

Grace United Church of Christ Annual Report – November 18, 2012



To Grace UCC from the desk of The Moderator-

This is our eighth year. It has been another satisfying one for Grace UCC, and one that has brought change. Every year we evolve as we define who we are and who we want to be. We continue to be a church that gives of ourselves through our mission work, through what we do for the community, and what we do for one another. This will be outlined in greater detail within this Annual Report.

I want to acknowledge our long time members for defining Grace UCC by living its values. When you walk into this church—regardless of who you are or where you are on life’s journey—it is apparent that everyone is welcome. This will never change. To our new members, we welcome you and look forward to sharing our spiritual journey with you.

We have a lot to offer, and we need to let others know what attracts us here every Sunday. Lets make 2013 a year of growth individually, and as a church.

Mary A. Bernard



Grace UCC Annual Report - Treasurer's Report– November 18, 2012

Please find attached the proposed 2013 Budget.

Some of the highlights for this year are as follows:

- The projected income from Offerings will remain constant at \$125,000.
- There will be a substantial reduction in Staff salaries in 2013 as we move from 2 pastors to 1 pastor.
- We've included \$1000 to cover several Sundays of a pulpit supply preacher.
- We've increased the mission budget.
- Added a projected \$6000 to the Space for Grace fund.
- Anticipate approximately \$10,000 to move back into the operating funds as a contingency.
- We've returned pastor Dan's salary and pension to previous levels and accounted for the additional Sunday's he will be preaching and additional responsibilities which he has taken on.
- The Marketing budget has been set at a high level so that the marketing team has the flexibility to develop and adjust their strategy throughout the year.

Michael Sisco
Treasurer, Grace United Church of Christ

Grace UCC 2013 Budget

Budget Summary	2012 Budget	2012 EOY Estimate	2013 Budget
Non-Staff Expenses	\$28,900	\$30,710	\$35,000
Staff Expenses	\$99,100	\$93,200	\$74,000
Operational Expense	\$128,000	\$123,910	\$109,000
Operating Contingency			\$10,000
Space for Grace Fund			\$6,000
Total Expense	\$128,000	\$123,910	\$125,000
Income from Offerings	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000
Growth Grant Allocated (or new)	\$3,000	\$6,000	
Total Income	\$128,000	\$131,000	\$125,000
Budget/Actual Variance	\$-	\$7,090	\$-

Budget Line Detail			
Non Staff Expenses	\$28,900	\$30,710	\$35,000
Education and Training:Education Materials	\$500	\$500	\$500
Facilities Expense	\$18,700	\$18,050	\$19,300
Facilities Expense:Church Rent	\$7,800	\$7,800	\$8,200
Facilities Expense:Computers and Network	\$600	\$200	\$600
Facilities Expense:Internet and Phone	\$1,400	\$1,400	\$1,400
Facilities Expense:Office Rent	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,400
Facilities Expense:Office Supplies	\$900	\$650	\$700
Missions	\$6,500	\$7,100	\$9,700
Christian Childrens' Fund (Messia)	\$300	\$300	\$300
Pennies & Nickels	\$1,000	\$600	\$600
Missions and Allocation	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$8,600
Pastors Discretionary	\$200	\$200	\$200
Worship and Programs	\$400	\$200	\$1,600
Sunday Worship (includes per diem pastor)			\$1,000
Other Programs	\$400		\$600
Evangelism and Marketing	\$2,800	\$4,860	\$3,900
Growth:Advertising - Facebook	\$800	\$1,500	
Growth:Advertising - Website	\$200	\$260	\$300
Growth:Advertising:Democrat	\$1,600	\$1,600	
Growth:Marketing Promotions	\$200	\$1,500	
Staff Expenses	\$99,100	\$93,200	\$74,000
Staff Expense:Salaries	\$93,400	\$85,900	\$67,300
Staff Expense:Employer Paid Taxes	\$600	\$2,600	\$2,000
Staff Expense:Balance Point payroll fees	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
Staff Expense:Insurance	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$2,400
Staff Expense:Travel and Expense	\$1,200	\$800	\$800

**Grace United Church of Christ
Annual Report – November 18, 2012**



Pastor Report

Submitted by the Reverend Daniel J. Lundquist

INTRODUCTION

I begin by reporting to you that almost eight years ago we began the Grace UCC church...eight years and many wonderful, exciting, and blessed things have happened in our community.

