12/31/05**			**12/31/06**
Item	**Initial value**	**Income**	**Payout**	**Final Value**
Deacons emergency – Karasi fund	$2,487	$4,360	$5,000	$1,847
One Great Hour	0	2,120	2,120	0
Neighbors in Need	0	965	915	50
Christmas Fund	390	390	430	350
Flowers (Easter Lilies, Poinsettias)	435	623	533	525
Christmas dinner/credit reimburse	295	670	0	965
Strengthen church	0	265	265	0
Equal Exchange	(42)	1,900	1,192	666
Palestinian Child	362	987	946	402
Calvert Foundation	0	1,250	1,250	0
New Orleans Rebuilding	0	1,915	1,915	0
Back Bay / T-shirt sale	30	880	840	70
400 voices	0	660	660	0
Front Porch Ministry	177	745	775	147
Deacons Remembrance fund	312	134	257	189
Spring retreat	0	536	536	0
Music Fund	0	302	0	302
Micah 6/Concert proceeds	399	25	424	0
Freeze Night	0	50	50	0
OCWM special appeal	0	960	0	960
CROP Walk	0	50	50	0
Lifeworks security deposit	2,100	0	0	2,100
TOTALS	**$6,945**	**$19.787**	**$18,158**	**$8,,574**

2007 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Since pledges for 2007 are at almost exactly the same level as for 2006, we expect income, including UCF accrual, to be about the same as last year, or $210K. This would lead to a deficit of approximately $14K, which is more than offset by our initial balance of $30K.

The Trustees have approved the following budget for presentation to the Congregation.

	CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN	2007 PROPOSAL			
		Adopted 2006	Proposed 2007	$ change	% change
	Pastoral Leadership - Tom VandeStadt				
10	Salary	42,822	45,391 ← 46,891		
11	Annuity	9,495	10,065		
12	Health Insurance	0	0		
13	Family Protection	1,017	1,078		
14	Continuing Education	462	490		
15	Housing Allowance	25,000	26,500 ← 25,000		
16	Travel Expenses	1,153	1,222		
*	**Pastoral Leadership Subtotal**	**$79,949**	**$84,746**	**$4,797**	**6.0%**
	Cooperative Responsibilities				
21	Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)	14,100	14,100	0	0.0%
22	Austin Area Interreligious Ministries	600	600	0	0.0%
23	Brazos Association Dues	540	540	0	0.0%
24	Texas Conference of Churches	30	30	0	0.0%
25	National Council of Churches	15	100	85	566.7%
26	World Council of Churches	15	100	85	566.7%
27	Seminary support	300	500	200	66.7%
29	Back Bay Mission	1,000	1,000	0	0.0%
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	363	363	0	0.0%
36	Micah 6	2,500	3,500	1,000	40.0%
37	Ministry to Homeless	1,200	2,200	1,000	83.3%
38	Religion Labor Network	500	500	0	0.0%
	Cooperative Responsibilities Subtotal	**$22,063**	**$24,433**	**$2,370**	**10.7%**
	Local Church Programs				
41	Pastor's Discretionary Fund	200	1,000	800	400.0%
42	Administrative Assistant - Salary	13,790	14,480	690	5.0%
43	Admin. Assistant - FICA & Med @7.65%	1,055	1,108	53	5.0%
44	Music for Worship	400	450	50	12.5%
45	Musicians	9,000	11,200	2,200	24.4%
46	Choral Director - Salary	6,077	6,442	365	6.0%
47	Choral Director - FICA & Medicare @7.65%	465	493	28	6.0%
48	Christian Education	2,825	1,975	(850)	40.7%
48B	Church Safety Policies Implementation		2,000	new	with above NEW

		Adopted 2006	Proposed 2007	$ change	% change
50	Supplies - office, janitor, kitchen	4,300	4,000	(300)	-7.0%
51	Postage	800	1,300	500	62.5%
53	Electricity & Water	12,500	14,000	1,500	12.0%
54	Gas	2,500	2,100	(400)	-16.0%
55	Telephone	3,000	2,800	(200)	-6.7%
57	Building Maintenance	14,000	10,000	0	0.0%
57B	Classroom Improvements		4,000		with above
57C	Garden Maintenance		300	300	NA
59	Janitor - Salary	11,680	13,750	2070	17.7%
60	Janitor - FICA & Medicare	894	1,052	158	17.7%
61	UCC Meeting Expenses	300	600	300	100.0%
63	Membership Outreach	2,723	1,255	(1,468)	-53.9%
64	Pulpit Supply - Speaker Stipends	900	900	0	0.0%
65	Nursery Attendants	2,200	2,600	400	18.2%
66	Insurance	4,000	8,900	4,900	122.5%
66B	Workers Compensation	2,250	3,000	750	33.3%
67	Fun & Fellowship Committee Expense	375	375	0	0.0%
68	Archives	100	100	0	0.0%
69	Deacons' Discretionary Fund	500	500	0	0.0%
70	Admin Assistant mileage (formerly printing)	180	200	20	11.1%
72	Parking		3,500	3,500	NA
73	Outreach discretionary	400	400	0	0.0%
	Local Church Programs: Subtotal	**$97,413**	**$114,778**	**$17,365**	**17.8%**
76	**TOTAL**	**$199,225**	**$223,957**	**$24,532**	**12.3%**

Notes

* Pastoral leadership set by Coordinating Council - distribution to be determined later

25 26 and 27 Increases proposed by Outreach Board

35 Religious Coalition in lieu of drainage fee. Rate set by City of Austin

36 Micah 6 increases proposed by Outreach Board

37 Freeze Nights changed to Ministry to Homeless – expanded to include Front Porch Lunch

42 Admin Assistant increase 5% set by Coordinating Council

45 Musicians increased to $50 (violin/cello) and $90/weeek (piano)

46 Choral Director increase 6% set by Coordinating Council

48 And 48B CE requests and Safety Policy requested by CE Board

50 Office, janitor, & kitchen supplies combined by Trustees. Janitor supplies, line 58, deleted.

57 57B and 57C Maintenance includes Trustees est., $10,000, CE Board request, $4,000 to address safety concerns, and a new Grounds Maintenance category at $300.

59 Janitor salary increased to $12.50/hour for custodial and maintenance work

61 Meeting expenses broadened to include Pastor and Lay representatives to all UCC meetings

63 Membership Outreach requested by Deacons

65 Nursery Attendants – raised to $50/weekl - CE Board

66 Insurance rates going up but not fully known - Trustees

66B Workers comp going up but not fully known - Trustees

72 Parking category restored – Trustees working on deal with Coop garage

↑ Now accepted.

