



Stanwich
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

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Report of the Senior Pastor – Rev. Dr. Chuck Davis

This is my 12th Senior Pastor Annual Report. As an exercise in reflection and thanksgiving I decided to read the past 12 editions. It was my first edition that especially captured my attention. I state without apology in the first paragraph, "At this early point in my journey as Senior Pastor, I do not have many things to say."

Let me explain. My very first report was after 4 months. You confirmed God's calling on me to pastor Stanwich Church in November 2006. I had a contract with Alliance Seminary through the academic year and ministry assignments in Australia and Syria, in the early part of 2007. Thus, I began as a part time Pastor in January and then shifted to fulltime in June. I was still assimilating Stanwich into my spiritual DNA.

But even in the few words of that report, I hear vision and expectancy in the tone. I wrote the following: "I am enjoying the early stages of connecting with you and thinking strategically about our situation – from where we have come, where we presently stand, and where God might be taking us – to move to a collective vision of God's designed plans for the future of Stanwich Congregational Church. The prospect of this faith journey is exhilarating!"

Today, we stand before another new chapter in the life of Stanwich Church. Once again, I feel the same exhilaration. There are some exciting chapters ahead. The announcement of our new Senior Pastor, Rev. Dr. Nathan Hart, has only added to my sense of expectancy. Even though the announcement is just weeks old, I already see vision bubbling up in him to lead you well. He already has assimilated the Stanwich DNA, so his leadership will unfold with greater fluency than mine.

I commend Nathan to you and charge you to follow him well. The writer of the letter to the Hebrews captures the importance of healthy followership and its benefits:

"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you."

Hebrews 13:17

As we have spent the past six months in transition planning and waiting on God, I need to especially commend your Elders. They led the process with incredible spiritual alertness. I watched in meetings as they would move from discussion around leadership theory and then move into spiritual warfare prayer. I have the impression that we have not lost a step as a church body in this transition and that is a result of their long hours, insightful leadership, and diligence in waiting on the Lord in prayer.

And finally, I want to celebrate you as an ever-maturing body of Christ. The way you have received the news of our departure, refused to create imagined narratives, and pressed into a healthy attitude in the face of change, shows that you understand the very nature of the kingdom of God. This has made my heart soar. I could not be prouder of you as the body of Christ.

In that first report from 2007, I concluded with words from Scripture:

"Look at the nations and watch – and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told."

Habakkuk 1:5

Then I concluded the report with this benediction:

"May this truly become our testimony in the days ahead! Father, surprise us! Jesus, receive all of the glory! Holy Spirit, make us faithful partners to realize your best for us!"

The Father has mystified us. Jesus has been lifted up. And especially when we were not up to the partnership, the Holy Spirit has remained faithful.

Bless the Lord!
Pastor Chuck

Report of the Associate Pastor – Rev. Dr. Jacky Gatliff

...so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left. Isaiah 30.21

Ministry Reflections:

As the *living* body of Christ, Stanwich Church continues to grow and deepen in its understanding of what it means to be a church whose mission is "*to know Christ and to make Him known*". In order to guide and equip the church to be able to fully embrace its mission, new ministry initiatives and topics for programs and retreats were created this year to be attentive to the many ways that God is moving among us.

Alpha in Stamford:

While Alpha has been offered for many years at Stanwich Church, this was the first time that it was offered in Stamford. A diverse and consistent group of between 50-55 adults were in attendance each week. Participants came from both the Greenwich and Stamford campuses.

Women in Ministry:

Women of Stanwich Church continued to have the opportunity to grow deeper and connect with one another in a variety of ways:

Advent Day Retreat: *The Four*

This is the fourth year this retreat, designed for women to prepare to enter into the season of Advent, has been led by Jacky Gatliff and Heather Wright.

Christmas Event: *Love Drew Near*

Designed for women to be able to invite friends to hear about the birth of Jesus and the difference it makes, two gatherings were led by Amy Julia Becker (morning brunch at Stanwich Church; evening event at McArdle's Florist).