Others speak to transition and change- **this year, as of August 31, we saw the resignation of the co-founding and co-pastor of Grace United Church of Christ, the Rev. Susan B. Goodwin. Sue will be greatly missed and we are grateful for her vision, her gifts, and her work helping to bring the church to where it is today.**

Serving Justice, Loving Kindness: Grace UCC's mission statement is alive and well. We continue to refer to that statement, along with others (e.g., a community of extravagant welcome, God is Still Speaking, No Matter Who You Are or Where You Are on Life's Journey You Are Welcome Here) as we name who and what we are as a church and community gathered together. It has been and continues to be an honor to work with each and every one of you. I truly believe Grace United Church of Christ takes to heart its mission and its vision. As such, we continue to be a welcoming and vibrant community.

The year 2012 has been an eventful one, filled with great worship experiences, Bible studies, council meetings, fellowship, Taize music, community dinners, breakfasts, and mission and outreach work- just to name a few themes.

WORSHIP/ SUNDAY

We have been, and continue to be blessed to have in our midst such wonderful **music** talent.

- With Dorothy (<http://graceuccnj.org/Dorothy.html>) we get to hear the heart of God in her passion and in her great gift on the piano.
- Howard (<http://graceuccnj.org/Howard.html>) and Michael (<http://graceuccnj.org/Michael.html>) both share their art of guitar and song.

- Charlie, Duncan (<http://graceuccnj.org/Duncan.html>), Jack (<http://graceuccnj.org/Jack.html>), and Myke (and the occasional yet so greatly appreciated appearance of various choirs and “the Jims”) continue to bless us all.
- With Bev we now receive another gift, that of the cello- welcome Bev!
- Choir(s): Led by Dorothy, we have been blessed with a wonderful choir during both the Christmas and Easter seasons. Hallelujah!

Thank you all for making Sunday such a wonderful experience!

MISSIONS

In addition to these partnered mission projects we continue to find many ways to move from thinking about our faith to acting on our faith. A simple word for this is “mission”.

Two of my favorite passages of the bible are a) Matthew 25: 31 ff. where we are encouraged to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit those in prison; and b) James 2: 14ff. where it states, “So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.” Both of these passages are prophetic and we here at Grace do a lot to make our faith not dead, but alive. Here are but some examples from 2012:

- **Habitat for Humanity** (<http://graceuccnj.org/Habitat.html>): we continue to support the local chapter (Raritan Valley) both financially and in our participation in at least one workday per year (this year we were signed up for two with one being cancelled and the other completed in October. Look for more workdays in Lambertville. Thank you to all who are helping bring affordable and safe housing to those in need.
- **Can Help** (<http://graceuccnj.org/CanHelp.html>): With the leadership of Ed, we have been saving (and sometimes crushing) our aluminum cans. With the money we have received from this, we have been able to give around \$1,000 per year to those in need for things like oil during the winter season.
- **Pennies and Nickels** (<http://graceuccnj.org/penniesandnickels.html>): This continues to be a great and well-received program. Each Sunday there is a silver, “change bowl” that is sent around during the offering. In it is placed loose change that is later converted to the support of mission projects, most of which are global in nature. The children are given a choice of projects to support- for example in 2011 the children chose to give the money raised to *Feeding America* through which 7,200 meals were given.
- **Relay for Life** (<http://graceuccnj.org/relayforlife.html>): We did not participate this year as our group leader Alice moved out of the area. If anyone would like to take the lead on this for next year, please let Dan or the church council know.
- **Family Promise (FP)** (<http://www.familypromisehc.org/>): Led by Bill T. and Melissa R. we continue to help the homeless in Hunterdon County. From being a support church, to helping raise emergency funds, to helping with moves, we continued our assistance efforts to those in our community who are without homes and/ or struggling to make ends meet.
- **Iguana Coffeehouse**: (<http://graceuccnj.org/iguana.html>).

- Child Sponsorship (<http://graceuccnj.org/Messia.html>). We, as a congregation, support a child named Messiah via the Christian Children's Fund. You get a chance to support this effort each Sunday as a small bag with her name is passed around to the offering time. In addition, the children, during Sunday School, have been sending Messiah cards on a regular basis- thank you!
- Flemington Food Pantry (<http://graceuccnj.org/FoodPantry.html>): Led by Elaine, we bring needed items for the local food pantry to church the last Sunday of each month. They are then brought to the pantry and distributed to those who are in need. We continue to see more and more support with this effort and it is greatly appreciated. (If possible, try to remember to pick up a few items whenever you are at the grocery store and bring them to church...)
- Heifer International (<http://www.heifer.org/>): Thanks to Mike S., Christine O, and Bridget A. we added a great project to our Thanksgiving season. Many animals were purchased and donated and we are doing this project again this Thanksgiving season.
- Coalition for Peace Action (<http://www.peacecoalition.org/>): Led by Peter, we continue to be involved with **supporting the peace** coalition. This year Grace UCC was again a co-sponsor of their annual Peace Conference that was held in November at Princeton University.
- SAFE in Hunterdon; Serving Women, Men and Families in Crisis (<http://www.safeinhunterdon.org/>): We continue to **support this organization** both with their annual candlelight vigil (clergy participation) and with their communities of light event where we have (in the past) served as a warming station for those who setting up the candles in the neighborhoods.
- We are a "Five for Five" congregation which means we support the greater denomination (UCC) in their five wider offerings, which are:

