

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH BENNINGTON, VERMONT

ANNUAL REPORT 2011



183RD ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING HELD JANUARY 22, 2011

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

183rd ANNUAL MEETING

AGENDA

JANUARY 22, 2012

10:45 A.M.

The First Baptist Church of Bennington, VT, will hold its 183rd annual meeting on Sunday, January 22, 2012, beginning at 10:45 AM in Colgate Hall for the following purposes:

A. CORPORATE BODY

1. Ratification of the actions of the Board of Trustees
2. Consideration of and action upon proposed bylaw changes

B. BUSINESS MEETING

1. Approval of the minutes of the Jan. 2011 annual meeting.
2. Presentation of the Financial Report
3. To hear and act upon the report of the Budget Committee.
4. To hear and act upon the report of the Nominating Committee.
5. To transact any other business that may properly come before this meeting.

—Aleta Bryant-Boutin, Church Clerk

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The First Baptist Church of Bennington, Vermont

I. REPORTS OF THE CORPORATION

CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of our Heavenly Father, to associate ourselves with this church in its united effort to promote God's will on earth, we therefore solemnly enter into agreement with one another and with the Lord Jesus Christ.

That we will strive to live a new and holy life, walking together in love as disciples of Jesus who said, "This is my commandment to you, to love one another as I have loved you... by this shall all men know that you are my disciples."

That we will seek to emulate the teachings of the New Testament: laying aside falsehood and speaking the truth. We will be kind one to another that we may live as children of light, standing firm as men and women of mature character and of clear convictions as to everything which is God's will.

That we will sustain this church in its worship, teaching and missionary interests home and abroad by our regular attendance at its services; and will contribute, as God prospers us, to meet various needs of the Kingdom; knowing that this is the only way we can keep the church strong and its work progressive.

That we will aim to maintain private family devotion, create a Christian atmosphere within our homes, encourage cheerfulness, a right appreciation of prayer, and a balance of Christian life.

That we pledge ourselves to maintain individual liberty of conscience to strive with all Christ's followers in a courageous effort to bring our social relations into harmony with all society and government, to promote peace, and a better understanding among mankind.

That should we move from this community we will as soon as possible unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

MINUTES OF THE 182ND ANNUAL MEETING

The 182nd Annual Meeting was called to order on Sunday, January 30, 2011, at 10:45AM by moderator Wayne Kachmar. A quorum was present.

In his opening remarks, Wayne Kachmar noted that First Baptist has moved from being a church trying to keep up with just maintaining itself to a "running" church: actively engaged in our ministry and mission. Now it is time to review the congregation's governance practices to reflect the current day and moving away from a leadership model that requires long time commitments from many people to cover boards and committees as described in the current bylaws. For example, a task force could be appointed to handle short-term needs (i.e. Religious Education appoints a group to oversee VBS made of persons who might not ordinarily have the time for a year-round or multi-year commitment.) Wayne noted that the congregation's welcoming of new members and the success of changing how pledge cards and annual budgeting processes are conducted have had good success.

The 2010 annual meeting minutes were reviewed. Florence "Budsie" Smith made a motion to accept minutes as read and was seconded by Allyn Lindsey. Motion carried.

In the financial report, a budget line item (p. 20, parsonage repair-\$1970.24) was noted as a typographical error, repeated twice inadvertently in the financial forecasts for 2011.

The moderator reported that the Treasurer position was still vacant for 2011; however, the vacancy has allowed the Trustees and Cabinet to consider improvements to financial management. An outside accountant, Michelle Marchetti, is working with the church leadership and the minister to enhance the church's relatively recent shift to electronic bookkeeping. Routine financial work is now being completed by the Office Manager, with the Moderator and Trustees chairperson serving as signatories and oversight of the routine bill payment and payroll processing.

In 2011, the Moderator and the Minister noted that the cash flow and bill payment of the congregation's finances has become more systematized. Endowment funds continue to perform well with the American Funds, despite the down stock market.

In his report, Coordinating Minister, the Rev. Jerrod Huguenot spoke about First Baptist's relative success during this past year and the ongoing recession. In the past five years, the congregation has increased its income with the addition of cost sharing partners, a vital set of partnerships for our missional purposes while also addressing income shortfalls for operating expenses not covered by congregant donations and other traditional forms of revenue. The church continues to receive excellent public recognition for the value we add to Bennington and efforts to meet the basic human needs of our community. As we move forward, we are in a much better position compared to five years ago. Jerrod reminded the congregation that he welcomes comments and concerns from anyone, as he keeps an open door policy to anyone wanting to discuss the management of the church. He thanked the congregation for everyone's hard work.

A motion to accept the budget report was made by Lisa Flynn and was seconded by Ralph Rockwell. The motion was carried.

The Nominating Committee presented their report. Due to the anticipated changes in governance and board/committee structures in 2012, the Cabinet recommended that officers and committee members in need of one-year appointments be elected as described in the nominating report, though no persons would be elected to boards in 2011. The present members of the four boards will oversee administrative needs for this year with new persons elected to boards in 2012 when bylaw revisions were completed. The Moderator cited the Treasurer's position as one such governance position in need of review.

A motion to proceed with the Nominating Committee's recommendations was made by Sandy Redding and seconded by Allyn Lindsey. The motion was carried.

A motion to elect board officers as stated by the Nominating Committee report was made by Frances Hunt and seconded by Sandy Redding. The motion was carried.

A motion to elect Marion Riddle and Josie Shepard to the Tellers Committee was made by Byron Spafford and seconded by Grace Becker-Wilson. The motion was carried.

A motion to adjourn was made by Grace Becker-Wilson and seconded by Sandy Redding. The motion was carried and the meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon. A potluck dinner followed.

Respectfully submitted--Aleta Bryant-Boutin, Church Clerk

REPORT OF MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

January 1, 2011

Resident Members	187
Non-Resident Members	<u>74</u>
TOTAL	261

Welcoming New Members:

Baptism: Christopher Redding	1
By Letter or Christian Experience:	0

TOTAL **1**

December 31, 2011

Resident Members	186
Non-Resident Members	<u>73</u>
TOTAL	259

Membership Transitions:

Transfer of Letter (inactive member):	-1
Lyta McCoy	
Death (active members):	-2
Anna Caracciola	
Carl Santo	

TOTAL **-3**

SLATE OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

The Cabinet served as the Nominating Committee for the 2012 slate preparation. The officers and new board members requiring election are noted with an asterisk (*) for vote at the 2012 annual meeting.

