



federated

live your faith

**2025 Annual Report
and
Congregational Meeting**

February 22, 2026

Purpose Statement of The Federated Church

The purpose of the Federated Church shall be to worship God; to preach and hear the gospel of Jesus Christ; to joyfully embody the living Spirit of God; to embrace all people; to transform lives; and to empower everyone to love and serve the world through Jesus Christ.

Core Values of The Federated Church

Living in God's Grace, we value:

- Extravagant Welcome: We warmly welcome and appreciate all people.
- Wondrous Worship: We praise and glorify God at the front and center of our lives. We open ourselves to God's call while seeking to create sacred space wherever we are.
- Faith Formation: We believe God is still speaking. We nurture and deepen our relationship with God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit individually and in community.
- Purposeful Leadership: We lead, work and serve together as followers of Christ to discern, design, create and inspire opportunities to experience the Divine.
- Responsible Stewardship: We serve as faithful and generous stewards of God's gifts to us: time, money, talents, church resources and the earth to do God's work in the world.
- Boundless Beauty: We encourage and celebrate individual and communal expressions of beauty in our worship and surroundings as examples of the Holy elegance of God.
- Transformational Ministry: Following Jesus' example of love and justice, we seek to transform lives, including our own, through compassionate response, caring relationships, advocacy and active service.

Vision Statement of The Federated Church

With Christ at our center and surrounded by God's abundant love and grace, Federated Church thrives as a dynamic faith community for this generation and the next by:

- Engaging in extravagant invitation, welcome and inclusion,
- Fostering faith formation,
- Bringing forth transformational ministries, and
- Sharing our story

Mission Statement of The Federated Church

God accepts me just as I am and loves me too much to leave me that way. Federated accepts all people as they are and supports them in the spiritual journey. With Christ we offer hope and healing to change our world.

Open and Affirming Statement of The Federated Church

We, the members of the Federated Church of Chagrin Falls, Ohio believe that God is still speaking, and we seek prayerfully to discern God's plan for us today. Acknowledging God's acceptance of us and Jesus' commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves, we affirm our belief that we are one body in Christ.

We welcome people of all races and ages, mental and physical abilities, marital status, gender or sexual orientation. We invite those from different backgrounds of economic class, ethnicity, and varieties of thought, expression and religious tradition to join us in our worship and to participate in the full life and ministry of our church.

We celebrate the diversity of God's creation and believe that every person is uniquely made in God's image.

We embrace the joy of being accepted and affirmed by God and by one another.

We strive for justice and inclusiveness following Jesus' example of love.

Federated Church Creation Justice Covenant

We, the people of the Federated Church, declare our sacred connection to God, each other and the world around us. In response to God's call to be stewards of God's creation, we commit ourselves as individuals and as a congregation to responsibly care for creation and seek justice for those unjustly and unequally affected by human abuses of creation.

With collective resolve, we covenant to continuously promote awareness, advocacy, and action to heal, renew and protect the Earth and its people and demonstrate our covenant in all that we do.

With courage, hope and joy, trusting God's spirit to empower us, we promise to keep Creation Care and Justice at the forefront of all our conversations, policies, practices and decisions and build it into the fabric of our church.

Agenda

Annual Meeting of The Federated Church

United Church of Christ

Sunday, February 22, 2026 (following the 11:00am service)

Meeting held in the Sanctuary and via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89335752206?pwd=K7kyxESvLJ4NfdntvnRdWipXd37Zy7.1>

or if you do not have the internet, join by phone: 1.301.715.8592,

Meeting ID: 893 3575 2206, Passcode is 44022, press # (no participant ID).

Full Zoom Instructions are on the last page of this Annual Report.

Please note: the Annual Meeting will be recorded.

Opening Prayer – Vicki McGaw, Interim Senior Pastor

Call to Order – Peggie Jo Shinagawa, Clerk of Church Council

Approval: Minutes for 2025 Annual Meeting (February 23, 2025) – Peggie Jo Shinagawa

Year in Review – Jeff Miller, 2025 Moderator

Comments from Past Moderator – Steve Downey

Vision for the Future – Karen Wright, 2026 Moderator

Senior Pastor Search Update – Jeff Miller, Chair Senior Pastor Search Committee

Approval: Constitution Change to Retire the “Telling Our Story” Committee – Peggie Jo Shinagawa

**Update on FLC Capital Campaign – Ann Lentz, Chair of FLC Capital Campaign
& Thea Mozingo, Director of Generosity**

Financial Annual Report and 2026 Budget – Brady Hively, Treasurer

Approval: 2026 Budget – Brady Hively

Operations & Program Updates – Beth Rutkowski, SDPO

Legacy Committee Report – Robin Harbage, Chair Legacy Committee

Recognition of 2025 Lay Leadership – Rose Brown, Membership & Nominating Committee

Approval: Election of Lay Leadership for 2026 – Rose Brown

Closing Remarks – Jeff Miller

Closing Prayer – Pastor Vicki McGaw

Adjournment

A Message from the Church Moderator

As our church embarked on our first change in senior leadership in 20 years, as Moderator, my goal was for our congregation to simply stay engaged in worship and our ministries. My hope was that by deliberately focusing on engagement, we would reduce the likelihood of members stepping back or waiting on the sidelines that naturally comes with uncertainty and transitions. I also knew this was going to be a challenging year for me and my family as I attempted to serve both as moderator and chair of our senior pastor search committee.

We began the year with strong representation from staff and members during a series of listen sessions and surveys. These sessions focused on Federated's strengths, qualities desired in our next senior pastor, and what God is calling us to become. Feedback from these sessions allowed us to design our senior pastor search process around five key characteristics expressed by our congregation. In addition, these sessions gave us clear direction to invest further in youth and family ministry resulting in the selection of Oliver Mason as our Director of Youth and Families.

Last March, during our annual lay leadership retreat, our commission and committee leaders worked together on ways to weave engagement strategies into their ministry plans for the year ahead. With God's guidance and fantastic teamwork across our staff, lay leadership, and church members, we exited 2025 in many ways even stronger than we were when we started the year.

To our congregation and staff, I want to say thank you. Thank you for staying engaged. Thank you for stepping up or continuing your leadership. Thank you for taking care of yourself, each other, and those in our community. Thank you for your pledges and financial support. Working together, Federated enjoyed another year stable growth. Numbers are only part of the story, but I'm happy to share that our average in-person Sunday worship attendance consistently grew 3% over last year. We even saw attendance on Christmas Eve exceed 1,000 people in-person and viewing live online!

I'd like to recognize our Interim Pastor Vicki McGaw who has done a marvelous job opening our hearts to change. You have led with compassion, strength, and energy above and beyond what I envisioned an interim pastor would bring. A huge thank you for extending your service well beyond a year to give us continuity of leadership. You have left a mark on Federated and I'm sure we'll be finding tiny Jesus figures around the church for years to come!

After a very thorough year long process, and with unanimous support across both the committee and church council, your Senior Pastor Search Committee announced an exceptional candidate for senior pastor: **Reverend Michael Anthony Howard**. Michael brings over 20 years of continuous ministry experience as a senior pastor and organizational leader, serving across United Church of Christ, United Methodist, ecumenical, and interfaith settings.

I am truly grateful to be part of such passionate and engaged staff and lay leadership. The creativity, the smiles, the comfort and support, and the energy brought forward has been tremendous. I look forward to working with Karen Wright and Chelsey Kohn as they plan to assume the roles of Moderator and Vice Moderator in what will surely be an exciting year ahead.



Jeff Miller, 2025 Moderator

A Message from the Interim Pastor

"God will be with this church at all times... 'I will never leave you or forsake you,' (Heb 13:5).

Pastors will come and go. Only God will never leave us." - Ben Simpson

Serving as your interim pastor over the last fifteen months has been both a joy and a privilege. Oftentimes, interims arrive with a need to resolve a variety of challenges from dysfunction among staff, or lay leaders, or members of the congregation . . . or all of the above. Sometimes a church has grown bored with worship and programming that has become static. Worship attendance or giving may be in decline. But here, I was blessed to be able to focus on other things.

Serving at Federated has truly been a gift! There have been things to tweak to strengthen the church before the arrival of a new pastor, but mostly my role has been to offer new ideas to open minds of congregants to different ways of doing things, something that can be challenging for a congregation who had been blessed with a beloved and long-term pastorate, but you have been a receptive group! Some of the things on which we have worked together over the past year include:

- Staffing adjustments:
 - Following the resignations of the associate pastor and director of children's spiritual formation, we hired a director of youth and family ministries to better align our staffing to meet the desire of the congregation to increase our focus on youth. Oliver Mason has been a great addition to the staff and has already increased the participation of our youth and children.
 - Believing that communication is critical in the life of the church in this time, we adjusted Brooke Strong's title and responsibilities, making her our new Director of Communications. To free more of her time for these new opportunities, we hired an administrative specialist, Allison Hutchins, who has been another great addition to our staff team.
- An openness to new ideas and worship styles:
 - The congregation has been amazingly supportive and willing to embrace new ideas from Christmas caroling, a Mardi Gras celebration, a dramatic Maundy Thursday worship service that began at the table, a Holy Saturday prayer vigil, and a variety of ways of making worship multisensory.
 - Following an inspiring meeting with leaders from the Church Building and Loan Fund, both our church council and the board of the Community Life Collaborative are considering ways to strengthen our partnership with the goal of creating a sustainable future for both the FLC and the CLC. Watch for more information about this in the coming months.
 - After a series of sessions to prayerfully consider where God is calling Federated in the near future, we have uncovered some interesting new ideas. Watch for feedback to be shared soon.

As the search committee prepares to announce a Senior Pastor candidate, I pray that you will heed the words of Ben Simpson quoted above: *"Pastors will come and go. Only God will never leave us."* I hope that, in our time together this past year, I have helped you prepare for one pastor to go so that another will come. Welcome that person with the same love and support you have offered me because ultimately things are still the same: God will never leave you!



Annual Report of the Interim Pastor, Vicki McGaw, February 2026

A Message from Operations

Operations and Staffing Report

Reflecting on 2025 is a pleasure, thanks to the positive energy and strong sense of community that continue to fill our building. This year brought meaningful progress as we cleaned, reorganized, and repurposed several areas at 76 Bell Street to better serve our congregation and community.

Facilities Improvements

- We completed the installation of our new 50-ton HVAC unit for the classroom building and office tower.
- Both kitchens were decluttered, with unused items donated to church members and local nonprofits.
- Room 330 was painted and repurposed into a Meditation and Healing Room, now hosting contemplative prayer groups, Reiki, massage, pastoral counseling, and spiritual direction.
- The main copier room and office space were cleaned and reorganized.
- A new donation closet was created in the lobby near the Sanctuary stairs for contributions to MedWish, St. Paul's, and other food pantries.
- Fellowship Hall lighting was upgraded to brighter, more energy-efficient fixtures.
- Carpets and pew cushions in the Sanctuary and Narthex were deep cleaned.
- Parking lot maintenance continued with crack filling and replenished ice melt supplies.

We continue to enjoy hosting a wide variety of outside groups who regularly use our space. This year, we welcomed several new renters, including two Business International Networking groups and a baker who utilizes our kitchen to supply local coffee shops.

Staffing Updates

Our staff remains a dedicated and talented group committed to the church's mission. Following the departures of Rev. Betsy Wooster and Kristin LeFeber, we reassessed staffing needs and made the following changes:

- **Oliver Mason** – Director of Youth & Family Ministries
This newly created position oversees programming for children and youth from birth through high school. Oliver joined the staff in August and has already fostered an engaging and welcoming environment for families, working alongside Sunday School teachers Jannine Mason and Shawn Bottcher.
- **Allison Hutchins** – Administrative Specialist
This new role provides essential administrative support to staff, particularly in the creation and printing of bulletins and programs.
- **Brooke Strong** – Director of Communications
With Allison's addition, Brooke's former role as Congregational Life Coordinator transitioned into a focused communications position, strengthening both internal and external marketing efforts.

