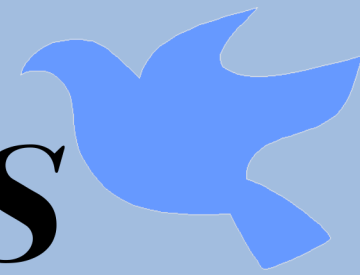
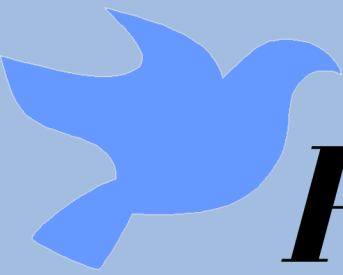


PEACEPRESS



Pastor's Perspective

As we continue in our efforts to live our faith and grow our congregation, I have been moved lately by some insights in regard to why mainline Protestant denominations have been in decline for so long. A recently published biography of Old Testament scholar Dr. Walter Brueggemann explores a bit what has happened to our mainline denominations, at least in terms of theology.

According to Dr. Brueggemann, who was raised in the tradition of German Evangelical Pietism (the great moral theologians H. Richard and Reinhold Niebuhr are sons of this tradition), the primary foundations of this pietism have over the last 60 years been replaced. Such pietistic foundations included tolerance for religious differences, taking the biblical text seriously, loving both God and neighbor, embracing a “heart” (personal transformation and dedication) religion, and focusing on compassion for the poor and marginalized in society. So how did German Evangelical Pietism get replaced?

The answer is complex, but a simplified answer is that this entity was swallowed up by Congregationalists who elevated deed over Word, head over heart, and the exhibition of God’s faithfulness through human agency as compared to deference to the sovereignty of God. Finally, and perhaps the most concerning aspect of this “swallowing” was that the biblical text was minimized in regard to its authority as

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well as the need for understanding. Today, we struggle with the consequences of this swallowing.

If we are committed to the renewal of the church, part of our commitment must be a dedication to the reclaiming of a heart-felt devotion to God and to biblical understanding through constant study. We can be “pietistic” without being intolerant of other faith traditions. We can be biblically grounded without being literalistic in our biblical interpretations. We can be committed to caring for our neighbors, especially the poor and marginalized, without being an appendage of any political party.

As we look forward to our new year and the challenges that are before us, might we all re-engage with God’s holy Word, learning again to love God with both our hearts and our minds. Some may criticize us as “pietistic”. So what? Instead, let us be humbly proud, for there are certainly worse crimes.

A Note from Elisabeth



What a special month this February 2024, is! Once again, we get a whole extra leap day to sing and praise God - and each one of us has 28 days to plan just how he or she is going to celebrate and what songs to use on the extra day. Think it through, and make it a really blessed (and musical) day!

February also brings us Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. I can’t help but think how appropriate it is that Ash Wednesday is on Valentine’s Day, February 14th, when people’s thoughts are about love. There could never be any greater love than that expressed to the world and to each of us personally by Jesus in His willingness to die for our sins on the cross. During Lent, music is usually more contemplative and directed toward personal reflection and penitence. Beginning with Ash Wednesday why not make the hymn, What Wondrous Love Is This on page 200 in our hymnal, a focus for personal devotional life?

It is an Appalachian folk hymn. The four verses move from thoughts of our sinfulness and Christ’s sacrifice to singing of the glory of eternal life with Him. Singing to God is a prominent theme in verses 3 and 4. The hymn ends with the phrase, I’ll sing on. Music and singing are such a meaningful way to pray and to praise God. As we move through Lent and Easter, let’s sing and then continue to sing on each and every day.

And another reminder – the choir meets on Sundays at 9:30 in the Sanctuary. You are welcome to come and join us!

Empowering Our Pucc Youth to Be the Church

We have made it a goal that for 2024, our Pucc Youth will embark on a transformative journey focused on service, community, and embodying the true spirit of being the church. We want them to be able to see how they can extend their impact beyond the walls of our church, outside of Sunday mornings, and reach into our community to spread God’s love. This focus revolves around our profound Christian calling to serve others and echo the teachings of compassion and kindness of Jesus that resonate throughout our faith.