Report from Coordinating Council and the Moderator for 2006

Thank you to all the volunteers who serve with such joy and energy. The members of the Coordinating Council over the past three years of my tenure have been especially dedicated.

There are rituals in the life of a church that we all recognize – communion and confirmation for example. There are other kinds of rituals – service and learning – that are equally meaningful. Our life together, because of all kinds of rituals, has been meaningful this year.

Food seems to be an important ritual for our church from the coffee hours to the pot lucks, to the special worship and luncheons for those who cannot regularly attend, to the front porch lunches for the homeless. And then there were all those delicious treat sales as fundraisers hosted by the children – cookies, cupcakes, and chocolate roses. A true highlight was the Spring Festival and Barbeque hosted by the Boards of Christian Education and Christian Outreach. Finally, there was the fair trade coffee and chocolate to buy each month.

Another series of rituals surrounded caring for our environment. The garden in our patio was planted and carefully tended. Twice we climbed Mr. Bonnell for clean-up days to better prepare the site for our wonderful sunrise Easter worship. The flowering trees bloomed again (although it appears we have a new planting "opportunity") and a waterfall was dedicated in a member's backyard. We also had our first ever Plumeria Festival!

Our rituals of learning included regular adult, youth, and children's Sunday School. Retreats at Slumber Falls and Saturday workshops gave us a chance to think in different settings while the Lenten study series brought new questions and challenges organized around the theme "Who Do You Say I Am?" Probably our most enjoyable learning ritual continues to be the music and hymn instruction offered during the Children's Time during worship.

Rev. VandeStadt helped the church more clearly discern a vision of justice for our community. He traveled to New Orleans in February carrying with him donations of money and tools to aid in rebuilding. The "Torture is Wrong" banner was hung. Members participated in Crop Walk. We contributed to the Calvert Social Investment Fund. We hosted a showing of the film, Letters from the Other Side, followed by a discussion with immigrant workers and the filmmaker. A forum on Comprehensive Immigration Reform was hosted at our church. As part of the Religion and Labor Network, Rev. VandeStadt shared with us his experiences in helping immigrants secure payment for their work. And it was his suggestion that the church's Centennial be celebrated by making the church truly accessible and welcoming for the next hundred years that led to the creation of the Centennial Committee. The Committee has, with the generous support of members and talented professionals, embraced and acted upon that suggestion.

Several new members joined the church and we invite them to share their rituals so that we may celebrate those as well.

At the beginning of 2007, we have been challenged by our minister to add another aspect of ritual to our common life. Can we walk with one another on a shared journey towards transcendence? Is our trust and faith deep enough to expand our spiritual practice? I look forward to hearing your response to Rev. Vandestadt's call.

Carol D. Barrett, Outgoing Moderator

Board of Christian Education

Report to be distributed

Board of Christian Education Report 2006

The activity that is at the heart of the Christian Education is the often unsung day-to-day, week-to-week, operation of the Sunday School program: the children's class and the youth group, held during part of the 11:00 Sunday worship service, and the adult Sunday School class, led by the pastor at 10:00 prior to the worship service. We owe a debt of gratitude to those dedicated teachers and assistants, and to those volunteers who taught in the "Sunday School Lite" program during the summer.

The Board faced a couple of major issues during the year: to provide a safe environment for our children and youth, and to provide high quality childcare.

- The Board began to look into the development of safety standards and regulations for children's programs in 2005. There were many things to consider: staffing requirements, physical safety, background checks on staff, implementation of the standards once developed. Jen Howicz, Robin Chapman, and Liz Nash worked very hard on this, and the Board's recommendations have been incorporated into the Coordinating Council's safety recommendations that are to be voted on at the congregation's Annual Meeting. The BCE does reserve the right to establish higher standards within its own programs if it deems necessary.
- In the past, we have often had *ad hoc* childcare arrangements, running around finding volunteers if for some reason our scheduled sitter was unable to come. The Board desired to change from a "baby-sitting" program to a more professional childcare operation. This desire became a reality in August when Melissa McFerrin assumed the childcare duties. She has done a superb job, and Paula Fracasso deserves a finder's fee for referring Melissa to us.
- Note: the budget increases for the CE program this year reflect the need to increase Melissa's compensation and to allow for any contingencies that may come up in implementing safety standards.

The CE program had many activities during the year:

- ✓ An adult education short course was led by Rev. Tom VandeStadt and Rev. Whit Bodman on "Who do you say that I am?"
- ✓ A family fun night was held on Friday, February 10th, to make Valentine candies, The following Sunday these were sold after church to raise money for our sponsorship program of a Palestinian child in Israel (done in coordination with Christian Outreach). The children raised $224 for this project.
- ✓ The Spring Retreat was held at Slumber Falls Camp on April 28-30, in coordination with the Deacons. Ms. Carla Cheatham led a workshop on personality, temperament, and spirituality. (This was so successful that the Deacons had another workshop with Carla on a Saturday at church.)
- ✓ Spring Fiesta was held on Sunday, May 21st. Christian Outreach (John Goff) did the barbecue, Jen Howicz managed the games, and the kids helped man the booths and games. A great time was had, and several hundred dollars were raised for our child sponsorship project.

- ✓ After the summer, the Back-to-Sunday School Breakfast was held on Sunday, August 20th, to kick off the start of the school year.
- ✓ On September 23rd CPR training was given to 7 teachers and others involved in the CE program by Tracie Zinda RN, recommended to us by Board member Dr. Nancy Binford. We are now in good shape with respect to CPR.
- ✓ On Saturday, November 4th, teachers, Board members, and friends had a cleanup day for the second floor children's classroom.
- ✓ Family Fun Night was held on Friday, December 1st. Participants made Christmas tree ornaments and decorated the church Christmas tree for the fellowship room. (A little more money was raised by selling ornaments the following Sunday.)
- ✓ The children's Christmas Pageant was held on Sunday, December 24th. This year they did a version of *Las Posadas* that Liz Nash and Jen Howicz developed from a program Liz found on the UCC web site.

During this year the Board will continue to be dedicated to improving the quality of our programs. Among the things to look for:

- The new nursery and childcare setting in the just remodeled first floor of the Towery wing.
- Tom VandeStadt will lead a Lenten Workshop on Walter Brueggeman's *The Prophetic Imagination*.
- There will be some fun-filled intergenerational activities.
- There will be a youth work group in Washington D.C. in June, in coordination with United Christian Church and other Disciple's churches.
- Church Spring Retreat at Shumber Falls.
- Dr. Whit Bodman is considering offering an adult CE short course on Islam and the Arab world sometime in the fall.

Our thanks to all who have helped us during the past year!

Annual Report of the Board of Deacons 2006

The Board of Deacons has three broad areas of responsibility including worship, pastoral care and membership. We approach the tasks associated with each of these while attempting to reflect the congregation's statement of faith.