It is a joy and privilege to work with this outstanding team to keep our building and programming vibrant and welcoming. I look forward with excitement to all that lies ahead in 2026.

Beth Rutkowski, Senior Director of People & Operations



Impact Summary

Each year, Federated Church touches the lives of thousands of people in our community through ongoing programs, special services, and events held in our building at 76 Bell Street. We offer a wide range of activities and opportunities that help both church members and neighbors of all ages connect—with our church, with their faith, and with one another. Creating meaningful connections and serving as a community hub reflect our core belief that **All Are Welcome, Accepted, and Loved Here.**

We are deeply grateful for the beautiful building we call home, and we honor our mission by opening our doors to the wider community. For generations, Federated Church has provided meeting and activity space for groups who need a place to gather. This tradition continues today as we live out our commitment to hospitality, welcome, and service by supporting programs and organizations that enrich our lives and the lives of those around us.

Federated Ongoing Offerings for Spiritual and Physical Wellness: All Church Book & Bible Study, Angel Ministries - Flowers, Food, & Rides, Childcare on Sundays, Colorado Kids Youth Trip, Communion Ministry for Homebound, Friday Women's Bible Study, Inquirers' Class for new members, Lenten Bible Study, Monday Morning Miracles, Yoga Classes, SPIFFY Middle School Youth Group for grades 6 – 8, Sr. High Youth Group for grades 9 – 12, Sunday School for grades K – 8, Weekly Prayer Note Writers, 28 Days – Programming for Women

Federated Activities for Entertainment and Education: Circle, Helping Hands, Mahjong, Primetime Bridge, Primetime Lunch Out & Other Trips, Rally Day Festival, Sit & Stitch, Sunday Coffee Fellowship Hour, Wondrous Wednesdays

Community & Non-Faith-Based Activities Welcome in Our Space: AA Meeting Chagrin Falls Friday, AA Meeting Friday Big Book, AA Meeting Women on the Move, ACA Weekly Meeting, Alzheimer's Support Group, Business Networking International, Closed Meditation Group, Continuing Bereavement Group, DAR, Girl Scout Events, Music Together, Scouts Pack 150, Scouts Troop 150, Simply Fit with Sue, Yoga CFCC Group

Federated Music & Arts Activities: Adult Choir, Bell Choir, Children's Choir, Children's Christmas Musical, Gallery Exhibits, Leap of Faith Liturgical Dancers, Performing Arts Series, RISE Band

Federated Special Worship and Activities: Advent by Candlelight, Ash Wednesday Service, Christmas Eve Services, Easter Sunday Service, Holiday Wonderland, Maundy Thursday Service, Service of Hope & Healing at Christmas, Trinkets & Treasures

Federated Ongoing or Annual Mission and Justice Activities: Chagrin Falls Park Community Center Collections, Christmas Eve Offering, Habitat Playhouse Build, Helping Hands, HOLA Collection, Lights for Lions, NEOCH Winter Clothing Collection, Replay for Kids, SJAM General Meetings, SJAM Movie Night, SJAM Racial Justice Series, St. Paul's Loaves & Fishes, St. Paul's Monthly Collections, Youth St. Paul's Toy Store Project, Youth Bake Sales

Additional Community & UCC Partners: American Red Cross, Chagrin Documentary Film Festival, Chagrin Falls PTO/Schools, Chagrin Valley Council of Churches, Chagrin Valley Chamber of Commerce, Community Life Collaborative, Heartland Conference, Living Waters Association, Village Nursery School

Submitted by Thea Mazingo, Director of Generosity



Highlights from the Congregational Care Commission

The Congregational Care Commission has been honored to serve our church family by fostering connection, support, and fellowship throughout the year. Through a variety of events and gatherings, we have sought to create spaces where our congregation can come together in love and community.

This past year, we have sponsored:

- **Coffee Fellowship** after every worship service, providing a warm and welcoming space for conversation.
- **New Member Brunch (Spring/Fall)** to embrace and celebrate those joining our church family.
- **Valentine's Day Cookie Care Packages** to offer comfort and love to those who have recently lost a spouse.
- **All-Church Summer Picnic**, a time of joy, laughter, and shared meals in the beauty of summer.
- **Advent by Candlelight Service**, a reflective evening preparing our hearts for the season of Christ's birth.
- **Soup Luncheon for Christmas Carolers**, nourishing those who spread the joy of Christmas through song.

There are also many service opportunities under the Congregational Care umbrella:

- 9 individuals received monthly communion in their homes as part of the Communion to the Confined ministry
- 4 individuals received the sermon and bulletin in the mail every week
- 172 individuals received flowers at least once as part of Angel Flower Ministry
- 7 families received meals as part of Angel Food Ministry
- Hosted 11 memorials and 2 weddings as part of the Memorial & Wedding Ambassador and Memorial Bakers ministries
- Angel Rides provided as requested

We are grateful for the opportunity to serve and look forward to continuing our mission of care and connection in the coming year.

Submitted by Heidi Asplin (Chair)

Highlights from the Mission & Service Commission

The Mission and Service Commission acts as a facilitator and supports many of the church's outreach missions. We facilitate financial support and/or volunteer opportunities with our mission partners. The commission assesses mission prospects at the local, state, national, and international levels and proposes appropriate actions. We educate the Congregation concerning social and political issues morally relevant to Christians.

- In 2025, Mission and Service had to decrease by 27% Federated's budgeted financial support for our mission partners.
- UCC's Churches Wider Mission: Our commission offers five collection opportunities throughout the year to support local and national UCC ministries.
- Mission and Service Commission oversees the selection process for Federated's Christmas Eve Offering. The commission was very pleased to have chosen RePlay for Kids as the worthy recipient this year. Over \$27,000 was donated and presented to RePlay. Their vision is extraordinary, and we will have continued opportunities to help by volunteering and advocating.
- Community Life Collaborative: Many members volunteered for their programs.
- Good Samaritan Fund: Available to assist in a time of crisis and is managed by the Staff Liaison and Pastors.
- Loaves and Fishes: Monthly meals at St. Paul's Community Church continued to be capably headed by Jim Scheuermann and volunteers.
- St. Paul's Church and Chagrin Falls Park: We joyously continued supporting these longtime mission partners with budgeted funds, food, clothing and volunteering.

- Social Justice Advocacy Ministry: Mission and Service provides support for their ongoing work to educate, advocate and act on social justice issues in the community.

Mission and Service funds that were provided to Federated mission partners in 2025, are included in the 2025 Annual Financial Report Mission and Service giving page.

Dave Strauch Chair. Sharon Bakke, Pete Bednar, Marty Culbertson (staff), Gary Dole (council), Emilie Gottsegen, Caroline McClennan, Wendy pierce, Terry Rounds, Todd Smith, Joy Wyatt

Highlights from Social Justice Advocacy Ministry (SJAM)

The mission of Social Justice Advocacy Ministry (SJAM) is to be a voice and witness to God's love for all people and creation. We advocate for justice for those who are marginalized, discriminated against and denied their inherent rights as children of God and citizens of our nation and world. We strive to become well informed, provide opportunities to educate ourselves, balanced with opportunities to take action. Live our Faith!

SJAM is involved in a wide variety of social justice issues such as, criminal justice, LGBTQ+ rights, racial justice, creation justice, voting rights, international justice, immigration and other areas of concern. Entering our tenth year, we have over 140 folks who receive our communications and generally 25-50 attendees at our events. Each month a general meeting, a movie/speaker night, and Environmental Tips in the Spire are offered.

In 2025, we continued to be guided by goals developed at a 2023 retreat:

- SJAM is known for changing hearts and minds with awareness and education
- SJAM connects and collaborates with other community organizations
- SJAM is known for sponsoring, promoting, planning and participating in regional events
- SJAM mobilizes action nimbly & effectively with readily available structures and people

SJAM partners with organizations whose missions align with ours such as: Americans Making Immigrants Safe (AMIS), Racial Equity Buddies (REB), Northeast Ohio Coalition for Homeless (NEOCH), Northeast Ohio Friends of Immigrants HOLA, The Community Life Collaborative (CLC), Moms Demand Action, Honesty in Education Ohio, Equality Ohio, Chagrin Falls Park Community Center, SOGI along with other churches such as, Bainbridge Community UCC, Forest Hills Presbyterian Church, Chesterland UCC, Mt. Zion UCC, St. Paul's UCC, and many others. Our members have long histories as volunteers with many of these organizations, and we continue to collaborate, building on their expertise and strategies.

A sampling of our 2025 activities includes:

- International Justice - An in depth look into the humanitarian crisis in Gaza Included a book study (Decolonizing Palestine) attended by about 20 both Federated/SJAM members and guests. This was followed by a Zoom meeting with the author and showing the film "Where Olive Trees Weep" attended by over 100 people. Donations for the non-profit, Healing Palestine, totaled \$1,200 raised by the participants. Moving forward, on May 5, 2026, from 6-9 we will offer a community presentation on Christianity in the Holy Land.
- Racial Justice - We offered a two-part series on Reparation, Affirmative Action and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). In 2025 we increased our involvement with Racial Equity Buddies (REB). One of our members is on the Steering Committee. We have co-sponsored and helped plan various trainings. We participated in an Underground Railroad tour led by REB.
- LGTBQ+ Rights -SJAM was a sponsor of the Cleveland Pride Event (June 2025) where Federated members joined with other UCC churches to march. The Pride in Geauga event (August 2025) was held at the Family Life Center again this year. SJAM hosted a table, provided sponsorship, and attended. Also in August, a fun night of Banned Books Bingo helped us learn about several banned topics including LGBTQ+ issues. We wrote letters of kindness to UCC Military Chaplains as they strive to support LGBT service personnel.

- **Creation Care and Justice** – To live into our church’s designation as a Creation Justice Church: This year we offered recycling opportunities: electronics, Christmas lights, prescription bottles and other forms of recycling to lessen landfills and plastics in our environment. Each year in April and May we emphasize Creation Care and Justice. In 2025, we had a special worship service at the FLC with a focus on caring for God’s Creation, followed by nature and sensory awareness walks. During Lent there was an emphasis on changing habits to reduce plastics and the impact of our habits on the health of the earth. We showed a film on how consumerism impacts all of us, but especially the planet. We sold milkweed plants to support the beautiful monarch butterflies. In November and December (five Sundays) we offered Eco-Friendly products for sale, to raise awareness about how each of us can help the earth by choosing eco-friendly products, saving trees and reducing plastics. Seventeen different products were offered and the enthusiasm was high.
- **Immigration** – We facilitated opportunities for the congregation to support immigrants through donations and volunteering. In 2025, SJAM partnered with the Community Life Collaborative (CLC) to offer a variety of opportunities to learn about and engage with the immigrant community in Northeast Ohio. In 2025, we supported AMIS and HOLA financially. Relationships with HOLA, AMIS and Northeast Ohio Friends of Immigrants continue. We hosted an event called “Stories from the Border” in November. We conducted a series of collections of specific items such as diapers and bedding for immigrant families. We learned of several Chagrin families from Ukraine facing difficult situations and wrote letters to offer prayer and concern while the families remained anonymous.
- **Unhoused** - Working with St. Paul’s and the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless (NEOCH), SJAM has invited speakers to educate us (in coordination with the Mission and Service Commission), collected clothing and other needed items and provided financial support.
- **Democracy and Voting Rights** - In September we offered a program for Wondrous Wednesday on Voter Suppression. SJAM was a sponsor of a collaborative workshop on Protecting Democracy held at Pilgrim UCC also in September. We co-sponsored the No Kings protest at Bainbridge UCC in October. A Braver Angels presentation helped us communicate across political divisions.
- SJAM operates with funds from the Mission and Service committee as well as donations designated to SJAM. We use these funds to support organizations who work to advance our mission. For example, Racial Equity Buddies, AMIS, HOLA, and The LGBT Center of Greater Cleveland are some of the entities we supported financially in 2025.

