

Old Steeple Community Church

Steeple View

FEBRUARY 2023



SINCE 1758

Old Steeple Community Church United Church of Christ

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Aquebogue, NY 11931

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Moderator:
Keith Young

Choir Director/Organist:
Guy M.L. Fein

Office Administrator:
Gail Evans

office hours:
Tu, W, Th 9-2



A message from our Search Committee ...

The week before Christmas the committee met with the council members to work together on the Local Church Profile. We took two weeks off for the holidays and have been meeting after worship on Sundays. We set a goal of finishing the profile by the first of February, happily it looks as though we will meet it. To give you an idea of why this has taken so long, here is a summary of the contents. The document has six sections:

1. Position Posting - listing information, scope of the new pastor's work, compensation and support & who is God calling to minister with us?
2. Who is God Calling Us to Become as a Congregation?
3. Who Are We Now? - congregational reflections, 11-year report data, congregational demographics, participation and staffing, church finances and historical information
4. Who Is Our Neighbor? - community vision
5. References - we need three who know the church well but are not members
6. Closing Thoughts - closing prayer, statement of consent and conference/association validation

Once we complete the profile, our Associate Conference Minister, Rev. Gary Ferner, will review it and make suggestions and comments as to parts we may want to revise. Finally it will be posted on the internet at UCC Ministry Opportunities where searching pastors can read it.

The committee would like to thank the council members who have worked with us: Keith Young, Kathy Stapon, Amy Cosgrove, Andrea Hanulec, Liz Wines and Edgar Goodale. Also thanks go to Rev. Janet Wright. We appreciate the support, prayers and patience of our church family.

The Search Committee:

Fay Young
Barbara Crowley
Jean Lapinski
Nancy Goodale
George Reeve
Ann Priapi



OUTREACH



Our “Souper Bowl” is still in game time, still plenty of time to contribute to our soup collection. Cans, packages, etc. — all are good choices. Robert has already made two deliveries to St John’s, so what you see in the sanctuary is not the total collected thus far. Please give as you are able, and many thanks for your generosity.

During the month of February we will have an additional special collection for Maureen’s Haven. Expenses are higher than expected for supplies, food, and laundry. This very worthy ministry aiding the undomiciled in our community deserves our extra attention. The volunteers are providing exceptional and nutritious meals and a warm bed during the coldest months. Again, many thanks for your contributions.

Andrea for Outreach



COUNCIL



Council Meeting Minutes, January 11, 2023

Moderator Keith Young called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM and thanked Council members in attendance. Members present were Amy Cosgrove, Andrea Hanulec, Ann Priapi, Edgar Goodale, Kathy Stapon, Liz Wines, Lisa Drozd, Keith Young and Jean Lapinski (Interim Clerk). The minutes of the December meeting were accepted as published in the last newsletter, with a motion by Amy and a second by Ann.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Edgar went over the 2022 January - December Treasurer’s Report which reflected the church’s finances throughout the year. He reported that overall the financial health of Old Steeple is sound, although the financial markets were challenging and the endowment showed a paper loss of over \$580,000. Expenses were down due to Rev. Anton’s retirement (salary and benefits), and our fundraiser brought in an additional \$4000 above budget. This resulted in our having to use \$37,000 less from the endowment fund. There was an unexpected expense of nearly \$8000 for the replacement of the large boiler for the church. We were able to increase our giving significantly towards both Maureen’s Haven and the food pantry. All conference expenses have been paid.

PASTOR’S REPORT

Keith shared Rev. Janet’s pastoral care activities for late November through December. She made calls, attended Riverhead Clergy Council, participated in the ecumenical Thanksgiving service, kept the church sign up to date, checked supplies for Maureen’s Haven, visited those in the hospital, and organized and led a funeral service. Because of the hours she has worked, Council voted to increase her weekly rate of pay to \$150. Keith will speak with her.

MINISTRY REPORTS

Buildings and Grounds

Keith and Edgar reported for Rick. Replacing the boiler triggered several other issues, including air leaks in the system and the lack of a filter system for the burner. Kevin Grattan (Grattan Heating & Cooling), who replaced the boiler, was very responsive in repairing the leaks. He recommended Kolb Mechanical to install the filter system for the burner at a cost of \$1500. Edgar will check on a service contract. Keith, Edgar, Rick and Robert will do a walkaround at the parsonage. Verizon has taken care of the screening repairs in the steeple.

Outreach

Andrea reported that the “souperbowl” project is up and running, and she will ask Rev. Lorraine to announce it weekly during January. Robert has been making weekly deliveries to the food pantry. Edgar will request a note from Victoria Pace to update us on Maureen’s Haven. The project for February will be Heifer International.