Nominating Committee Report

for vote at 2012 Annual Meeting

OFFICERS

		<u>for year 2012</u>	<u>Term Limit</u>
Moderator	*	Wayne Kachmar	1 year term
Clerk	*	Aleta Bryant-Boutin	1 year term
Treasurer	*	Robert Wilson	1 year term
Financial Secretary	*	Byron Spafford	1 year term

BOARDS:

Church Life:		Lisa Flynn	term ending Jan 2013
		Sandy Williams	term ending Jan 2013
		Kerry Shermer	term ending Jan 2013
		Fran Hunt	term ending Jan 2013
	*	Jean Hoag	term Jan 2012-Jan 2015
Trustees:		Byron Spafford	term ending Jan 2013
		Grace Becker Wilson	term ending Jan 2013
	*	Sandy Redding	term Jan 2012-Jan 2015
	*	Ralph Rockwell	term Jan 2012-Jan 2015

Note: Standing committees and taskforces will be appointed by the Cabinet or Boards as needed.

II. REPORT OF THE COORDINATING MINISTER

As we completed 2011, I breathed a sigh of relief.

In a time of difficult economic conditions, First Baptist has made it through yet another year of challenge. We completed the year with all bills paid and our facilities in relatively good repair and well purposed for our ministry and mission. Indeed, our investment in community partnerships continuing to be a source of vitality for our congregation. This good progress comes during challenging times and is most worthy of our celebration.

Such relief comes after the passage of year where sometimes it felt otherwise, trying to puzzle out situations anticipated and unanticipated alike. The relief at year's end was accompanied also by a realization of the long hours at hand given by the many people who serve as First Baptist's active members. Together, we got to the end of the year through our determination to move forward.

This past year, I have continued to be more involved in the administrative life of the congregation, overseeing the transition to a new configuration of office administrative staff. Sorting out the financial and property management of the congregation has been a substantial part of my duties of the last two years, and I am pleased to note that we have made excellent progress. The financial systems of the church are working well, thanks to the assistance of Michelle Marchetti, our outside consultant, and the skill and due diligence of Melissa Hepler, our Office Manager. My thanks to each of the church staff members for their continued efforts to serve the needs of the congregation, programs, and facilities.

In 2011, I continued my community work, serving as the Secretary of the Better Bennington Corporation and as the clergy representative with the Greater Bennington Area Interfaith Council. In 2012, I will serve as the Co-Convener of the Interfaith Council.

Of particular success was my joint effort with GBICS director Sue Andrews to procure a \$10,000 development grant from the denomination's One Great Hour of Sharing fund. Such generosity from outside funders demonstrates an appreciation for the collaborative model we have developed as a congregation involved in missional work. Similarly, the building's technology upgrades, especially in Colgate Hall, are the benefit of a grant received from the Vermont Community Foundation, likewise affirming their trust that First Baptist can be a gathering place for persons to receive and organizations to deliver needed community services.

During the challenging days and weeks after Hurricane Irene's flood waters, First Baptist was able to be part of the grassroots efforts to support our community. The congregation became a temporary donation center for food and clothing. Our office phones kept ringing as persons from the community looked for answers to questions or wanted ways to connect with volunteer efforts. I was involved with encouraging our local faith communities to get involved, keeping up information flow between the Rev. Robin Greene, a local minister involved in disaster relief coordination (particularly as Wilmington's needs became known) and Sue Andrews of GBICS. When an extraordinary crisis arose, First Baptist was able to work collaboratively with the various efforts in our community to help those affected by Irene's many challenges. The generosity and volunteerism of our congregation and staff during this time was made possible thanks to our changing understanding of what it means to be "church".

In my professional development work, I note the opportunity just after Easter to attend a preaching retreat with the renowned homiletics professor the Rev. Dr. Thomas G. Long at the Stony Point Center in Stony Point, NY. I note with gratitude the funding for professional development offered by grants from the ABCVNH Silver Bean Clergy Continuing Education Fund and the New Life 2010 Continuing Education funds provided by the American Baptist Home Mission Societies. The underwriting is an extra gift to First Baptist from our denomination and another way our mission dollars "return" in services to First Baptist, as I did not rely solely on personal or First Baptist related funds for my professional development needs. I appreciate First Baptist's underwriting of annual dues for the Academy of Parish Clergy and the American Baptist Minister's Council, two professional organizations that provide me with ministerial resources and collegiality. With the Minister's Council, I note a grant received by Rabbi Howard Cohen and I to facilitate interfaith clergy collegiality groups, presently taking place via monthly telephone conversations. We have ten ministers and rabbis involved in this group, discussing the rigors and challenges of religious professionals as well as our mutual interests in fostering interfaith dialogue and collegiality.

I continue to provide book reviews for the clergy journal *Sharing the Practice*, which serves as part of my efforts to keep current with new books in ministry as well as contemporary theology and biblical studies. I contributed occasional columns for the *Bennington Banner's* "Speaking of Religion" along with other Interfaith Council members. I also note with delight the publication of one of my sermons in *The Journal for Preachers*, the Lent 2011 issue.

In 2011, our missional partnerships have continued to keep our ministry and mission lively. It is my hope that we will experience the same in 2012. As always, I appreciate your support and affirmation. I encourage and welcome your feedback about my service to First Baptist. Thank you again for this past year's efforts to keep First Baptist at the forefront of its mission to be "a place for healing, community involvement, and spiritual grounding."

Grace and peace, The Rev. Jerrod H. Huguenot, Coordinating Minister

III. REPORTS OF THE CABINET AND OFFICERS

REPORT OF THE CABINET

During this transitional year for our governance, the Cabinet was a smaller number due to the Christian Education and Mission boards declining to elect chairpersons. Lisa Flynn co-chaired the boards of Christian Education and Deacons. The board of mission did not have a chairperson elected. (Rev. Huguenot facilitated the monthly mission board meetings, though only the elected mission board members were involved in matters regarding a formal vote.)

The Cabinet received updates through the year regarding the governance revision process. In December, the Cabinet convened to review a first draft of suggested bylaws and the 2012 budget, as prepared by the board of Trustees. The Cabinet made minor revisions to the suggested bylaw revisions and approved these revisions to be forwarded to legal counsel and the congregation for review.

Respectfully submitted by Aleta Bryant-Boutin, Church Clerk

REPORT OF THE MODERATOR

This past year we have seen many of the changes we made over the last few years start to pay off. The physical plant is in reasonable condition and does not dominate our discussions or planning time any longer. Our cost share space is full with active charities we support and they are needed in our community.