For more information about SJAM, email sjamfedchurch@gmail.com or contact Kathy Franz at 440-821-7795. All are welcome. One does not need to be a Federated member to become involved.

Submitted by Kathy Franz

Highlights from the Generosity Commission

Throughout 2025, your Generosity Commission has continued to work diligently on our overarching paradigm to reinforce the idea that generosity cannot be compartmentalized into a once-a-year campaign. We believe that generosity needs to be a prioritized component of our spiritual journey at ALL times during the Church year; an integral part of our spiritual lifestyle choice. This sea-change shift in perspective began several years ago when Generosity was elevated to a Commission in Federated’s organizational structure rather than a once-a-year stewardship effort.

- Early in the year we focused on wrapping up the receipt of pledge materials from as many Federated families as possible and thanking those families who had pledged to the 2025 operating year.
- While we didn’t achieve our goal of moving our participation rate for active Federated families from 60% to 75%, we made some ground, and we remained committed to this lofty goal in 2025 and in future years. It is important that a Community thrive as a Community, and we hope to have all hands on board at all times.
- We continued to noodle on what motivates people’s generosity and participation. We looked for a strategy to take any stigma away from pledging, as it is the pledged total that our Council responsibly uses for budgeting. We made plans introduce new cultivation, education and investment mindset activities in order that our Community feel cultivated not pestered, reminded not burdened, and joyous not weighed down with the concept of sacrificial, impactful giving.

- Throughout the year we continued focusing on the importance of Generosity Impact Moments at every worship service as an educational tool as well as a reminder of the year-round aspect of generosity. We executed on 2024 plans with Staff members for programming that addressed generosity appropriately in our K-8 church school classes. We continued to spend time with several Inquirers classes during the year emphasizing the importance of regular pledging to Federated as part of a spiritual lifestyle.
- Our Commission volunteered meaningfully in the successful 2025 Trinkets & Treasures weekend, an important fundraising and friend-raising event for Federated. We also continued collaborations with the Membership & Nominating Committee to identify people who have been less active recently and re-engage their time, talents and treasure, all important components of the generosity puzzle.
- Our theme for the 2026 pledge campaign was “Celebrate the Past, Commit to the Future”, emphasizing the mindset that giving to Federated should be an investment, not just a budget filler. Our Commission and our Church has much room for advancement, as our participation percentages continue to be in the mid 60-percent range (that is, approximately 60-65% of active families at Federated pledge to the annual operating campaign). Your Generosity Commission’s lofty goal continues to be to reach 75% in the near future.
- Your Generosity Commission absolutely celebrates the generosity at Federated Church and the blessing that this generosity brings in both spiritual growth and sound financial footing. We maintain our goals for cultivating a year-round spiritual practice that embraces generosity at all times and hope for robust community participation in our funding needs and aspirations.

We cannot let this letter end without asking YOU to join us! Please consider being part of this critical effort at Federated by joining the Generosity Commission today!

Submitted by the Generosity Commission: Ken Horner(chair)

Highlights from the Spiritual Formation Commission

This year our commission has continued to create new programming for all ages and are grateful to support our amazing staff and other commission initiatives.

Programming for children and youth:

- Sunday school was provided for grades Birth through Eighth Grade with additional teachers to break up the age groups to accommodate more children.
- The youth group did service work at the church, for neighbors, and St. Paul’s. The group also took a trip to Go-Karting and Ziplining.
- A successful VBS was held at the FLC this summer.
- A playgroup for mothers of young children met on Wednesdays.
- Group has facilitated many community meals within the community.
- Group is planning the Colorado trip with upwards of 15 kids interested and signed up. We will be spending lots of time over the coming months fundraising.
- We have incorporated students from the youth group into our childcare at Federated. Opening up positions for them to work and get paid for helping.
- Trunk or Treat event was held for families and members of the congregation
- Passed out popsicles/ice cream and invitations to children on Blossom weekend to invite them to VBS.
- Lent madness for studying the Saints
- SFC sold parking spots during Blossom Weekend to raise money for youth programming
- Federated families made toys accessible for children with disabilities through Re-Play.
- Families participated in the Bethlehem Market on Sunday, December 15th.

Adult Spiritual Formation:

- Lectionary Bible study led by Betsy Wooster, Pete Bednar, and Dan Kershner during Lent
- Wonderous Wednesday topics: Breathwork, Composting in Your Backyard, Voter Registration, Life & Law Events, Ash Wednesday, and more!
- Bible Study with Vicki during the Lenten Season
- Book of Joy Book Study Groups
- Enneagram speaker and event for the community
- Enneagram book study
- Worship with Nature met on the spring equinox for a service in S. Chagrin Reservation.
- Federated Gallery continued to host Federated artists and artists from the community. Two of the artists donated part of their proceeds back to the church.
- Bible Study in the Fall: Kerygma

Submitted by Ali Hively (Chair)

Highlights from the Legacy Committee

The Legacy Fund Committee is responsible for growing and maintaining the Legacy Fund endowment of Federated. This requires careful stewardship of the invested funds, and a focus on encouraging new contributions in the form of estate gifts and current donations. Thanks to the 2025 members of the Committee, Dan Allen, Tricia Baumgartner, Lauren Brandon and Adam Graves. Recognition given to Brady Hively and Thea Mozingo for their contributions of time and talent.

It has been several years since the Legacy Fund received a gift from an estate, but annual giving continues with \$5,620 donated in 2025 from several congregants. The 2025 annual investment gain for the Legacy Fund was \$121,427, or 16.1%. Annual return over the past five years has exceeded 8%, in spite of a significant downturn in 2022. For 2025, \$38,380 was transferred to the church operating fund, representing our target of 5% of the trailing eight quarters average balance, to support the operations/mission of the church, resulting in a 2025 ending balance of \$843,937.

The Legacy Fund was highlighted during the September 21 church service, and a special offering resulted in a collection of \$470. While not a large collection, this provided a great opportunity to raise awareness of the Legacy Fund.

The Legacy Fund Committee sponsored a Wondrous Wednesday event in October about financial planning and estate planning for all ages. The guest, Taylor Carlucci of Hahn, Loeser & Parks provided a well-received program attended by about 40 people.

We encourage you to consider a contribution to the Legacy Fund either as a current gift or in your estate planning. Please reach out to any member of the Legacy Fund Committee for more information or to discuss how you can help sustain the mission of Federated Church.

Submitted by Robin Harbage, Legacy Committee Chair

Highlights from the Finance & Properties Committee

The Finance & Properties Commission is pleased to present the 2025 financial update and the approved 2026 budget.

- **2025 Financial Overview:** The year concluded with a small surplus (income slightly exceeding expenses). This was balanced, as mandated by the constitution, by adding the surplus to our deferred major maintenance designated fund. Pledges declined by 2.4% from 2024, a trend consistent with broader congregational patterns, with 98% of pledges collected.
- **Property and Program Costs:** Expenses for 76 Bell Street exceeded budget by 11%, primarily due to utility costs; the 2026 budget reflects current pricing. Program and education expenditures also exceeded budget but remain a small percentage of total spending. The 2026 budget increases programming allocations by 23%. Major maintenance and programming continue to be primarily funded by specific designated donations.
- **Staff Compensation:** The 2026 budget includes cost-of-living adjustments for staff and annual compensation for a full-time Senior Pastor, prioritizing fair compensation while balancing other needs.
- **Mission Giving Strategy:** In 2025, the Commission formally committed 10% of total pledges to missions, including out-of-budget giving (like the Christmas Eve Offering). While the formal budget line was set lower at \$25,014 (reflecting the anticipated out-of-budget portion), an additional \$40,068 from the anticipated surplus was designated for missions. Ultimately, total mission giving for 2025 amounted to \$151,219, or **16% of 2025 pledges**.
- **New Budget Presentation Changes:**
 - **Properties:** The budget documents now include the full income (rent/reimbursements) and expenses for the FLC and 102 Bell Street for greater transparency.
 - **Designated Funds:** Dollars received and spent from designated funds will now be shown separately to reflect total giving/spending, without impacting the bottom-line budget.
- **Mission Giving:** The 2026 budget will calculate the formal mission line by subtracting estimated out-of-budget giving from 10% of expected pledges, ensuring the 10% total mission commitment is met.

We sincerely appreciate the support and dedication so many of you give to Federated - thank you. Our budget structure allows limited flexibility to reduce expenses in our largest areas—properties and salaries. As a result, when pledging decreases, as it has over the last several years, and difficult decisions must be made, missions giving and program funding are most affected. Higher participation and increased giving through our annual pledge campaigns would allow us to invest more fully in the ministries and programs that matter deeply to our congregation.

Submitted by Padi Joseph, Finance Committee Chair

Highlights from the Human Resources Committee

Human Resources committee met monthly in 2025 and acted as follows:

- Recognized the importance of the “listening sessions” and applied their value.
- Utilized and worked through a “task worksheet,” which identified tasks, responsible parties, target completion dates and updates. This acted as an effective tool to guide the work of the HR Committee.
- Supported both Youth Director and Senior Pastor Search Committees.
- Assisted in the onboarding of, and offered ongoing support to, the new Youth Director, Oliver Mason.
- Supported operations in updating job descriptions, as well as assessing staffing levels, performance, compensation and benefits, providing training and navigating staff and clergy resignations.

- Reviewed and updated both Employee and Volunteer Manuals, which included guidelines and rules.
- Due to the sensitive nature of the issues in which HR is involved, we continued to observe brevity and confidentiality.

Respectfully & gratefully submitted by Dave Watterson, Chairperson

Highlights from the Membership & Nominating Committee

The Membership and Nominating Committee is in its third year of reorganization with a focus on a Growing with New Members and offering an Extravagant Welcome to newcomers, connecting with the members of the congregation, and filling Federated's 4 Committees and 4 Commissions each year.

MEMBERSHIP

19 New Members joined the church at services in April and September 2025. Our Inquirer's classes are designed to foster connections and share our faith journeys with one another, and this is a deeply meaningful experience for both committee members, clergy, and our Inquirers. We also share knowledge about Federated's past, our current activities and missions, and our commitment to generosity and living our faith.

New Member Sunday includes a breakfast provided by Congregational Care, the vows and promises of the church during the service, a symbolic loaf of bread, and a welcome reception after the service. New members are featured on the M&N bulletin board.

We are continuing to pair each new member with a **New Member Partner** volunteer who offers an extravagant welcome and encourages further engagement to help new members feel connected to Federated. Thank you to all our members who participate in this activity, for this has been truly successful in keeping our new members engaged (as well as deepening personal connections and forging friendships).

EXTRAVAGANT WELCOME

Our committee continues to extend an extravagant welcome to visitors who attend worship. Approximately 74 visitors received a welcoming phone call, note, or email from one of our committee members, thanking them for attending and reminding them that all are welcome here. The feedback to this has been positive, and we believe it has encouraged interest in further attendance.

Some of the other activities included of our Extravagant Welcome include:

- Welcoming postcards sent to new residents of the Greater Chagrin Community
- Informational brochures were printed this year and are found along with other promotional material in the newly organized displays.
- Welcome bags in the Narthex with information and goodies for visitors.

