



Niles Discovery Church

Annual Report 2021

In preparation for the Annual Meeting
to be held on May 2, 2021

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Annual Meeting Agenda

Sunday, May 2, 2021

Call to Order – John Smith, Moderator

Opening Prayer – Associate Pastor Brenda Loreman

Declaration of a Quorum – Cathy West, Clerk

Approval of Minutes of past Congregational Meetings (starting on page 5)

Minutes of Niles Discovery Church Annual Meeting, May 17, 2020

Minutes of Budget Meeting of Niles Discovery Church, January 31, 2021

Nominations and Elections

Presentation of Slate – Sandy Thomas, Nominating Committee

Nominations from the Floor

Closing Nominations

Election

New Business introduced from the floor – John Smith, Moderator

Installation Service – Pastor Brenda Loreman and Pastor Jeff Spencer

Benediction – Pastor Jeff Spencer

Adjournment – John Smith, Moderator

Annual Meeting Minutes

Sunday, May 17, 2020

1. Call to Order – John Smith, Moderator **10:55am**
2. Opening Prayer – Associate Pastor Brenda Loreman
3. Declaration of a Quorum – Cathy West, Clerk – **Quorum Established**
4. Approval of Minutes of past Congregational Meetings **Minutes Accepted**
 - a. Minutes of Niles Discovery Church Annual Meeting, May 5, 2019
 - b. Minutes of the continuation of the Annual Meeting, June 9, 2019
 - c. Minutes of the Special Congregational Meeting, September 15, 2019
 - d. Minutes of Budget Meeting of Niles Discovery Church, January 26, 2020
5. Nominations and Elections
 - a. Presentation of Slate – Sandy Thomas, Nominating Committee
 - b. Nominations from the Floor – **No nominations from the floor**
 - c. Closing Nominations
 - d. Election – **Slate was unanimously accepted.**
6. New Business introduced from the floor – John Smith, Moderator – **No new business**
7. Installation Service – Pastor Brenda Loreman and Pastor Jeff Spencer
8. Benediction – Pastor Jeff Spencer
9. Adjournment – John Smith, Moderator – **11:15am**

Annual Budget Meeting Minutes

Sunday, January 31, 2021

Called to Order: 11:06am by Moderator John Smith

Opening Prayer: Pastor Brenda

Quorum: A poll was launched, and responses counted – 65 members being present. Quorum has been met.

Motion to amend bylaws

On behalf of the Cabinet, acting on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, Treasurer Barbara P. King moved the adoption of an amendment to the Bylaws, Article X, as printed in the Annual Financial Report. Barbara then moved, on behalf of the Cabinet, that the proposed amendment be modified by adding the words in bold italics and highlighted in yellow:

Bylaws, Article X. Finance, B. Designated Funds

The Finance Committee recommends, and the Cabinet supports the following amendment to the Bylaws (strikethrough is deletion; italics underlined is addition, Bold is modification):

B. DESIGNATED FUNDS

Designated funds are created by the Cabinet to accumulate money for purposes other than for the payment of normally budgeted operating expenses. Individuals, Ministry Teams, and the Cabinet itself may recommend their creation. The monies accumulated in designated funds shall not be used for purposes other than those for which they were given. ~~The monies accumulated in designated funds shall not be used for purposes other than those for which they were given.~~ *The monies accumulated in a designated fund will be used for the purpose given. If the purpose has been placed-in-service and excess funds remain, the Cabinet has the authority to reclass the excess to another purpose. **The Cabinet will make every effort to move the excess funds to a related and existing Designated Fund.***

Vote on modifying the proposed amendment: 60 votes yes, 2 votes no. Passed

Vote on the bylaw amendment (as modified): 70 votes yes, 0 votes no. Passed

Budget review and approval

After reviewing the 2020 finances and the proposed 2021 budget, Treasurer Barbara P. King moved (on behalf of the Cabinet) to adopt them budget as printed in the Annual Financial Report. She then moved (on behalf of Cabinet) that the proposed budget be amended:

Increase line 25, Property Insurance, to \$32,424

Increase line 48, Assoc. Pastor Housing, to \$17,546

Increase line 49, Assoc. Pastor Social Security, to \$3,335

Increase line 53, Assoc. Pastor Annuity/Pension, to \$6,103

Vote on motion to amend the proposed budget: 64 votes yes, 1 vote no – passed

Vote on motion to approve the proposed 2021 budget as amended: 66 votes yes, 0 votes no – passed

Various announcements were shared.

Pastor Jeff offered a closing prayer

The meeting was adjourned at 11:52am

Respectfully submitted – Cathy West-Jancoski, Clerk

Nominating Committee's Report

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of Officers, Ministry Team chairs/Cabinet members, and Nominating Committee members for the 2021-22 program year:

Cabinet Officers Nominations

Moderator	John Smith
Vice Moderator	Jim Thomas
Clerk	Cathy West-Jancoski
Treasurer	Judy Hollowell
Auditor	---

Standing Ministry Team Chair Nominations

Ministry of Christian Education Team:	Beth Armstrong
Ministry of Evangelism Team:	---
Ministry of Hospitality and Fellowship Team:	Melissa Palleschi
Ministry of Property Team:	Mark Twist
Ministry of Social Concerns Team:	Alta Jo Adamson
Ministry of Spiritual Life Team:	Val Parker

Nominating Committee Members Nominations

Nominating Committee 1	Marilyn Singer
Nominating Committee 2	John Smith
Nominating Committee 3	---

Senior Pastor's Annual Report

I sit down to write this Annual Report wondering, “What did I write in my Annual Report last year? And when did I write it?” I had to go back and check. It turns out we were about five weeks into the pandemic when I wrote the report. This was my concluding paragraph:

I suspect that we will be worshipping via Zoom for several more months – perhaps until a vaccine for COVID-19 is developed. I suspect we will be holding our meetings via Zoom and gathering socially via Zoom (and in other cyber spaces) for a while. My hope is that this we will come out the other side of this pandemic transformed – yes, transformed by technology, and more importantly, transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit may be molding us into the church the Tri-Cities needs for the rest of the 21st century.

I write this annual report on the anniversary of Alameda County issuing the order that we shelter in place. It feels as if this may be the most important Annual Report I've written in my career. These reports – mine and the others you read here – seem to be the ones (of all our annual reports) most likely to be referred to decades from now. I say that because I wonder what my paternal grandfather's experience of the 1918-1920 flu pandemic was like and I wish he had kept a journal. I imagine, sometime in the future, people wondering how we as a church managed during the COVID-19 pandemic will look to annual reports to catch a glimpse.

And I find myself answering that future historian's question: “Well, we just figured out different ways to be church.” I do think the pandemic has taught us that the center of the church's life is the worship of God. That was the first thing we figured out how to do in a new, safe way. The adaptation was not simple and, I suppose, it is an adaptation that has been taking place all year. After moving onto the Zoom platform, Pastor Brenda and I have tweaked the flow of worship, figured out what to include and what could be left out, added times for testimony and Kairos minutes, fumbled with and accepted the limitations of music (a frustration for people like us who love to sing in community), and learned how to create effective video elements.

All year, Pastor Brenda and I have been working far more than the number of hours called for in our letters of call. This has been necessary, for we have needed to learn new ways of doing every aspect of our ministries. In addition to finding new ways to create a worshipful environment (with the support of the Ministry of Spiritual Life Team), we've needed to learn new ways of offering pastoral care, new ways of creating space for fellowship (with the Ministry of Hospitality and Fellowship Team), and new technologies (supported by the Ministry of Property Team and tons of behind the scenes work by Jim Thomas).

In the midst of this unusual year, we welcomed a Minister In Training, Maggie Guekguezian. This is the first time I've been an MIT mentor and only had a vague idea of what it would be like. I had no idea what it would be like to be a mentor while I was feeling like such a student, learning new ways to do ministry. See her report for more about her experience.

With the Ministry of Christian Education Team, Pastor Brenda, and I have tried to stay connected with the children and youth in our church, a truly challenging task when they are Zoomed-out from school and their parents are stretched thin. While our Wednesday afternoon Zoom with the kids has worked quite well for a half dozen of the children in our church, it is not worked for all of them. When we can

return to in-person worship and Sunday School, we will need to give special attention to our children and youth.

I think the two hardest adjustments for our congregation have been not being able to sing together (as noted above) and being very limited in the sorts of direct compassionate care we've been able to offer our neighbors. Nonetheless, we have found ways, as we say in our mission statement, to serve our neighbors near and far. I am deeply grateful for all those who worked to bring the *Pray Their Names* art installation to our church property last August and September. I'm grateful that a few people have figured out how to safely drive for the Tri-City Volunteers mobile pantry. And I'm grateful for the little ways so many have found to be supportive – from continuing to bring in bottles and cans for recycling (see the Ministry of Social Concerns Team report), to bringing in paper bags for the food bank to use, to dropping off food at the Little Free Pantry.

Finally, I want to recognize that the Green Team has revitalized and blossomed (much to my delight). They've gone from zero to 60 like an electric vehicle. Thanks to their work, Niles Discovery Church is now recognized by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as a *Certified Green Chalice Congregation* and will soon be recognized by the United Church of Christ as a *Climate Justice Congregation*. In the coming months, the Green Team will be inviting you to participate in the "Green Challenge." Their work won't stop there. In a year when many community organizers (me included) were baffled as to how we could take action on important issues like climate change and racism and economic inequality, our Green Team has shown us what is possible.