We have started to do some work on our foundations, both physical and spiritual. Physically we are looking at our roofs, heating system, structures and windows. We have started activities to improve the condition and efficiency of the sanctuary, the Nichols building, the parsonage and our other properties. We finally are able to look at potential difficulties and address them prior to their becoming urgent problems requiring immediate attention. Spiritually the missional church pathway we are now on is shoring up our foundations of faith by providing us the opportunity to serve others. Additionally, we have updated our bylaws to relate to 21st century lifestyles which are growing more hectic and less predictable as we continue to manage being connected and expected to cram more activity into the same amount of time.

In addition, the activities which go on in our buildings, both within the congregation and in the wider world of other charitable organizations housed here are blessings we did not expect. We have truly started to blend the lines between traditional church and missional church activities as we have embraced our new identity. We count our stewardship blessings in so many actions; Dresses for Africa, local cooking classes, school supplies and warm socks and gloves for local elementary school, active participation in the interfaith council, mindful and directed donations to local charities and the national and regional Baptist organizations. God has blessed us with a well functioning Pastorate and a caring, engaged and active congregation.

Our cost share partners are making a difference in our community! When discussions about basic

human needs are brought up in town, First Baptist is often mentioned as the source of ideas, space and willingness to help work on these issues. We have taken the biblical directive to be good stewards of all that we are given and translated it into action. Our facilities now are working 7 days a week in a sustainable model.

As we move into 2012 with proposed new bylaws and much of the basic structure of the church on solid footing, (as well as the sanctuary), we can now start to build on the foundation the past few years of change has brought. Future opportunities include a strategic plan for the church, building leadership continuity (training, focus, etc.)

As we move forward there are many storm clouds on the horizon: more government oversight and reporting requirements, increased need both of local good souls and a need for good souls in the wider world, as well as the ominous increase in the costs of heating oil, electricity, and gas.

Looking toward the new year we will still be feeling our way on this journey we have started. There may be some difficult times and some blessings along the way, as we try to follow on the path God has set before us. We pray for his continued guidance as we face the challenges ahead.

Respectfully submitted by Wayne Kachmar, Moderator.

REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

For 2011, I received 35 pledge cards with 5 other households that will be giving on a non-pledge basis. For 2012, I have received 36 pledge cards with an estimated 5 other households that will be giving on a non-pledge basis. The 2012 pledges are cumulatively \$43,708.00 for local expenses, \$9,864.00 for benevolence (mission), and \$5,611.92 (building fund). The income received for 2011 and the income anticipated for 2012 appear as part of the budget listed at the back of this document.

The totals for 2011 pledge/non-pledge giving included:

Local	pledges: \$45,448.00;	non-pledges: \$ 2,647.00;	loose offerings: \$1,909.33
Benevolence	pledges: \$ 9,559.00;	non-pledges: \$ 360.00	
Building Fund	pledges: \$ 4,890.00;	non-pledges: \$ 457.00	

Please contact me if you have questions about your giving. All records related to congregant giving are confidential and handled only by the financial secretary.

Respectfully submitted by Byron Spafford, Financial Secretary

REPORT OF THE HISTORIAN

The archives received filing work of important documents by Melissa Hepler, Office Manager. The photographs were placed into archival boxes by Lisa Mandela. We appreciate the care given to our archives by staff and volunteers.

Respectfully submitted by Florence Smith, Historian

IV. REPORTS OF THE BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DEACONS

The Deacons, as usual, have had a very busy year. The Board of Deacons has prepared Communion for worship services each month as well as recording of monthly contributions to the Deacon's Fund. A report of the Deacon's Fund follows.

Much hospitality has been provided this year by the Deacons, such as hosting many events such as, hosting a light pot luck following communion in March; Maundy Thursday pot luck; some funeral receptions; Easter Brunch; pot luck following the Children's Christmas Program; and Christmas Eve Reception held in the lounge following services. We thank everyone who has donated time when needed for help with cleaning, pot lucks and decorating.

The Deacons have also been primarily responsible for seasonal decorating, many coffee hour refreshments, and the preparation of Thanksgiving Basket for congregational households in need. Lisa Flynn and Sandy Williams did shopping for the baskets and there was much support from congregants with monetary donations as well as foods for these baskets.

The board members assist with visitation to members at home when possible. Many congregants do this on a regular basis. We thank them as we are so appreciative of their help. Betty Cross makes certain that birthday cards and other appropriate cards go out to our congregants.

Respectfully submitted by Sandy Williams, secretary

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

During 2011, the Board of Christian Education met with the Board of Deacons in anticipation of bylaw changes in 2012. The two boards reviewed ways that their respective historic tasks and functions as boards could be blended together in the proposed "Church Life" board in the future. In many ways, the two boards have a lot in common, as the boards oversee programming that help congregants grow in faith, worship, knowledge, and service. The two boards were able to plan events and look at the "big picture" of congregational life and its needs thanks to being able to be in the same room at the same time. We are hopeful in the coming year that the Church Life board will help enhance our individual and congregation-wide efforts to be better disciples of Jesus.

As part of the joint board meetings in 2011, the work of Christian Education continued with the new approach to religious education begun in 2010 (i.e. shorter schedules for Sunday School classes in the Fall and the Spring and short-term series of adult forums). We thank Alycia Post and Rhonda Harmon for ensuring our younger and middle school classes this year. We thank Rev. Hugenot and Rabbi Howard Cohen for their contributions to the 2011 adult forums held in the winter and fall. Our board appreciates the work of the church staff who serve in related areas: Alycia Post (CE Director), Rev. Hugenot, and Michelle Fournier (playroom supervisor). We note our gratitude as well for Lisa Flynn serving as an alternate playroom supervisor when needed.

During the summer of 2011, we hosted another Vacation Bible School during two weekends in July. Our curriculum was created internally by our own congregants and staff, and we found it to be another delightful VBS. Also, we have learned that using our own resources and creativity may take a little more planning at the initial planning stage, however, we are able to align the program to fit our needs.

As always, the Board of Christian Education acknowledges the contributions of our congregant volunteers. You help enrich our religious programming through your willingness to volunteer and offer your talents. We also acknowledge the ongoing support of the Mabel Harris Fund and the Mary Edgerton Trust, gifts given for the congregation's religious education programming. Such generosity by members now deceased allows these two women's love and delight in our church's children and First Baptist's future to be an ongoing legacy.