CONNECTING WITH THE CONGREGATION

M&N continues to reach out to congregants who have not been in attendance for a significant time. Our goal is to reconnect, and also to get an accurate number of congregants for leadership. This year, 21 households were contacted.

We reach out via phone or email for a status update, and also ascertain whether there are any pastoral needs, transportation issues, etc. After multiple attempts to personally connect, letters are sent to those not reached.

We continue to encourage everyone in the Congregation to use the **REALM** application, our online church directory. **REALM** is a great way to be able to connect with other congregation members, sign up for church activities, and check in for online worship, or give a donation online.

Lastly, our Table Tents at the Fellowship Hour encourage the inclusion of everyone in the room. These icebreakers can be used to simulate conversations with old friends or new acquaintances. Our hope is that newer attendees will feel welcomed and included in coffee and conversation.

NOMINATING

There are 56 positions on our four Commissions (minimum 6, maximum 9) and our four Committees (minimum 3, maximum 5). M&N works with current Commission and Committee leaders and clergy throughout the year to fill openings, and brainstorm for the following year's vacancies.

As of this writing, we have filled 39 positions, and all the minimums have been met. Right now, Mission & Service, Human Resources, Membership & Nominating, and Legacy are filled. Thanks to our congregants who do this important work! We are thankful for those serving now and for those new to leadership who are being approved at the Annual Meeting.

We look forward to another year of welcoming, growing, and engaging our visitors and members!

Submitted by Dawn Herdman, Membership & Nominating Committee Chair

Highlights from the Community Life Collaborative (CLC)

OUR MISSION

To engage communities in social and environmental justice by empowering untapped relationships, collaborations and understandings across boundaries.

GENERAL HIGHLIGHTS:

- Networked across local churches, foundations and nonprofits to elevate environmental awareness and mobilize solutions in response to community needs for food security and connection. We coordinated projects within *Communities of Practice* for collective social and environmental action in Northeast Ohio.
- Transformed the gardens around the labyrinth to all native perennials through generous contributions, and working with Native Landscaping and Gardens, Good Nature Lawn Care, and dozens of volunteers.
- Optimized the Family Life Center as an asset to Federated in advancing community engagement goals of the church's Visionary Action Plan with 438 events, 2,750 community touchpoints at Federated's FLC per month, or 33,000 visitors for 2025.
- The Federated Church continues to be recognized as a model in reimagining "church" in the 21st Century through its partnership with the Community Life Collaborative (CLC) to optimize the FLC property as a community hub for environmental action and stewardship across the region, aligning with and broadcasting Federated's Creation Care designation.

The CLC IMPACT - The CLC bridges untapped relationships, collaborations and understandings by:

- Launching and co-facilitating overnight **Youth Retreats** at the FLC featuring environmental solution-finding, climate-based careers, exploring "How the place where I live can become a just place?"

- Hosting free **community workshops** on basic composting, installing rain gardens, building climate resilience, equity, and solutions for Geauga County, and nonviolent community organizing tools.
- **Coordinating partnerships** across Summit County organizations and municipalities to reach common sustainability goals for increasing native planting to support local leadership and invest in community resilience for underserved communities through our “Tree Up Akron”.
- Ramping up **community recycling commitments** using an Ohio EPA grant to incentivize practices around the campus and at residences in the wider community resulting in the diverting over 8,325 lbs of material from landfills.
- Facilitating Akron **Community Tree Giveaway** at Joy Park, including the donation of 16 native plants and 33 native trees, to strengthen the urban canopy in neighborhoods most impacted by heat and air quality harms.
- Hosting provocative **gallery exhibits** that expand visibility and education, highlighting diverse cultures, community action, and poignant environmental issues and solutions.
- Welcoming approximately 75 families and children to explore the FLC’s 40 acres during the **Third Annual Epic Leaf Party and Fall Festival** – an inclusive community gathering with drum circles, hayrides, mindfulness trails, nature crafts, food trucks and more.
- Sponsoring celebrations across Northeast Ohio, including **Juneteenth** with Shaker Lakes Nature Center and **Nature Includes You** with Cuyahoga Valley National Park, that welcomed hundreds of people, fostered inclusive community connection, and increased our visibility across the region.
- Hosting activities & events for **The Federated Church programs at the FLC** including Memorial Day worship, Federated’s Trinkets and Treasures Fundraiser, the return of Vacation Bible School for God’s Creation, partnering with Federated’s Social Justice Advocacy Ministries (SJAM) to engage speaker programs, movie nights, and critical conversations around topics for social action, and more!

Thank you to our 2025 program partners: *Federated Church, Living Waters Association, Chagrin River Watershed, African American Quilt & Doll Guild, Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park, The Ohio University College of Engineering, Big Love Network, Spark Acumen, Northern Ohio Recovery Association, LEAD for Pollinators, Inc, Native Landscape and Gardens, Good Nature Lawn Care, CLC Garden Guardians, Northeast Ohio Community Resilience Centre, Museum of Creative Human Art (MOCHA), CUCC Orville, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Cuyahoga Arts & Culture, Rid All, Student Nonviolence Academy, Organic Connects, Ledgewood Christian Church, Shaker Lakes Nature Center, Food Strong*

Community Life Collaborative Board of Directors: Ann Lentz, Anne Burr, Maren Koepf, Rev. Cheryl Lindsay, Pete Bednar, Kimberly Price, Martine Scheuermann, Anne Watson, Dan Allen. **Executive Director:** Destinee Burse

Submitted by the Community Life Collaborative

Highlights from Youth & Family Ministries

My name is Oliver Mason and I was hired in my role as the Director of Youth and Family Ministry in August. During my time here we have worked across the generational divide to curate a welcoming environment to any prospective member and began to cultivate a community for children who are about to take their first steps into young adulthood. Here are a few events which we have participated in and put on over the past six months.

- Adventure Fun Zone – took 15 students to a day at Geneva on the Lake
- Apple Picking – Explored Patterson’s fruit farm and had an apple pie baking contest
- Trunk or Treat – Members decorated cars and gave out candy to kids from the church and community
- Friendsgiving – Hosted two Friendsgiving events for different ages
- Loaves & Fishes – Have twice gone to St. Paul’s church to assist with the feeding the homeless
- Bake Sale & Toy Shopping – The youth group baked treats during service to sell for at will donations; we used the \$1700 raised to shop for toys to donate to St. Paul’s Church Christmas Toy Shop
- H.A.C.K. – Reimplemented a program where congregation members are able to Hire A Colorado Kid for a donation to the Colorado Travel Fund
- Kid’s Church – every month begins with the first Sunday of Sunday School as Kid’s Church, where we go over traditions and practices to help the students adjust to being in church with families during important services

We have lots of events in the rear-view mirror, but even more ahead of us! Here is just a preview of some youth activities for 2026

- Mardi Gras Fundraiser – Colorado Kids will be helping serve a Mardi Gras themed lunch on 2/15 and accepting at will donations for the Colorado Trip!
- Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser – Colorado Kids will be cooking and serving a pancake breakfast on a weekend in March
- Colorado Trip: July 11-18 – a group of trusted volunteers are taking our youth group on a faith and mission trip to Colorado
- Youth and Children led services – we plan to have the youth lead a service after returning from Colorado to share their experiences
- Vacation Bible School – a summer bible camp for young students, beginning 7/13 and ending on 7/17. More details to follow.

Oliver Mason, Director of Youth and Family Ministries

Highlights from Music Ministries and Technology

The music ministries at Federated Church in 2025 continued our goals of engaging the congregation in immersive worship and dynamic programming. 2025 served as a streamlining year that bolstered our current ensembles and improved our online technical presence. We are streaming our services at the highest quality yet and participation has remained consistent across all ensembles.

Thank you to every single musician and volunteer that has made the various ensembles and events at Federated Church a success! The members of the Choir, Bell Choir, RISE to Shine Band, Children’s Choir, and our Tech Team enhance the life of Federated Church greatly with their participation! It is a wonderful gift to share music with our congregation and community, deepening the faith walks for all involved. It is a great honor to lead these groups! I’m also extremely

grateful to my colleagues, Marcia Snively and Pat Haynish, for their leadership and skill. We welcome anyone interested in being a part of our dynamic community approach to music making.

The Federated Choir has galvanized into a group eager for challenging and expressive music making. This group is truly outstanding to work with, and their efforts should be applauded! The RISE to Shine Band, from its inception, has been a very tight knit group (and we have a ridiculous amount of fun in rehearsals). The Bell Choir is eager to grow but spirits are as uplifted as ever from week to week in rehearsals. Our Children's Choir continued its wonderful history of bringing joy to our youth through song, especially in their wonderful Christmas season pageant!

Federated Church has grown into a premier music venue, not only for our ensembles, but world-class level performance with our Performing Arts Series and multiple rental events throughout the year. In 2025, the Performing Arts Series welcomed composer Margi Griebing-Haigh, the Baldwin Wallace Men's Chorus, Sammy DeLeon and his Latin jazz orchestra, pianist Roman Rabinovich, and the Burning River Brass. Equally exciting was our slate of rental events as we hosted successful concerts by the Cleveland Repertory Orchestra, ChamberFest Cleveland, Encore Chamber Music Festival, and local music teachers in addition to multiple high-profile recording sessions by the Factory Seconds Brass. Every event allows an audience that may have never stepped foot into Federated to experience who we are and what we value.

2025 continued our strong music ministry. I look forward to our future programs and opportunities for your involvement! Your support makes everything possible.

Submitted by Joshua Konow, Director of Music Ministries and Technology

Highlights from the Office of Generosity

As predicted, 2025 proved to be an exciting time of transition, discernment and opportunity.

The 2026 Generosity Campaign's theme was "Celebrate the Past – Commit to the Future". In this transition year, we looked to honor all of the wonderful things that Federated has done and been in the past, with an eye to the amazing year to come. You are an integral part of this church, its mission, its support and its future. Because of your support, we are blessed with opportunities to come together to worship, serve, and celebrate the abundance of God's love and grace. We could not do any of this without your generous gifts of time, talent and treasure. We are grateful for YOU!

The work of the Legacy Fund Committee was featured in a Generosity Impact Moment during worship. With the help of one of the church's youths and a member of the committee, we were able to share the important role that our endowment plays in the ongoing life of the church. The committee also sponsored Wondrous Wednesday in October. This event was called Stages of Life & the Law-Planning for your Life and Legacy. This event helped members and friends learn about the various legal documents and planning considerations needed through the stages of life.

It was an honor to work with Marty and the Mission & Service Commission on the many ways that we are called to serve others in our community and beyond. Together we were able to support people in need through special offerings, collections, and fundraisers. In 2025 these included collections for the Colorado Kids, Chagrin Falls Park, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, Habitat for Humanity's Playhouse Build, NEOCH, Replay for Kids, St. Paul's Church, Re:Source Cleveland and the UCC's 5 for 5 offerings.

In all that we do—within our walls and throughout the community—we strive to reflect who we are as a faith family. Our promise is to embody a spirit of extravagant welcome, acceptance, and love. I am deeply thankful for the opportunity to collaborate with Brooke, the Telling Our Story Committee, and our dedicated church staff as we worked together to share that story—our story—with the local community and beyond.