A favorite verse of mine is from 1 Timothy 4:12- 12 “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers.” It has been a goal and passion of mine for the past 15 years (when I first stepped into youth and children’s ministry) to ensure that every young person knows this calling is for them and does not have an age restriction! I have been so fortunate and so inspired to spend time with youth in action, sharing God’s love.

I am reminded of a time when a 6-year-old handed out a sandwich to a man experiencing homelessness in a park in downtown Greensboro where they struck up a conversation and both walked away smiling so big; a time when a not-originally-so-excited teenager helped to build a deck for an elderly widow on a mission trip and they then spent time sitting together on the deck as she shared about her life; and a time where an 11-year-old and a resident of the memory care unit in a nursing home played games and laughed so much they cried!

I could write a book (or probably a whole series!) sharing the amazing ways I have witnessed God work through young people who are empowered to live out His call for us to love others and serve in His name. I am thrilled to lead our Pucc Youth this year in creating more stories filled with acts of kindness, love, and service, all rooted in the teachings of our faith. I can’t wait to be able to share how our youth feel called, empowered, and capable of being vessels of God’s love and the impacts they will have on the lives of so many outside of church walls, in our community, and beyond!

We invite everyone to join us on this journey, supporting and participating in the initiatives that will unfold throughout the year. We appreciate your encouragement and

support as we step outside the familiar walls and venture into the heart of our community, embodying the true meaning of being the church in 2024!

Rhiannon Kelly

Did You Know?

Did you know in 1908, women of Peace Church did a Bible study on “Women of the Bible” led by Doris Yeattes? When the study was completed, they invited the congregation to the Fellowship Hall where they took to the stage in costumes and portrayed the women about whom they had studied!



Abbie Wheeling as Herodias. She is carrying the head of John the Baptist on a platter.



Iris Haislip as Eve. She is wearing a snake around her neck and apples are in her basket.

Several ladies depended on their memories to recall who participated. Apologies to any who might be left out:

Doris Yeattes, directed
Abbie Wheeling
Iris Haislip
Theo Scott
Carol McDonald
Margaret Crutchfield

There are books in the History Room on women of the Bible donated by Doris Yeattes. They can be borrowed if your name and book title are left.



BEE -ware of bad health habits



BEE aware of good health habits

BE here in the Narthex
Tuesday, March 5 at 10 AM.

Our own Rick Owen,
Occupational Therapist,
Cone Hospital, will **BE** here to
help you.

Please come to an
Informational Presentation by
the **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP**.

All are welcome



Mission of the Month: Church World Service Blankets

Imagine a circumstance where you lost your home and you had to sleep outside during these winter nights on a cold bench. How would you find warmth? Most people without homes have a daily challenge of fighting the bitter cold.

The Church World Service Blanket program provides warmth, hope, and care during cold and trying times. A gift of just \$10 provides a warm, comforting blanket to children, men, and women who are struggling against the cold. It is a simple way to offer people hope and to share Christ's love with other people. It is a perfect time to give thanks for the warmth in our homes by providing CWS Blankets to those in need.

Please give generously to CWS Blankets.



CWSBLANKETS.ORG

"I have the perfect gift for them. It's a blanket that will keep them warm and that will keep them safe. There are many people who sponsor these blankets, who are concerned about the welfare of others. And together we can help keep our neighbors warm and show them that someone loves them."

— JACQUELYN DEAN, COMMISSIONED MINISTER IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION AND FORMATION, OHIO



7,349
emergency
cleanup
buckets



32,785
blankets

606
welcome
backpacks



CWS
**YOUR COMPASSION
IN ACTION**
2023 CWS Kits & Blankets
Shipping Report



Scan the QR code to see the complete shipping report.

4,733
period
packs



38,190
hygiene kits



32,610
school kits

"When God gives you lemons like a hurricane, God also gives you angels like Church World Service. Thank you for these kits and blankets for our clients after Hurricane Idalia. Your volunteers are a force to be reckoned with because its people like them that give humanity a good name. Thank you to the CWS volunteers and donors who made this donation of kits and blankets possible."