Worship

Kathy thanked Andrea and her team for taking down the Christmas decorations. Because Rev. Lorraine is completing her two months with us at the end of January, Kathy addressed the need for supply ministers going forward. She contacted Rev. Sean Murray of the First Congregational Church in Riverhead and Ann Van Cleef, Chair of the Commission on Ministry for the New York Conference, who recommended Rev. Joan Finck. Council suggested that Kathy ask her to preach the first two weeks in February and our Rev. Bonnie Miller the last two weeks in February. Rev. Lorraine is willing to help out again, but not on a continuing basis.



Welcoming / Advertising

Lisa discussed specifics for a bronze plate for the time capsule, and Ann will write the inscription. Lisa offered to arrange for our church sign to be updated every few weeks, and Keith will speak with Rev. Janet about helping Lisa with the content. Lisa reminded everyone to submit information and pictures for the website, Facebook and Instagram so that we can keep our social media current. Amy has been working with Gail to update the website every couple of months.

Caring

Liz has called several people, along with Rev. Janet (see Pastor's Report above.)

CONTINUING and NEW BUSINESS

- Annual Reports have been prepared for the Annual Meeting on January 22, and will be sent out tomorrow. Kathy will check with Jeannine Martin regarding the potluck luncheon for the meeting. Council discussed and completed the Nominating Committee Report.
- Ann reported that revising the membership list is in progress. There are presently 78 active members, and 45 letters will be sent to inactive members to see if they wish to be maintained on, or removed from, the inactive list. Gail will be asked to send the letters, along with a self-addressed stamped postcard.
- Keith will check with Gail about completing the 2023 National UCC Directory Reporting/Survey/Data Reporting paperwork.
- Rental agreement specifics have been resolved amicably with Jessica deVera.
- Edgar will check on and change AED batteries.
- Rev. Janet has been sharing NYUCC Happenings with Council members.
- Lisa brought up the idea of having our new minister offer a half-hour Saturday evening (5:00 PM) worship service for families, followed by sharing a brief meal. The Search Committee will keep this in mind as they prepare for interviews.

SEARCH PROCESS

Ann reported that the Search Committee has been meeting regularly after Sunday worship with members of Council to develop the profile, with a goal of completing the profile in early February. Input from all involved has been invaluable.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10. The next Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 8, at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Jean Lapinski, Interim Clerk



Join Old Steeple's Book Club!

The Old Steeple Book Club is up and running! We held our organizational meeting on Friday, January 13, and welcomed seven enthusiastic participants, with three others expressing interest in future sessions. We will be meeting twice a month on the second and fourth Fridays from 10:30-11:30 AM.

The group is presently reading *Factfulness* by Hans and Ola Rosling. *Factfulness* presents ten natural instincts that distort our perception of the condition of the world and offers statistics and strategies for thinking more positively about our world. We discussed chapters 1 and 2, and will consider chapters 3-7 on January 27th and finish with chapters 8-12 on February 10.

We also agreed on the following schedule and books:

February 24 – *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan

March 10 and 24 – *Southernmost* by Silas House

April 14 and 28 – *The Grimkes: The Legacy of Slavery in an American Family* by Kerri K. Greenidge

We each take responsibility for securing a copy of the selections.

Please plan to join us! You're welcome to come to all our meetings, or to select the meetings for the books you are most interested in. We value diverse perspectives!

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

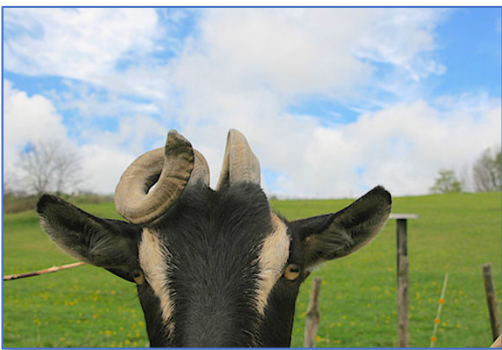
January 22, 2023

Moderator Keith Young called the meeting to order at 11:28, greeting the participants and thanking them for attending. He mentioned that 2022 has been a difficult year with Rev. Anton's retirement, and expressed our appreciation to Rev. Lorraine De Armitt for serving as pulpit supply minister through December and January and Rev. Janet Wright for taking over pastoral care responsibilities. Those present were: Guy Fein, Robert Hanulec, Ann Priapi, Gail Evans, Rev. Janet Wright, Carol Lee, Rick Reeve, Fay Young, Jeannine Martin, Amy Cosgrove, Garret Moore, Edgar Goodale, Kathy Stapon, Liz Wines, Keith Young, and Jean Lapinski. Nonmembers in attendance included Mignon Osmer, Christina Ruschin, Jackie Wolfson, and Pat Ruiz.