Spring Day Retreat: *The Hope of Forgiveness*

Through conversations and counseling with different individuals, the need to address how to offer and receive forgiveness was evident. Nicole Zasowski (speaker) and Katie Nelson Troyer (worship) led 69 women who participated at a new venue, Tarrytown House Estate in Tarrytown, NY.

A Mother's Heart:

Mothers of infants through elementary school continued to find this weekly study a place for connection while studying the scriptures to guide them to a deeper faith and experience of God in their lives. The following studies were used in 2017-2018:

Conversations that Matter: Learning to Speak to God from the Way He Speaks to Us; Psalms: A Window into My Heart

written by Jacky Gatliff

Free of Me written by Sharon Hodde Miller

Young Lives Camp 2017:

For a second year, Stanwich Church sent a team of women (8) to serve as child care volunteers at the Young Lives Camp for teen moms and their infants held at Young Life's Lake Champion. Young Lives is a mission partner of Stanwich Church.

Care Ministries:

Caregiver Support: Recognizing the growing number of individuals who are caregivers to friends or family members, quarterly gatherings were begun to provide support, encouragement and care for those in this unique role. Offered immediately after the 10:45 am service, caregivers were invited to lunch at Charis House for conversation and guidance around a particular topic. To date the topics have included: *Caring for the Caregiver* and *Boundaries for Caregivers*.

Service of Remembrance and Hope: This important worship service held during Advent continues to be a place of comfort and hope for those who have experienced significant loss or the death of a family member during the past year.

Leadership Development:

A grant request is in the process of being written and submitted to the Lilly Foundation requesting funding for *"The Phoebe Project"* that would have a unique purpose: to launch women into ministry by hosting a year-long pastoral residency designed to steward the call of recent female seminary graduates as they transition from student to pastor. The request will be submitted by June 1st and notification of grant awards will be received in October, 2018.

Personal Note:

Mike and I continue to learn what it means to the parents of adult children who have their own families which offers a mixture of both challenges and great fun. Granddaughter, Reagan Grace, is growing rapidly which we know from our daily "facetime" connection with her. As always, we are gratefully aware that God holds each of them tightly in His hands and we can trust Him for their care.

One of the most significant, personal highlights this year for me (and Mike) was the opportunity we had to travel to Israel with Bryan Widbin and 30 others from Stanwich Church. After you have been to Israel, it is impossible to read the scriptures and pray as you have done all your life. As I have moved through the church year where God's grand story of redemption is remembered and told, it has been a more vibrant experience for me as I remind myself that the story is real and true.

To God Be the Glory
Rev. Dr. Jacky Gatliff

Report of the Associate Pastor – Rev. Dr. Nathan Hart

The Fruit of Chuck Davis's Legacy

We all know Chuck Davis as an anointed preacher, effective teacher and author, and visionary leader. These public aspects of his ministry are plain to observe. What many might not know, but what I have had a front-row seat to for seven years, is how profoundly humble he is in his desire to see his team flourish. Chuck is countercultural in this aspect. While many leaders feel threatened by the success of their colleagues and team members, Chuck allows them to shine. I am an example of someone who has benefited from this leadership style. It would have been natural for Chuck to limit my growth as a preacher and staff leader—many senior pastors do that to their associate pastors. Instead, he fostered my growth, created an atmosphere in which it could reach its fullest potential, and celebrated it. I am inexpressibly grateful and also inspired to pass along the same kind of leadership to every team I lead henceforth. And I know I am not the only one who Chuck has influenced in this way. Chuck often speaks of legacy. One of his most enduring legacies will be all of us who are now thriving in faith because of the atmosphere of growth he created over these last 11 years. In the same way John the Baptist said, “Christ must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30), Chuck has modeled for us a leadership posture that was not *all about him*, but all about Christ. *Much* more could be said about Chuck's legacy, and there will be time for us all to celebrate him in the weeks to come. It might even take years for us to wrap our minds around the exponential impact that God has had, through Chuck, on us and our community. What a gift!