Respectfully submitted by Kerry Shermer, Alycia Post, and the Rev. Jerrod H. Hugenot

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

This year the Trustees have focused on trying to save money, while paying a huge increase in fuel and as always trying to keep the building intact. The changes to and the hard work entailed by our day-to-day financial management needs have paid off this year. Our cash flow and budget projections are becoming quite helpful in anticipating financial shortfalls and tightening expense control. We thank Rev. Hugnot, Melissa Hepler, and our consultant Michelle Marchetti for their help in the many details behind the scenes.

As you can see by the new front lawn sign out front we are known for sharing our space with other organization compatible with our mission. We are continuing to open space for this cost-sharing project, to help others and to help with the costs of the upkeep of the building. At the present we have two rooms available for nonprofit organizations with similar missions. Help spread the word that we are seeking nonprofit organizations that help with basic human needs issues. We appreciate the generosity of the Barber family, whose memorial funds helped pay for our new lawn sign designed and installed by The Flying Cow Sign Company (Manchester, Vermont). The new front lawn sign project also reflects our policy of seeking out bids from contractors to obtain the best costs for major projects.

The winter of 2011 was costly in plowing and caused some minor roof damage. A heavy winter comes with bigger clean-up bills. The \$2500 spent on "winter grounds keeping" and related roof repair was an unanticipated facilities cost early in our fiscal year. Likewise, our fuel use during the 2010-11 heating season was higher, necessitating a summer-time purchase of 500 gallons above our projected contract of 8000 gallons to meet the needs of the last weeks of summer and the beginning of a new heating contract that began in August 2011 (with a higher cost per gallon than 2010-11). Fuel costs continue to be our most significant facilities cost. In 2007, we were paying around \$1.80/gallon. For 2011-2012, we are paying \$3.30/gallon. In the fall, we noticed part of the building near the first floor restrooms were shifting. Through Wayne Kachmar, we have sought the consultation of James Secor, a local certified structural engineer. Mr. Secor noted that the problems have to do with the way the "old" and "new" buildings were connected back in the mid-1960s. While we thought it was a "basement" issue, there are also issues with how the roof was constructed also complicating matters. (Likely last winter's heavy snows made the roof issues more visible.)

We are working with Mr. Secor to address these structural problems in 2012. Also related to the project was the discovery of asbestos materials in the cellar, which had to be removed by a certified removal service. The costs were absorbed by the Building Fund.

We had weed trees removed at the Parsonage due to safety concerns. Likewise, the tree at the corner of Valentine and Main was removed. We are grateful to the Career Development Center's landscaping students for providing needed bush removal and grounds-keeping around the church facilities.

During this year, we conducted a number of energy efficiency inquiries and projects. Thanks to Efficiency Vermont rebates, we were able to complete the conversion of all fluorescent lighting to modern, energy efficient bulbs and ballasts. We are already seeing an appreciable savings per month with our utility bills. In December, we had a consultation with Bill Christian, a local engineer, about his thoughts on reducing our dependency (and expenses) with heating fuel. Mr. Christian is completing a set of recommendations for the Trustee board to review in early 2012. We also authorized some repairs to the #2 boiler (controlling the "newer" part of the building), as some of our boiler system is still using original parts, which are well past their "warranty". Additional savings may be found in looking at the various places around the church where heat loss is occurring due to a lack of proper insulation.

The Colgate Hall technology conversion made progress through the year. Thanks to a grant from the Vermont Community Foundation, we have purchased a new projection screen (replacing the original 1965 one that had cracked and torn) and installed the necessary wiring to create Wi-Fi access for the fellowship hall area. A media cabinet will be appearing in the early part of 2012 to secure and house the controls for audio/video/networking needs for events and winter worship. We also received a technology donation of several computers and tech components that will be brought into service in the coming months. We will be offering the technological amenities as part of our cost-sharing projects with community groups looking for what has become standard issue in today's business and non-profit world. Colgate Hall is becoming "a smart room", or a well wired, connected and interactive space for community events and gatherings.

We welcome any help and or input that we can get. Our church is an old building and in need of constant repairs. Our sexton was able to do a lot of the repairs for us, but with the increase in responsibilities

he is busy with the daily routine. If you or anyone you know is looking for volunteer jobs, please let us know. There is still a lot of work to do: ongoing budget reviews, capital improvement decisions, grant writing, governance and compliance issues just to name a few. As you can see, we are blazing new territory in most areas and we have no instruction book for telling us how to do it. In fact, we (that is each and every one of us) are participating in “writing” the book for a new, creative way for the “thinking” missional church.

Respectfully submitted by Grace Becker-Wilson, Chair

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF MISSION

The Mission Board is pleased to report that 2011 was a great year for congregational support and missional engagement. Despite economic challenges locally and globally, our congregation has given faithfully through our time, talents, and tithes to the needs of persons in need, near and far. We are pleased to report another year of meeting our basic mission pledge goals through our weekly pledge and non-pledge giving to mission. Our faithful giving to mission at First Baptist enables local and denominational efforts to live out the gospel through the sharing of the Word and varied efforts to be “the hands and feet of Christ” in the world!

The Board of Mission affirms the global and local emphases of our congregation’s mission. We supported One Great Hour of Sharing very faithfully when called upon to send funds to support Japanese earthquake needs as well as the post-Hurricane Irene challenges arising when Vermont encountered historic flooding as well as many local needs in our community. We are particularly glad to note the creative and collaborative spirit within our congregation as we worked together to respond to “Irene relief” needs at the time of the flooding and in the weeks thereafter. Through our denominational partnerships, we were able to provide support to our sister congregation in Wilmington. Through our interfaith partnerships, First Baptist joined with other area faith communities, especially through the Food & Fuel Fund, to provide assistance. We also note the helpfulness of Church World Service’s New England office, as CWS provided supplies and blankets for those affected by the storm, reminding us of how our contributions to such programs can come “full circle” when we become the neighbor in need.

The congregation responded faithfully to our annual support of various ABC/USA offerings in support of denominational mission: Retired Ministers & Missionaries Offering, America for Christ, One Great Hour of Sharing, the World Mission Offering, and the ABCVNH regional offering. Additional offerings in support of the Gove Hill Retreat, CWS blankets and health kits were also received.

In our missional project work, Martha McCann and Aleta Bryant-Boutin engaged a number of congregational and community volunteers in creating dresses as part of the “Lil Dresses for Africa” project. Thanks to this group, over seventy dresses were sewn over a period of weeks during the winter for distribution via a Christian service organization. The project’s success appeared as a front-page news story in the *Bennington Banner*. Later in the year, Alycia Post led a small group effort to teach basic cooking skills for families with low income and/or food assistance benefits. This group was funded by the Missional Church Initiatives Fund, which is underwritten by annual mission pledge donations. Participants were referred by local service agencies, and Alycia reports good success with this class.