1: UCC Basic Support (OCWM- Our Church's Wider Mission): Provides funding from congregations for Conferences and the national ministries of the United Church of Christ (Wider Church Ministries, Local Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, General Ministries, and Pension Boards).

2: One Great Hour of Sharing (Fourth Sunday in Lent): Channels resources for international programs in health, education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response, administered by Wider Church Ministries, Global Sharing of Resources.

3: Strengthen the Church (Pentecost Sunday): Supports leadership for new and revitalizing congregations, programs for youth and young adults, and leadership development for the whole church. UCC Conference and Local Church Ministries carry out these ministries.

4: Neighbors in Need (First Sunday in October): Supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, including the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM), justice and advocacy, and direct service projects supported by Justice and Witness Ministries.

5: The Christmas Fund (Sunday before Christmas): Helps provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retired church workers, emergency assistance to clergy families in need, and Christmas checks to hundreds of annuitants, as administered by the Pension Boards.

FELLOWSHIP

In addition to these mission projects we have wonderful fellowship. From potlucks, to breakfasts to dinners, we continue to develop and grow, in large part, because of the relationships we share and nurture. Of note:

- Community Dinners (<http://graceuccnj.org/CommunityDinners.html>): Led by Marianne, 2012 brought to us our fifth series of community dinners. This is where Grace UCC members and friends hosted a dinner where others from the church gathered and shared community and a meal together. Thank you to all the wonderful hosts! The sixth series will begin in the New Year.
- Men's Breakfast: At least once per month, the men in the church are invited to gather for breakfast at the Country Griddle in Flemington. The socialization and laughter is very welcome.
- Women's Gatherings: a monthly soup gathering began this year...look for more.

These mission projects and fellowship, their support and desire to continue to be involved with them come from our heart and our minds where we seek to be instruments of Christ's peace and love here on earth. To come to this point, in addition to our worship celebrations, we gather on a regular basis for Christian and Religious Education.

EDUCATION

- Sunday School (<http://graceuccnj.org/Sunday-School.html>): Every Sunday morning (for a short time during worship) the children (age 12 and under) are offered a Sunday School lesson. Thanks to our wonderful teachers (Melissa, Elaine, Edeo, Carol, Mike, Christine, and Geoff) and their creativity, our children are learning about God, about the Bible, about what it means to be a church, about our loving and inclusive God. It is great to see the teachers have the freedom to use the lesson in the manner they are most comfortable and in which they use their knowledge and creativity. The children love this time and all involved are giving of their gifts in a wonderful way. Thank you.
-As of November 2012, Carol J. has volunteered to lead and organize the Sunday School. Thank you Carol!
- Teen Sunday School (<http://graceuccnj.org/Teenagers.html>): Led by Bill, our teens (ages 13-18) are offered a **Bible Study** lesson before worship over at the church office from 10:00-10:45 am. We are in the process of adding a Confirmation component to this time. This is a wonderful component of our church program and we are blessed to have it in our midst.
- Adult Bible Study:
-Wednesday morning (9:15 am.) adult study meets at Theresa's Café in Flemington.

-Wednesday evening Bible Study (<http://graceuccnj.org/JourneyBible.html>) meets at the church office at 7 pm. And we continue with the *Journey through the Bible* series. These small groups continue to be great **gatherings of support** as we question, learn and process our faith and life journeys.

COUNCIL

None of the above could have happened without the ongoing support and vision of Grace UCC's council.

Mary B. is our moderator. Mary's leadership has been a blessing and we have all benefited from her leadership.

Christine O. is our vice-moderator. She leads us well. She and Bill were instrumental in completing the recent Congregational Survey- thank you Christine!

Geoff M. is our secretary. We continue to be grateful to Geoff for his willingness to take on this very vital role.

Mike S. is our Treasurer and we are blessed to have him continue to do all those things needed, oftentimes behind the scenes, of our church.

Bill T. continues to be our financial secretary (I use the same words here as last year's report). Using one of Bill's words, he does an *outstanding* job. From envelopes to tallies, to pie charts and numbers, Bill's gifts are welcomed and needed.