Our Future Vision

I feel energized to run alongside the Holy Spirit as he leads this amazing church into God's good purposes for us in the coming years. I've been having a hard time staying asleep at night, not because of anxiety, but because of so many “downloads” of church vision that God keeps sending me. I look forward to these ideas being tested and refined by the Elders with input from the congregation. To that end, we are designing a churchwide survey to be distributed this fall, with which I look forward to getting an honest assessment of where we are as a body and how God wants to lead us, use us, and shape us. One example of an exciting new initiative is The Phoebe Project, which Pastor Jacky describes in more detail in her report. I am sensing that God has so much more Kingdom expansion he wants to do in us and through us. Thanks to Chuck's faithful leadership, truly amazing Elders, a united and top-shelf staff team, and the constant sustaining power of the Holy Spirit, we are in a great position as we enter this next chapter. We have the opportunity to go from strength to strength and I, for one, am feeling exceedingly optimistic about this new season as we continue our vision to know Christ and make Him known.

Gratitude

As I wrote in my letter to the congregation at the conclusion of the Search Committee's process, Nancy and I are deeply grateful for their work and the efforts of the Elder Board over the past few months. Knowing that this particular group of people was praying and seeking discernment along with the entire congregation gave us great peace throughout the entire process. We are also grateful and humbled by the outpouring of love and affirmation from you all.

As I look toward the future that God is unfolding for Stanwich, I will be unspeakably grateful to be a “steward of his grace” (1 Peter 4:10), continuing the heritage of Nate Adams, Neely Towe, Chuck Davis, and so many saints who preceded them as shepherds of this flock. Surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us *all* “run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith” (Hebrews 12:1b-2). He is our Good Shepherd; he holds our lives and the future of this wonderful church in his able hands.

Pastor Nathan

Report of the Stamford Campus Pastor – Rev. David Borden

Dear Church,

I've now been the Stamford Campus Pastor for a little less than two years, and I've seen God move in some amazing ways. Also, I've also experienced some of the challenges/opportunities of planting a church in an urban environment. In this report, I will talk about both the awesome and challenging things, and I will talk about the future plans for the campus in the South End.

God's Work in the South End

Over the past year we have seen God do many different things. From 50 people in Alpha meetings each week, to 150 at an outdoor service, we have seen God move. However, numbers can only show one aspect of this growth. What we have also seen in Stamford is the growth of depth in our body. Here are a couple of stories of the fruit of depth:

1. My wife was teaching children's ministry at the Stamford Campus when a young man walked through the downstairs door. She told him about the service. The next week I got together with him, and now I have been discipling him ever since. He lives in the apartment building directly across from the Revolution Gym. He is now an integral part of our campus. He has grown in considerable depth of faith and is now bringing his testimony into his line of work (private equity).
2. I was walking down the street in March and saw a young man walking out of the Pacific House. I could tell he was upset. As I walked by him I asked him what was wrong. He told me. I asked if I could pray for him. He said yes. We prayed, and he prayed to receive Christ that day. He had been coming to the Stamford campus until moving out of the area.
3. Paul Barker has been serving the homeless at the Stamford train station for the past 5 years. However, in the last 6 months with the help of Stanwich Church, Paul has been able to partner with social service agencies in Stamford (Inspirica/Pacific House) to get housing for individuals who are chronically homeless. A woman named Patty is the visible fruit of this ministry. She had been homeless for over 3 years, and through the ministry of Stanwich Church, she has now received permanent housing in Stamford. She attends our service on Sunday night.

The ministry hardship/opportunity provided by the South End.

The town of Greenwich has one main identity. The city of Stamford does not. Stamford has approximately eight different identities (one could argue even more): Shippan, Glenbrook, Springdale, the West Side, North Stamford, Downtown, Ridgeway, and the South End. Each of these neighborhoods is unlike the other. The South End is the only one of these neighborhoods in which over 90% of the residents rent. This has caused it to be the most transient neighborhood in an already transient city. For example, since I've arrived in Stamford, we as a church have blessed more than 15 individuals who have moved away. You may be reading this and think, THAT SOUNDS HORRIBLE, but in truth it is an opportunity for our church to really disciple and send out healthy followers of Christ into their next

calling. God has given our church through the Stamford location the ability to influence people who are moving all over the country and beyond. However, I do not think the Lord is limiting our vision to ONLY reach people in the South End. There is a significant representation from five of the eight different neighborhoods attending the evening service. I feel the Lord calling us to have a vibrant group in each neighborhood connected to the Stamford Campus.