During the summer of 2011, we received word of a \$10,000 grant from the Domestic Development Fund of our denomination’s One Great Hour of Sharing fund. The grant was written by our minister and Sue Andrews, director of the Greater Bennington Interfaith Community Services, Inc., with the hope that any funds received would be helpful to the expansion needs of The Kitchen Cupboard. This food distribution center opened in April 2011, and the grant assisted GBICS in purchasing commercial refrigeration units and upgrading the center’s front entrance’s accessibility to all persons. The grant received front page coverage in local media, celebrating the partnerships of First Baptist and our local interfaith community service projects. Over 1000 households have registered for food assistance with GBICS’ food distribution program since April 2011, so we believe this grant was a well-timed gift to accelerate The Kitchen Cupboard’s start-up needs to meet the demand. We are grateful to the American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) for their consideration of our grant application and the support of the Rev. Dr. Louis George, interim Regional Executive Minister, in his kind recommendation of this grant.

As we look ahead to 2012, we hope to create additional short-term collaborative missional

projects. Our Missional Church Initiatives Fund is available to provide “seed money” for such endeavors. We encourage congregants interested in a project meeting “basic human needs” type projects such as “Cooking Skills 101” or “Lil Dresses for Africa” to get involved in local and global service projects.

We appreciate the various ways First Baptist congregants support mission. We celebrate our congregation’s long-time love of mission as well as the way the missional church model has helped us see “mission” as a driving force behind our congregation’s renewal. We have discovered mission fields just outside the doorstep of our church and local partnerships that have allowed our congregation to engage in community issues far more effectively.

Thank you for your support of First Baptist’s mission!

Respectfully submitted by Rev. Jerrod Huguenot and Darcy Oakes, secretary

REPORT OF THE PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

For new members and others who might not know the Pastoral Relations Committee works with both the pastor and the congregation to manage the pastor/congregation relationship, evaluate the minister’s work keep confidentiality with the minister in attending to complex issues and resolve any issues that might arise. The committee members are Grace Becker Wilson and Carolyn Peckham.

Again this year the committee members have had many health challenges, and the availability of the committee has been very limited. We want to remind everyone to feel they can contact any one of us if a need exists. We can address any issue via telephone conference, if need be. During the course of the year, Susan Kachmar resigned from the committee due to time commitments and availability. We reluctantly accepted her resignation and thank Susan for her years of service.

Over the past year, Jerrod has managed to juggle his role as a minister and all of its challenges, as well as the oversight of our financial management needs. Along with staff and consultant assistance, he has managed to bring the finances up to date and has put them in a form that is easy to track. That has been a big challenge which would normally be done by a treasurer. He is also involved in managing the cost share tenants and the issues that arise there. Let us not forget the many challenges of this old building and its frequent needs.

He represents First Baptist Church In the community and is thought of highly. There is so much more I will leave that to his report. We would like to support him in letting go of some of these responsibilities, as we get more help from the congregation. We are ever grateful for Jerrod’s patience with our limited availability.

Submitted by Grace Becker-Wilson, Chair, Pastoral Relations Committee

REPORT OF THE ALTAR GUILD

The Altar Guild attempted to give our church a special look and to tie the altar decorations with the sermon material. On special days, such as Easter and Christmas, many hands outside our committee helped to provide the altar the beauty of the season. We thank all who gave money or flowers in memory and in honor of the special people in their lives. We encourage members to do the same in the coming year. My thanks to Sandy Williams, Aleta Bryant-Boutin, Rhonda Harmon, Cindy Marsh, and Carolyn Peckham.

Respectfully submitted by Allyn Lindsey, chair

REPORT OF THE AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN OF BENNINGTON

In cooperation with the Board of Missions, we as American Baptist Women continued throughout the year to support the various projects of our local church as well as those of the ABCVNH Region and ABWM’s national work, reaching out to help people worldwide. Our two annual tag sales provided funds which were used toward supporting the wonderful ministries of both regional and local Student Scholarship recipients and the White Cross requests to two areas of Overseas Mission work.

We extend thanks in appreciation to all who gave time and effort to the tag sales and to those who donated gifts of cash or purchased items to fill the two boxes sent to Valley Christian Center on Phoenix, AZ. As we give out of love, we receive a blessing of knowing that even a little can mean so much to someone somewhere.

Respectfully submitted by Marion Riddle

REPORT OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH'S MEMORIAL FUND

In 1976 our Board of Trustees set up a Memorial Trust Fund. As memorial contributions, either undesignated or specifically designated to this Fund, are received they are placed in a special savings account, with other investment mediums used when sums warrant. From time to time these funds are used to make special purchases, which will benefit the church. In 2002, our Board of Trustees decided that the contributions for specific funds would be listed under that designated fund.

2011 Financial Report of FBC Memorial Fund

Balance 12/31/2011

\$1,950.84

The following list recalls the names those honored by friends and loved ones with a financial memorial gift to be placed in the First Baptist Church Memorial Fund.

Martha Anderson (03/11/?), Julia Behan (05/17/1985), Leslie Baker (07/05/1993), Josephine B. Ballou (11/20/1991), Jean L. Baudistel (11/26/1989), Barbara G. Benner (03/16/1981), Barbara R. Bennett (11/26/1995), Leonard J. Black (01/18/1987), Conrad Blodgett, Harold A. Blodgett (06/01/31), Eupha Bonham (03/01/1996), Lucy Boutin (01/14/2009), Albert G. Brown (11/29/1988), John Brown, Belle Burgess (01/16/1984), Clyde Burgess (04/15/1983), Eugene C. Burt (03/13/1985), Ronald Bushee (12/17/2005), Sarah Chase (01/12/1976), James A. Coulter (02/16/1962), Mary C. Coulter (03/03/1991), Genevieve B. Dawson (09/21/1996), Raymond W. Dickinson (01/26/1968), Minnette B. Dill (10/13/1976), LeGrand Dow (01/26/1994), Jean S. Durant (11/26/1995), A. Sidney Edson (10/22/1970), Ara O. Edson (1905), Bessie M. Edson (1919), Bettie W. Edson (01/06/1947), Dorothy Edson Madison (April 25, 2011); Frank A. Edson (03/02/1999), Guy O. Edson (1958), Katharine L. Edson (10/14/1987), Maud A. Edson (04/06/1988), Edward N. Emmons (03/21/1983), Helen W. Emmons (05/02/1988), Mabel Fitzgerald (12/23/1979), Mary Fliteroft (12/26/1981), Mrs. Carl (Marie) Gaines (12/28/1992), Christopher Gaines (04/30/2007), Osborne "Doc" Gaines (12/11/2010), Richard Gibbs (08/16/1981), Paul D. Greenawalt (10/05/1988), Peter Groenewegen (06/10/1998),