— BETH WATSON, PLYMOUTH HARBOR RETIREMENT HOME, FLORIDA

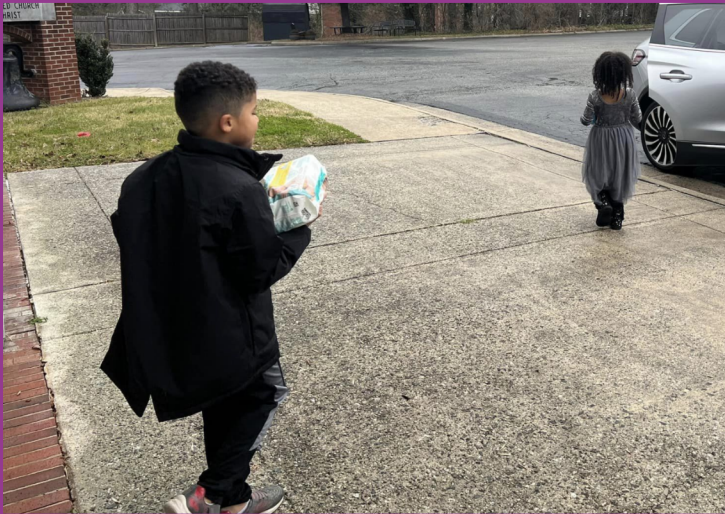


Mission in Action: Youth Make Delivery to the Family Room

December's Mission of the Month was the Family Room, a nonprofit founded and based in Greensboro that provides love, encouragement, and support to families who foster and the children in their care by offering free resources to families that foster. They help children and families from the Triad to the Piedmont to the Sandhill areas of North Carolina.

In addition to the \$300.20 in donations to purchase much-needed items, our congregation provided various items including bicycles, diapers, bottles, car seats, a stroller, and a crib to the organization.

On January 15, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the youth of PUCG loaded up and delivered the donations to the Family Room. They also helped put things away and learned more about the impact our donations will have on children in foster care. What a way to spend the day of service honoring the legacy of MLK!



Left: Keegan and Gabby Goode loading up Cindy Spillers' car to take items to Family Room.

Below: Gus bringing in a girl's bike. Drew, Logan, and their mother Amanda carrying items from their car.



Logan, Gabby, Drew, and Keegan helping to put a mattress away at The Family Room.





The youth listened to Melinda speak about how the church donations will impact foster children and foster families in our area.



**Back: Grant and Olivia Jolliff, Andrea Goode
Front: Gus, Archie, Drew, Gabby, Keegan, Logan, Cindy Spillers and Amanda Hindson**

Peace UCC Annual Meeting Highlights



Our annual meeting was held on Sunday, January 28th immediately following church service.

Both Pastor Tom and Consistory President, Grant Jolliff (pictured left) extolled on the thriving committees and mission work at Peace UCC. As it is often said but remains true, “We are a small but mighty church!”

One of the thriving committees of our church is Mission Outreach chaired by Cindy Spillers. Cindy has helmed the committee for over 30 years, including during the uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic. She is stepping down as chair but will remain an active part of the committee. The search now begins to find a new chair for Mission Outreach.

Special thanks were given to Linda Forotan for her hard work and dedication in serving two terms on Consistory. A hearty welcome was extended to Jason Goode who will serve as assistant secretary.

Russ Haver, Stewardship Chair, and Melinda Summers, 2023 Treasurer, presented the financial report as well as the crafting of the 2024 Income and Spending Budgets. There is great anticipation for the lowering of our electricity expenses once solar power is operative. This will give us conservative savings projected of \$6,500.00 for electricity usage! Last year we spent almost \$12,000.00 for electricity.

Our projected income through pledges, non-pledged offerings, and facility-use donations for 2024 is \$187,750.00. Expenses are anticipated to total \$223,076.00 with a deficit of \$35,326.00.

The congregation unanimously accepted both budgets.



Pastor Tom centered the meeting with a few wonderful reminders of our statement of vision (Peace UCC is a community of people who strive to be living examples of the teachings, ethics, and values of Jesus Christ) and also our statement of mission (that we are called by God to: teach and embrace the ethics of Jesus through worship, study, and prayer; Invite, welcome, and love ALL people into our fellowship; practice good stewardship of our church, our community, and our environment; and promote the healing and well-being of the human family through acts of mission and justice).

In addition, he reminded us that we are in year two of three of our “Looking to the Future: A Plan of Intentional Faith” proposal for the future of our church. He noted that we have begun working on some of the three-year plan of growth with a net goal of three new pledging units per year over and above the units lost to attrition; have increased our presence in the community with our partnership with Lindley Elementary School with the End of Summer Splash event chaired by

Olivia Jolliff; and re-engaged with current church members through the Sharing the Joy of Christmas event in December chaired by Theo Scott. Pastor Tom says he is encouraged about our future and can see growth in slow but subtle ways.