Stanwich Stamford Goals for 2018

- **Full assessment of Stamford budget and vision.** In this assessment the following questions and more will be asked. What are we spending money on that isn't moving us forward toward our vision? What are we currently doing that isn't supporting our overall vision in Stamford? What do we need to update and change to better fulfill our mission?
- **Leadership team training and launch.** There are a group of individuals that have been brought into a Stamford leadership team. Over the summer they will be developed during four specific training sessions. In the fall they will be launched into their respective ministry roles
- **Achieve 20% growth in attendance.** From Fall 2016 to Fall 2017, we achieved a 20% growth in our campus attendance. We want to grow another 20% from Fall 2017- to Fall 2018. This would mean hitting our capacity for seating in our space. This may mean going to two services in Fall 2018 if necessary.

Executive Director – Bob Rieger

“We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men” (2 Corinthians 8:20-21)

The Executive Director is dedicated to financial stewardship and a commitment to excellence in directing the strategic financial and administrative requirements to manage the operations of SCC. This enables our Pastors and Ministry Leaders to have more time to focus on the ministry and mission of the church “in the field”.

The Executive Director’s staff responsibilities span a full range of activities including financial management (annual and monthly budget, internal/external audits), program management, communications, information technology, human resources, building maintenance, ministry support and prayer.

Sheila Hyland, Business Director, is my “right hand” and has fully supported my many requests with grace and excellence. The entire staff here is something to behold as team players who love the Lord and serve Him and the flock well.

Financial Summary:

In FY 2018, the Stewardship vision of cultivating a culture of generosity from a holistic view encompassing faith, time, talent, and treasure is bearing fruit. Through the planning and delivering of teaching, preaching, leadership development, small groups, retreats, and Journey of Generosity (JOGs) events, we are seeing lives being transformed and a release of greater generosity. Giving from July through January was strong and despite February and March giving short-falls, April and May are in line with our budget. As of May 16th, we need \$590,191 to meet this year’s budget and the Operating Fund balance has remained stable at \$515,779 (April 30th). Our Missions Fund giving of \$214,331 is on track to finish the year at budget level of \$275,000. We need to finish this fiscal year strong.

Future: Based on FY 2018, we are encouraged to keep pressing into our mission to Know Christ and Make Him Known, to continue to love and serve the needs of this community with excellence, and to actively seek God’s voice and vision for the future. The key FY 2019 budget theme is a pastoral transition year with continued emphasis on leadership development and resourcing priorities to further our vision. The Elders recommend approval of the proposed FY 2019 budget which directly reflects our spiritual and financial priorities.

Thank you for the honor and the privilege to serve as Executive Director this past year.

Respectfully,
Bob Rieger

Children's Ministry

Children's Ministry at Stanwich Church is wrapping up another successful year of working with children, and their families, to teach them the truths of the Bible and show the children who Jesus is and how life-changing a relationship with Him is. Our focus is the same as the church mission statement, "To know Christ and make Him known."

In order to know Christ, our children have to know the Bible, and know it, not as a book of rules and regulations for how to live a moral life, but as the divinely inspired word of God. We want the children to look at the Bible as the story of God's redemption, His love for us and His rescue plan, sending Christ to die as the ultimate sacrifice for our sins. Our tool for teaching the Bible is our Sunday curriculum, The Gospel Project for Kids, a chronological teaching of the Bible, with a Christ connection for every lesson.

Team

Our children's ministry team is made up of just two people: Jessica Curri and myself.

Jessica is our administrator, who also teaches in preschool and occasionally our large group session in the 9:00 service, as well as consistently leading a small group in the 10:45 service. She organizes and orders needed supplies for Kids Church. I am so grateful for her organizational gifts and her newfound love of teaching!

My duties include teaching large group sessions in Kids Church on Sundays, leading small groups on Sundays, editing curriculum, communicating with Sunday volunteers, planning and running the Wednesday night program, planning for, directing and working at Sky Kids, collaborating with other church ministries for service projects, communicating with parents and welcoming new families to Stanwich.