Grace Hall (01/05/2005), Lee F. Hammond (08/22/1985), Harry Harmon (07/18/1977), Warren E. Harmon (08/12/1991), Gaylord Harrington (04/30/2003), Robert Harrington (10/31/1981), Mabel L. Harris (08/09/1991), Eleanor Harwood (07/08/1983), George Hathaway, Jr. (01/09/1977), Marjorie P. Hayes (09/18/1994), Elizabeth Hescocock (04/09/1997), Mildred Jepson (12/02/2004), Harold A. Kennedy (04/21/1988), Howard Lackey (10/10/2007), Virginia V. LaFlamme (12/15/1995), Ralph C. Lindsey (12/19/1989), Ralph H. Lindsey (02/05/1985), Marie H. Loomis (02/18/1984), Jessie Maclay (01/23/1974), Dorothy A. Marechal (09/07/1985), Maud McNaney (04/03/1976), Louise McSherry (12/13/2010), Walter McSherry (01/25/1984), Florence Mears (01/16/1982), Mary Jane Mattison, Glenn Miller (1994), Herbert Miller (11/29/1990), Frank Millington (11/20/1993), Florence C. Moore (01/04/1977), Ada L. Morgan (10/18/1975), Margaret Ogilvie (08/08/1979), Leon A. Orr (10/05/1975), Ada Ostrander (11/17/1979), Robert S. Outwater Sr. (04/19/2001), Hilda R. Parker (10/08/1984), Etta Percey (12/07/1982), Mary McGrossan Percey (08/06/2005), Koby James Peterson (03/20/1994), Paul Prescott (09/20/1977), Joseph Prue,

Edna T. Rice (10/14/1984), Ethel Richmond (04/04/1983), John P. Riddle, Sr. (08/28/2000), Lena L. Rose (07/17/1987), Carl Santo (02/17/2011); Maude K. Scott (03/14/1989), Ruth B. Shea (10/27/1997), Jeffrey E. Shepard (05/09/1989), Althea Spafford (01/03/1992), Mary Spicer (05/24/1977), Mabel Stewart (08/03/1984), Elaine Sumner (08/31/1993), Lawrence Sumner (01/16/1994), Robert W. Thomas (08/30/1994), Arthur W. Tinkham (10/21/1974), Anna Towslee (12/09/1989), Marian W. Barber Vince (06/04/2000), James Vince (12/2005), Everett L. Vose (05/28/1984), Harriette Walbridge (01/21/1976), Jeanne Walbridge (09/03/1977), Lucinda Warner (06/24/1975), Kay Watson (12/02/2009), Ralph Watson (09/02/2006), Betty Werner (05/22/1980), Jessie Harris Wheeler (05/06/1979), Alice White (01/28/1978), Minnie C. Woods (03/16/1985), Kathryn Young (04/24/1984)

SOUND SYSTEM: James and Mary Coulter, Leon and Avis Peckham, Lucy Quinby

ORGAN FUND: Hope Colgate, Jerome Sloan

ORGAN MUSIC FUND: Mescal Winn

TOWER FUND – 2001 – 2002: The members of the First Baptist Church, American Baptist Women, Eupha Bonham, James Coulter, Mary Coulter, Elizabeth Escala, John Finlayson, Paul Greenawalt, Harry Harmon, Michael Harmon, Rose Harmon, Eleanor Harwood, Harold Hilliard, The Jepson Family, Anna Kennedy, Chester Mallory, The Paddock Family, Harry Percy, Koby Peterson, Lucy Quinby, John Riddle, Sr., Kimberly Watson Shand, Blanche Strohmaier, The Summer Family, Florence C. Towsley, Betty Werner

V. REPORT OF FINANCES AND ACCOUNTS FOR FISCAL YEARS 2011 AND 2012

REPORT OF THE 2011 AND 2012 BENEVOLENCE BUDGETS

The Board of Mission affirms yet another strong year for mission giving. Thanks to the pledges and donations of non-pledge giving households, we were able to exceed our pledge goals by \$153. After distributing to the 2011 mission pledge budget recipient organizations, the Board directed the \$153 overage to be deposited in the church's Missional Church Initiatives Fund, to add additional monies for our own homegrown missional work.

The Board notes the additional giving above and beyond the pledge benevolence budget to support various denominational and ecumenical offerings collected through the years. The Board also notes further funds given by individual donors for various organizations due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e. money for Japanese earthquake relief or Hurricane Irene relief) as well as the wonderful OGHS grant for The Kitchen Cupboard (\$10,000), received by the church and disbursed to the Greater Bennington Interfaith Community Services, Inc. (GBICS).

2011 Benevolence Budget

	Budget for Year	Recv'd 12/31/11	
<u>INCOME RECVD</u>			
Pledges for 2011	\$ 9,752.00	\$ 9,599.00	<i>received in hand by 9/30/2011</i>
Non-pledges	\$ -	\$ 306.00	<i>as given</i>
Other offerings (as given, not pledged/ anticipated)	\$ -	\$13,573.14	<i>(incl. \$10K OGHS-GBICS grant)</i>
TOTAL OF FUNDS GIVEN (pledge/non- pledge/other)		\$ 23,478.14	

FUNDS DISTRIBUTED

<i>ANNUAL PLEDGE MISSION GIVING</i>	Allocation of Total Pledges	Distributed funds to: (12/31/2011)	
United Mission Basics	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	<i>basic support for ABC/USA (65% ABCVNH;</i>
ANTS (Glenn Payne Scholarship)	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	<i>support for scholarship aid to ANTS students</i>
Family Time	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	<i>support for local non-profit organization</i>
Coalition for the Homeless	\$ 850.00	\$ 850.00	<i>support for local non-profit organization</i>
Habitat for Humanity	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	<i>support for local non-profit organization</i>
Food & Fuel Fund	\$ 1,550.00	\$ 1,550.00	<i>support for local non-profit organization</i>
Missional Church Initiatives	\$ 852.00	\$ 1,005.00	<i>support for FBC missional projects</i>
Warm the Children	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	<i>support for local non-profit organization</i>
subtotal	\$ 9,752.00	\$ 9,905.00	<i>Overage donations given to Missional Church</i>