One of the main responsibilities of my role is community outreach. We are excited to announce that we had over 6,000 community visitors in the building in 2025. As a church, it is important for us to be a good community partner. We have made a commitment to be involved in wider community activities and to be a resource for neighboring organizations. This year, we have worked with: 100 Women Who Care-Western Reserve, Adult Children of Alcoholics, Alcoholics Anonymous, Alzheimer's Support Group, American Red Cross, Business Network International, Daughters of the American Revolution, Chagrin Falls Schools, Chagrin Documentary Film Festival, Chagrin History Center, ChamberFest Cleveland, Children's Guild, Cleveland Repertory Orchestra, Climate Hope Affiliates, Chagrin Valley Chamber of Commerce, Encore Chamber Music, Encore Creativity Choir, Girl Scouts of American, Habitat for Humanity, Music Together, Scouts-Troop & Pack 150, Village Nursery School and yoga & exercise programs.

We are blessed to have this wonderful building that serves as a home to us and to the community. We are blessed to have each other – a faith family that cares so deeply for God, our planet, our neighbors and each other. Thank you for sharing your generous hearts, spirits and your joy. They will know we are Christian by our love.

Submitted by Thea Mozingo, Director of Generosity

Federated Church's 2025 Lay Leadership

Church Council

Position	Lay Leader	Representative to
Moderator	Jeff Miller	
Vice Moderator	Karen Wright	
Past Moderator	Steve Downey	
Clerk	Peggie Jo Shinagawa	
Treasurer	Brady Hively	Finance & Properties and Legacy Committees
Admin Councilor	Sunny Doxey	Telling Our Story and Human Resources Committees
Councilor 1	Diane Tuuri	Congregational Care Commission
Councilor 2	Ann Lentz	Generosity Commission
Councilor 3	Gary Dole	Mission & Service Commission
Councilor 4	Dan Kershner	Spiritual Formation Commission
Staff	Beth Rutkowski, SDPO	

COMMISSIONS

Congregational Care Commission

Heidi Asplin (chair), Jodi Eliooff, Leah Hassett, Karen Johns, Gabrielle Quintin, Dawn Thatcher, Kathy Kieta, Jane Biggar, Martine Scheuermann

Generosity Commission

Ken Horner(chair), Maren Koepf, Michael Quintin, Joan Reike, Judy Riemenschneider, Owen Foster, Houston Bowers*

Mission & Service Commission

Dave Strauch (chair), Pete Bednar*, Joy Wyatt, Sharen Bakke, Emilie Gottsegen, Todd Smith, Terrance Rounds, Wendy Pierce, Caroline McClennan

Spiritual Formation Commission

Ali Hively (Co chair) Allison Graves (Co-chair), Sandra Meyer, Katie Swanson-Harbage, Doug Antil, Anne Wingfield, Laura Reed, Marc Arnold, Cathy Digel

ELECTED COMMITTEES

Finance & Properties Committee

Padi Joseph (chair), Phil Fogerty, Chelsey Kohn, Al Woehrle, Doug Harlan*

Human Resources Committee

Dave Watterson (Chair), Eric Baumgartner, Kelly Lawrence, Chris Bednar, Bill Franz

Legacy Committee

Robin Harbage (chair), Dan Allen, Tricia Baumgartner, Adam Graves, Lauren Brandon*

Membership & Nominating Committee

Dawn Herdman (chair), Rose Brown, Harriett Rogers, Elaine Witmer, Cindy Barclay*

Telling Our Story Committee

Diana Gardner, Representatives from the four Commissions

APPOINTED DELEGATES

Living Water Association Delegates

Susi Kawolics, Judy Bagley-Bonner

Heartland Conference Delegates

Susi Kawolics, Judy Bagley-Bonner

—New appointment/position since
Annual Meeting held February 2025

The asterisk (*) indicates the individual was elected after the Annual Meeting. The following individuals have retired from elected service during the past year or are doing so after the Annual Meeting. Federated Church wishes to thank them for their service. Heidi Asplin, Eric Baumgartner, Sharen Bakke, Rick Bryan, Owen Foster, Allison Graves, Emilie Gottsegen, Leah Hassett, Ali Hively, Karen Johns, Walker Johnson, Sandra Meyer, Dave Watterson, Al Woehrle, Karen Zoltowicz.

Lay Leaders – Slate for 2026

Church Council

<i>Position</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Term</i>
Vice Moderator	Chelsey Kohn*	2029
Moderator	Karen Wright*	2028
Past Moderator	Jeff Miller*	2027
Clerk	Peggie Jo Shinagawa*	2028
Treasurer	Brady Hively*	2029

Church Council Councilors

<i>Position</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Term</i>
Administrative	Sunny Doxey	2028
Congregational Care	Diane Tuuri	2027
Generosity	Ann Lentz*	2029
Mission & Service	Gary Dole	2027
Spiritual Formation	Dan Kershner	2028

COMMISSIONS

Mission & Service Commission

<i>Position</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Term</i>
Commissioner	Todd Smith	2027
Commissioner	Terrance Rounds	2027
Commissioner	Wendy Pierce	2027
Commissioner	Pete Bednar	2028
Commissioner	Joy Wyatt	2028
Chair	Dave Strauch	2028
Commissioner	Caroline McClennan*	2029
Commissioner	Laura Taylor*	2029
Commissioner	Gabrielle Quintin*	2029

Generosity Commission

<i>Position</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Term</i>
Commissioner	Michael Quintin	2027
Commissioner	Maren Koepf	2027
Commissioner	Joan Rieke	2027
Commissioner	Judy Riemenschneider	2028
Chair	Ken Horner	2028
Commissioner	Houston Bowers	2028
Commissioner	Diana Gardner*	2029
Commissioner	OPEN	2029
Commissioner	OPEN	2029

Spiritual Formation Commission

<i>Position</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Term</i>
Commissioner	Katie Swanson-Harbage	2027
Commissioner	Doug Antil	2027
Commissioner	Marc Arnold	2027
Commissioner	OPEN	2028
Commissioner	Anne Wingfield	2028
Commissioner	Laura Reed	2028
Chair	Cathy Digel*	2029
Commissioner	Donnie Adams*	2029
Commissioner	OPEN	2029

Congregational Care Commission

<i>Position</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Term</i>
Commissioner	Dawn Thatcher	2027
Commissioner	Kathy Kieta	2027
Commissioner	Jane Biggar	2027
Commissioner	Jodi Elioff	2028
Commissioner	Martine Scheuermann	2028
Commissioner	Kathleen Davis*	2029
Commissioner	OPEN	2029
Commissioner	OPEN	2029

ELECTED COMMITTEES

Legacy

<i>Position</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Term</i>
Member	Dan Allen	2027
Member	Tricia Baumgartner	2027
Member	Adam Graves	2028
Member	Lauren Brandon	2028
Member	Bill Caster*	2029

Human Resources

<i>Position</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Term</i>
Member	Chris Bednar	2027
Chair	Bill Franz	2028
Member	Kelly Lawrence*	2029
Member	Linda Robertson*	2029
Member	Peggie Jo Shinagawa*	2029

Finance & Properties

<i>Position</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Term</i>
Member	Doug Harlan	2027
Member	OPEN	2028
Member	Phil Fogarty	2028
Chair	Padi Joseph*	2029
Member	Carrie English*	2029

Membership & Nominating

<i>Position</i>	<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Term</i>
Member	Harriett Rogers	2027
Member	Cindy Barclay	2027
Member	Rose Brown	2028
Chair	Dawn Herdman	2028
Member	Elaine Witmer*	2029

“TERM” —Year indicates last year of service for this term.

* Nomination for Lay Leader

APPOINTED DELEGATES

Living Waters Association

<i>Position</i>	<i>Candidate</i>
Delegate	Susi Kawolics
Delegate	Judy Bagley-Bonner
Delegate	OPEN

Heartland Conference

<i>Position</i>	<i>Candidate</i>
Delegate	Susi Kawolics
Delegate	Judy Bagley-Bonner

2026 Pledges

We are grateful to those who have made a financial commitment to Federated Church for 2026. Through your gifts we will be able to do God's work inside the walls of our church home and out the in the community. Living our faith!

"In normal life we hardly realize how much more we receive than we give, and life cannot be rich without such gratitude." Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Bob Abley & Deborah Parker	Mark & Suzanne Carle	Phil & Sally Fogarty
Donnie & Nickie Adams	Becky Carter	Casey Forbes & Signe Wrolstad-Forbes
Doug & Lisa Antil	Bill & Judie Caster	Owen & Toni Foster
Marc & Shana Arnold	Doug & Barb Church	Bill & Kathy Franz
Tom & Heidi Asplin	George & Ruth Clemens	Dave & Chris Frazier
Jane Badal	John & Elizabeth Click	John & Lee Ann Frederick
Brian & Judy Bagley-Bonner	Mark Corrado	Alan & Lori Frey
Jack & Nancy Baker	Jim & Carolyn Cunningham	Peggy Fullmer
John & Debbie Baker	Tom Dantimo	Karen & Rich Gajewski
Ken & Sharen Bakke	Amy Davis	Tim & Diana Gardner
Doug & Lu Bannerman	Mark & Kathleen Davis	Bill Gaskin
Bob & Cindy Barclay	Jon Denney	Bruce Gigax
Bob & Mimi Bathgate	Dave & Judy Devore	John & Sue Giles
Eric & Tricia Baumgartner	Leigh & Cathy Digel	Steve & Cindy Girouard
Pete Bednar & Chris Kutsko Bednar	Gary & Dawn Dole	Pam Goetsch
Joanie Belair	David & Karen Doll	Eric & Jill Goodman
Dave Bender	Mike & Cheryl Dolohanty	Scott & Julie Gordon
Janet Berlincourt	Terry Donley	Emilie Gottsegen
John & Marilee Biel	Christopher Dougherty	Adam & Allison Graves
Bill & Jane Biggar	Steve & Kelly Downey	Mary Griffith
Barry & Kathie Biggin	Bob & Sunny Doxey	Curtis & Erinn Grube
Houston & Mary Bowers	Wendy Duncan	Dave & Marcy Gurd
Mary Ann Boysen	Ruth Eberlein-Kershner	Leon & Joy Haddix
Bill & Lauren Brandon	Roger & Brenda Ehle	Mari Hageman
Lisa Braun	Jodi Elioff	Laura Hancock
Jim & Barbie Breitenbach	Joan Elliott	Susie Hanson
Susan Brooks	Robert & Lindsay Elmore	Robin Harbage & Katie Swanson-Harbage
Peter & Rose Brown	James (JP) & Carrie English	Doug Harlan
Will & Kristin Brown	Kris Exline	Bob Harris
Brendan & Lisa Buescher	Warren & Diane Farr	Judy Harvey