Worship

We assist and support the Pastor in our weekly worship services and in special services during the year.

The tradition of holding an Easter Sunrise service on Mt. Bonnell continued. There was some discussion of the need to scale back the scope of the service although no changes in planning or execution have been decided on.

The Lenten and Advent services and luncheons are another tradition that the deacons oversee. These services are for anyone who wishes to attend, but particular attention is paid to including our members who cannot regularly attend Sunday services.

We also organized a special service this fall to honor those in our congregation who have given a lifetime of service to the church. We honored not only long-time members of this congregation, but also those who have served the church at large throughout their lives.

Steve Domingue has continued to take responsibility for recruiting and scheduling ushers; we rotate the job of communion steward (preparing communion trays, cleaning up after communion).

The deacons are responsible for the music committee, but because our glorious choir director, Nodie Murphy, gives so much of her time and talent, this committee has not been active for some years. For reasons to be outlined at annual meeting, we are suggesting a change in the composition of this committee; it would become an ad hoc fine arts committee, overseeing not only music, but also art in any form that might be included in worship.

Pastoral care

The congregation generously supported the Deacons' Emergency Fund so that we were able to send $5,000 to the family of Judith Karasi.

At the suggestion of Marilyn Vache, we created the Card Table. This is simply a supply of greeting cards that remain available to the congregation, should anyone wish to respond to the joys and concerns from the service with a personal note.

We hoped to hold a book/DVD/video sale this past fall to benefit the Deacons' Remembrance Fund. This fund is a non-budgeted item the deacons use to make contributions in memory of church members' loved ones who have died. The sale was postponed in part due to our Centennial Project construction; we are hoping to hold the sale this spring and thank all those who have made donations so far.

Membership

The deacons have held three new member/visitor information sessions throughout the year. Nine new members have been welcomed into the congregation: Dianne Borrero, Linda Berard, Cora Gordan, George Hetrick, Dan Jeffery, Don Miles, Bill and Betty Phillips and Tiina Tapia..

The congregation voted on a new standard for the determination of a quorum for meetings. It was decided that the number that constitutes a quorum would be based on the number of those members living within a 100 mile radius of the church. The rationale for this change was the number of members living at a great distance from the church who are unable to attend meetings but who wish to remain on the membership role. This made achieving a quorum more difficult. At Annual Meeting more wording will be put before the congregation to provide consistency throughout the Constitution and Bylaws.

The deacons have been involved in advertising to help those searching for the perfect church community find us. Most visitors report using the UCC web-site to locate us. We have decided to discontinue advertising in the Austin Chronicle but to continue print and on-line ads with the Yellow Pages.

A series of friendship Suppers in people's homes have allowed us to get to know both old and new members in a way different from the usual Sunday morning fellowship hour.

The Fellowship Hour has continued to be a favorite time to catch up on what other members are up to as well as to celebrate our comings and goings as a congregation.

A picture directory of the congregation was created. This directory will remain in the Fellowship Hall; new faces will be added on a regular basis.

A spring workshop with Carla Cheatham focused on gifts and talents that individuals bring to their church community. An additional one-day Saturday workshop was organized, since some people could not commit to the longer weekend session

In order to make the church more accessible to all, we need parking which is convenient for those unable to walk to and from distant parking lots and we are hopeful that the problem with parking may be close to being solved. Conversations are underway with the managers of the new parking garage on the Southwest corner of 23rd St. and San Antonio and we expect to have adequate parking available to us in that garage on Sunday mornings. Additionally, when the *Cadeau* closes in January, we will attempt to renegotiate our use of the lot directly behind the church.

Additional items of note

The Deacons voted to approve a contribution to the Centennial Project from the Memorial Fund, which we oversee. We have made a request to the Centennial Project Committee that some plaque of recognition be placed for the deceased in whose memory the money was given. We suggested the newly re-landscaped garden, when it is completed, as an appropriate site for the plaque.

The Deacons and the Pastor have been meeting with individuals who have requested to be "in care" with our congregation. These include Will Heimbach, Linda Berard and Dan Nieto. Their requests are to be brought before the congregation at the Annual Meeting.

The Deacons would like to recognize four people from our congregation who have formed an Interfaith Care Team. These people are Dan Jeffery, Marilyn Harris, Cecile Adam and George Hetrick. They care for two brothers in the Austin area. This Care Team is working independently of the deacons, but we would like to applaud their efforts and offer to them our support or help should they desire it.

Finally, the deacons would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to the following;

The musicians who add so much to the worship service;
- All the choir members
- Aaron Carter-Cohen
- Andy Streitelmeier
- Robin Rosson
- Amy Harris
- Melanie Wilkins
- Nodie Murphy, our musically fearless leader

For managing the church website
- Sara Ross

For organizing the Fellowship Dinners:
- Andria Miner
- Vic Appel

For Fun and Fellowship
- Pat Oakes
- Tommie Pinkard

For the picture directory
- Ruell Nash

For organizing the retreat and workshop
- Marilyn Vache

Our ushers and welcomers

TRUSTEE REPORT

The main responsibilities of the Trustees are the Church's physical facilities and the Church's finances.

For management of the Church's finances, the Trustees work closely with the Financial Secretary and Treasurer. Early in 2006, in lieu of an actual audit, we investigated the procedures used by those who handle money for the Church. Based on this investigation, we decided to have two people count the loose offering cash, which protects them and the Church. Their records can now be compared to deposit records from the bank to ensure the money is handled properly.

With an aging building like ours, maintenance is a never ending struggle. Our tasks have ranged from locks and rats to water intrusion and masonry. The air conditioning, heating, and plumbing systems are complicated and we all notice when something is not right. This year we have been fortunate to have a large fund available for major expenses. Next year, we will begin a program of evaluating the lifetimes of our major systems (e.g. roof and boiler) and saving for their inevitable replacement. The building maintenance effort is led by Lincoln Binford.

The physical facilities of the Church include the grounds. In the past grounds maintenance and improvements have been ad hoc, which has been frustrating to those involved. This year we decided to "organize to succeed" by creating and funding a separate grounds committee made up of interested and qualified volunteers, led by Nancy Edison and Vic Appel. They have a budget and authority to use it.

The Trustees have worked this year with Centennial Committee on the Centennial Project proposal. The Trustees came up with funding plans for the project which were adopted by the Church last May. We have held joint meetings with the Centennial Committee before and during construction. Phase I of the project is nearly complete.

Another area of concern is parking. The Trustees arranged for outreach lunch volunteer parking at the University Baptist Church and are currently negotiating with The University Co-op for Sunday parking.