<i>AS GIVEN</i>	GOAL	Actual <i>When the Offering is Promoted</i>
America for Christ - goal	\$ 500.00	\$250.00 <i>March</i>
World Mission Offering - goal	\$ 500.00	\$343.33 <i>October</i>
One Great Hr of Sharing - goal	\$ 500.00	\$640.24 <i>June</i>
RMMO - goal	\$ 500.00	\$423.25 <i>January</i>
UM - ABW Love Gift	\$ -	\$131.32 <i>as given</i>
V/NH Region - goal	\$ -	\$150.00 <i>November</i>
Gove Hill Retreat	\$ 300.00	\$150.00 <i>August</i>
Church World Services blanket fund	\$ -	\$480.00 <i>April/May</i>
Church World Services Health Kits	\$ -	\$0.00 <i>April/May</i>
subtotal	\$ 2,300.00	\$2,568.14

<i>UNANTICIPATED</i>		
OGHS--Japan Earthquake	\$ -	\$155.00
ABCVNH Disaster Fund (post-Irene VT/ NH)		\$200.00
Wilmington Baptist Flood relief (sent via ABCVNH)		\$60.00
Food & Fuel Flood Relief (GBICS)		\$550.00
Irene Flood Relief (sent to GBICS)		\$40.00
OGHS--Onetime Grant for GBICS support		\$10,000.00
subtotal		\$11,005.00

AS GIVEN subtotal (anticipated & unanticipated)	\$ -	\$13,573.14
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For the 2012 budget year, the Board of Mission recommends the main benevolence budget to be based on the Financial Secretary's report showing \$9864.00 for 2012 pledge cards designated for Mission. The Board bases its 2012 recommendations for the split of these funds based on congregant feedback received at the October 2011 mission conversation held as an Adult Forum after worship. Consistent with the past two years, the Board proposes a benevolence budget supportive of denominational mission as well as organizations helping meet basic human needs within our own community.

<u>2012 proposed Mission Budget</u>	<u>Allocation of Total Pledges</u>	<u>% of total pledge</u>	
United Mission Basics	\$4,430.00	44.91%	<i>basic support for ABC/USA (65% ABCVNH; 35% ABCUSA)</i>
ANTS (Glenn Payne Scholarship)	\$490.00	4.97%	<i>support for scholarship aid to ANTS students</i>
Family Time	\$490.00	4.97%	<i>support for local non-profit organization</i>
Coalition for the Homeless	\$790.00	8.01%	<i>support for local non-profit organization</i>
Habitat for Humanity	\$360.00	3.65%	<i>support for local non-profit organization</i>
GBICS (Food & Fuel, Kitchen Cupboard, Bennington Free Clinic)	\$2,460.00	24.94%	<i>support for local non-profit organization</i>
Missional Church Initiatives	\$844.00	8.56%	<i>support for FBC missional projects</i>
subtotal	\$9,864.00	100.00%	

During the course of 2012, the Mission Board recommends we offer opportunities to support the following denominational or ecumenical organizations through special offerings during given months:

January 2012:	Retired Ministers & Missionaries Offering (goal of \$500);
March 2012:	America for Christ Offering (goal of \$250);
April/May 2012:	Church World Service Blanket Offering (between Easter and Mother's Day as donations are received);
June 2012:	One Great Hour of Sharing offering (\$500);
August 2012:	Gove Hill Retreat (as donations are received);
October 2012:	World Mission Offering (\$350);
November 2012:	ABCVNH Regional Offering (as donations are received);
Year-Round:	ABWM Love Gift (in support of United Mission; as donations are received)

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL BUDGETS**FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011 AND PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012**

The 2011 and 2012 budgets below reflect the income and expenses of the operational budget of the congregation with the offset from endowment funds. All monies received for benevolence purposes, the building fund, and other restricted purposes (i.e. scholarship fund, memorial fund, etc.) were received and disbursed through 2011, leaving the stated numbers below as a reflection of our 2011 operational budget (deficit of -\$1,526.88), an amount less than projected in the 2011 approved budget. The Trustees and the Cabinet served as the Budget committee in reviewing 2011 and proposing the 2012 budget.

	2011 Expenses	2011 Budget	Proposed 2012
<u>Ordinary Income/Expense</u>			
<u>Income</u>			
Checking interest	39.21	20.00	30.00
Court Trust Dividends	9,232.55	7,000.00	8,500.00
Flower Fund	833.00	0.00	0
Fundraising	0.00	2,000.00	0
Local Income	95,665.30	86,126.00	84632.74
Total Income	105,770.06	100,685.00	93,162.74
Gross Profit	105,770.06	100,685.00	93,162.74
<u>Expense</u>			
Administrative Expenses	5,843.11	6,810.76	5,206.36
Building Repair & Maintenance	53,341.29	50,300.00	58,824.00
Christian Education	853.69	1,850.00	1,250.00
Parson Benefits	28,222.52	29,644.10	30,705.26
Parsonage R and M	3,358.23	1,500.00	1,500.00
Sexton Property	2,589.61	3,200.00	3,025.00
Staff Payroll Taxes	3,080.75	5,937.54	3,170.00
Staff Salary	84,478.08	84,610.09	86,552.96
Staff Temporary Help	1,052.50	2,800.00	3,600.00
Worship and Service	2,477.16	3,310.00	1,370.00
Total Expense	-185,296.94	189,962.49	195,203.58
Net Ordinary Income	-79,526.88	-89,277.49	-102,203.84
<u>Other Income/Expense</u>			
Monthly Transfer	78,000.00	78,000.00	93,000.00
Net Other Income	78,000.00	78,000.00	93,000.00
Net Income	-1,526.88	-11,277.49	-9,040.84

REPORT OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR 2011

All checking and savings accounts and certificates of deposit (CDs) of First Baptist are lodged at the Heritage Family Credit Union (Bennington, Vermont branch). Donations made at the end of year (after 12/25) were not deposited until after December 31, 2011, and will be reflected therefore on January 2012 bank statements. The amounts below reflect the “end of year” balances for December 31, 2011.