Anne Burr	Leslie Fincun	Mike & Mary Hasman
Ben & Erin Calkins	John & Cathy Fitzgerald	Leah Hassett
Chuck & Sandy Hauser	Mary Kudasick	Steve & Hope Murphy
Allison Hawkes	Betsy Lancaster	Mike & Sara Newstead
Pat Haynish	Jamey & Kelly Lawrence	Darlene Nichols
Bob & Dawn Herdman	Bill & Ann Lentz	John & Linda Nichols
Steve & Laura Hervert	Diana Lindeman	Nancy Nichols
Skip & Ann-Marie Heston	Bill Lineweaver	Rita Nichols
Brady & Ali Hively	Cal & Kim Lockert	Jim & Sue Ollinger
Alan & Lee Hoffman	Heather Luckey	Georgiann Pace
Michael Hogue	Bob & Joyce Luczywo	Morris Pengilly
Don Hoke	Byron Lutman	Michael & Wendy Pierce
Chris & Meghan Holden	Patti Lyden	Chuck & Cheryl Pitcock
Jane Hoover-Plow	Liz Manchester	Greg Polyak & Marcia Snavelly
Ken & Kristi Horner	Jon & Polly Manke	Frank & Fran Porter
Janey Horth	Mark & Sue Mansour	Gerry & Marie Powers
Jerry & Patty Hridel	Bill & Carole Mason	Dave & Betty Pugh
Joe & Barbara Hudson	Jannine Mason	Michael & Gabrielle Quintin
Nancy Isham	Dave & Betsy Mast	Thaddeus & Dorothy Quintin
Joan Jenkins	Keith & Jan Mast	Anne Randall
Bill & Regina Johannisson	Dick Masters	Laura Reed
Lee & Karen Johns	Kathryn Matthews	Harry Rees & Karen Anderson
Cheryl Johnson	Dick & Sibyl McBride	Mary Rensel
Bob Jones & Anita Gage	Mort & Caroline McClennan	Don Rice
Padi Joseph	Joyce McFarland	Carolyn Richardson
Rich & Susi Kawolics	Michael McGaw	Joan Rieke & Dan Allen
Bill & Silvia Kenneweg	John & Laura McMullen	Judy Riemenschneider
Jane Kenneweg-Welch	Debbie Medlar	Joyce Ritchie
Dan Kershner	Scott & Mindy Meneely	Joy Robertson
Lynne Kessell	Martha Meyer	Linda Robertson
Todd & Richelle Kidder	Tom & Sandra Meyer	Harriett Rogers
Dennis & Kathy Kieta	Tom & Jenica Mignogna	Joe Rose & Kristina Morgan
Nancy King	Jeff & Lauren Miller	Linnea Rostek
Carol King-Shaw	Mike & Lynn Miller	Terrence & Carole Rounds
Paul & Maren Koepf	Emily Moore & Kaleb Kaschalk	Bob & Beth Rutkowski
Chelsey & Katie Kohn	Mike & Ruth Moore	Bill & B.J. Schatz
Kathy Kolcaba	Tom & Marilyn Morrow	Jim Scheuermann
Joshua & Rebecca Konow	Toney & Lindsey Morton	Martine Scheuermann & Marty Culbertson
Dana Korosi & Gylene Pelton	Chuck & Thea Mazingo	Susan Schreiner
Tony Kotnik & Maureen Corrigan	Bob & Tami Munson	Cindy Scott & Miriam Huebscher-Scott
Don & Charlene Krejci	Sharon Munson	Laura Senel Woodworth
Jennie Krutilla	Anne Murphy	Bill & Carolyn Shaul

Gail & Jack Shelley	Jim VanCleaf	Kay Wellman
Alan & Peggie Shinagawa	Bob & Liz Vargo	Ed & Judy Weston
Nancie Skonezny	Laura Vargo	Larry & Lee Wiley
Barb Smith	Joe & Sue Ellen Vayda	Ollie & Anne Wingfield
Todd & Melinda Smith	Dean & Sue Vecchio	Marilyn Wise & Bob Chatfant
Dan & Sandi Sommers	Arturo & Mary Ann Viveros	Elaine Witmer
Jim & Linda Squire	Heather Wagley	Al & Rebecca Woehrle
Dave & Holly Strauch	Nora Wagner	Bill & Karen Wright
Susan Sulcs	Don & Carole Wakeman	Joy Wyatt
James DeWitt & Susan Sullivan	Kristen Walenga	Darren & Lynn Wyville
Alex & Alice Taylor	Edward & Rannigan Walsh	Jim Young
Laura Taylor	Mike & Kate Walsh	Jack & Barb Youshak
Brian & Julie Tutkovics	Cathy & Dave Watterson	Bill & Linda Zelazny
Diane Tuuri & Ward Pierson	Doug Welling	Karen Zoltowicz

Family Life Capital Campaign

At the 2025 Annual Meeting, the congregation approved the commencement of a capital campaign for the Family Life Center (FLC). This capital campaign began in late spring of 2025 and will continue through December 2027. The campaign aims to address the long-term cost of ownership of the FLC. The goal is to raise \$1,000,000 to provide for the future capital maintenance needs of the FLC property.

To date, members of the church and community have pledged \$399,575 and we have received \$176,900 of those pledged dollars. Funds raised through the capital campaign will be added to the management fees from the Community Life Collaborative (\$25,000 per year) and the funds that were held in the FLC Deferred Maintenance account (\$129,000 at the start of the campaign). The total of these three is \$603,575. These funds will be used for capital expenses at the FLC.

What Deferred Capital Maintenance needs are being assumed in the FLC Capital Campaign?

Family Life Center Capital Needs	Estimates
HVAC	\$350,000
Roof/Siding	\$200,000
Parking Lot Paving and Drainage	\$190,000
Unforeseen Capital Expenditures	\$200,000
Subtotal	\$940,000

Note: Itemized estimates are subject to bidding and will be reviewed with the congregation. Expenditures for the capital needs of the FLC will be determined by the Federated Properties & Finance committee and, in accordance with the Federated Constitution, will be approved by the congregation if the amount exceeds \$100,000.

Retiring the Telling Our Story (TOS) Committee From the Governance Model

Our current staffing model is structured such that the staff is responsible for (1) the direct communication of events within Federated and throughout the community and (2) developing and managing the church "brand", both of which are the only responsibilities defined in the Constitution as belonging to the Telling Our Story (TOS) committee.

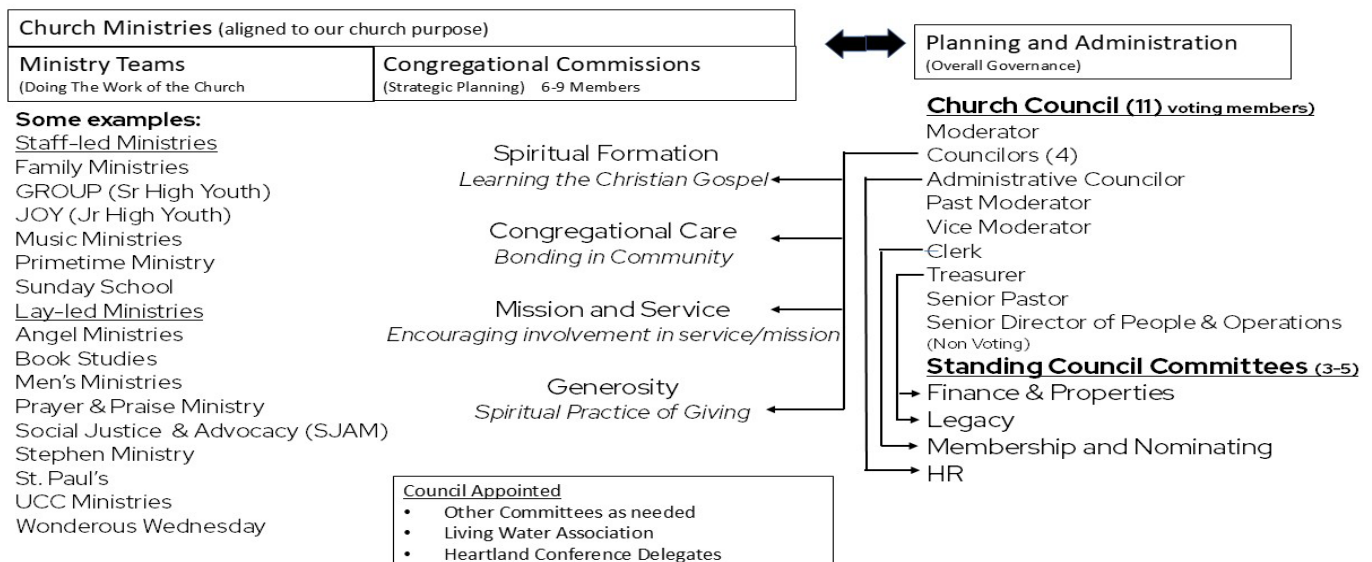
The more recent role of the TOS Committee has been to convene commission representatives to discuss marketing needs and collaboration. However, this function no longer meets the constitutional description of a committee to be "responsible for a crucial aspect of the church's business or operation." (Going forward this function to convene commission representatives will return to the Vice Moderator as defined in the Constitution.)

For the purposes of following constitutional requirements, a realignment of Federated's Governance Model will retire the TOS committee, as it is no longer needed in its defined capacity. We are forever grateful to the many individuals who have served on Telling Our Story both as a commission and most recently as a committee.

Therefore, Church Council recommends realigning Federated's Governance Model by retiring the Telling Our Story (TOS) Committee from the Constitution with the deletions noted as a single strike through.

Congregation

Revised February 2026



D. Hereinafter Member shall refer to an Active Member.

ARTICLE VIII – GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The lay governance structure consists of Church Council, Standing Church Council Committees, and Council-Appointed Committees and Delegates, and Commissions. All lay leaders must be active Members of the Church, must financially support the Church through active pledging, and are subject to the requirements set forth in the current Policy Book. Each person who is elected has answered the call to be a servant leader and therefore is also called as a Deacon.

The governance structure is designed to distinguish between governance and ministry. Governance is responsible for articulating the mission and vision of Federated Church; adopting policies to guide its ministry and to ensure responsible stewardship of its resources; and seeing that its policies are executed and staff, Committees and Commissions are held accountable for the authority delegated to them. Ministry is responsible for the “work of the Church,” i.e. fulfilling the mission of the Church through ministry which includes staff, committees, commissions and ministry teams. While there is a clear boundary between the two spheres of leadership, they function as a partnership providing mutual support to each other.

SECTION 1 - CHURCH COUNCIL

A. Church Council Organization

Church Council functions as the Board of Trustees of The Church and is the governing body of Federated Church when the Congregation is not in session/meeting. The Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Past Moderator, Treasurer, and Clerk are officers of Federated Church. All members of Church Council are voting members except the Senior Director of Operations. Most members of Church Council are also liaisons or representatives to other Commissions, Committees, or church staff.

During the vacancy of an elected Commission Councilor, the corresponding Commission chairperson is expected to attend and vote at Church Council meetings.

Church Council consists of:

- Moderator
- Vice Moderator
 - Liaison to Commission Councilors
- Past Moderator
 - Liaison to active task forces
 - Liaison to proposed and existing Ministry Teams
- Treasurer
 - Liaison to Finance and Properties Committee
 - Liaison to Legacy Committee
- Clerk
- Commission Councilors
 - Each is a liaison to one Commission
- Administrative Councilor
 - Liaison to Human Resources Committee
 - Liaison to Membership and Nominating Committee
 - ~~Liaison to Telling Our Story Committee~~
- Senior Pastor
 - Liaison to all staff as Head of Staff
 - Provide a Strategic and Consultative role with the Generosity Commission
 - Liaison to Legacy Committee

- f) Staffing plans and substantive changes to staff
- g) New staff position descriptions and corresponding compensation ranges and or adjustments
- h) Non-budgeted expenditures
- i) Affiliations with other organizations
- j) All Church-related fundraising events.