The Church has Lifeworks as a tenant in the Appel Room and the third floor of the Towery Wing. In order to maintain a good relationship with our tenant, the Trustees have asked Rambie Briggs to serve as our liaison to Lifeworks. They have brought several maintenance issues to our attention and we are working with them to possibly obtain funding for renovations that will be mutually beneficial.

I'd like to thank our outgoing Trustees John Moore and Gail Christeson for their service and welcome incoming Trustees Carol Barrett and Don Brown.
--Reuel Nash

Board of Christian Outreach Annual Report for 2006

The Board of Christian Outreach has undertaken a number of outreach ministries during the past year. These ministries serve to bring our members into active engagement with the world around us in response to our church's vision of Christ's call for compassion, justice and stewardship.

The Front Porch Lunch, which serves a free lunch to Lifeworks' homeless youth clients, was expanded to a twice-a-month program, and funding for the lunch was transitioned from member donations to a line-item in the church budget. The lunch continues to receive ample support from church volunteers, who purchase and deliver the food, prepare sandwiches, serve the lunch and clean up afterwards.

The Freeze Night Shelter also continues with strong support. During the winter months, we open up the Appel room for Lifeworks clients to stay the night, and we pay for Lifeworks professional staff to spend the night. Our volunteers cook and serve meals for the shelter. We split nights and costs with Vincare Ministry at St. Austin's Catholic Church.

At Christmas, we once again served a meal for homeless, and as always we had tremendous support from church volunteers and a great turnout for the meal.

Several church members continue to volunteer regularly for the Micah 6 food pantry. The pantry serves more and more clients every month. The pantry will soon move to the University Presbyterian Church. The Micah 6 organization is expanding with the addition of several new churches, and continues to be strong.

Earlier in the year, we participated in the "Torture is Wrong" campaign, which included hanging a banner during Sundays. Although a regrettably few churches in Austin participated, we continue to hang our banner.

The Outreach Board had a number of activities centered on fair trade. Through the year we sold fair-trade coffee and chocolate, and do a very strong business among the congregation. Some of the profits from those sales went to purchase "sweat-free" T-shirts, manufactured by a women's cooperative in Nicaragua and distributed in the US without markup by the Presbyterian Church. The Outreach Board, along with several of our youth, then silk-screened the shirts with new Congregational Church of Austin designs created by several members of our church. These were hot items among our members, and all proceeds (not just profits) from these sales were designated for Back Bay Mission. Additional profits from the coffee and chocolate sales also went to Back Bay Mission. We also raised, through donations of our members, over $1200 to invest long-term in the Calvert Social Investment Fund, a national and international micro-lending organization.

Through Tom's tireless efforts with the Religion and Labor Network, we have been actively involved in local immigrant and worker rights issues, particularly issues such as

advocating on behalf of day laborers for unpaid wages, and advocating on behalf of the Cap Metro bus drivers in their dispute with management. We hosted the film "Letters from the Other Side", a compelling look at the effect of immigration on Mexican families and communities.

For the second year in a row, we held a drive for donations of school supplies and cash to support the "400 Voices" project, which assists a school in Kosovo trying to rebuild following the war there, and connects with letters children there and here in Austin. We collected well over 100 lbs of supplies and over $500 in cash. Sunday School children helped to fill the backpacks.

In collaboration with the CE Board, we helped to raise funds for the church's sponsorship of Hala Sameer, a Palestinian child. These funds go to help Hala and other children attend a school in east Jerusalem.

The Outreach Board also continues to sponsor a semi-annual clean-up of Mt. Bonnel, which is always well-attended by our members. Mt. Bonnel is where we hold our Easter Sunrise service – it is a beautiful natural setting that needs a bit of TLC to mitigate the effects of human usage.

In October, the Outreach Board hosted Texas Impact's showing of Al Gore's movie "An Inconvenient Truth" about global warming and what can be done about it. John Goff's colleague at the UT Institute for Geophysics, Dr. Charles Jackson, was on hand to answer questions from an expert's perspective on climate modeling.

Stewardship Committee

This year the stewardship committee was worried that the church's people programs would be in direct competition with our building campaign for the congregation's support. Early indications are that this is not the case! The enlistment committee would especially like to thank Doyal Pinkard, Will Heimbach, Jim Howicz and Reuel Nash for their presentations on behalf of the boards of Christian Education and Outreach, Deacons, and Trustees.

Briefly, this years campaign resulted in:

- 39 pledges, less than last year but …
- $155,626 of pledged income, very nearly the same as the $155,825 pledged this time last year.
- 12 Time and Talent pledges. This information has been collated and is available, as are the previous 2 years time and talent surveys. We need to make more use of these valuable gifts.
- We will not need to revise the boards' wish lists.

The stewardship committee is very grateful to the entire congregation for its support. We hope that we will not only make the place *where* we gather more beautiful and useful for our purposes, your pledges of time, effort, and resources will mean that *when* we gather here it will be as a truly Christian community.

Sara Ross, Lynne Lemley & Fran Briggs

CENTENNIAL PROJECT COMMITTEE

In 2004, knowing that the year 2006 would mark an important centennial—construction of the congregation's first church building, which was at the corner of Colorado Street and West Ninth—the Board of Trustees appointed a committee to recommend a project to recognize and celebrate the centennial.

The Centennial Project Committee, composed of [illegible] 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, the Committee agreed that a Centennial Project should make the current buildings fully accessible and inviting to all who would enter.

After several months of conversations with church members, the Coordinating Council and the Trustees, an initial outline of the project was created. Further discussions among committee members and with Evan Taniguchi, a highly-respected and talented Austin architect, the Trustees approved a contract with Mr. Taniguchi to prepare a preliminary design and cost estimates for the Centennial Project.

On May 7, 2006, with much care and enthusiasm, the congregation approved the motions by the Trustees to embark on a Centennial Project to consist of the following three stages:

(1) Creation of an accessible restroom, a better kitchen, a nursery, more efficient storage; installation of a safe wheelchair ramp; prevention and repair of rainwater damage to the building; easier access to the front entrance through a more attractive garden area;
(2) Making the exterior of the church much more attractive to all comers;
(3) Installation of an elevator for vertical accessibility from the choir room level to the third floor, along with lifts to enable wheelchair movement from the choir room to the Appel room.

The congregation approved the commitment of at least $30,000 from the capital fund to the cost of Stage 1, and of at least $5000 to each of Stages 2 and 3. The Trustees and the Board of Deacons allocated additional funds from several sources. The congregation responded generously with pledges and contributions, enabling work on the project to begin in August.

Thanks to fine work by the architects, contractor, subcontractors, minister, church staff and many, many members and friends, Stage 1 has proceeded well.