Having Fun Prepping for Jamabalaya Saturday

Sue Brittain, Jane Ford, Trish Larimer, Russ Haver, Mick McGrogan, and Pastor Tom rolled up their sleeves and donned gloves to prep the food for Chef Rick Owen to cook his famous jambalaya on Saturday, February 3rd. This is the first of two food fundraisers for 2024. We have received over 100 orders so far with more presales and walk-ins anticipated.



Solar Panel Update



Great news! The taps for the solar panels have come in! Duke Power will come power down the electricity on February 7th between noon and 2:00 p.m. 8 M will be installing the taps the same day.

YOUTH SUNDAY

2/18



OUR PUCY YOUTH WILL BE TAKING OVER AND LEADING US IN WORSHIP WHILE PASTOR TOM IS IN CUBA! PLEASE JOIN US FOR THIS SPECIAL SERVICE LED BY OUR YOUTH WITH A MESSAGE FROM RHIANNON, OUR PUCY YOUTH DIRECTOR!

What Makes Your Heart Smile?

My family-thought
of them healthy
and happy is the
best feeling

Seeing and
spending time with
my sons and
grandchildren

When I have ALL my
family members
surrounding me.

Loving friends
Coming to church
Fiery sermons
My family

Friends
Family
Nice Weather

My mom, dad,
family, friends and
God!

Memories of my
life, children, and
God's beauty in
Nature

Watching kids play,
music, helping
others, memories
of loved ones

YOU

Children's laughter
Watching birds play
in water puddles

Faithful love of pets
Hearing and
singing favorite
hymns

My family

Seeing my family
together

Beautiful sunrise
over a beach

The gift of a
gorgeous flower
bouquet

Thinking about
how much God
loves me

Seeing my children
happy, healthy and
whole

My friends, family,
and eating good
food

Happy Birthday!

- **1st** - **Sally McGrogan**
- **2nd** - **Kathleen Saunders**
- **5th** - **Jean Jones**
- **13th** - **Logan Hindson**
- **21st** - **Olivia Saunders**
- **27th** - **Harold Poffenbaugh**
- **29th** - **Jonathan Jefferson**



Doing the Math on Why We Have a Leap Day



You may have noticed that there's an extra day on your calendar this year. That's not a typo – it's leap day! Leap day is another name for Feb. 29, a date that typically comes around every four years, during a leap year.

Why doesn't Feb. 29 appear on the calendar every year?

The length of a year is based on how long it takes a planet to revolve around the Sun. Earth takes about 365.2422 days to make one revolution around the Sun. That's about six hours longer than the 365 days that we typically include in a calendar year. As a result, every four years, we have about 24 extra hours that we add to the calendar at the end of February in the form of leap day.

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Without leap day, the dates of annual events, such as equinoxes and solstices, would slowly shift to later in the year, changing the dates of each season. After only a century without leap day, summer wouldn't start until mid-July! But the peculiar adjustments don't end there. If Earth revolved around the Sun in exactly 365 days and six hours, this system of adding a leap day every four years would need no exceptions. However, Earth takes a little less time than that to orbit the Sun. Rounding up and inserting a 24-hour leap day every four years adds about 45 extra minutes to every four-year leap cycle. That adds up to about three days every 400 years. To correct for that, years that are divisible by 100 don't have leap days unless they're also divisible by 400.

If you do the math, you'll see that the year 2000 was a leap year, but 2100, 2200, and 2300 will not be.