3. Church Council individual duties and responsibilities

a) Moderator

- The Moderator is the lay leader of Federated Church. The Moderator or her/his designated representative is the only person authorized to speak for Church Council.
- The Moderator or designated representative is empowered to chair Church Council and Congregational meetings.
- The Moderator ensures that the Church Council, Commissions, and Committees behave consistently with the Constitution and Policy Book.
- The Moderator works in collaboration with the Senior Pastor and the Senior Director of Operations.

b) Vice Moderator

- In the absence of the Moderator the Vice Moderator shall assume all the duties of the Moderator.
- The Vice Moderator serves as liaison to the Commission Councilors when coordination is required.

c) Past Moderator

- The Past Moderator is the contact person for a proposed ministry team, and determines the assignment of ministry teams to Commissions.
- The Past Moderator is the liaison between all Ad-Hoc Committees and Church Council to ensure consistency and two-way communication.

d) Treasurer

- The Treasurer assists Church Council in its oversight of the Church's finances and ensures that the financial operations are in line with prudence, best practices and the Church's mission.
- The Treasurer collaborates with the Finance and Properties Committee in developing an annual budget ensuring compliance with that budget on a quarterly and annual basis and works with Finance and Properties Committee to oversee the maintenance of all Federated Properties.
- The Treasurer or designee presents an Annual Financial Report to the congregation
- The Treasurer has responsibility for investing the surplus funds of Federated.

e) Clerk

- The Clerk assures the integrity and distribution of the Church Council's records, meeting minutes and Congregational meeting minutes.
- In the absence of the Clerk, any voting member of Church Council may serve as the Interim Clerk of Church Council.

f) Commission Councilors

- Each Commission Councilor serves as a liaison between their respective Commission and Church Council to ensure consistency and two-way communication.
- Each Councilor attends the Commission meetings and collaborates closely with its members.

g) Administrative Councilor

- The Administrative Councilor serves as liaison between the Human Resources, Membership and Nominating and Telling Our Story Committees and Church Council to ensure consistency and two-way communication.
- The Administrative Councilor attends the meetings of and collaborates closely with the members of each assigned committee.

SECTION 2 – STANDING CHURCH COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Each of the Standing Church Council Committees is responsible for a crucial aspect of the church's business or operation. Each Committee consists of no fewer than three (3) and no more than five (5) members. Each Committee has at least one liaison who serves on Church Council, and at least one staff representative. The liaison is non-voting except for ties, and the staff representative is non-voting. The Committees are:

- Legacy Committee
- Finance and Properties Committee
- Human Resources Committee
- Membership and Nominating Committee
- ~~Telling Our Story Committee~~

Committees serve Church Council, and provide recommendations to Church Council in their areas of responsibility. Council may grant Committees specific responsibilities and powers, as defined in the Policy Book.

Committee members collaborate with liaisons from Church Council, staff representatives, and other staff members and lay leaders as required.

Each Standing Committee shall meet monthly or at the discretion of the chairperson.

Standing committee positions are elected. The terms shall be for three (3) years with a maximum of two (2) terms of continuous service. The terms should be staggered to ensure continuity of leadership.

Committee Chairpersons shall be selected annually by the members of the committees.

A. Legacy Committee

1. Manages The Federated Legacy Fund, which is a permanently restricted fund established to support Federated Church by being a receptacle for gifts, devises and bequests to be held in trust in perpetuity, and to be invested and distributed according to The Federated Legacy By-Laws.
2. Operates according to The Federated Legacy By-Laws, which are included in the Policy Book.
3. Presents a report on the Fund to the congregation at the Annual Meeting.

B. Finance and Properties Committee

1. Prepares an annual budget for Federated Church, and submits it to Church Council for approval. The budget must be approved by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.
2. Develops and maintains financial operating policies and procedures to ensure the smooth financial operations of the Church.
3. Is responsible for the long-term care and maintenance of Church buildings, grounds, and vehicles.
4. Manages a maintenance and improvement schedule, prioritized project list, and budget, consistent with current policies.

C. Human Resources Committee

1. Ensures that Federated Church is a responsible employer.
2. Reviews staffing levels, staff compensation and benefits annually and recommends changes as needed.
3. Consults on job descriptions and salary ranges for new or changed positions.
4. Reviews and affirms staff hires, reorganizations and terminations.
5. Ensures that an up-to-date Employee Manual of human resource policies and practices is provided to every Church employee and is adhered to by all the staff.
6. Ensures members are available for confidential contact by an employee or a Church member in accordance with the procedure established in the Employee Manual.
7. Reviews the terms of call for the Senior Pastor and the Associate Pastors annually and recommends any changes to Church Council.

D. Membership and Nominating Committee

1. Provides classes for prospective new members in collaboration with the Pastoral staff.
2. Develops programs for assimilating new members into the life of the church.
3. Studies and provides leaders with information on attendance, activity, retention and attrition of members and makes recommendations in light of this information.
4. Keeps the membership rolls of the church current with regard to active vs. inactive members.
5. Prepares a slate of all nominees for Church Council, Commissions, and Standing Council Committees to present at the Annual Meeting for congregational approval.

If a lay leadership vacancy occurs, identifies and nominates candidates to fill the vacancy. All mid-year vacancy candidates shall be confirmed by the Church Council.

E. Telling Out Story Committee

- ~~1. Communicates the Church's mission, purpose and many ministries within Federated and with the community beyond Federated Church.~~
- ~~2. Develops and manages the Federated Church "brand" within the Congregation and the community.~~

SECTION 3 - COUNCIL-APPOINTED COMMITTEES AND DELEGATES

Council-appointed committees and delegates are appointed by Church Council. The numbers of members/delegates is subject to change and there are no specific terms or term limits. Nominations for these positions will originate from Church Council. As of February, 2021 there are no Church Council Appointed Committees

A. Delegates

Church Council may call upon individuals to serve as its representative; for example:

1. Western Reserve Association Delegates
2. Ohio Conference Delegates

B. Ad-Hoc Committees and Task Forces

Church Council may establish an Ad-Hoc Committee or time-limited Task Force for a specific purpose. The make-up of each Committee or Task Force will be determined by Church Council, and may include hired consultants. Such Committees and Task Forces will submit their work and recommendations to Church Council for consideration.

SECTION 4 - COMMISSIONS

Each of the Commissions is responsible for a crucial facet of church life, and for the Programs and Ministry Teams that serve that facet. Each Commission consists of no fewer than six (6) and no more than nine (9) members, one Councilor who serves on Church Council, and at least one staff representative. The Councilor is non-voting except for ties, and the staff representative(s) is non-voting. The Commissions are:

- Congregational Care Commission
- Spiritual Formation Commission
- Mission and Service Commission
- Generosity Commission

The Commissions are focused on the support of Ministry Teams that do God's work in the Congregation, the community, and the world. They work to help create, support, and sustain Ministry Teams in their particular areas, and help church members and participants find their calling in ministry. The goal is a church filled with active ministers. Staff-led programs are also considered Ministry Teams.

Commissions will collaborate and coordinate with staff, through the staff representative, and with staff whose duties are aligned with the Commission's area of responsibility.

Each Commission has the authority to approve new actions and programs that occur within its area of responsibility, including the use of budgeted funds assigned to the Commission. Major changes or actions, which impact the whole Church or the community at large, must be submitted to Church Council for approval. The Policy Book provides additional guidance on the matters that require such approval.

Commissioner positions are elected, except for staff positions. Terms of office for all lay Commissioners are three (3) years with a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms. The terms should be staggered to ensure continuity of leadership.

In collaboration with the current Chairperson, the Commission Chairperson will be proposed by the Membership and Nominating Committee and the Senior Pastor and voted on by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting. Vice chairs and secretaries shall be selected annually by the members of the Commissions as needed.

A. Spiritual Formation Commission

1. Assists members of the Congregation to grow in their Christian development, to enlarge and strengthen their Christian witness and to help them understand and participate in the whole work of the Church.
2. Initiates and support programs and activities that foster the Church's ministry of spiritual growth and fellowship for adults, children, youth and families.

B. Congregational Care Commission

1. Fosters attendance at Church services and fellowship opportunities for the Congregation.
2. Provides compassion, personal visitation, and service in response to needs of the Congregation.

C. Mission and Service Commission

1. Fosters and oversees a mission and benevolence program and budget, giving special consideration to the programs of the United Church of Christ.
2. Assesses opportunities for mission, partnership and service at local, national, and international levels and proposes action for giving and/or service.
3. Provides opportunities for individuals and Ministry Teams to serve the larger community.
4. Educates the Congregation concerning social and political issues morally relevant to Christians.

D. Generosity Commission

1. Creates and executes the Church's strategy for obtaining, maintaining and celebrating the financial commitments of Members, non-Members and the community at large
2. Promotes, cherishes and celebrates the impact of non-financial gifts of time and talents to the Church by Members, non-Members, Church Staff and the community at large
3. Coordinates with the Legacy Committee such that fundraising activities are connectible and consistent
4. Coordinates with the Spiritual Formation Commission ~~and the Membership and Nominating Committee and the Telling Our Story Committee~~ to assure that the spiritual teachings and practices of generosity and sacrificial giving are deeply woven into both the spiritual life of the community and into the internal and external messaging of the Church as a whole across a program year
5. Presents stewardship as a year-round practice, while coordinating with the Treasurer and the Finance and Properties Committee to assure that the practical funding needs of the Church are reasonably met.

SECTION 5 - ELECTION OF LAY LEADERS

A. A slate of new lay leaders for open elected positions will be presented to the Congregation for approval at the Annual Meeting. Nominations from the floor will be accepted provided the candidate has agreed to serve and meets the lay leadership requirements as defined in the Policy Book.

Minutes from the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting of the Federated Church

Sunday February 23, 2025

The Annual Meeting was held in-person in the sanctuary and via Zoom. A link to both the 2024 Annual Report and 2024 Annual Financial Report were emailed to each member household. Copies were available at the church.

Opening Prayer – Rev. Vicki McGaw, Interim Senior Pastor, led the congregation in opening prayer at 11:02 am

Call to Order – Joe Rose, Clerk of Church Council, called the meeting to order. A quorum was declared present via Zoom and in the sanctuary.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting for the Federated Church on February 25, 2024, as printed in 2024 Annual Report on pages 27-30.

- Motion by Joe Rose to accept the minutes
- Seconded by Harriett Rogers
- Discussion: None
- Vote: Unanimous in-person voice and Zoom vote
- Result: The motion passed; the minutes were approved as published

Steve expressed his appreciation for all the work that Joe did this year with a round of applause.

Year in Review – Stephen Downey, Moderator

Stephen shared that it has been an honor to serve as moderator through this past year, a year where he challenged the congregation to grow in three areas:

- Engage more families and children
- Reach out to the LGBTQ+ community
- Outreach to the community to extend the love of Christ beyond our walls

Steve shared an increase in our attendance of 8% -10% year-over-year even 2024 being a year of transition with Melissa Owen, SDO, leaving and hiring Beth Rutkowski as the new SDO, hiring Thea Mozingo as new Director of Generosity, Hamilton's retirement and hiring Rev. Vicki McGaw, Interim Sr. Pastor.

Our partnership with the Community Life Collaborative (CLC) continues to grow by hosting a number of events at the Family Life Center (FLC), having Ann Lentz join Church the Council serving as Generosity Commission Councilor as well as serving as the CLC liaison to Church Council, and forming a special team to work with the CLC on a new agreement for the FLC property.

There were advancements in our technology to not only reach those here, but in the broader community.

In closing, Steve asked the congregation to be ever mindful of our mission as a community of faith and together with God's guidance we are going to continue to grow

Vision for the Future – Jeff Miller, Vice Moderator

Jeff expressed his appreciation and thanks to Steve for his service as Moderator this past year with a round of applause.

Jeff shared that our focus for 2025 is to capitalize on Federated's strength of being engaged in our programs and ministries as well as looking for new engagement opportunities which will help us during this year of transition.

Senior Pastor Search Update – Jeff Miller, Chair of SPSC

Jeff shared the 6 steps for calling a new Senior Pastor and the Search Committee's status:

1. Call the search committee **Complete**
2. Gather information **Complete**
 - Held in-person and zoom listening sessions and completed the survey in January
3. Develop Church Profile **In Process**
 - Utilizing the information gathered in January to develop the church profile
4. Review of Candidate Profiles
5. Interview Candidates
6. Selection

Jeff announced that the committee is on schedule and thanked the team for their hard work and dedication and assured the congregation that they will bring the best possible candidate to Federated.