Unrestricted Accounts	12/31/2011	
Business Share Draft	\$18,240.65	General Checking of First Baptist
Primary Share	\$2,484.30	General Savings of First Baptist
621 Rental Savings Account	\$25.51	For any additional/non-operational 621 funds
621 Rental Security Deposit	\$755.56	For 621 tenant security deposits
621 Rental Checking Account	\$2,552.39	Grant for facility upgrades (\$6K for projects)
Memorial Fund	Closed account	For needs & improvements of First Baptist
Restricted Funds	12/31/2011	
		Donations for future improvements (note: not all Fund donations received by 12/31/11 were able to be “banked” by 12/31/11.
Building Fund	\$4,654.09	
Scholarship Fund	Closed account	Balance in 3 month CD
Video Account	Closed account	Balance in 24 month CD
McEweon/Shoe Fund	Closed account	Balance in 3 month CD
Barbar Signage	Closed account	Funds expended for new church signage
Vermont Community Foundation Grant	\$2,715.04	Grant for facility upgrades
Lester Nichols Dividend Account	\$0.00	2011 dividends transferred out by 12/31
JH HA White Dividend Account	\$0.00	2011 dividends transferred out by 12/31
Mary Edgerton Dividend Account	\$0.03	2011 dividends transferred out by 12/31
Mable Harris Dividend Account	\$0.01	2011 dividends transferred out by 12/31
Music Fund	Closed account	Winn family memorial gift for organ music
CDs		
Video Fund (24 month CD)	\$1910.02	due in Feb. 2012
McEweon/Shoe Fund (3 month CD)	\$2799.04	Trustees now using 3 month CDs
Scholarship Fund (3 month CD)	\$9083.38	Trustees now using 3 month CDs

REPORT OF THE ENDOWMENT FUND

The Board of Trustees oversees fund management needs for operational use and capital improvements. Despite a difficult market for endowment growth, the American Funds continues to be a wise place for our investments and trusts to grow for present and future needs of the congregation. The church endowment is a living legacy of congregants who remembered First Baptist in their estate planning. With the careful management of Frank Hogel and other lay leadership during the latter decades of the 20th century, First Baptist was able to create an endowment fund valued at \$1,000,000. The White, Nichols, Edgerton, and Harris trusts are lodged in the Capital Income Builder, generating quarterly dividends listed above. An additional fund given by the estate of Mabel Harris (\$31,442.44) is in a separate money market account held by the American Funds.

In 2011, the endowment funds assisted with \$78,000.00 for basic operational needs. For the 2011 budget, the Board of Trustees projects \$93,000 for operational needs due to current and anticipated heating fuel costs.

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	As of 12/31/2010	As of 12/31/2011
EuroPacific Growth	\$ 35,253.57	\$ 27,248.40
Growth Fund of America	\$ 36,522.34	\$ 31,130.71
New Perspective Fund	\$ 39,806.64	\$ 33,039.90
New World Fund	\$ 40,083.85	\$ 30,905.29
SMALLCAP World Fund	\$ 37,880.49	\$ 29,166.65
Capital World Growth & Income Fund	\$ 192,064.15	\$ 158,968.30
Investment Company of America	\$ 187,197.68	\$ 164,711.02
Income Fund of America	\$ 204,179.35	\$ 194,499.85
Subtotal of Unrestricted Funds	\$ 772,988.07	\$ 676,170.77
RESTRICTED FUNDS		
Capital Income Builder*	\$ 217,219.96	\$ 214,128.16
Subtotal of Restricted Funds	\$ 217,129.96	\$ 214,128.16
MONEY MARKET ACCOUNTS		
Money Market (restricted for operational)	\$ 6,500.65	\$ 6,500.65
Money Market (restricted for CE use/M. Harris)	\$ 31,442.44	\$ 31,442.44
Subtotal of Money Market Funds	\$ 37,943.09	\$ 37,943.09
TOTAL OF ENDOWMENT FUNDS	\$ 1,028,061.10	\$ 928,242.02

REPORT OF COURT TRUST AND ESTATE GIFTS

When First Baptist moved our endowment portfolio into the care of the American Funds in 1999, the four court trusts given by the estates of congregants Nichols, White, Edgerton, and Harris, had terms stipulating dividends were to be paid to the congregation on a quarterly basis. The Nichols and the White Trust dividends are used for property upkeep expenses. The Edgerton and Harris Trusts are used for the work of Christian education.

Upon receipt of quarterly dividends, the Board of Trustees reviews the expenses paid out by the church's general account for costs related to building operations and upkeep and religious education programming and personnel. Effective this year, the church is reimbursed on a quarterly basis, allowing the general account to be repaid in a more timely manner. In 2011, we received \$9232.55 cumulatively from the four accounts. We give thanks for the continuing generosity of these congregants now deceased.

REPORT OF THE DEACONS' FUND

The Deacons' Fellowship Fund exists to assist persons in need. The board of Deacons is thankful for the congregation's faithful help in providing discretionary funds. The faithful monthly support of this fund by the congregation has created a multitude of blessings for those in need during 2011. Indeed, most of the monies disbursed helped those within the congregation's membership.

By the terms set in our bylaws, any amount over \$500 on hand may be disbursed to community organizations. This year, the Deacons' Fund provided assistance to GBICS (start-up funds for The Kitchen Cupboard and postage help for annual community-wide fundraising mailings), First Baptist missional work (funds for purchasing socks for Molly Stark Elementary and the Cooking Skills class facilitated by Alycia Post), Emmanuel United Church of Mechanicsville, NY (support for Rev. Richard McSherry's congregation as they coordinated Japanese earthquake aid), and the Bennington AIDS Project (support for a family during the holidays).

In April 2007, the Deacon board elected to cease the direct assistance to individuals not within the membership. The Deacons recognize the contributions of persons for our annual Thanksgiving basket appeal in support of congregational households in need. The deacons gathered the donations and purchased the basket needs directly. These donations were credited via the financial secretary's annual giving statement.

Presently, the account is lodged with Heritage Financial Credit Union, Bennington branch. A mandatory deposit of \$25 is required to keep the account open and active. Sandy Williams, deacons' treasurer, and Rev. Jerrod Huguenot serve as the signatories. Most requests are handled by the minister directly, with the deacons' treasurer providing coverage when the minister is on scheduled leave. All requests to the Deacons' Fund are kept confidential.

ON HAND BALANCES FOR 2010: Beginning: \$225.83 Ending \$420.72

	2010	2011
INCOME		
Communion Offering	\$2,483.12	\$1,974.55
Interest Inc	\$0.68	\$0.72
Other income	\$0.00	\$110.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 2,483.76	\$ 2,085.27
EXPENSES		
Bank Charge	\$0.00	\$0.00
Community Support	\$717.45	\$584.00
Congregant Assistance	\$1,975.75	\$1,306.42
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,693.20	\$1,890.42
OVERALL TOTAL	-209.40	194.85

Respectfully submitted by the Rev. Jerrod H. Huguenot