As of the date of this report, the church has a new kitchen, accessible restroom, nursery, storage area, renovated children's play area, and greater security against rainwater damage. Work is about to begin on a wheelchair ramp entrance to the Towery Wing and on a garden enhancement project that will provide wheelchair access through the garden to the front entrance.

After Stage 1 of the Centennial Project is completed and celebrated, the next decision to be made will be when to embark on Stage 2 and Stage 3.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE TO THE JANUARY 2007 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF AUSTIN (UCC), AUSTIN, TEXAS.

At the Annual Meeting in January 2006, a slate or nominations was presented by the Nominating Committee and approved by the congregation. The slate contained nominations for all but four positions for which it had not proved possible to find nominees by the time of the Annual Meeting. Within the first, few months of 2006 the Nominating Committee found willing nominees for three of the four positions, which were then approved by the congregation. The fourth position, on the Board of Christian Outreach could not be filled despite broad canvassing and advertising by the Nominating Committee; it remained unfilled for the remainder of 2006.

In the fall, a delegate to the Brazos Association's Executive Committee had to resign for reasons of health. The Nominating Committee was able to fill that vacancy, with congregational approval, for the rest of the term involved.

In the course of developing this year's slate of nominees, an error was found. On March 20, 2006 Dr. Joseph McMillan was nominated to fill a vacancy on the Board of Trustees. In the motion approved by the congregation at that time, it was stated that he would serve for a three-year term.

The error was that the vacancy was not for a full, three-year term but for a two-year, partial term. A three-year term would have led to a distribution of membership on the Board of Trustees, by years, out of keeping with the By-Laws. This matter was raised with Dr. McMillan who agreed to change from a three-year term of service to a two-year, partial one to correct the error and bring the membership of the Board of

Trustees into line with the By-Laws. However, since the original, March 20 motion was passed by the congregation, passage of a motion is needed to correct the error. It is proposed that, at the Annual Meeting in January 2007, the following proposed motion be approved:

PROPOSED MOTION: *That the motion of March 20, 2006 be corrected by substituting the words, "two-year, partial term" for the words, "three-year term" where it refers to service by Dr. Joseph McMillan on the Board of Trustees.*

The slate of nominations proposed for approval by the congregation at the January 2007 Annual Meeting is shown in the table that begins on the next page. The table shows incumbents whose terms continue, as well as nominees to fill vacancies. All terms of service are indicated in the table.

The Nominating Committee submits this report to the congregation and thanks those who assisted the Committee in securing nominees. The Committee also thanks the nominees, themselves, for being willing to serve as shown..

Respectfully submitted in January 2007 by the Nominating Committee:

Suzanne Bradford, Chair,

Paul Deisler, Secretary and

Mathis Blackstock, Member

INCUMBENTS AND NOMINEES, 2007 ANNUAL MEETING*

(NOMINEES SHOWN IN UPPER CASE ITALICS, UNDERLINED)

Board, Committee or Position	Members, Terms Ending Following The End Of:		
	2009	2008	2007
THREE YEAR TERMS			
Moderator	*JOHN GOFF*		
Clerk		Jesse Binford	
Board of Trustees	*CAROL BARRETT*	Reuel Nash	Cecile Adam
	DON BROWN	Lincoln Binford	Joe McMillan
Board of Deacons	*MARILYN VACHÉ*	Betty Bodman	Steve Domingue
	BARBARA BURNHAM	Dennis Murphy	Jim Howicz
Board of Christian Outreach	*BEN WHITE*	Will Heimbach	Sara Ross
	DAN JEFFERY	*SHARON BROWN*	Tommie Pinkard
Board of Christian Education	*DOYAL PINKARD*	Nancy Binford	Pat Oakes
	PAULA FRACASSO	Nancy Edison	*BECKY NASH*
Nominating Committee	*JOHN BURLINSON*	Mathis Blackstock	Paul Deisler
Enlistment and Stewardship Committee	*FRANCES ALFORD*	Fran Briggs	Dennis Murphy ex officio as Finamcial Secretary,
TWO YEAR TERMS			
Delegate, Brazos Assn. Exec. Com	_____		Vic Appel
Delegate to Micah 6 Board	_____	*SUZANNE VANDERPOEL*	
ONE YEAR TERMS			
Treasurer	----------	----------	*DAVID ROSS*
Financial Secretary	----------	----------	*DENNIS MURPHY*

Board, Committee or Position	Members, Terms Ending Following The End Of:		
	2009	2008	2007
Coordinating Council, Member at Large			ROBIN CHAPMAN
Superintendent Christian Education			LIZ NASH
Historian			WHIT BODMAN
Austin Area Interreligious Ministries			WHIT BODMAN SUZANNE VANDERPOEL
University Area Partners			DOYAL PINKARD
Delegate to South Central Conference			WILL HEIMBACH

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tepeyac52@hotmail.com Printed: Friday, January 26, 2007 4:18 PM

From : Congregational Church of Austin UCC <ucausti@swbell.net>

Sent : Wednesday, January 24, 2007 6:14 PM

To : "George Hetrick" <hetrick@acm.org>, "Aaron Carter-Cohn" <cartercohn@gmail.com>, "Betty Bodman" <ejbodman@yahoo.com>, "Carol Barrett" <tepeyac52@hotmail.com>, "Derrick Evans" <derrick.evans@yahoo.com>, "Fran Briggs" <briggsf@wildblue.net>, "Frances Alford" <COYOTETRAP@aol.com>, "John Towery" <padre@grandecom.com>, "Mathis Blackstock" <mblackstock@copper.net>, "Michael Adams" <mfadams@academicplanet.com>, "Pam Tucker" <psst@raptornails.com>, "Sally Tomasek" <sallytomasek@cox-internet.com>, "Sarah Bentley" <srbentley@austin.rr.com>, "Suzanne Bradford" <Suzanne_Bradford@mgtamer.com>, "Victor Appel" <vappel@sbcglobal.net>

Subject : Sweat-Free Austin Proposed Ordinance; Our Church's Possible Endorsement

Dear Members and Friends of the Congregational Church of Austin, UCC,

The Board of Christian Outreach has asked me to send you some information regarding a proposed ordinance that will go before the Austin City Council this Spring. The proposed ordinance, to be introduced by the Texas Fair Trade Coalition, calls for an Ethical Procurement Policy for the city. If there is adequate time for discussion, the Board of Christian Outreach would like to seek our church's endorsement of this proposed ordinance at our church's Annual Meeting this Sunday. If there is not adequate time for discussion, the Board of Christian Outreach will bring this matter before the congregation at a later date.