The minutes from the January 23, 2022 annual congregational meeting and the October 16, 2022, annual budget meeting were distributed along with the annual reports. As there were no corrections, the minutes were accepted as printed, with a motion by Amy Cosgrove and seconded by Ann Priapi.

Annual Reports

Keith reviewed the annual reports, compiled by Gail Evans and distributed to church members and friends. He thanked the Council team leaders and gave those in attendance an opportunity for questions and comments. Our financial health is sound even after a difficult year financially, thanks to Edgar Goodale (Treasurer) and Amy Cosgrove (Financial Secretary). Rick Reeve (Buildings and Grounds) commented on recent repairs including damage to the fellowship hall and burner / boiler issues, and thanked Robert Hanulec for regularly checking on the now empty parsonage. Keith added thanks to Kevin Goodale, our "go-to" person for large repairs. Keith said that this year's Outreach support has been particularly generous under Andrea Hanulec's leadership (with husband Robert's help), and added that our excess barbecue fundraiser monies helped supplement our donations to the food pantry. Rev. Janet Wright updated the group on our continued involvement with Maureen's Haven. Kathy Stapon (Worship) has had countless extra responsibilities this year as we transitioned from Rev. Anton's leadership. Liz Wines (Caring) commented on the work of the Sunshine Committee and Rev. Janet Wright's pastoral care efforts. Keith mentioned Lisa Wedel's (Welcoming / Publicity) creation of signs and maintenance of our website and social



media. In addition to serving as Clerk, Ann Priapi stepped up as Chair of the newly formed Search Committee. Keith thanked our part-time staff, Gail Evans, Lorraine Link, and Guy Fein, who in turn expressed his admiration for our dedicated choir members.

Election of New Officers for 2023

Keith reviewed the recommended ballot of officers for 2023 as printed in the annual reports. Three people were nominated for three-year positions: Andrea Hanulec (Outreach), Edgar Goodale (Treasurer), and Amy Cosgrove (Financial Secretary). Rev. Janet Wright added the nomination of Rev. Bonnie Miller as Suffolk Association delegate. There were no other nominees from the floor, so Keith conducted a 'hands' vote for the slate as proposed. The slate was elected, with a vote of 16 for and 0 opposed.

Search Committee

Chairperson Ann Priapi mentioned the other members of the 6-person Search Committee: George Reeve, Barbara Crowley, Nancy Goodale, Fay Young, and Jean Lapinski; and added that the Council has been assisting the Search Committee with the profile. Our liaison with the NY Conference is Rev. Gary Furner, who will read our profile and make recommendations before it is posted on the UCC website. Ann said that the profile is nearly complete and reviewed the remaining steps in the process of calling a new minister to Old Steeple.

New Business

Rev. Janet Wright suggested that we resume our Community Board meetings and include a potluck luncheon. After some discussion, it was agreed that we begin on March 12 and set up a consistent schedule every other month (May, September, November and January). Keith and the Council will establish and publicize a schedule for the year.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05, with a motion by Edgar Goodale and second by Guy Fein.

Respectfully submitted, Jean Lapinski filling in for Ann Priapi



PRAYER LIST



Prayers & Concerns:

Those in harm's way who serve our country including Christopher Mascia, Ben Pileski, William Gilmore Jr., and Thomas Pagano

Our Prayer List includes those in hospital, at home recovering or taking extra COVID precautions:

Ray Atkins
Barbara Fein
Guy Fein
Gene Goodale
Geraldine Hulse
Lucas Mascia
Arthur Miller & Rev. Bonnie
Patricia Overs
Scotty Robertson
Paulette Sherman
Fred Sherman
Beverly Sherman
Walter and Betty Stewart
Michael Taylor

Please let us know of any additions or changes. Contact the church office at 631-722-3070; or e-mail oldsteeplecc@gmail.com. Include your name, and let that person know that those at Old Steeple will be praying for them.

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 2 3

Outreach for February is **Heifer International**

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 Choir rehearsal 10:15 | 3 AA 6 pm | 4 |
| 5 | 6 AA 7 pm | 7 AA 6 pm NA 8 pm | 8 Council mtg. 7 pm | 9 Choir rehearsal 10:15 | 10 Book Club 10:30 am AA 6 pm | 11 |
| 12 Souper Bowl Sunday | 13 AA 7 pm | 14 AA 6 pm NA 8 pm | 15 Old Steeple Stitchers meet at 7 pm | 16 Choir rehearsal 10:15 | 17 AA 6 pm | 18 |
| 19 | 20 AA 7 pm | 21 SV articles due AA 6 pm NA 8 pm | 22 | 23 Choir rehearsal 10:15 | 24 Book Club 10:30 am AA 6 pm | 25 |
| 26 | 27 AA 7 pm | 28 AA 6 pm NA 8 pm | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 19 | 11 |