Kids Church

Kids Church happens on Sundays in all three services. The children (grades 1 through 5) join their families in the worship service and then are dismissed to Kids Church after the children's sermon. The children start Kids Church with worship together, singing songs of praise, playing a quick game or sharing important events going on in their lives. They are then taught a lesson from our curriculum, The Gospel Project for Kids, that includes a Bible story, Bible verse, Big Picture Question and a short video illustrating the Bible story. After our large group session, the children are dismissed to their small groups, where they are grouped by age and sometimes gender, to further discuss the Bible story in an age appropriate way. Small groups will also have an activity, game or craft relating to our lesson, and prayer.

Preschool and Kindergarten Kids Church

Our preschool and kindergarten program (age 3 through kindergarten) also uses The Gospel Project for Kids. Their program is similar in that it involves worship, prayer and Bible study along with games and crafts to reinforce our Bible story. This group also spends time in play, so that the children are able to engage with one another and with their teachers.

Nursery

Our nursery is a wonderful, inviting place for our littlest children. Magda Castro and Vilma Castro have been with Stanwich for 11 and 8 years respectively. They work hard to create a loving environment,

where parents are happy to leave their children so they can attend a service or a Bible study. Vanessa Cardinal has been working with Magda and Vilma since June of last year. Vanessa is leaving us because she will soon have a baby of her own, so Melissa Aridoux will be taking Vanessa's place, at least temporarily.

Wednesday Nights at Stanwich

To further our goal of creating a stronger community within our children's ministry, our Wednesday night program includes free play (outside, weather permitting), a crafting station and wooden blocks, so the children can work independently on their art work or collaborate with a friend to build a giant tower. We also include an episode of Super Book, which is a program available to us from Right Now Media. This series tells a Bible story, nearly verbatim to the scripture, and relates it to a current day set of siblings.

I believe that in just playing together and having fun with each other, friendships among the children have blossomed. I want them to see Stanwich as not only a place where they are taught the Bible, but also as a place to make friends and have fun.

Sky Kids (VBS)

Sky Kids was a great success last year! We made many changes in 2017 that worked out very well. We no longer have 2 weeks of Sky Kids, so we used an event tent outside in order to be able to have more children in one session. We added a pick up and drop off line, changed the hours of Sky Kids, strengthened our curriculum and station leaders and added Audra Kruk to cater our snacks, which are all allergy friendly and gluten free. This program is a fantastic way to show off our ministry and bring in new families from around Fairfield County. I am sure Sky Kids will continue on this year as a strong program with a great reach into our community.

I am completing nearly three years of working for this ministry and I am constantly amazed at what our God is doing in and through our children. It is such a privilege to get to work for this church and this ministry, my personal relationship with God has grown stronger through this role and I am just so grateful I get a close-up view of what He is doing through this ministry.

I am looking forward to the future at Stanwich Church and am excited to have Pastor Nathan as our head pastor. God has blessed Stanwich richly with an amazing leadership team.

Ann Roth
Director of Children's Ministry

Student Ministry

Now it has been five years that I have been part of Stanwich Church. It has been wonderful to watch the Student Ministry grow and change, and I feel I have as well. Stanwich is a place where I am being stretched not only professionally, but also as a person, under the leadership of Pastors Nathan and Chuck. I feel close to everyone on staff and can have open and enjoyable conversation with any one of them. Through this pastoral transition, I can honestly say I am not nervous at all but rather quite excited to see Stanwich enter its next stage of growth.

Please come and talk to me for any ideas you think would be interesting to try at Stanwich Student Ministries, I love to brainstorm and discuss ideas. Here's what this past year as looked like in a nutshell:

Reaching Busy Teenagers

It is essential to have high school and middle school students as part of the greater church even when they are difficult to reach. It's a known fact that the families of Greenwich and the surrounding area are consistently busy. There are many kids who can only attend events on certain days. Despite the great variety of students, they all still consider themselves part of Stanwich Student Ministries. Over my past five years, I've had to become creative with how I spend time with students—attending school and sport events, doing Bible studies over breakfast, or meeting at diners late at night. I keep my availability open and do whatever I can to show students that they are valuable and worth the time of an adult who cares for them.