(Article by Lyle Tavernier from <https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/edu/news/2020/2/21/doing-the-math-on-why-we-have-leap-day/>)

Treasurer's Report 2023

Peace United Church of Christ - Greensboro NC
Treasurer's Report as of December 2023 for General Fund

Account #	Account Name	Period Activity	YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Annual Budget Remaining
Offerings					
4001	Pledges	10,667.55	114,771.70	117,110.00	2,338.30
4003	Loose Offerings	126.19	1,262.19	500.00	(762.19)
4004	Initial Offerings	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4006	Non-Pledged Offerings	10,880.00	25,655.00	25,870.00	215.00
4007	Sunday School	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
	Total Offerings	\$21,673.74	\$141,688.89	\$143,580.00	\$1,891.11
Fundraising					
4102	Jambalaya	0.00	3,200.00	4,000.00	800.00
4104	Yard Sale	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4106	Brunswick Stew	169.26	2,815.23	3,000.00	184.77
4121	History Room	0.00	600.00		
	Total Fundraising	\$169.26	\$6,615.23	\$7,000.00	\$984.77
Special Offerings					
4009	Communion	82.60	0.00	100.00	100.00
4108	Birthday/Thank You	0.00	50.00	100.00	50.00
4110	Christmas	0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
4112	Easter	0.00	45.00	50.00	5.00
4114	Memorials	1,010.00	1,600.00	0.00	(1,600.00)
4116	Thanksgiving	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total Special Offerings	\$1,092.60	\$1,695.00	\$350.00	(\$1,345.00)
Other Services					
4118	Weddings	0.00	200.00	0.00	(200.00)
		\$0.00	\$200.00	\$0.00	(\$200.00)
	Total Other Services				
Miscellaneous Income					
Facility Use Donations					
4124	New Arrivals Institute	8,250.00	30,900.00	30,360.00	(540.00)
4126	Narcotics Anonymous	75.00	900.00	900.00	0.00
4128	Alliance Church	250.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00
4130	Fellowship Hall Use		1,910.00	1,000.00	(910.00)
	Total Facilities Use Donations	\$8,575.00	\$36,710.00	\$35,260.00	(\$1,450.00)
4122	Miscellaneous Income	0.00	243.44	100.00	(143.44)
4123	Sales Tax Refund		0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total Miscellaneous Income	\$8,575.00	\$36,953.44	\$35,360.00	(\$1,593.44)
4109	Easter Lilies	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4111	Flower Fund (Covid Worship)	0.00	200.00		
4115	Community Event Donations	(40.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total Offering Income	\$31,470.60	\$187,352.56	\$186,290.00	(\$262.56)

Peace United Church of Christ - Greensboro NC
Treasurer's Report as of December 2023 for General Fund

Account #	Account Name	Period Activity	YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Annual Budget Remaining
Expenses					
Missions					
5001	OCWM	2,000.00	4,000.00		
5003	Community Outreach Publicity	0.00	538.32	400.00	(138.32)
5005	Community Outreach Events	8.41	48.06	150.00	101.94
	Total Missions	\$2,008.41	\$4,586.38	\$550.00	(\$36.38)
Consistory					
5101	PeaceCare	73.06	383.70	350.00	(33.70)
5103	Membership Growth	1,167.68	1,167.68	700.00	(467.68)
5104	Membership Support	0.00	585.47	800.00	214.53
5105	Worship Committee	422.60	2,324.35	1,700.00	(624.35)
5106	Stewardship	42.69	255.15	250.00	(5.15)
	Total Consistory	\$1,706.03	\$4,716.35	\$3,800.00	(\$916.35)
Christian Ed					
5117	Christian Ed Literature/Supplies	0.00	46.00	400.00	354.00
5119	Youth Fellowship	393.90	1,057.10	500.00	(557.10)
	Total Christian Ed	\$393.90	\$1,103.10	\$900.00	(\$203.10)
Property					
5210	Janitorial	700.00	8,400.00	8,800.00	400.00
5212	Grounds	416.67	5,000.04	5,417.00	416.96
5214	Property Insurance	1,243.92	14,621.28	16,000.00	1,378.72
5216	Building Equipment/Maintenance	576.04	6,642.46	10,000.00	3,357.54
5217	Boiler Maintenance	4,458.66	11,841.08	15,000.00	3,158.92
5219	ADT Security	53.75	332.49	600.00	267.51
5221	Supplies	0.00	386.50	1,000.00	613.50
	Total Property	\$7,449.04	\$47,223.85	\$56,817.00	\$9,593.15
Administration					
5401	Postage	89.84	1,249.77	1,300.00	50.23
5403	Office Equipment Lease	0.00	3,900.33	4,000.00	99.67
5405	Computer Software/Maintenance	0.00	1,090.36	1,000.00	(90.36)
5407	Telephone/Internet	248.86	2,992.48	3,100.00	107.52
5409	Office Supplies	117.85	1,835.16	1,500.00	(335.16)
5410	Miscellaneous Expenses	245.00	748.71	1,000.00	251.29
5412	Bank Charges	37.39	487.80	600.00	112.20
	Total Administration	\$738.94	\$12,304.61	\$12,500.00	\$195.39
Utilities					
5301	Gas	25.00	7,844.00	15,000.00	7,156.00
5303	Electricity	884.82	11,987.14	11,500.00	(487.14)
5304	Water	459.90	5,172.00	7,000.00	1,828.00
	Total Utilities	\$1,369.72	\$25,003.14	\$33,500.00	\$8,496.86
Pastoral Compensation					
5501	Cash Salary	2,790.84	33,490.08	33,491.00	0.92
5503	Housing Allowance	1,416.66	16,999.92	17,000.00	0.08
5505	Social Security Reimb.	338.76	4,048.24	4,065.00	16.76
5507	Annuity	589.05	6,816.15	7,069.00	252.85
5509	Insurance	1,797.37	20,996.44	3,000.00	2,003.56
5510	Medical Reimb.	607.86	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00
5511	Mileage Reimb.	0.00	458.25	500.00	41.75
	Total Pastoral Compensation	\$7,540.54	\$85,309.08	\$87,625.00	\$2,315.92