Last year I wrote, "I suspect that we will be worshipping via Zoom for several more months – perhaps until a vaccine for COVID-19 is developed." What I didn't know then was how long we would be out of our building and that, once we are able to meet in the building again, we will still have to have a Zoom worship presence. We are still figure out what that will look like and how it will work, and we don't know what the restrictions will be once we're able to return to the building. Will we need to wear masks? Will we be able to sing? Will there be a safe way to celebrate communion? How about post-worship fellowship time?

Our learning is not over. Neither is our transformation.

A year ago, I mused, "The Holy Spirit may be molding us into the church the Tri-Cities needs for the rest of the 21st century." I pray that is true.

Peace,
Pastor Jeff
March 16, 2021

Associate Pastor's Annual Report

I began writing this report the week of the one-year anniversary of the first shelter-in-place orders in our county and state, and the anniversary of our pivoting as a community to exclusively gathering online. It has certainly been a remarkable year—a year I could not have anticipated or imagined living through when I received a call to be your Associate Pastor eight years ago. I certainly would not have predicted that we would still be worshipping and meeting online more than a year after the beginning of our confinement.

Despite that confinement, and despite some difficulty and sadness, I do believe that we are still thriving as a community. As you will read in other reports, though we have had to curtail our in-person work in our community ministries, those ministries continue, and we have found ways to support them in appropriate, socially-distanced ways. We've continued to host the hygiene unit, many of us continue to take shifts delivering food in the Tri-City Volunteers mobile pantry, and we've even started a new ministry: a "Little Free Pantry" in the small shed in the front parking lot. It's a way for us to serve our immediate neighborhood, and for our neighbors to serve each other.

One of the new ways we served our community this year was through the offering of an art installation in our empty corner lot (aka "Squirrel Hill"). Titled "Pray Their Names," the interactive installation was created by the Rev. Katy Morrison and the congregation of First Congregational Church of Sonoma. The outdoor sculpture of large wooden hearts was created in memory of 160 of the more than 7,000 black lives lost since the lynching of Emmett Till in 1955. We installed it at the end of August, and it remained in place for the first three weeks in September. The installation garnered positive notice in the neighborhood, although it was also vandalized within a couple of days of being installed. The vandalism (crossing out "Black Lives Matter" to read "All Lives Matter") was an indication of how important our witness to Black lives is and how important it is for us to continue the work of becoming an anti-racist church. I'm grateful to the many willing hands that went into making the installation possible.

Another sign of our thriving is our attendance at weekly worship. We went from an average of 77 in Sunday worship attendance in 2019, to an average of 97 for 2020 (for the period between September 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020). That's an increase of 26%, which is astounding, and, perhaps, a sign that our efforts to create spiritually-nurturing and sensory-rich worship on the Zoom platform have been largely successful.

One of the worship attendance metrics we've been tracking for just a couple of years now is the number of first-time worshippers to our Sunday service. We do this because the rule of thumb from church consultants is that in order to maintain steady growth, a church must have at least as many first-timers in a year as the church has weekly average attendance at worship. In 2019, we had 59 first-timers, and in 2020, we had 96 first-timers—a whopping 63% increase. Many of these first-timers came during the second half of the year, while we've been worshipping online. This year, our number of first-timers (96) is roughly the same as our average attendance (97). This is great news, another sign of our thriving, and is one of the surprising benefits of worshipping online (To read all the numbers we've kept track of from year to year, check out the Ministry Scorecard on pages 23-24.)

As always, I've enjoyed getting to know the new worshippers as they've returned and become "regulars." Although our online platform makes it harder to connect with new folks, a handful have begun to be integrated into the regular life of our congregation. I'm really looking forward to getting to know people "in real life" as we begin eventually—God willing—to move back to in-person activities and worship.

One core truth we've discerned from all these online experiences is that our online presence is here to stay. The pandemic has thrust us fully into the digital age, and it's obvious that, when we do go back to worshipping in person, we will not be abandoning the digital platform. Your worship leaders are deeply involved in pondering how we'll create a hybrid way of worshipping, with some of us in person, and some of us on Zoom.

In addition to my core responsibilities supporting the spiritual and leadership life of the congregation (worship and preaching, pastoral care, leadership support), worshipping on Zoom has

brought a new challenge in worship music. Because our Choir Director, Adam Lee, resigned just as we were beginning to shelter in place, leaving us without musical support, the Cabinet decided to increase my hours specifically to address the extra hours it was taking the pastors to include music in weekly worship. See the Music Ministry Report for more detail on my work in this area.

Throughout the difficult times of this past year, I have been continually awed and blessed by your resilience, your commitment to our mission and values, and your willingness to learn and grow. This church family is truly a blessing—to me, and to this community we serve—and I am deeply grateful to be serving as your Associate Pastor.

Pastor Brenda

Minister in Training's Report

I doubt that I will ever be completely used to summarizing the events of a year in five- to eight-hundred words, even in a year that is quite normal and not one that requires a major reorientation of what worship, fellowship, work, and education look like. Indeed, it is a small blessing on my end that my reflections on the year 2020 - 2021 only covers the beginning of October to the time of writing this, as it has been an eventful six months.

First, some reflection upon the fact of my being at Niles Discovery Church as Minister-in-Training (MIT) for its own sake and in the context of global pandemic. I am quite aware that I am the first MIT to serve and learn at Niles Discovery Church since Jeff began his time at Niles Congregational at least. This has necessitated adaptations on both my own and the church's ends, as well as adjustments of my self-expectations regarding how learning would happen. Niles Discovery Church has been and continues to be a fruitful place of learning, and I'm grateful that my flexibility has been met at every turn by the church whether in altering some of my expectations for worship leadership based on the technology I have available and giving me space to practice leadership in smalls groups and areas outside of worship. Learning-serving in pandemic times has meant that: **1) My field education experiences are all mediated through video communication platforms. 2) My chances to interact with members of the congregation are quite limited. 3) Some of the learning opportunities I would have had working in the office or accompanying Jeff or Brenda to in-person pastoral care visits were not available to me.**

Building from discussion of adaptations that were required from both myself and the church to the particularities of this year, I have some thoughts on what Niles Discovery Church ought to keep in mind if it continues being a teaching congregation. As special committees and ministry teams at the church plan when and how to transition to hybrid worship, a question that should be considered is: **What in the learning-serving experience *can* and *cannot* afford to be hybridized in the future?** This is an especially important question if a potential MIT has a chronic health condition that makes a long commute extra challenging or if they don't have a motor vehicle (the transit route isn't difficult so much as the travel time is lengthy and the costs will add up.) Additionally, although I find that Pastor Jeff has been thoughtful on this regard, it will always be necessary for the MIT Committee and the senior pastor to check-in with the student and one another about **what is and isn't appropriate to ask of a student.** Finally, I believe that fostering a posture of **awareness of social location** among any

member of the congregation serving in a formal position —e.g. on a committee—will be greatly beneficial for student ministers in the future. With or without any conscious intention, different contexts regarding ability, gender, age, sexual orientation *et al.* can affect a student’s presence as an observer or participant on church committees.

Finally, I want to share my learning objectives with the congregation and assess how I rose to meet them with all the flying colors and short-falls in between. During this year I have striven to learn and encounter the administrative leadership expected of a pastor, pastoral leadership outside of worship and care, develop my pastoral care style, and to grow in my capacities as a worship leader.

- 1) I believe that after refinement of my tasks in this area I have learned necessary skills for church administration through writing reports, learning how to operate any unfamiliar software, and through observing meetings —notably, Finance Committee meetings during the building of the 2021 budget.
- 2) It took until the spring semester for me to have a sense of direction with this objective, in revising it, Jeff and I determined a place that I could practice pastoral leadership.
- 3) Learning pastoral skills has been the most challenging objective for me, and it took a lot of nervousness, false starts, and imaginative solutions for me to get to a place of making consistent pastoral calls.
- 4) Worship leadership has always been the easiest and most joyful area of learning for me to approach, it’s a place in which I feel comfortable, and I have refined my skills as a worship leader over the past six months.

I also have to celebrate how my learning at Niles has often happened in quite unexpected places, notably in check-ins at the beginning of meetings and during fellowship time after Zoom worship!

I’d like to conclude in a place of gratitude. I am grateful for all of the interactions and time spent with members of Niles Discovery Church from breakout-room fellowship after Sunday worship to Monday Morning Bible Study to committee meetings and back again. Tremendous thanks go out to Pastor Jeff and Pastor Brenda for their mentorship over the course of this year, I am deeply appreciative of the lessons I’ve learned from their years of experience and for the sense of humor they bring to meetings! Finally, special thanks to the MIT Committee: Val Parker, Joy Barnitz, Mike Foster, Roberta McReynolds, and Sybil Smith. They offered invaluable gifts of time and perspective at our monthly meetings, and their reflections and feedback helped me make the most of my learning here at Niles Discovery Church!

With Gratitude,
Madeleine Guekguezian

Moderator’s Report

May the Peace of Christ be with you and yours. 2020/21 has been a challenge for us all, with the grace of God Niles Discovery Church has grown and prospered throughout the year. I begin this report while not in isolation at home, but certainly practicing social distancing and wearing a mask when out and about. Sybil and I are fortunate enough to be double vaccinated at this point, as are about half of our congregation. We are not ready to move back into the Sanctuary for worship service yet, but I think we can see a time in the third quarter of 2021 that we may be. The Corona Virus has affected just about

every aspect of our lives, not always for the worst. At this time last year, March 2020 it was looking very bleak, we were just entering the “Isolate at Home” faze, which seemed to go on and on. Our Pastors were pivoting the congregation to new ways to experience the worship of God with some very innovative means. We were not certain we could financially maneuver and keep the level of staff and support that we had grown accustomed too. What a difference a year makes. We ended 2020 with outstanding financials and got a bonus when the Adamson’s friend from Wyoming arranged a \$100,000 donation to the Church that we were able to pay forward to some of our local Non-Profits: Abode, S.A.V.E., Life Elder Care, Puente de la Costa Sur, Tri-City Volunteers and put aside funds so that we as church can help those that are homeless.