Mentors

Being an intergenerational church, I have seen the impact of dynamic relationships between adults and students on the life of the church. I love seeing adults and teens talking together after services and at church events. It makes the church feel smaller and more intimate. This past year, one of my goals was to give more attention to our mentorship model but simply did not have the bandwidth. My goal is for each student who is part of Stanwich Student Ministries to have an adult mentor. Currently we have 60 students who are considered part of Stanwich Student Ministries. About a quarter of those students have adult mentors who take part in their lives. Over the next year, my goal is to match every student with a Christian mentor in the church. Ideally, these relationships will continue far beyond a student's years at Stanwich. It is a challenge to find these volunteers to be mentors, but with a push from the church, I believe each student could have an adult, besides a parent or church volunteer, speaking into their lives.

Sunday Morning Student Service

On Sundays, students meet during the 10:45am service. They begin in the worship service with their families and then are dismissed before the children's sermon. Currently we average about 30 students each week. The Student Service has become Stanwich Student Ministries' focus since this is the most well-attended, consistent gathering we offer the students. My primary goals last year were to split the high schoolers and middle schoolers and to recruit 2-4 volunteers to help on Sunday mornings to accommodate the differences in their ages and development. Both of those goals were accomplished this past year and now we have three teachers in each the middle school and high school classes on Sunday mornings. I personally rotate each week between both classes so each age group has exposure to their Student Pastor.

Small Groups on Friday Nights

For the past six months, we have provided students the opportunity to join Stanwich Student Ministries every other week in a smaller, more intimate Bible study at a home in Greenwich. Small groups have been well attended in that time period, averaging around 15-20 students, and 6 or 7 leaders each week including volunteers. We begin each small group session by hanging out and catching up with the students while we enjoy pizza and refreshments. We then divide the larger group into smaller boys' and girls' Bible studies. The students, guided by the leaders, dive into the Bible and apply it to their lives. We end the night asking the students what their prayer requests are and then have the students pray for each other as we also pray over them. Through their attendance and positive feedback, I have found that this is something the students really desire. They are in need of a place where they can talk about how they really feel and explore their beliefs, which Stanwich Student Ministries is now providing.

Student Groups on Wednesday Nights

Stanwich Student Ministries meets on Wednesday evenings during the school year. The event is open for both high school and middle school students, though mostly middle school students attend. The night is centered around a Biblical and relevant message, usually preached in series-long themes with fun, games, and discussion tied in. This past year, one major obstacle we faced was attendance. Currently about 5-10 students will attend on a weekly basis. I have found Wednesday night difficult for the students to plan activities outside of school, especially high schoolers. Pastor Nathan and I are trying to figure out what is the best plan for the fall in regards to Wednesday Nights.

Confirmation

We have now completed our fifth full Confirmation Class, graduating a class of 18 this past year. The class consists of 9 sessions over the course of 13 weeks, where students learn vital truths about God, the Church, and Biblical History. Each student is charged with choosing a life verse and writing a testimony of faith. As in the past, the challenge continues to be retaining the students who only attend Stanwich because of Confirmation, typically required by a parent, but then do not return for other events. A portion of families do continue on at Stanwich after Confirmation Sunday which is encouraging, but we would like to see more in the future.

Assistant Student Ministry Director

Last year, the Assistan Student Ministry Director, Kara Svendsen, moved away. It has been a goal of mine to fill this position as soon as possible. It will be great to have someone to spend time with the girls in our ministry and also someone to focus on administrative office work. In her absence, I have noticed some areas have not received the time and energy that they need. Currently, we have an interim Student Ministry Assistant, which has been going well, with the hope that it turns into a full time position soon to tackle some of the new ideas we would like to implement.