Here is some information on the proposed ordinance:

The Department of Labor defines a work place as a sweat-shop if it violates two or more labor laws regarding child labor, minimum wage, overtime, use of prison labor, sexual harassment, repression of workers' rights to bargain collectively, and safety. The City of Austin currently does not monitor whether the products it purchases come from factories that use sweat-shop labor. However, The Workers' Rights Consortium, an independent garment monitoring agency, has twice cited Austin's second largest supplier, VF Corporation, for sweat shop abuses abroad (2003 and 2005). The labor practices of the other thirteen major garment companies from whom Austin purchases uniforms are unknown.

The proposed ordinance seeks to ensure that the City of Austin will not purchase goods or services from suppliers who benefit from practices that illegally exploit workers.

The proposed Ethical Procurement Policy Ordinance provides for the following:

--Establishes the right to know how city tax dollars are spent through required disclosure of basic information about workplace conditions.
--A signed affidavit between vendors and the City of Austin that would serve to enforce policy guidelines.
--A process to work with companies in response to complaints and violations.

The following cities in the United States have passed a similar ordinance: Boston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Milwaukee.

The following organizations or faith communities have already endorsed this proposed ordinance: Austin Labor Council, Religion and Labor Network of Austin, American Friends Service Committee, St. Ignatius Catholic Church, Proyecto Defensa Laboral, Universal Living Wage Campaign, Pax Christ, Oxfam UT, and the Green Party of Travis County.

Through my work with the Religion and Labor Network, I have been involved in this campaign. I will be visiting with City Council Members in the near future, and will speak at the public hearing when the Council schedules one. As I noted, our church's Christian Outreach Board is seeking our church's endorsement of this proposed ordinance, and if some of you would like to get more involved, your involvement would be welcomed.

I will have more information for you on Sunday. If you have a question or comment, please e-mail me at revtomv@swbell.net

Thank you...

TOM

Rev. Tom VandeStadt
Congregational Church of Austin
An Open and Affirming Church of the United Church of Christ
408 W. 23rd Street
Austin, Texas
512-472-2370
revtomv@SWBell.net
congregational.faithweb.com

Approved (10/28) working draft
Revised 12/19/06, 1/3/07, 1/10/07, 1/16/07, 1/19/07

Congregational Church of Austin, United Church of Christ
Safe Church Policy Concerning Abuse Prevention

Background

The Congregational Church of Austin was informed by its insurance carrier that we need to adopt, as a church, a policy concerning abuse prevention to maintain our insurance coverage. The Coordinating Council has approved the following for your consideration. We believe it meets the minimal requirements established by the United Church of Christ.

Where the policy calls for confidentially, this responsibility will be accomplished with the utmost care. Further, issues of security will also be attended to and if any personal information such as social security numbers is required to accomplish background checks, it will be destroyed immediately after use. Finally, if background checks reveal information that could call into question the fitness of anyone to serve as a Minister or Authorized Minister, that information will be shared with the individual to confirm its accuracy. Further, individuals will be encouraged to seek counseling if appropriate when the background check provides information and the individual so confirms there is an issue that counseling could help address.

Definitions

Minister: a person formally authorized by the church to carry out its ministry. Ministers are: elected or appointed leaders of the church; or formally designated by the Coordinating Council; or employees; or Authorized Ministers, Sunday School Teachers, Freeze Night Volunteers, or Youth Volunteers. It should be noted that parents of children who wish to accompany their children to class are not deemed to be Sunday School Teachers under this definition and they are exempted from the requirements of this policy.

Authorized Minister: a person employed by the Congregational Church of Austin who holds ordained ministerial standing in any denomination or has been commissioned or licensed by an Association of the United Church of Christ or region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). An Authorized Minister is one type of minister within the meaning of this policy.

Ministerial Relationship: the relationship between one who carries out the ministry of the church and the one being served by that ministry. A ministerial relationship is not established by simply attending worship service or having one's name listed as a member.

Sexual Exploitation: sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which a Minister engaged in a ministerial relationship with another takes advantage of the vulnerability of the person being served by causing or allowing that person to engage in sexual behavior with the Minister.

Sexual Harassment: repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes but is not limited to behavior directed at another person with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition or circumstance of instruction, employment, or participation in any church activity.

- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel or church-related decisions affecting an individual; or

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or participation in church activities or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or church environment.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact that has sexual overtones, particularly:

- Written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, e-mails, or invitations;

- Verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes about gender-specific traits, sexual propositions;

- Physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault, coercing sexual intercourse; and

- Visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, or magazines.

Sexual harassment also includes continuing to express sexual interest after being informed directly that the interest is unwelcome and using sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, salary, work, learning, or worship environment of another.

Policy Prohibiting Abuse, Exploitation and Harassment

As a community of Christian faith, the Congregational Church of Austin, is committed to creating and maintaining programs, facilities and a community in which members, friends, staff and volunteers can worship, learn and work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation or intimidation. All persons associated with the Congregational Church of Austin should be aware that the church is strongly opposed to Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Harassment and that such behavior is prohibited by church policy. It is the intention of the church to take action in an attempt to prevent and correct behavior that is contrary to this policy and, if necessary, to discipline those persons who violate this policy.

It is impermissible to suggest, threaten, or imply that failure to accept a request for a date or sexual intimacy will affect a person's job prospects, church leadership, or comfortable participation in the life of the church It is forbidden either to imply or actually withhold support for an appointment, promotion, or change of assignment, to suggest that a poor performance report will be given because a person has declined a personal proposition; or to hint that benefits, such as promotions, favorable performance evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, recommendations or reclassifications, will be forthcoming in exchange for sexual favors.

It is impermissible to abuse members of the congregation, especially children and youth, either physically or verbally.

Ministerial Conduct

Consistent with our understanding of the priesthood of all believers, all Authorized Ministers, employees, elected lay leaders, Sunday School Teachers and Youth Volunteers are Ministers to the congregation when engaged in the ministry of the church. It is important that every Minister to the congregation be adequately prepared and educated for the ministry in which they serve others, and to understand the ways in which their use or misuse of authority may impact others.

It is the policy of the Congregational Church of Austin to encourage its Ministers to nurture safety within Ministerial Relationships by being attentive to self-care, education, maintaining appropriate boundaries, and the importance of referring those in need to supportive and helpful resources.

Sexual Exploitation or Sexual Harassment of parishioners or others by anyone engaged in ministry on behalf of the Congregational Church of Austin is unethical behavior and will not be tolerated within this congregation.