The Niles Discovery Ministry Teams, Christian Education lead by Beth Armstrong, Social Concerns lead by Judy Zlatnik, Hospitality and Fellowship lead by Amy Gunnarson, Spiritual Life lead by Val Parker, Evangelism lead by Helen Boyer, and Property lead by Mark Twist along with Jim Thomas Vice-Moderator and Barbara King Treasurer make up the Cabinet for Niles Discovery Church. Together with over 30 of the ministry team members they have led us through a very rewarding year, while allowing us to live out the Niles Discovery Mission: Following the example of Jesus, welcoming all people, growing in our relationship with God and each other, and to serve our neighbors near and far. We are very lucky to have all these dedicated people working for our Church.

A few of the accomplishments from the year:

- **Cabinet** – Barbara King, Treasurer, along with Jim Thomas, Vice-Moderator, made our Annual meetings clear, informative and easy to understand.
- **Homelessness Taskforce** – We have continued the Tri-City Volunteers Food Pantry and CleanStart Mobile Hygiene Unit that we host in our parking lot on Monday and Wednesday every week.
- **Ministry of Christen Education Team** – continued to work with the youth throughout the year in creative ways.
- **Ministry of Hospitality and Fellowship Team** – has developed very creative activities that help implement a sense of community for us all (the Halloween Party and the “surprise” Valentine) while also being an integral part of our service every week as Greeters.
- **Ministry of Property Team** – painting the hallway, improving the Audio/Visual equipment to improve our sound in the Sanctuary and allow us to have the technical ability to stream our services. Work parties that have kept our church looking great.
- **Ministry of Social Concerns Team** – had successful monthly special offerings for Puente de la Costa Sur and to Raise money for local charities (Giving Seniors Hope and Laguna Commons Holiday gift cards, to name a few). They also had one of their best years supporting two children in school with the recyclable bottles and cans program.
- **Ministry of Spiritual Life Team** – worked to ensure that worship services were well organized and effective.
- **Pledge Campaign** – led by Mark Twist was successful in reaching out to our members and gaining support for our Church in 2021. The letters, calls, and sermons all combined to make for a great outcome.
- **“Pray Their Names” Art Installation** – 160 hand-painted wooden hearts displayed the names of Black victims of racially charged murder, who were often killed at the hands of police. Niles Discovery Church participated in September 2020 by installing the project on Squirrel Hill. Many Church members assisted in executing the install. The Project conceived by local pastor and public-school teacher Rev. Katie Morrison, is the product of the concerted efforts of a volunteer community

workforce during this moment of reckoning of the nation's centuries-old history of systemic racism brought to the fore by the May 25 killing of George Floyd.

We are finding ways to continue to congregate together but at a distance. Pastor Jeff, Pastor Brenda, Maggie Guekguezian Minister in training, along with Jim Thomas are showing us new ways to worship. Niles Discovery is a strong and prosperous church. The leadership of our Pastors, Ministry Teams, and members will continue to Shepard us throughout the coming year. We should all look forward to growing in our understanding of God's word and living our lives with Christ's example.

Submitted by – John Smith

Vice Moderator's Report

PG&E Temporary Construction Easement

In April 2020, PG&E reached out to us to negotiate an agreement for a temporary construction easement on roughly 1,500 square foot area in the small parking lot to drill a geotechnical bore in a small area of the parking lot – which is a soil test technique and is a preliminary step in a larger gas pipeline project that has to do with earthquake preparedness and pipeline safety given its proximity to the Hayward fault. The Geotech bore is just the first phase, to get an idea of soil conditions in the area. The term of the agreement was for one month. I worked with Josef Vasilieff (the PG&E project manager) and we set up the following terms:

1. Compensation would be set at \$700 per month
2. The project would start on June 15, 2020
3. The term would be for one month
4. An extension of this agreement for one month upon written notification to the church

The agreement was then shared with the Pastors, the moderator, the chair of the Ministry of Property, and Ryan Ramseyer for review and negotiations. Ryan requested that an indemnification clause be added. PG&E agreed to the changes.

Pray Their Names Art Installation

I served on the "Pray Their Names" committee that brought over the traveling art installation of hearts with names of black lives lost to systemic racism in law enforcement. I video documented the preparation and installation of the event. I also created a web app that had information on all the names in the installation so that visitors can use their phone to walk through the installation and read the details of the incident that led to their death.

White Fragility

A group reading of the book, "White Fragility" was set up and I agreed to serve as a group's facilitator.

Submitted by – Jim Thomas

Clerk's Report

April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021

Baptisms:

Weddings:

Johanna Maria Martinez and Donald Bryan Tirre 05/30/2020

Funerals and Memorial Services:

Nicolina (Nicky) Moss 07/20/2020

John Phillip Hollowell 01/23/2021

New Members added to Membership Roll:

Confession of Faith

Reaffirmation of Faith

Sandra Wong 05/17/2020

Transfer

Beth Newell 05/17/2020

Martha Williams 12/06/2020

From Associate Member to Participating Member

Members removed from Membership Roll:

Death:

Mark McConville 04/22/2020

John Phillip Hollowell 01/18/2021

Transfer:

Request:

Michelle McConville 02/25/2021

From Active Members to Inactive Members by action of Cabinet

From Inactive Members to Alumni by action of Cabinet

Submitted by – Mikele Kearney

Treasurer's Report

The 2020 Financial Report and 2021 Budget were presented at the January 31, 2021, Annual Congregational Budget Meeting. Please see that report (available in the church office) for details. Financial reports are reviewed each month with the Cabinet. All reports are subject to approval and audit.

Submitted by – Barbara P. King

Auditor's Report

The 2020 Financial Report and 2021 Budget were presented at the January 31, 2021, Annual Congregational Budget Meeting. Please see that report (available in the church office) for details.

Submitted by – Jim Vermazen

Ministry of Music

In some ways, the past year has felt like a year without music and singing. Just before we began sheltering in place in March 2020, our Choir Director, Adam Lee, had announced that he had found full-time employment in a dream job, and would be leaving after just a year as our director. Although we wished Adam well in his new endeavors, we felt the lack of musical leadership as we scrambled to figure out how to include music in our new mode of worshipping online.

In other ways, this year has opened up many new possibilities for music in our worship life. Although we have missed the choir and live singing, by turning to online resources, we have been able to include a broad range of musical styles and performers in worship, both traditional and classic, as well as modern and contemporary. Even though we can't sing with each other, we can sing loudly and enthusiastically at home.

Because finding appropriate music for worship was an added time demand on the pastors, the Cabinet voted in the fall to extend the Associate Pastor's hours from 20 to 25 hours per week to compensate for the additional time. My additional duties now include finding recorded or virtual choir versions of hymns for weekly worship, coordinating with our Organist, Jenny Lin, to record music for accompaniment and preludes, and coordinating the production of several virtual choir pieces for use during Advent and regular worship.

Our most ambitious project this year was the series of virtual choir pieces we did with our choir for our Advent Worship series, "I Believe...Even When." With some help from former Music Director, Ofer dal Lal, the choir rehearsed and recorded four pieces based on Mark Miller's anthem, "I Believe." These were engineered and, with images from our sanctuary, made into short videos that were played as

“threshold moments” at the beginning of worship leading up to Christmas. We also recorded our two regular worship songs, “Let’s Walk Together” and “Go in Peace.” Engineered into virtual choir videos by our A/V engineer, Jesse Beller, we have been able to incorporate these familiar, beloved songs into worship since January.

As it has in other areas, the past year has taught us much about how we can use new technology in worship to create spiritually nourishing and sensory-rich experiences. Although we all look forward to a time when we can enjoy live choir performances and singing together again, this year has been an important learning experience that will impact our music program in the months to come.

Submitted by – Pastor Brenda

Ministry of Christian Education Team

The Ministry of Christian Education’s main responsibility is to provide Sunday School curriculum that reflects the Niles Discovery Church mission and values, and teachers to guide them through it. Our team members are Beth Armstrong, Barbara P. King, Inger Svaert, and Cathy West-Jancoski. This year circumstances made this quite challenging, as we were not able to worship or have Sunday School in person.

While virtual worship has been well attended and has kept adults connected with the church; it has not been as successful in keeping the children feeling engaged. Kids are sometimes seen watching with parents, but there has been little focused on them. Much brainstorming ensued to try to improve the situation, but it has been tough to find the right answer.

Zoom with the Children, a weekly half hour Zoom event with Pastor Jeff and occasionally Pastor Brenda, has given our pastors an opportunity to keep in touch with the kids. It is consistently attended by a small group, so it is meaningful to them.

Happy Summer cards made by some of the kids were delivered in June, along with the first week of a 12-week curriculum based on Bible stories dealing with the Earth. Subsequent curriculum was sent out by email weekly.

Bravo Sunday celebrated our teachers from the first part of the year, and 5 graduates, 2 of whom participated in the worship service with their families.