Peace United Church of Christ - Greensboro NC
Treasurer's Report as of December 2023 for General Fund

Account #	Account Name	Period Activity	YTD Balance	Annual Budget	Annual Budget Remaining
Personnel					
5601	Organist/Dir of Music	1,600.00	15,500.00	15,600.00	100.00
5603	Secretary	0.00	4,014.00	18,720.00	14,706.00
5604	Office Support	1,245.00	12,875.00	0.00	(12,875.00)
5605	Nursery Attendant	0.00	265.50	1,800.00	1,534.50
5607	Youth Leadership	375.00	3,804.00	9,360.00	5,556.00
	Total Personnel	\$3,220.00	\$36,458.50	\$45,480.00	\$9,021.50
Personnel Benefits					
5612	Social Security Exp.	246.33	2,789.13	3,479.00	689.87
5614	Worker's Comp Insurance	832.00	832.00	1,200.00	368.00
5618	Conference & Meetings	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00
	Total Personnel Benefits	\$1,078.33	\$3,821.13	\$4,879.00	\$1,057.87
Fundraising Expenses					
5701	Jambalaya Expense	0.00	1,288.46	1,500.00	211.54
5703	Yard Sale Expenses	0.00	0.00	200.00	200.00
5705	Brunswick Stew Expenses	679.87	679.87	1,600.00	920.13
5707	History Room Expenses	0.00	386.99		
	Total Fundraising Expenses	\$679.87	\$2,355.32	\$3,300.00	\$1,331.67
5224	Cornerstone Solar Panel Loan Interest	277.58	1,349.57		
	Total Restricted Funds Expenses	\$277.58	\$1,349.57		
	Total Expenses	\$26,463.16	\$224,231.03	\$249,351.00	\$30,856.53
	Difference	\$5,007.44	(\$36,878.47)	(\$63,061.00)	

Budgeted Income–Expenses 2023 **\$186,290.00 – \$249,351.00 = \$63,061.00**
December Income–Expenses 2023 **\$31,470.60 – \$26,463.16 = \$5,007.44**
Income–Expenses 2023 **\$187,352.56 – \$224,231.03 = \$36,878.47**

Notes:

Income:

- Community Event Donations for food for the End of Summer Splash event benefitting Lindley Elementary were transferred to the youth fellowship line item.

Expenses:

- OCWM is \$3,000 annually; however, the conference did not receive the last \$1,000 mailed to them in 2022.
- Office Support was added as Melinda works in the office Tuesday–Thursday weekly. The secretarial position was Monday–Friday.
- The Cornerstone Loan interest for the solar panels and installation is new to the Treasurer's Report.

Memorials:

- \$1,000.00 in memory of Jimmy Norred and in honor of Norra Norred. (per the family's request, \$600.00 was transferred to the History Room to cover expenses)
- \$1,010.00 in memory of Jack and Marcy Neal.
- \$140.00 in memory of Carol MacDonald.
- \$50.00 Don Willoughby.