2024 Financial Report & 2025 Proposed Annual Budget - Brady Hively, Treasurer**2023 - 2024 Balance Sheet** (Page 4 of 2024 Annual Financial Report)

- Non-property assets are down at about \$150,000 from the prior year.
- Liabilities are up at about \$16,000 from the prior year.
- Unrestricted assets are about \$250,000 from the prior year, and primarily due to the closing of the capital campaign.
- Restricted assets are down at about \$415,000 from the prior year due primarily to the utilization of our designated funds to support our programs and ministries
- Net assets are down at about \$650,000 from prior year due to various building projects and utilizing designated funds to support our programs and ministries
- Approximately \$270,000 in "free" assets or available cash, which is money that is not associated with our properties, designated funds or our legacy fund.

2024 Financial Highlights

- Pledge Receipts up 1% from the prior year.
- Personnel expenses were up about 5% from the prior year.
- Overall expenses were up 6% from the prior year
- A \$7,000 surplus from our 2024 budget will be used to provide staff bonuses and add to the missions designated fund.

Review of Federated's Financial Trends for past 10 Years

Brady felt it was important for the congregation to be mindful of these trends and to consider how they can be reversed. Over the past 10 years:

- Total revenue is down about 25%
- Pledge receipts are down 31%
- Personnel expenses are down 6%
- Programming expenses are down 85%
- Mission and Service distributions are down 32%

Proposed 2025 Budget (Page 2 of 2024 Annual Financial Report)

- Pledges are 2% lower than the 2024 actual pledges
- Revenue is 6% lower than the actual 2024 revenue
- Personnel expenses are 8% lower,
 - A part-time interim pastor for most of 2025
 - Anticipate that a full-time senior pastor in 2026.
- Missions and service distribution are substantially lower than 2024 actual distributions
- A \$50,000 remainder (aka money from savings) is planned

- \$40,000 going to the Missions designated fund
- \$10,000 going to Deferred Major Maintenance.

Motion to approve the budget was made Robin Harbage and seconded by Sunny Doxey and discussion followed:

- Concern raised on the non-pledge contribution 35% decrease
 - It's a timing issue: 2023 pledges that are received in 2024 go into the non-pledge giving for 2024 and don't anticipate an actual change in the giving or in the amount that people give
- Concern raised on the continued downward trend with giving
 - The only way the downward trend in giving will change is if the revenue turns around in the same way that the attendance increased this year.
- Question: Can't the value on our fixed assets increase when money is spent on these fixed assets?
 - Replacing or fixing something should not change the value on our books. However, when a fixed asset is new or improved, then there will be an increase in its value on our books.
- Question: Is there is any portion of a new senior pastor salary in the 2025 budget?
 - There are 2 months of a new senior pastor salary within the 2025 budget.
- Question: How much were designated funds used for youth, music, and family programming?
 - In 2023 about \$10,000 for youth, ministries and music
 - In 2024 designed funds heavily subsidized youth, ministries and music, bringing the remainder in the fund to \$4000 (Brady did not have the amount spent in 2024 at the time).
- Question: How much is the program spending buried in personnel expense?
 - Nothing other than childcare expenses
- Motion by Doug Church to increase the mission and outreach budget by the \$40,000 that is currently going into the Designated Mission Fund.
- Seconded by Todd Smith
- Discussion:
 - \$40,000K from savings is going into a 2024 Mission and Service Designated Fund, along with the budgeted funds which the Mission and Service Commission will distribute to our mission partners as they have in the past.
 - If individuals continue to contribute to designed funds rather than make a commitment to the budget (e.g., pledge) then the annual budget is going to decrease.
 - Our budget is based on only spending money that is expected to be received in 2025. Keeping the \$40,000 in a designated fund helps us to recognize the reality that overspending is needed to support our programs and ministries.
 - The difference is that \$40,000, if it's in the budget, must be spent in 2025. If it's in the designated fund, it could be spent in 2025, or it could be spent in the future. However, the money doesn't leave the designated fund until it's spent
- Vote: Motion failed (approximately 15 votes in person and via Zoom were in favor of the Motion)
- Result: The motion was defeated

Motion to approve the 2025 Budget as it appears on page 2 of the 2024 Financial Annual Report

- Motion by Robin Harbage to approve the budget
- Seconded by Sunny Doxey
- Discussion: (see above)
- Vote: - Overwhelmingly approved by hand and on zoom
- Result: 2025 Budget approved as printed

New FLC Management Agreement with Community Life Collaborative (CLC) – Brady Hively

Referring to the 2024 Annual Report, page 26, Brady shared that the 4-year agreement between Federated and the CLC will come to end on March 31, 2025. Brady, Adam Graves, Ann Lentz, Martine Schuermann and others have

worked on the new agreement that is beneficial to all parties. The recommendation is to have a 5-year agreement, ending 3/30/2030 which is similar to the current 4-Year agreement with some slight modifications:

- Rollover option if both parties agree. However, because it is a bilateral agreement, it could end early if both parties agreed.
 - A \$25,000 annual fee paid by the CLC to Federated each year for all 5 years that will go into a designated fund solely for deferred major maintenance projects on the FLC property.
 - The FLC does have some significant needs that need to be addressed but none have been specified at this time
- Motion to approve the 5-year agreement between Federated Church and the CLC was made by Adam Graves and seconded by Harriett Rogers.
- Question – Who will be managing the capital campaign?
 - The money raised for the FLC capital campaign will be the responsibility of Federated and will be used for the long-term needs of the FLC property.
 - Concern raised because it is a bilateral agreement between the CLC and Federated, then if the FLC capital campaign fails or significantly falls short, Federated Church is going to be in a huge financial crunch to maintain the property, because it is not going to be the responsibility to the CLC make the capital improvements.
 - Comment made that congregation voted last year to keep the FLC and therefore, this year the congregation is responsible to support maintaining the FLC property
 - Perspective shared that 2025 pledged income and FLC capital campaign are roughly equivalent. If all the people who pledged were to increase their giving by 20% for each of those 5 years it would cover the capital campaign
 - Comment made that the CLC is offering programs that attract youth and young families

Motion to approve the 5-year agreement between Federated Church and the CLC as described on page 26 of the 2024 Annual Report

- Motion by Adam Graves to approve the agreement
- Seconded by Harriett Rogers
- Discussion: (see above)
- Vote: Approved by hand and on Zoom
- Result: New Agreement between Federated Church and FLC approved.

Steve expressed his appreciation for all the work that Brady has done this year with a round of applause.

FLC Capital Campaign – Ann Lentz, Generosity Councilor and CLC liaison to Church Council

The FLC capital campaign is to raise designated funds to maintain the Family Life Center property with a goal of \$800,000 and a stretch goal of a million dollars. While there are no imminent replacements needed at this time, the FLC is 25 years old, and replacements listed on page 26 of the 2024 Annual Report are anticipated within the next decade. A team is being assembled to spearhead this initiative who will reach out to the congregation and members of the community. The details and timeline will be shared in the coming weeks.

Operations & Program Updates – Beth Rutkowski, Senior Director of Operations and People

The staff believe in the power of involvement, and everyday witness programs at the church touching lives of those in the community. Beth highlighted several refurbished spaces in 2024:

- The lounge used it a lot, especially for groups that are outside of the church was made possible through a generous donation.
- Unused space was turned into a new youth room that was made possible from the proceeds of the Trinkets and Treasures. Rummage Sale
- Several other improvements are listed in the Annual Report on page 6

There has been a smooth transition with the staffing changes this year, and Beth expressed her appreciation for the congregation's support. One staff role that will expand in the coming year is for Joshua Konow, who has been Director of Music ministries here for 7 years and will now become the Director of Music Ministries and (worship) Technology.

Steve expressed his appreciation for all the work that Beth and the entire staff have done this year with a round of applause.

Legacy Fund Update – Robin Harbage, Chair of the Legacy Fund Committee

Every year 5% of the average balance from the prior 8 fiscal quarters flows from the Legacy Fund into the operating fund of the church; in 2025 that is just slightly over \$35,000. Last year the Fund raised \$88,000 - roughly 13.7%.

No questions from the floor.

Recognition of Retiring Lay Leaders – Rose Brown, Chair of Membership and Nominating Committee

Rose referenced page 22 of the 2024 Annual Report acknowledging with applause for those who were elected since last year's Annual Meeting, and those individuals who retired in 2024 or will retire on March 1.

Rose took the opportunity to thank everyone who prayerfully considered before deciding not to serve. Since people join the committees and commissions in a prayerful, intentional manner, 82% who were eligible to retire after fulfilling their term have chosen to stay.

Election of 2025 Lay Leaders – Rose Brown

Rose referenced page 23 of the 2024 Annual Report.

Motion to elect the individuals whose names have an asterisk or plus sign to the governing body for the terms specified on page 23 of the 2025 Annual Report

- Motion by Ann Lentz to approve the slate
- Second by Bill Franz
- Discussion: None
- Vote: Unanimous voice and Zoom vote
- Result: The motion passed; The slate was approved.

Closing Remarks and Prayer – Steve Downey

Thanked the congregation for their respectful and loving discussion today.

Pastor Vicki closed the meeting in prayer at 12:37pm

Motion to adjourn the meeting

- Motion by Peggie Jo to adjourn the meeting
- Seconded by Ann Lentz
- Discussion: None
- Vote: Unanimous voice and Zoom vote
- Result: The meeting ended

Respectfully submitted by Peggie Jo Shinagawa, Clerk elect

Zoom Instructions

You can join a Zoom meeting online from **ANY** device that has internet capability (desktop, laptop, tablet, smartphone). Click Annual Meeting Zoom Link (below) or type or copy/paste it into your internet browser.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89335752206?pwd=K7kyxESvLJ4NfdntvnRdWipXd37Zy7.1>

If you do not have the internet, join by phone: 1.301.715.8592
Meeting ID: 893 3575 2206, Passcode is 44022, press # (no participant ID).

Please note, the Annual Meeting will be recorded.

Here are some tips:

- You do **NOT** need to have a Zoom account to join a Zoom meeting.
- You do **NOT** need to have the Zoom application on your device to join a Zoom meeting as a participant.
- **Click the link above** or in the email message the Church sent you. Or go to the Church website (www.fedchurch.org) and **click on the link** for the Annual Meeting Zoom invitation.
- You will then see a box that asks you to “**open zoom.us**”. Click on this and you will be connected to the Annual Meeting.
- **SOUND/MUTING:** At the bottom left of your screen, you will see a Microphone icon. This controls the sound feed from your device so others attending the meeting can hear you. If there is red slash mark through the Microphone icon, you are **MUTED** – click or touch to unmute. **PLEASE MUTE WHILE LISTENING TO AVOID EXCESSIVE BACKGROUND NOISE.** NOTE: The host of the meeting will have the ability to mute ALL participants. When it is time to vote, be sure to unmute so your voice is heard (for voice voting).
- **VIDEO/CAMERA:** At the bottom left edge of your screen, there is a “Start Video” icon (looks like a video camera). This controls the camera feed from your device so others attending the meeting can see you. If there is a red slash through the video camera, your camera is off. Your name should show up in the screen in place of your camera feed. A simple click on this icon will turn off your video feed, and a second click will turn it back on.
- **CHAT Function.** At the bottom center of your Zoom screen, you will see the word CHAT. If you click CHAT, a window will appear where you can type a note to an individual or to everyone. There may be times during the meeting when the chat function is disabled. NOTE: Our annual meeting will be recorded, which includes the chat.
- When the meeting ends, the host will end the meeting for all.
- If you join us online for the February 22nd Worship Service, there will be a clickable link in the YouTube/Worship Service chat; click it to get right to the Annual Meeting on Zoom.