Sadly, all camps were canceled for the 2020 year.

School supplies, and money to buy them, were collected in the August Special Offering. Almost \$1000 in supplies geared to virtual learning at home was delivered to the Fremont Family Resource Center for distribution. In addition, \$500 was donated to and matched by the Fremont Education Foundation. The funds were then sent on to the Fremont Unified School District to use for virtual learning equipment for students.

During August, the Team members and Pastor Brenda made phone calls the parents of Sunday School kids to gather feedback on what the Team had provided over the summer and information about what they would like to see happen going forward for virtual faith formation of their kids. Most parents felt overwhelmed by keeping on top of schoolwork while they were trying to work and trying to provide as

much normalcy as they could for their families. It was decided to not offer a curriculum and add to the stress at this time. Many parents were eager for their kids to be able to see their classmates and teachers in person, perhaps in an outside activity. This, unfortunately, was not within guidelines at that time.

The Mission Moment for the September Special Offering, Heifer, was given by one of our enthusiastic middle schoolers. Several weeks later the kids chose which animals to buy with the \$1050 that had been donated.

The Ministry of Christian Education Team helped support the Advent craft festival organized and led by the Ministry of Hospitality and Fellowship Team. A Nativity craft was completed in break-out rooms and was enjoyed by both children and adults.

After Christmas, a Book Loan program offering curriculum books to families was established but not well used by families.

For Easter small pots with seeds and coloring pages were delivered to each child.

Over the year several kids provided Testimony during the worship services. They had relevant and thoughtful things to say. We are looking forward to when we are able to hear more of what they have to say, in person.

Submitted by – Beth Armstrong

Ministry of Evangelism Team

The Ministry of Evangelism Team does not have a chair and has been largely inactive this year. No report was submitted.

Ministry of Hospitality and Fellowship Team

2020 was a challenging year for the Ministry of Hospitality and Fellowship Team. During the first part of the year (pre-COVID), we focused on tasks that would increase our ability to facilitate more church activities. Those tasks included:

- Formalizing a description of the work required when volunteering
- Streamlining a process for cash donations
- Beginning a process for supplies and food to be routinely purchased
- Initiating recruitment for more volunteers

Activities during this period:

- The team started packaging Coffee Hour leftover baked goods, fruit, etc., for distribution to the Mobil Hygiene participants.

- The team completed plans for a “Parents Night Out” event to be held on March 28. The event was intended to provide an evening of respite for parents, while their children enjoyed time with church friends; participating in a kid-friendly meal, followed by games, crafts, and a movie. Unfortunately, this event had to be canceled due to COVID-19.

After adjusting to the new COVID paradigm, the team retooled to serve an online community. In July, Virtual Greeters began serving during Niles Discovery Church online worship services. As co-hosts for the meeting, Greeters can interact with new participants, welcome them, answer questions, etc., while encouraging everyone to attend the social time after the service. Team members recruited Randy Fewel to work as a Greeter during the fifth Sunday in applicable months. Many thanks to Randy for taking on this task!

Events held during the remainder of the year:

- October 24th
Halloween party featuring a scavenger hunt, pumpkin carving contest, costumes, and gift card prizes.
- December 6th
Holiday Advent Celebration with seasonal music, performed by our members, along with a Christmas ornament craft for children and adults
- February 14th
Secret Valentine exchange lasting for ten days, with many cards and packages exchanged. The event culminated with participants learning who they had been paired with during a group “video reveal” after the Sunday worship service.

Your 2020-2021 Ministry of Hospitality and Fellowship Team members have been Carol Easter, Amy Gunnarson, Alison Kieft, Melissa Palleschi, Sybil Smith, and Riki Twist.

Submitted by – Amy Gunnarson, Chair

Ministry of Property Team

In Charles Dickens’s book, *A Tale of Two Cities*, part of the opening line is “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity...” That doesn't exactly describe what has transpired in the last year with the pandemic, social distancing, and the use of Zoom. But this past year has some highlights to report.

- The Ministry of Property Team has continued to:

Monitor and secure the building and grounds	Manage the church building records
Manage the office equipment	Manage the parsonage property
Manage the IT and AV systems	Manage the church storage space
- Serve as the point of contact and/or coordinator for:

Weekly cleaning service	Required inspections for the fire alarm and sprinkler systems
Weekly landscape service	

Annual mechanical inspections and servicing

Church and parsonage property insurance
The fire and burglar alarm system

Projects completed this year were:

Parsonage – solar and electric car charger, electrical panel upgrade, plumbing lines upgrade, and heat pump (a hybrid heating and AC system) with new subfloor ducts were all installed

Audio and computer upgrades – finished by the fall 2020 – new server, repurposed the old computer for the sanctuary audio and cameras including choir microphones, upgraded the Kentech card access software, installed ExacqVision software, and upgraded the hallway WiFi mesh nodes

The hallway ceiling cracks were repaired, and control joints installed. Hallway ceiling and walls were repainted. A noticeable improvement.

A yearlong contract with Terminex was initiated for pests both within and without the building. There are no signs of ants or spiders in or out of the building. On the positive note, the attic roof rat traps in eight months have come up empty ... Maybe they have a peanut allergy.

Added another shelving rack in the storage room to accommodate 25 boxes of archival documents that were at the Ewing home.

Patched five holes in the west parking lot asphalt.

Installed wooden decking to protect the air conditioning refrigerant lines at two locations on the Niles Boulevard side of the building.

Added two solar powered Arlo exterior WiFi cameras to monitor the west entrance and south exit areas.

Replaced the CFL bulbs in the hanging lights in the Fellowship Hall with 8-watt LED bulbs.

Minton Door carpenters adjusted both the east and west door closures to latch correctly and added hardware that will allow the doors between the kitchen and hall to stay open at 90 degrees when needed.

Replaced the motion sensor for office lights in the office.

I wish to thank all the members of the Ministry of Property Team for their contributions of time and talent: Matt Espinoza, Tom Gunnarson, Diane Harvey, Bill Palleschi, Ryan Ramseyer, and John Smith.

Yours in Christ – Mark Twist, Chair

Ministry of Social Concerns Team

As with many of the Ministry Teams of Niles Discovery Church, we have had to adapt over the past year and approach our mission with a sense of creativity and inventiveness. In the past our activities involved gathering together after worship, which was not possible due to quarantine. However, obstacles are meant to be overcome.

We were able to continue collecting redeemable cans and bottles and turn them in to Tri-Ced in Union City. Even though we were not having services in the building, we collected more recyclables than in the previous year, which were diligently delivered on a regular basis by Rich Gallegos. For the first time

we paid for both our girl in Jamaica and boy from El Salvador. We even carried over \$176.51 to the next year.

Using articles in The Bell, the church newsletter, we promoted *Compassion and Choices* by offering congregation members material on Advance Directives available on the Compassion and Choices website as well as books that we purchased and offered to deliver to congregation members.

In November we helped facilitate a Special Offering to *Puente de la Costa Sur* and raised over \$2000.

December found us helping the group *Giving Hope for Seniors*. We were able to deliver 18 gift baskets to the City of Fremont Human Services Department. We also sponsored a *Holiday Food Baskets Drive* to raise money to purchase grocery store gift cards for the residents of Laguna Common. These residents are then able to buy their own ingredients for a holiday meal.

In March 2021, the Cabinet voted to study for possible action items on two topics:

Interfaith Coalition for Justice in our Jails

Creation of a Land Acknowledgement and further potential supportive action

Submitted by – Judy Zlatnik

Ministry of Spiritual Life Team

This is not my usual annual report. We know life changed in March 2020. These changes made a huge difference in how the Ministry of Spiritual Life Team works. A brief history of what we did. We were responsible for getting the sanctuary set up for worship services, it did not matter if it was Sunday or a special service. We set up communion. Dealt with the liturgical art that was within the church. We help with ideas for worship services.

March of 2020 when we changed from worship services within the church to Zoom services, our roles changed. We are no longer setting up communion, you are responsible for that. We no longer get the sanctuary ready for worship services. Yes, Jeff and Brenda have been in the sanctuary, only one at a time or with masks on. The liturgical art you see in the sanctuary has been done the help of several people Joy Barnitz, Sandy Thomas, Brenda Loreman and Jeff Spencer. We still help with ideas for worship.

As I said our worship services changed last year. For our Team, Pastor Jeff and Pastor Brenda have made the biggest changes for our Team. They are the ones that have had to learn how to do Zoom worship. They will tell you they did not learn about Zoom worship when they were in Seminary. Our church is very fortunate to have several tech savvy people. Who have helped Jeff and Brenda – Jim Thomas, Bill Palleschi and many people of the Ministry of Property Team. We thank everyone who helps make our worship services possible.

One new area is we now have cyber ushers. They are responsible for making sure our worship services safe by monitoring visitors to our services. We want to thank, Ron Adamson, Ron Qian, Bob Monkman, Susie Claxton, Glenda Chui, Mike Foster, Carl Nordling, Ryan Ramseyer, Bill Palleschi and John

Smith. If you would like to join this wonderful team you can contact Valerie Parker at nursvalsbcglobal.net.

Respectfully submitted – Valerie Parker

Care Team

COVID-19 had a huge impact on the Care Team. We were no longer able to visit people in hospitals or nursing homes, meet with friends of the congregation, and/or assist with medical appointments.

We are hoping to rebuild our team when we have the ability to meet face-to-face again.