Requirements for Commencing and Continuing Ministry

- Before beginning their duties, all Ministers will be provided a copy of this policy and must complete and submit the disclosure form attached hereto as Exhibit A. The forms will be given to the Church Administrative Assistant and made available to the Moderator who will treat all information confidentially. The Moderator's disclosure form will be reviewed by the Response Team. If matters are disclosed on the form which may directly or indirectly impact someone's ability to serve as a Minister, the form will be reviewed by the Response Team and a joint decision will be made regarding an individual's suitability. The results of the check of the Registry of Sex Offenders will be reported to the Response Team for their consideration. The individual will be informed of the decision and shall inform the nominating committee of the change in their ability to serve. The Response Team will treat all information confidentially.

  A new disclosure form will be required for each new position.

- Before beginning their duties, all Ministers will be assessed to ensure their suitability and qualifications for the position they seek. This assessment will be done by the Nominating Committee, or an Authorized Minister, or Chairs of Boards.

- The church will conduct a registered sex offender review for each Minister by searching their name on the Department of Justice website at www.nsopr.gov. This registered sex offender review will be repeated on an annual basis for all Ministers.

- All Authorized Ministers of the church will attend all boundary workshops required by the Brazos Association or the South Central Conference, or will attend at least one workshop on this topic every three years, whichever is more frequent.

Additional Requirements for Child and Youth Ministry and for Church Employees

The Congregational Church of Austin is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience God's love.

In order to promote this, we have established the following guidelines in addition ~~to the general requirements for ministry to the church~~.

- We expect that those who volunteer to work with minors will have been members of the Congregational Church of Austin for at least six months or, if not members, regularly and frequently associated with the Congregational Church of Austin for at least a year.

- All volunteers who regularly work with children and youth will be given a copy of this policy and must complete and submit the disclosure form attached hereto as Exhibit B.

- Before beginning their duties, all prospective employees will undergo a background check, including but not necessarily limited to inquiries of references and a criminal history verification by a third party vendor.

- All volunteers and employees who regularly work with children and youth will receive orientation regarding safe church policy and procedures. The Board of Christian Education will establish the appropriate age requirements for youth volunteers who are required to participate in the orientation.

- It is the policy of this church to provide adequate supervision and safeguards for youth activities. In situations where participants are not readily visible to each other, there will be no fewer than two unrelated adults present with children. Youth over the age of 12 may assist an unrelated adult in supervising children and youth activities; ~~however, such assistance does not alter the requirement that at least two unrelated adults be present~~. There is no age limit for youth assisting a related adult.

- Written consent of one parent or guardian of a minor will be required for all activities off the church property, and any overnight activities.

Procedures for Handling Complaints of Sexual Exploitation or Harassment

I. Generally

A. A subcommittee of the Coordinating Council, appointed by the Coordinating Council, with no less than two members, one male and one female, will be established each year in preparation for the possibility of hearing complaints under this policy. The subcommittee, hereinafter referred to as "The Response Team," will be familiar with the terms of this policy, as well as the established procedures of the church for dealing with a complaint.

B. Several approaches may be taken in addressing incidents of alleged sexual exploitation or harassment:

1. The complainant can attempt to resolve the matter directly with the respondent, the individual accused of sexual exploitation or harassment.

2. The complainant can report the incident to an Authorized Minister, in an effort to resolve the matter informally.

3. If an informal resolution of the complaint does not seem wise, appropriate, possible, or does not succeed, the complainant may request of the Chair of the Coordinating Council that the Response Team institute formal proceedings which shall include the following steps:

The Response Team shall advise an Authorized Minister and Moderator of the receipt of all complaints and shall keep them apprised of ongoing steps and actions taken. If either an Minister or Moderator is the subject of the complaint, this notice requirement shall not apply as to that person.

- The Response Team shall gather statements or other information from the individuals involved in the alleged exploitation or harassment and from others who may have pertinent information, such as qualified professional consultants, and present such information to the Coordinating Council or an appropriate subcommittee thereof.

- The Coordinating Council, or an appropriate subcommittee thereof, shall make determinations and take actions appropriate to resolve the matter. These may include:

a. a finding that sexual exploitation or harassment has occurred, and that the appropriate body of the church is called upon to take action accordingly; such action may include one or more of the following:

(i) a formal reprimand, with defined expectations for changed behavior;

(ii) recommending or requiring psychological or psychiatric assessment, counseling and/or treatment;

(iii) probationary standing, with the terms of the probation clearly defined;

(iv) dismissal from employment or authorized volunteer position by, affiliation with, or membership in, the church.

b. a finding that sexual exploitation or harassment did not occur.

- The Coordinating Council, or its designee, may seek the advice of legal counsel or others to advise it in performing its functions.

C. A written summary of the Coordinating Council's proceedings in such cases will be maintained.

D. The person(s) toward whom the inappropriate behavior is directed need not be the complainant. Moreover, neither consent nor acquiescence will excuse or exonerate inappropriate behavior. At any time the church may initiate or proceed with the formal complaint process.

E. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment or exploitation, consideration shall be given to the record of the alleged incident(s) as a whole and to the totality of the circumstances, including the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred.

F. Any person bringing a sexual harassment or exploitation complaint or assisting in investigating such a complaint will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment or church membership or affiliation, or otherwise discriminated against or discharged.

G. If the complainant or respondent is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter by the Coordinating Council , he or she has the right to appeal to the Moderator, or to the Chair of the Board of Trustees if the Moderator is the subject of the complaint, who shall refer the matter to the Board of Trustees. The subject of any such appeal to the Board of Trustees shall be limited solely to whether the procedures of this policy were followed. The matter will not be reconsidered on the merits and the decision of the Coordinating Council will be the final resolution of the matter. If the Board of Trustees determines that the procedures of this policy were not followed, it will refer the matter back to the Coordinating Council to complete the processing of the complaint in accordance with these procedures.

II. Child Abuse

Apart from any legal requirements, the Congregational Church of Austin will make a report to appropriate authorities, including but not limited to the Texas Department of Children and Family Services), if at any time the church has reasonable cause to believe that a minor may be an abused or neglected child. Any Minister of the church who becomes aware of facts or circumstances that child abuse or neglect has occurred or that there exists a substantial risk that child abuse or neglect may occur in the reasonably foreseeable future shall immediately report the matter to an Authorized Minister and Moderator so that the church may take appropriate action in a timely manner. The Texas Child Abuse Hotline currently is 1-800-252-5400 or www.txabusehotline.org.

III. Clergy

Apart from any disposition of the matter by the church, all allegations of behavior which call into question the fitness for ministry of any Authorized Minister will promptly be forwarded to the Church & Ministry Committee of the Brazos Association or the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ. The outcome of consideration by the Response Team will also be forwarded to the South Central Conference. The South Central Conference may be contacted at: 512-459-7607.