Our deacons for 2012: Christine O., Ed F., Michael St. (who also did the *Grace Cafe*- (and is doing one today) an annual event that is helping us hone our values and beliefs as we move forward as a congregation), Edeo M., Kathleen S. and Stein S. Thank you to you all as you continue to help minister to the congregation. Note here- in addition to the deacons, we have also started a prayer and support e-mail list that has turned out to be invaluable in its efficiency and effectiveness. To date, we have 23 people praying and supporting those who submit their requests.

Our trustees for 2012: Bill T., Mike S., Mary B. and Geoff M. Thank you for doing those things that are oftentimes done with little recognition.

In addition, our council meetings now are more efficiently run via a team concept, one initiated by Michael St. and appreciated by all. Of note, look for a billboard in December on Route 12! Thank you Chris S.!

CONCLUSION

A lot to report from 2012. All good, all blessings and all things for which we can be grateful. I apologize if I have left anyone out by name, as I most likely did.

What a great place, what a great vision. What a unique church. Doing church here in and of itself is a mission; being ***Open and Affirming is a mission***- let us never forget that. Let us never forget we did not exist until December of 2004. A lot of ground and growth has occurred in these past eight years. This is a place worthy of our time and our commitments.

Last year I was asked at a council meeting to put together some “talking points” that would help describe Grace UCC. On the front page of the web site I added the following:

Grace UCC is:

- An Open and Affirming church.
- Where the Bible is taken seriously if not literally.
- Where science, psychology, history and anthropology are welcome.
- Where the arts and music of all forms are welcome.
- Where all are welcome to the communion table.
- Where fellowship and kindness are embraced.
- Where mission, peace and justice are embraced.
- Where metaphor, analogy and allegory are welcomed.
- An ecumenical and interfaith church.
- Where questions of belief and faith are welcomed.
- Where the pastors preach what they feel and believe.
- Where religious education is offered to all.
- An extravagantly welcoming church.

In addition now, I would like to add **Grace UCC's values**:

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here.

- We are guided by the teachings of Jesus.
- We make decisions with integrity in accordance with our beliefs.
- We act in the interest of peace and social justice.
- We promote and support opportunities for lay leadership.
- We conduct ourselves in a transparent and ethical manner.
- We maximize our community presence through collaboration and partnership.
- We continually act and reflect as we promote a learning culture.
- We nurture a community of extravagant welcome and hospitality.
- We celebrate our strengths and accomplishments and appreciate our fears and doubts.
- We embrace the diversity of each person's culture and spiritual journey.
- We seek out and use the knowledge and wisdom of our congregation in decision-making.

Lives have been transformed with each of the above points. We have discovered so many people's gifts. Let us continue to nurture each other's gifts. Let us continue to share these gifts with the larger community. Let us continue to define and figure out how we can better share these gifts and get the word out about this special place. A place where truly **“no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.”**

Truly, this is a special and unique place. God bless. Let us continue to grow and to help transform others from worry to hope, from fear to love, from rejection to acceptance, from imprisonment to freedom. Let us continue to be agents of love, of salvation.

Respectfully and lovingly submitted,

Daniel J. Lundquist

Grace UCC Financial Secretary Annual Report for 2012

This Annual Report is being submitted as of November 17, 2012.

Giving

As of the end of October, donations to Grace UCC have grown 2.2% over the comparable period in 2011. Total donations from members, visitors and other individual supporters through the end of October were \$91,887. That amount is 2.0% higher than our budget of \$90,051 for that period.

The table below demonstrates the commitment our members and supporters have made to the improvement in the financial health of the church over the last 5 years.

October YTD	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Cash donations	\$76,240	\$75,212	\$83,245	\$87,962	\$89,846
In-kind gifts	\$1,984	\$1,623	\$1,234	\$1,971	\$2,041
Total donations	\$78,224	\$76,835	\$84,479	\$89,933	\$91,887

Sunday Worship Attendance

Currently the church has about 95 voting members. While the exact percentage changes slightly over the course of each year (summer time being the lowest attendance period), about 38% of the church members regularly attend Sunday worship services. The other 62% of church members are fairly infrequent attendees of Sunday worship services.

Attendance at Grace UCC Sunday worship services has remained fairly stable over the last five years. The church has averaged about 38 people per Sunday worship service during that period. The table below shows the details.

Avg. Attendance	2008	2009	2010	2011	YTD 2012
Adults	31.8	35.3	33.2	33.2	32.1
Children	5.5	4.1	4.2	5.1	6.9
Total	37.3	39.4	37.4	38.3	39.0

Respectively submitted,

Bill Taylor

Bill Taylor, Financial Secretary, GUCC
taylorware1@comcast.net