Respectfully submitted by – Valerie Parker

Finance Committee

Members: Tom Gunnarson, Diane Harvey, Barbara King, Carl Nordling, Ryan Ramseyer, Beth Rasler, and Michael Thomson

The 2020 Financial Report and 2021 Budget were presented at the January 31, 2021, Annual Congregational Budget Meeting via Zoom. Please see that report (available in the church office) for details. Financial reports are reviewed each month with the Cabinet. All reports are subject to approval and audit.

Submitted by – Barbara King, Treasurer

Pastor Parish Relations Committee (PPRC)

Pastor Parish Relations Committee is one of the six standing committees of the church. Its membership is appointed by the Cabinet, with its members asked to serve three-year terms. Ken Rasler (term ending June 2021); Ingert Svaerd (term ending June 2022); Roberta McReynolds and Leonard Lloyd (terms ending June 2023) and, of course, our pastors.

The PPRC meets at least every other month, with additional meeting scheduled if needed to fulfill its charge: “to encourage healthy relationships between the Pastor(s) and members of the Church and within the Church.” We are pleased to say that relationships within the church in between members and our pastors are, as far as we can tell, healthy. We are concerned that our pastors have been working many, many hours beyond their official calls during this year of pandemic. At the same time, we recognize that our pastor’s work has been deeply appreciated by our congregation.

We take it upon ourselves each fall to compile data about our church in a “ministry scorecard.” See pages 23-24 for this data.

Submitted by – Pastor Jeff Spencer

Ministry Scorecard	09/01/2013	09/01/2014	09/01/2015	09/01/2016	09/01/2017	09/01/2018	09/01/2019	09/01/2020
Average weekly attendance for year ending Sept. 1	83	68	75	86	82	78	77	97
Total number of "Participating Members"	120	130	129	120	137	128	129	119
Total number of "Associate Members"	12	6	4	2	5	4	5	6
Total number of Active Participants ("Active" means worshiped at least 5 times or gave money in past year.)	175	177	160	210	244	185	218	205
% of Active Participants who can articulate a clear sense of vision and purpose for the church (PPRC will look at "Active" list and guess who can.)	144 people 82%	133 people 75%	139 people 87%	125 people 59%	191 people 78%	137 people 74%	155 people 71%	171 people 83%
% of Active Participants active in the full life of the church ("Full life" means worships at least 12 times and gave money and is in a small group in the past year.)	55 people 31%	52 people 29%	66 people 41%	73 people 35%	67 people 35%	77 people 42%	87 people 40%	90 people 44%
% of Participating Members who have been members less than 2 years	18 people 13.6%	7 people 4.02%	6 people 3.75%	24 people 20%	29 people 21%	15 people 12%	10 people 8%	10 people 10 people
% of Active Participants who are under age 40	39 or 22%	31 or 18%	21 or 13%	30 or 14%	41 or 17%	24 or 13%	41 or 19%	37 or 18%
% of Active Participants who are not European-American	9.7%	11%	15 or 9.4%	14 or 6.6%	25 or 10%	16 or 9%	18 or 8%	22 or 11%
% of budget dedicated to facilities	19.90%	25%	15.34%	20.91%	18.57%	17.74%	19.47%	18.63%
% of budget dedicated to staff	65.20%	69%	72.51%	73.09%	71.62%	77.16%	72.91%	73.10%
% of budget dedicated to other ministry	7.10%	6%	12.15%	6%	9.81%	5.10%	8.61%	0.30%
Special Offerings giving:	no count	no count	\$ 14,300.00	\$16,311	\$16,073	\$17,542	\$18,750	\$24,132
Other non-budget giving - total given*	no count	no count	\$135,756.16*	\$67,250*	\$30,384	\$14,589	\$20,446	\$46,537
Non-budget giving - number of ways (including spec. offerings)	no count	no count	17	15	28	28	29	20
Number of externally focused ministry opportunities vs internally focused management opportunities (ministry opportunity = caring for others; management opportunities = caring for institution. PPRC will make a list annually.)	25 ministry 20 manage	34 ministry 23 manage	44 ministry manage	42 ministry 30 manage	46 ministry 31 manage	48 ministry 34 manage	53 ministry 40 manage	52 ministry 38 manage
Number of followers on Facebook fan page	107	147	185	248	253	291	344	404
Number of followers in Facebook group	49	53	66	77	82	88	93	110
Number of community ministry partners (do stuff with hands on; or have members on boards etc.)	22	26	35	38	57	58	62	63

Ministry Scorecard	09/01/2013	09/01/2014	09/01/2015	09/01/2016	09/01/2017	09/01/2018	09/01/2019	09/01/2020
Number of community ministry partners we only give money to	10	12	10	9	12	13	7	11
Number of ministry "failures" (new ministries that didn't work; old ministries that ended)	3	4	9	4	5	5	7	9
Number of new ministry "successes" (new ministry launches during year that are working as of Sept. 1)	1	5	4	3	4	5	11	9
Number of continuing education hours by staff and key leaders	68	88	70.5	79.5	114	60.5	87.5	156
Number of entry points into the faith community (small groups, worship, website, etc.) (PPRC will create a list each year.)	13	21	32	33	36	36	41	44
Number of subscribers to "This Week"	88	106	115	132	143	150	153	163
Number of subscribers to "eBell"	175	199	214	250	262	262	255	264
Number of subscribers to "Prayer Requests"	90	96	100	109	111	115	113	114
Number of subscribers to "Second Saturday Documentary Series"	1185	1036	954	945	960	958	971	948
Number of subscribers to "Adult Sunday School"	9	13	17	18	deleted	-	-	-
Number of subscribers to "Citizens Against Hazardous Oil Trains" (Now "Tri-City Climate Action")	no count	no count	no count	no count	77	83	82	108
Yahoo! Group membership (2019-20, changed to Google Group)	no count	92	92	no count	91	83	83	52
Online giving units (any giving)	n/a	8	9	7	7	16	30	41
Online giving units (giving regularly)	n/a	1	3	3	5	4	6	23
Number of self-identified 1st time worshipers			58	96	50	47	59	96
* Other non-budget giving - total given includes:								
9/1/15 & 9/1/16, giving to construction/angel gifts								
9/1/20, includes giving for solar/electrical upgrades at parsonage								

Personnel Committee

Meeting Minutes: March 1, 2020

California passed SB1343 that requires us to do anti-harassment training. Jeff was assigned to pursue the training available through our insurance.

We also determined that part-time employees are entitled to time and a half overtime pay for hours worked beyond 8 hours in a day. Cecilia has been working one day a week and puts in 11 hours a day. Jeff was assigned follow-up with Cecilia about options.

Recognizing that Mikele's work in event hosting is separate from her contracted work as an office administrator, she was advised to fill out a different time sheet for that because the pay is different.

We also discussed if we could require events to hire facilities hosts from our list of hosts. It is better if we hire the event/facilities host. And for current employees, they should report hours on a separate time sheet.

Mark wants to set up an orientation for event hosts.

We determined that we need to open a California savers retirement account because we do not offer a pension plan for all employees. We do not have any fiduciary responsibility.

Adam has accepted a job at another church that is full time and will resign as our Choir Director. He has required a transition plan before he leaves. We are working with Ofer to find an interim.

Meeting Minutes: September 16, 2020

Members Attended: Valerie Parker, Jeff Spencer, Jim Thomas, and Mark Twist

Guest attended: John Smith

Due to the pandemic, the workload for our pastors has nearly doubled. The personnel committee met to discuss what actions should be taken to compensate the pastors for their extra work and to find ways to decrease their workload.

Jeff brought up three things we needed to address:

1. Brenda worked 40 hours a week during Jeff's vacation. She is called to work 20 hours per week and adding an extra 10 hours during Jeff's absence is considered part of the calling. However, because Brenda worked an additional 10 hours per week over the expected workload for four weeks, the committee considered some type of compensation. This compensation is considered unique to this time and place due to the corona virus and its impact on the church.
2. Jeff and Brenda have been working harder, especially in the music ministry.
3. Jeff would like to improve our music ministry to include live music, music from members of our congregation, and virtual choir style anthems.

After deliberating these items and considering various proposals and their financial impact, the committee settled onto the following:

1. In lieu of hiring a music director while adhering to "Shelter in Place" orders, the committee proposes to offer Brenda a temporary increase in hours so that she can take on the duties of the music ministry in regard to determining, finding, and acquiring music for our worship services.

This will be a 25% increase in her hours and will be accompanied by a 25% increase in her compensation package. This temporary increase in time and pay will expire in nine (9) months. Prior to the expiration of this temporary increase in hours, the personnel committee will reconvene to consider whether to extend this increase or to hire a music director to take over the music ministry.

2. As a one-time bonus for the unexpected workload that came as a result of the corona virus, the personnel committee recommends that Brenda be offered two additional weeks of vacation time just for this coming year or \$1,500 cash bonus, the choice to be made by Brenda. This is not a compensation; this is a bonus to recognize her leadership during a time of crisis and uncertain times.
3. The committee considered the task of expanding the work of the music ministry. It is recommended for Advent, that a knowledgeable person be contracted to put something together. Then in 2021, consideration of adding this function to the music directors job description when looking to hire a music director.
4. The committee also recognized that the church is involved with a lot of ministries, many which are driven by the pastors. The committee also recognizes that the church cannot afford two full-time pastors. The committee recommends a review of the work the pastors do to determine whether to continue to support certain activities or delegate them to lay leadership.
5. The committee further recommends that the pastors undergo a performance review process every two years. The NCNC-UCC and the CCNC-N have manuals that provide context for such reviews.