Approved (10/28) working draft
Revised 12/19/06, 1/3/07, 1/16/07. 1/19/07

Exhibit A

The Congregational Church of Austin
Authorized MinisterVolunteer
Application and Disclosure Form

Name: Last **First** **Middle**

Address: Street **City/State** **Zip code**

Daytime Phone **Evening Phone** **Email**

References: One reference should be related to you and the other references should not be related to you.

Name

Address **City** **State** **Zip code**

Telephone **Email**

Name

Address **City** **State** **Zip code**

Telephone **Email**

Name

Address **City** **State** **Zip code**

Telephone **Email**

☐ **You have my permission to contact these references.**
☐ **I have been a member of this church since**

☐ **I have been a friend of this church since**

I have never been convicted of, nor pled guilty or no contest to, a crime. (Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged or legally eradicated, misdemeanor convictions for which probation was completed and the case was dismissed, or offenses about which inquiry is not permissible in this state)

☐ **True** ☐ **Not True**

If not true, please attach a brief description of the nature of the crime(s), the date and place of conviction and the legal disposition of the case. The church will not deny a position to any applicant solely because the person has been convicted of a crime. The church, however, may consider the

nature, date and circumstances of the offense, as well as whether the offense is relevant to the duties of the position applied for.

Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the responsibilities of the position for which you are applying?

☐ Yes **☐ No**

If yes, please attach a brief explanation.

The covenants between persons seeking authorized volunteer positions in the church require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the church. To that end, I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a the continuing and healthy covenant between volunteers and the church they seek to serve. To that end, I authorize the Congregational Church of Austin and/or its agents to make inquiries regarding my character and qualifications, including all statements I have set forth above. I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background, character, and qualifications. To encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses, comments, and statements.

The Congregational Church of Austin authorized volunteer recruitment process involves the sharing of information regarding applicants with those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise both the position I am seeking to fill and program I am seeking to participate in. To that end, I authorize The Congregational Church of Austin and its agents to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to such persons for these purposes. I understand that the Congregational Church of Austin will share with me information it has gathered about me, if I request it to do so.

I acknowledge my receipt and understanding of the Congregational Church of Austin's Safe Church Policy.

_____

(PRINT NAME & SIGN) **DATE**

_____

(PRINT NAME & SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN FOR APPLICANTS UNDER 18)DATE

- Sex Offender Registry (www.nsopr.gov) review performed on _____
- Reference inquiries completed on _____

Approved (10/28) working draft
Revised 12/19/06, 1/3/07, 1/10/07

Exhibit B

Congregational Church of Austin
Employment/Authorized Children and Youth Volunteer and Employee
Application and Disclosure Form

NAME: LAST FIRST MIDDLE

ADDRESS: STREET CITY/STATE ZIP CODE

DAYTIME PHONE EVENING PHONE EMAIL

References: One reference should be related to you and the other references should not be related to you.

NAME

ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP CODE

TELEPHONE EMAIL

NAME

ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP CODE

TELEPHONE EMAIL

NAME

ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIPCODE

TELEPHONE EMAIL

Approved (10/28) working draft
Revised 12/19/06, 1/3/07, 1/10/07

☐ **You have my permission to contact these references**
☐ **I have been a member of this church since** _____
☐ **I have been a friend of this church since** _____

I have never been convicted of, nor pled guilty or no contest to, a crime. (Exclude convictions that have been sealed, expunged or legally eradicated, misdemeanor convictions for which probation was completed and the case was dismissed, or offenses about which inquiry is not permissible in this state)

☐ **True** ☐ **Not True**

If not true, please attach a brief description of the nature of the crime(s), the date and place of conviction and the legal disposition of the case. The church will not deny a position to any applicant solely because the person has been convicted of a crime. The church, however, may consider the nature, date and circumstances of the offense, as well as whether the offense is relevant to the duties of the position applied for.

No civil lawsuit alleging actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct has ever resulted in a judgment being entered against me, been settled out of court, or been dismissed because the statute of limitations has expired.

☐ **True** ☐ **Not True**

If not true, give attach a short explanation of the lawsuit. (Please indicate the date, nature, and place of the incident leading to the lawsuit; where the lawsuit was filed; and the precise disposition of the lawsuit.)

I have never terminated my employment, professional credentials, or service in a volunteer position or had my employment, professional credentials, or authorization to hold a volunteer position terminated for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or misconduct; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct.

☐ **True** ☐ **Not True**

If not true, please attach a short explanation. (Please indicate the date of termination; name, address, and telephone number of employer or volunteer supervisor; and nature of the incident(s) leading to your termination.)

Do you have a valid drivers' license?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

With respect to my driving record, I have not had my license suspended or revoked within the last five years due to reckless driving or driving while intoxicated and/or under the influence of a controlled substance.

☐ **True** ☐ **Not True**

If not true, please attach a short explanation

Is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the responsibilities of the position for which you are applying?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If yes, please attach a brief explanation.

The covenants between persons seeking authorized volunteer positions in the church require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the church. To that end, I attest that the information set forth in this application is true and complete. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for, or termination of, the position I am seeking to fill. I acknowledge that it is my duty in a timely fashion to amend the responses and information I have provided if I come to know that the response or information was incorrect when given or, though accurate when given, the response or information is no longer accurate.

Beginning such relationships with an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for a continuing and healthy covenant between volunteers and the church they seek to serve. To that end, I authorize the Congregational Church of Austin or its agents to make inquiries regarding my character and qualifications, including all statements I have set forth above. I also authorize all entities, persons, former employers, supervisors, courts, law enforcement, and other public agencies to respond to inquiries concerning me, to supply verification of the statements I have made, and to comment on and state opinions regarding my background, character, and qualifications. To encourage such persons and entities to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses, comments, and statements.

The Congregational Church of Austin's authorized volunteer and employee recruitment process involves the sharing of information regarding applicants with those persons in a position to recruit, secure, and supervise both the position I am seeking to fill and program I am seeking to participate in. To that end, I authorize the Congregational Church of Austin and its agents to circulate, distribute, and otherwise share information gathered in connection with this application to such persons for these purposes. I understand that the Congregational Church of Austin will share with me information it has gathered about me, if I request it to do so.

I acknowledge my receipt and understanding of the Congregational Church of Austin Safe Church Policy.

_____

(PRINT NAME & SIGN) **DATE**

_____

(PRINT NAME & SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN FOR APPLICANTS UNDER 18) DATE

- Sex Offender Registry (www.nsopr.gov) review performed on _____
- Personal interview conducted by staff on _____
- Reference inquiries completed on _____
- Church membership for 6 mos. or association for 1 year confirmed on _____

(If less than, please list circumstances warranting waiver of guideline.)

- Safe church awareness training and policy orientation performed on _____

Additionally, if considered for employment:

- Criminal History Verification together with Fair Credit Reporting Act notices, completed on _____

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