Recommendation to the Cabinet: October 18, 2020

Person	Recommendation
Mikele Kearney	1.3% COLA increase (1.3%)
Cecilia Le	1.3% COLA plus 1.7% merit increase (3%) and increase hours from 11 to 13 hours per week
Jenny Lin	1.3% COLA increase (1.3%)
Brenda Loreman	1.3% COLA increase (1.3%) We also recommend that her current salary be extended for the full 12 months of the year.
Jeff Spencer	1.3% COLA increase (1.3%) and a reduction of the housing annual cost by \$625. <i>This was recommended by Jeff because that amount was what he was compensated for gasoline which he no longer uses.</i>
Choir Director	Set salary to \$12,000 annually as a placeholder in the event our circumstances change, and we decide to hire a choir director.

COLA is based on the Social Security Administration’s definition of the benefit. They announced that COLA is 1.3% on their website: <https://www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/latestCOLA.html>

Submitted by – Jim Thomas, Chair, Personnel Committee

Stewardship Committee

This year’s Stewardship effort was titled “Faithful, Hopeful, and Loving”. And truly, the response from our congregation mirrored this theme. The manner in which they pledged financial support, even during this time of the pandemic and uncertainty was breathtaking. We were astonished at the quick responses from everyone – in that we received all the pledges within two weeks after Pledge Sunday. Blessings to all of you for your support.

Your trust and commitment to the mission of Niles Discovery Church is evident in the following figures:

Item	2020	2021
Total pledges received	71	83
New pledges in totals	9	14
Pledges that increased	24	41
Pledges that remained the same	15	40
Pledges that were lowered	5	5
Pledges that were not renewed	8	2
Total Dollars pledges	\$241,776	\$264,493

Thank you for being so faithful, hopeful, and loving!
 Jeff Spencer, Brenda Loreman, John Smith, and Mark Twist

Strategic Taskforce (to) Assess Returning Team

Created by Cabinet in May 2020, the Strategic Taskforce (to) Asses Returning Team includes:

Brenda Loreman

John Smith

Mark Twist

Val Parker

Jim Thomas

Judy Zlatnik

Referred to as START, this team deals with all things related to COVID-19. The group meets monthly to assess where we are relative to the outbreak. With input from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), California State Health Care, County Health Department, and any scientific information we could gather, we made recommendations to Cabinet for ways to address the COVID impact to our church and to determine how and when we might be able to return. START has recommended and Cabinet has approved guidelines for operating during the COVID pandemic (COVID-19 Response Plan) and we continue to make quarterly recommendations regarding streaming services and/or potential in person services. START will continue to meet and guide the church until we are back in our facility for regular worship.

Submitted by – John Smith

Green Team

The Green Team was revitalized in May 2020. Bill Palleschi, the former leader, consulted with Susie Claxton, who then volunteered to lead it. Information about the Green Team may be found at the Green Team website under the Ministries tab at www.nilesdiscoverychurch.org. We always welcome new members with differing viewpoints and skill sets to help us grow.

Our Members:

Ron Adamson	Leonard Lloyd	Bill Palleschi
Susie Claxton	Roberta McReynolds	Jan Quilici
Richard Godfrey	Lynn Miller	Beth Rasler
Amalira Henrie	Bee Newell	Marilyn Singer
Vaishaly Jaiprakash	Iris Nicholson	Sandra Wong

Supporting Members:

Joy Barnitz	Brenda Loreman	Judy Zlatnik
Tarrah Henrie	Jeff Spencer	
Mikele Kearney	James Thomas	

Below are some of our accomplishments this year:

- Kairos Moments during Sunday services at Church – As part of the UCC Kairos Call to Action – 10 Years of Church Mobilization of Climate and Inequality, the Green Team requested the Cabinet to allow Kairos Moments as part of church services. Cabinet decided on a twice per month schedule, with some exceptions, for these times for a call to environmental justice. The Green Team is responsible for finding speakers to deliver these messages. The Moments are to highlight the importance of recognizing and acting on environmental justice issues, with an overarching goal to combat and adapt to Climate Change. The Kairos Moments are documented on the Green Team Website, with title, author, printed version, and video clips. (Special thanks to Jim Thomas for posting and keeping this up to date.)
- Based on the long history of Niles Discovery Church as a “Green Church,” we applied to the United Church of Christ to be recognized as a Creation Justice Church, and to the Disciples Of Christ to be recognized as a Certified Green Chalice Church. We have officially received both these designations. For each of these applications, we needed to have a Creation Covenant. We came to the Cabinet with the *Creation Care Covenant of Commitment*, which was unanimously adopted on February 15, 2021, and can be found on the Green Team website.
- With a goal of education and increased understanding for our congregation about Climate Change and Environmental and Racial Justice issues, the Green Team co-sponsored with Daytime Fellowship, “All Church Reads” on Creation Justice issues, including: *Climate Church*, *Climate World*, by Jim Antal, *White Fragility*, by Robin DiAngelo, and *Stamped From the Beginning, the Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*, by Ibram X. Kendi. In Addition, after the reading of *Climate Church, Climate World*, we invited Jim Antal for a question-and-answer session with the congregation, which was very well attended.
- The Green Team publishes monthly in a section of The Bell called Climate Corner. We have written on topics such as: *Motivation for the Green Team*, *Stay Cool with the Green Team*, *Green Living through Zero Net Energy*, *Fremont Green Challenge*, *California Coastal Cleanup*, *The Green Team Salutes our Finance Committee*, *Tri-City Urban Forest Alliance (TUFA)*, *Growing our Urban Forest*

for Trillion Trees.org, Small Endeavors... (about Fremont's Green Challenge), Creation Care Covenant of Commitment, and Save the Earth – Earth Day is Coming in April.

- The Niles Discovery Church (NDC) Green Challenge is being launched again in April 2021. It is based on the Fremont Green Challenge.
- At their March 15 meeting, the Cabinet agreed to pledge as the whole church to the Trillion Trees Initiative. The Green Team will spearhead the action, pledging financial and participation resources to Tri-City Urban Forest Alliance. We have already had one event this year, fostering Oak & other native tree seedlings.
- In 2020, the Green Team held only one in-person outdoor event, the California Coastal Cleanup at Quarry Lakes. As the pandemic subsides, we hope to sponsor more outdoor events in wonderful Nature.

Stay Cool – Susie Claxton

Homelessness Taskforce

The Homelessness Taskforce is a special ministry team of the Ministry of Social Concerns Team of Niles Discovery Church. Our goal is to implement programs that address the needs of the homeless, provide education and information about homelessness issues, and work with community partners in addressing challenges that arise while providing this much needed ministry.

The Homelessness Taskforce Meeting - March 1, 2020

- The taskforce reviewed the current programs we were hosting:

Home Warming/Rapid Rehousing – Abode Services	Mobile Health Clinic – Tri-City Health Center
Clean Start Mobile Hygiene Unit – City of Fremont	Food Events – Renegade Feedings / Fremont for Everyone / YIMBY
- Ancillary Services that include:

The Mend Zone – Lisa Stambaugh	Sidewalk Talk – Unknown
Hair Cutting – Mari-Lynn Harris and Randy Fewel	Donations/Food/Supplies management – various volunteers

We also discussed the challenges we face in supporting these programs. Storage is an issue, so we began to explore voucher programs, such as the shoe voucher program provided by CityServe. Volunteers are needed for both Clean Start and our ancillary services

We began to plan for the following events: Food Events will occur on the fourth Friday of the month, Mental Health educational and benefit concert on May 15, 2020.

- We discussed other projects we would like to explore:

Tiny Homes/Conestoga Homes	Homeless Post Office
Safe Parking	Homeless ID
The Pandemic	

Due to the pandemic, many changes have been made to the task force programs. All ancillary programs have been cancelled. The Tri-City Health van was recalled helping provide full-time assistance in the

COVID-19 testing services. They also joined with a couple of other services in the area to form Bay Area Community Health (BAHC). The Clean Start program dropped all volunteer help and is being run only by city employees. The Food events have been cancelled.

The Little Free Pantry

Due to several break-ins of the Clean Start storage shed, the Ministry of Property Team expressed their concern over the efforts being made to clean up and repair the shed. The Taskforce decided to take full responsibility of the shed and in August of 2020, we repurposed it as a “Little Free Pantry” where volunteers can stock the shelves with food, hygiene items, and small articles of clothing. Since then, it has been regularly stocked and is being used by our unhoused neighbors for food and other essential items.

Respectfully submitted by – James Thomas

Liturgical Art Special Team

The Liturgical Art Special Team is a sub-team of the Ministry of Spiritual Life (MSL) Team which works closely with members of the Ministry of Property (MoPs) Team, when we meet in person, and with interested congregants. As we spent the entire year (Lent 2020 – Lent 2021) on Zoom, Pastor Brenda, Pastor Jeff, and Minister-in-Training, Maggie Guekguezian were central to designing and preparing materials for including art in home-based ritual as part of the worship experience. Members of the Niles Discovery Church ministry teams were key to the preparation and delivery of these worship materials to those who requested them.

Because we spent this year in Zoom worship, the sanctuary remained decorated with Lenten quilts for its entirety. At Christmas, the stars were hung on the panels on the west wall to support the filming of a video of an Advent procession. Our worship was enhanced by using materials from the Worship Design Studio for Advent, Epiphany, and Lent.

- **Season of Creation 2020:** To complement our second annual celebration, images were requested from members and many were submitted for use during worship. The highlight was a video parade of animals on the final Sunday (the Feast of St. Francis).
- **Advent 2020:** Our worship theme centered on “I Believe” (Worship Design Studio). Sandy Thomas of both the Ministry of Spiritual Life and the Liturgical Art Special Team assembled Advent kits for those who requested them; these contained five battery operated candles (Peace, Hope, Joy and Love) and a Christ candle in a box that unfolded marked with the four Sundays of Advent in a “wreath.” Luminaries were provided (with a candle) as well. The nativity scene was placed in the hall. An Advent wreath was assembled on the communion table which was placed on the chancel. A gold sparkly cloth was installed behind the cross. The cross and the communion table were visible in the chancel camera during worship. The pastors installed seasonal cloths in their offices as backdrops.
- **Epiphany 2021:** The worship theme was “God is Holding Your Life.” (Worship Design Studio). There was no special installation in the sanctuary; congregants were encouraged to put prayers in a bowl or a box throughout the season. The pastors had seasonal backdrops in their offices.

- **Lent 2021:** We focused on a central theme of “Holy Vessels” (Worship Design Studio). Congregants were encouraged to prepare trays with vessels of water and sand or dirt, a candle and sea glass. Sand and sea glass were provided to those who requested them. Pastor Brenda prepared a beautiful installation for the communion table that was a focal point for the chancel camera during worship. The pastors had seasonal backdrops in their offices.
- **Easter 2021:** A Palm Sunday video procession is being prepared and the Easter banner will be installed behind the cross on Holy Saturday.

Respectfully Submitted by – Joy Barnitz

Mobile Food Pantry

Because of the pandemic, the Mobile Food Pantry outreach was put on hold. As the year went on, a few people started driving again. We hope to reactivate this ministry once more people are vaccinated, and the spread of the SAR-CoV-2 virus abates. No report was submitted.

Pathways to Beloved Community

Just Peace – Annual Review

One of the commitments Niles Discovery Church made when we adopted our Just Peace covenant was to highlight activities that we have been doing over the past year to support this covenant and work toward the goal of creating a Beloved Community.

Highlights of this year (2020-2021) include:

- Hosting the CleanStart mobile hygiene unit two days each week, only pausing when the unit broke an axle
- Establishing and stocking the "Little Free Pantry" in the west parking lot – especially important during the pandemic
- Continuing to drive for the Tri-City Volunteers Mobile Pantry even when the pandemic made TCV change how the Mobile Pantry worked
- Donations of recyclable cans and bottles to fund the education of two children
- Exhibiting the “Pray Their Names” art installation in September 2020, including an opening and closing service
- “Raise the Alarm” event on March 11, 2021, as part of the “Sacred People, Sacred Earth” Day of Action sponsored by GreenFaith
- Hosted Tri-City Interfaith Council events on Niles Discovery Church Zoom account, including Yom HaShoah services (2020 & 2021), Thanksgiving Service 2020, Interfaith Harmony Day 2021, and “INTERCONNECTED - a service marking one year shelter-in-place because of the COVID-19 pandemic” (March 2021)

- Increased awareness and solidarity on current topics through book groups that read and discussed books on topics including, but not limited to:
- *Climate Church, Climate World: How People of Faith Must Work for Change*, by Jim Antal
- *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*, by Isabel Wilkerson
- *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*, by Ibram X. Kendi

Submitted by – Joy Barnitz

Adult Sunday School

As a group we search for deeper understanding and an openness for discussing a range of topics. During the pandemic, we have gathered, as a group of about ten people, on Zoom each Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. We select books by vote. Our goal is to alternate books dealing with theological topics and with books dealing with social issues that challenge our Christian faith. In the group, we feel safe to speak frankly about our struggles, our beliefs, and our individual faith journeys. We seek to create a respectful place where you can be open and honest.

Over the past year our books have included:

- *Climate Church, Climate World* – Rev. Jim Antal
- *The Book of Forgiving* – Abp. Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu
- *Truth and Hope* – Walter Brueggemann
- *The Warmth of Other Suns* – Isabel Wilkerson

Respectfully submitted by – John Zlatnik

Chartered Organization: Scouts of America Troop and Pack 112

Pack 112 – Kindergarten through Mid-Fifth Grade (Boys and Girls)

As with many things in this year of COVID, scouting has been difficult. We lost some numbers with Zoom fatigue proving to be a very real thing, especially for the elementary school age group. We continue to power on with 20 scouts, 5 of whom are girls, and an amazing leadership team. Proving that small can be mighty and as a Pack we can persevere.

We have been able to continue a program called Trail Trekker hikes. Usually these are scheduled once a month to get together and hike in various locations around the Bay area as a Pack. With the social distancing concerns, our Outdoor Activities Chair has organized the monthly hike and given directions for a specific tree or rock to take a picture in front of or the coordinates for the Pack Rock to find and take a photo of to show you did the hike and therefor get the patch. This has given the hikes a scavenger hunt quality and families can go individually any time during the month.

Den and Pack meetings have had to be online. These have been met with various levels of success. Sometimes everything goes smoothly, the kids are well behaved, and you get the badge and activity requirements done in a timely manner. Other times you are trying to teach knife safety and whittling to third graders via Zoom ...

As tiers change and vaccinations increase, we see some hope for the scouting program. There are a handful of summer camp programs happening. Once leaders are vaccinated, they can start having in person meetings with up to 12 scouts. There might be light at the end of the tunnel.

Yours in Scouting – Mikele Kearney, Committee Chair, Treasurer, Den Leader Pack 112

Troop 112 – Mid-Fifth Grade through 18 years old (Boys)

Though you cannot spell “Scouting” without “outing”, Troop 112 transitioned to an all-virtual program as best as can be expected. It was an explosive year for our membership as 15 new scouts joined us from multiple packs in the region and we tried everything – Zoom meetings, virtual campouts, online chess competitions, an evening exploring woodworking, and Kahoot online games covering topics like outdoor ethics, camping, cooking, and hiking. Overall, I was very impressed with our scouts. Many of them attended virtual merit badge camps, worked with each other on rank requirements, and attended regional events online events like Winter Awareness Training.

Individually and as a troop, we learned a lot this year and though we are more than ready to dust off our backpacks and get back to the trails and camps, I suspect the confidence the scouts acquired communicating and collaborating online and being advocates for their own advancement will stay with them throughout their scouting lives.

Submitted by – Sean Smith, Scout Master Troop 112

Daytime Fellowship Group

This year the Daytime Fellowship Group has continued with meetings on Zoom. Attendees have enjoyed a monthly bible study with one of the pastors followed by time to chat.

The group sponsored three all-church reads to increase our knowledge of two important issues of our time, racism and climate change. In the summer of 2020, we encouraged people to read *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo and then participate in small groups discussions. For the fall, we tackled the subject of climate change with *Climate Church, Climate World* by Rev. Jim Antal, with support from the Green Team. We were able to arrange a question-and-answer session with the author that was very well attended. The spring of 2021 has us tackling *Stamped from the Beginning* by Ibram X. Kendi, with small group discussions scheduled. We look forward to more opportunities to bring the community together with these types of projects.

Submitted by – Carol Easter

Home Warming/Rapid Rehousing

The Home Warming / Rapid Rehousing program at Niles Discovery Church is the liaison between the church and Abode Services. We work with several other faith-based organizations to provide assistance to people as they are being moved out of homelessness. Abode Services provides us with a list of needs for potential candidates. The needs include household items as well as funds to help meet move-in costs (first/last month rent and security deposit).

We met with Abode Services a couple of times at the beginning of the year, but the COVID-19 pandemic has required us to conduct business via email.

We agreed to support a shared storage space that would cost each member \$20/month. The storage unit is located at Mowry U-Store Storage in Fremont. A check for \$240 was sent to Abode Services to cover the Niles Discovery Church portion of this commitment.

Submitted by – James Thomas

Lap Robe Tying Group

No report submitted.

Monday Morning Bible Study

The Monday Morning Bible Study started as a program at the beginning of the Daytime Fellowship gatherings. It has become a weekly gathering and meets 11:30 a.m.-12:30p.m. The group studies the scripture lesson that will be shared (and usually preached on) six days later in worship. The Study is led by one of our Pastors or our Minister In Training.

Submitted by – Pastor Jeff

Rainbow Ukulele Club

The Rainbow Ukulele Club is a music ministry of Niles Discovery Church. The club is open to all people who desire to learn to play the ukulele. The club performs music for various events, when requested. This includes Niles Discovery Church worship services and the Tri-City Interfaith Council's Thanksgiving Services.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Rainbow Ukulele Club was unable to provide any live music events, training, or meetings in 2020.

However, one of the previously video recorded performances of music written by Jim Thomas and Sandy Thomas was played during the Christian Church of Northern California-Nevada's online annual gathering in September 2020.

Submitted by – James Thomas

Cyber Geezers

This group meets once a month on the Tuesday following the third Wednesday of the month. Currently, all meetings are held on Zoom and start at 1:00 p.m. The group includes seniors of the Greater Niles Village community, members of Niles Discovery Church, and Seniors in Retirement (SIR) members.

This past year's meetings have covered:

- Using "Smart Phones"
- Cutting the Cord – TV service via non-traditional carriers such as Hulu, Sling TV, YouTube TV, and/or AT&T Now
- The Zoom app and how to conduct a Zoom session
- Photo scanning and organizing digital photos
- Mail clients such as MS Outlook, Mozilla Thunderbird, Microsoft Mail and Apple Mail
- Upgrading computer memory and storage including the concept of cloning and Solid-State Drive installation
- Telephone protocols such as 4G and 5G.
- Using the Screenflow app to illustrate when to use right/left mouse buttons
- Spreadsheet creation using Libre Office Calc and Apple Numbers compared to Excel
- A Cyber security presentation with guest speaker Alan Baker

We hope that members/participants will submit questions regarding technology: such as Smart TVs, Wi-Fi, home networks, computer usage, iPhone (smart phone) or iPad (tablet) usage to help direct future meetings. We will be working with Screenflow to allow presentations and how-tos to be recorded for future viewing by both attendees and other members.

Respectfully submitted by – Jerry Sabo

Greater Niles Village

Greater Niles Village is a community of neighbors who share their skills and support to navigate the challenges and opportunities of aging. We provide services to those in need plus educational and social

programs to engage our neighbors - helping everyone avoid isolation and stay engaged with the community.

Board of Directors:

Kathy Steel-Sabo – Chairperson
Doug Avery – Corporate Secretary
Iris Nicholson – Treasurer

Pat Finch – Recording Secretary
Barbara King – Membership Chairperson
Susan Meadows – Newsletter & Eblast Editor

Standing Committees:

Outreach & Publicity
Helping Hands (services)
Finance

Membership & Volunteers
Technology

Types of Services:

Health & Wellness (including Weekly Wellness Calls)
Home Maintenance
In-home Assistance

Meals, Groceries & Supplies Shopping/Courier Services
Pet Care
Transportation.

Social and Service Members – 45

Member and Community Volunteers – 25

Direct Services provided – 190

Communication: Regularly published Greater Niles Villages eNewsletter and special “eBlasts” like the Power Outage eBlast within 4 hours of the PG&E announcement that reached our 345 person email list, and instructions to seniors on completing the 2020 census forms.

Activities: “Ice Cream Social: Sundaes in the Park” with the Roeding’s at the Historic California Nursery Park. “Are you in the Picture?” party at the Niles Essanay Silent Film Museum.

Online activities (due to COVID-19): We began online ‘Gatherings’ once or twice a month with the following topics:

Your favorite comfort food
Maintaining resilience during a pandemic
Beyond sourdough and jigsaw puzzles
Travel experiences

Holiday traditions
Holiday food
Emergency Preparedness

Interest Groups: We already have several groups in place. Members are ready to activate more interest groups when in-person meetings are permitted. Current groups are:

Book Club
Needlework Group
Take Charge of your Tech

Tales of the Town (Niles Folklore)
Walking Group
Culture Club meets monthly via Zoom

We wish to thank Niles Discovery Church for allowing us to hold our Board Meetings, special events and interest group meetings in the Fellowship Hall before the COVID-19 outbreak. We look forward to being able to resume our facility use in the future.

Submitted by – Barbara P. King

Retirement Reinvention Group

The Retirement Reinvention group is open to all retired people seeking to maximize their retirement years through encounters with stimulating ideas and communication with others dealing with retirement. Before the pandemic we met in one of the church rooms, but now we meet bimonthly at 10:00 a.m. on the first and third Thursdays of each month via the Zoom platform. We are posted as an item of common interest in the Niles Neighborhood group. We have grown closer as a group as we have learned about each other. We now have more comfort speaking freely and sharing the details of our experiences, both past and present. In addition, we provide a great platform to share materials and resources of common interest.

The group continues to reinvent its members and itself with challenging themes. Our activities this past year have included:

- Building a list of activities and resources available to us in this area.
- Each person (optionally) took a session to talk about his or her individual journey. We talked about our own family “mythology” and the effect of that in our self-image and world views.
- We have been sharing an aspect of our work or interests. These presentations have included:
 - The story of the COVID-19 virus and how to protect yourself – 2 sessions
 - “Understanding radiation” – 2 sessions
 - Tax preparation and the new laws
 - Effective small group interactions

Respectfully Submitted by – John Zlatnik

Second Saturday Documentary Series

What a year. Although the viewing and discussion format has changed, we have managed to stay true to our mission:

“On the second Saturday of each month, we show a documentary film that shines lights on topics that affect your life -- often in ways you never would have imagined.”

When COVID first hit and the shelter in place orders were put in effect, the future (at least during the pandemic) of the Second Saturday Documentary Series was in question. How were we going to continue sharing the films if we could not be together?

After a brief hiatus, March through May 2020, we were able to create a new system. First, we had links available, viewers could watch on their own time, sometimes during a restricted window, and then join the Zoom on the second Saturday only for the discussion. We have now moved to streaming the films during the Second Saturday Zoom and having the discussion immediately after. It has been determined this is the closest we can currently get to the pre-pandemic format.

Documentaries and their topics from the past year are:

- *Circles* – Restorative Justice
- *Bedlam* – Mental Health
- *The Story of Plastic* – Environment
- *Suppressed: The Right to Vote* – Voter Suppression
- *The Need to Grow!* – Environment/Food
- *Singing our Way to Freedom* – Farmworkers
- *Hungry to Learn* – Hunger/Education
- *The Cave* – Syrian War

Submitted by – Mikele Kearney

Disciples of Christ Delegate Report

As a Niles Discovery Church delegate to The Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada I attended the 166th Annual Gathering via Zoom on Saturday, September 26, 2020. This event had been postponed from April due to COVID-19.

After the Gathering, Introduction/Welcome, Opening Devotion, Greetings, and Staff Reports we had a Business Meeting. The 2021 Budget was passed. Then there was discussion on investigating and selling some of the unused property at The Community of the Great Commission, which is the Region's Church Camp. This motion passed. We voted to extend the Rev. Dr. LaTaunya M. Bynum's call as Regional Minister President until 9/30/23. We then elected a slate of new officers.

Upcoming Zoom workshops were announced, and I attended two. One was on "What's a Christian to do about Climate Change?" (10/9/2020) and other on "The Poor People's Campaign" (10/16/2020).

The meeting concluded with a Worship Service, including Communion, a Benediction by the Rev. Dr. LaTaunya M. Bynum, and adjournment.

Respectfully Submitted – Liz Musgrave

United Church of Christ Delegate Report

Like almost everything else in 2020 the Annual Gathering for the Northern California/Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ went from in person to Zoom. This really changed the dynamics of the meeting. Much of the gathering is about renewing friendships, which is difficult over a screen.

The business was done online with different meetings for the different parts. Those wanted to speak had to be called on instead of walking up to the microphone to speak. When in person, I could get up and go

ask someone a question to help me better understand what was going on. I missed that. It is very helpful for me.

Being the first year, there were some glitches. Here is to another year and experience.

Respectfully Submitted – Valerie Parker

Service of Installation of Officers and Ministry Team Chairs An Affirmation of Ministry

LITANY OF MINISTRY

Leader: Within the whole family of God on earth, the church appears wherever believers in Jesus Christ are gathered (even in cyberspace) in his name, and God graces the church with leaders equipped for its work by gifts of the Holy Spirit. Today we rejoice in the rich blessings of God as represented in the leaders who have been called to Christ's service and who now acknowledge this calling by dedicating themselves to Christ's servant ministry. The Apostle Paul reminds us that there are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them.

People: There are different ways of serving, but the same God is served.

Leader: There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God gives ability to each of us for our particular service.

People: The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all.

Leader: Christ is like a single body, which has many parts.

People: It is still one body even though it is made up of different parts.

Leader: If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it; if one part is praised, all the other parts share in its happiness.

People: All of us are Christ's body, and each one is a part of it.

ACT OF COMMITMENT

Leader: People of Niles Discovery Church, you have just elected Officers and Ministry Team Chairs, the leaders of our church. You did so because they have been called by God, in accordance with the faith and order of this church, to serve among us. They have accepted their call and are with us in witness to their willingness to serve.

Newly elected leaders, my siblings in Christ, it is an honor to be entrusted with the responsibility for particular service in the ministry of the church.

Having prayerfully considered the duties and responsibilities of your ministry, are you prepared to serve with the help of and for the glory of God? If so, please use the "thumbs up" reaction.

Do you promise, relying on God's grace, to exercise your ministry diligently and faithfully, showing forth the love of Christ? If so, please use the "thumbs up" reaction.

Members of this household of faith, you have witnessed the promises of our siblings in Christ who have answered God's call to service. Though we cannot hear each other, let us nonetheless affirm aloud our intention to live in covenant with them.

People: We gather in celebration of the joy that is ours to be partners with you in the service of Jesus Christ. We promise to love you, honor your leadership, and assist you that together we may be a faithful church of Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

Leader: Let us pray.

Loving God, source of all blessings, give these your servants grace and power to fulfill their ministry. Make them faithful to serve, ready to teach, and constant in advancing your gospel. Send your Holy Spirit on them that they may serve among us with honor and faithfulness. Help them to be diligent in their duties that your church may prosper in the mission you place before it. May their example prove worthy for all of us to follow, as we are united in Christ's ministry, to the glory of your name.

All: Amen.

PRONOUNCEMENT

Leader: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the people of Niles Discovery Church, I rejoice to announce that you are installed in your respective positions.

Closing Song: "Welcome (Let's Walk Together)"

*Let's walk together for a while and ask where we begin
to build a world where love can grow and hope can enter in,
to be the hands of healing and to plant the seeds of peace,
Singing welcome, welcome to this place.
You're invited to come and know God's grace.
All are welcome the love of God to share
'cause all of us are welcome here;
All are welcome in this place.*