Excitedly,
Lance Svendsen
Student Ministry Director

Report of the Director of Music – Leon Reid

*Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!
(Psalm 98:4, ESV)*

The 2017-2018 music season was an exciting one in the music ministry at Stanwich Church/Greenwich. All of our musicians and singers have had the opportunity and privilege to use their God-given talents for God's glory and for the advancement of the gospel. Our musical teams (Stanwich Adult Choir, Stanwich Children's Choir, Stanwich Handbell Ringers, and the Stanwich Praise Team) are small in number, but huge in their commitment and enthusiasm.

The Stanwich Praise Team (led by Anna Jacobson) diligently led our congregation in the corporate singing of contemporary praise songs at both of our Sunday morning services.

The Stanwich Handbell Ringers have ministered in our annual Christmas and Spring Concerts, and in two of our Resurrection Sunday morning services.

The Children's Choir participated in our annual Christmas Concert, in one of our Sunday morning services on December 17, in one of our Christmas Eve services, and in one of our Resurrection Sunday morning services.

The Stanwich Adult Choir has faithfully ministered in our Sunday morning 9 a.m. services (and in both morning services once a month), in our annual Christmas and Spring Concerts, and in two of our Christmas Eve services.

We have had two Hymn Sings: one during the Advent season, and another during the Easter season. These were opportunities to learn more about the hymns we sing, enabling us to "sing with the spirit and with our minds also" (1 Corinthians 14:15b).

We also had other guest musicians, singers, and a liturgical dancer minister with us in our services and concerts. This was the first year in my tenure that the choir from Pivot Ministries and the Stanwich Adult Choir sang together on Pivot Sunday. Pivot's choir also participated in the Spring Concert.

I am thankful to God for the privilege of directing the music ministry at Stanwich Church/Greenwich, and for the dedication and commitment to excellence by our entire staff, musicians, and singers. May God the Holy Spirit continue to equip and anoint us for the work that He has called us to.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leon G. Reid
Minister of Music
Stanwich Church/Greenwich

Report of the Board of Elders

The Bylaws of Stanwich Church task the Elders with spiritual leadership, financial stewardship, oversight, representing the Church in its relationship with the Pastors, and assisting the Pastors in defining and implementing the overall mission, vision and strategy of Stanwich Church. It is the sincere desire of the Elder Board to faithfully execute the responsibilities entrusted to us, and particularly to hold Stanwich Church, Pastors, staff, congregation, and ministries in trust for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Over the past twelve months, the most significant issue facing the Elders has been the pastoral leadership transition. Pastor Chuck's announcement in February that he would relinquish his responsibilities as Senior Pastor effective August 31 marked the culmination of many months of prayer and discernment. While saddened by this news, the Elders recognized the Lord's call on Pastor Chuck's life into a new chapter of ministry. The Elders thank Chuck for his leadership these past 11 years, and we thank God for sending him to us. Chuck is a Godly leader, an anointed teacher and preacher, and a bold servant of the Lord. We invite each of you to join us on August 25 for a worship service to celebrate Chuck's ministry at Stanwich Church.

In February, a Pastoral Search Committee was charged with discerning whom the Lord is calling as our next Senior Pastor. Their recommendation of Nathan Hart was approved by the Elders at our May 15 meeting and will come before the congregation for a vote at our Annual Meeting on June 18. In addition to Chair Mark Curtis, the Elders would like to thank Jo-Ann Abbate, Christa Hartch, Charlotte Jackson, Wes Lyvers, James McArdle, and Bill Voth for their service on the Pastoral Search Committee.

Apart from the leadership transition, the Elder Board continued our move to a policy governance board that both honors the requirements of our Bylaws and focuses on high level issues rather than operating details. To do this, we restructured our standing Board committees and Elder liaison roles. We remain a working board, but with four standing committees: Finance, Stewardship, Personnel, and Governance. Elders also exercise oversight as liaisons to important ministry and functional areas including Buildings and Grounds, Congregational Care, Discipleship, the Greenwich Center for Hope and Renewal, Missions, Prayer Ministries, Stanwich Stamford, and Youth & Children's Ministries.

In terms of committee work this year, the Finance Committee carefully stewarded our resources, developed a prudent budget for the year ahead, managed Stanwich investments, and ensured that internal and external financial audits were conducted. Stewardship built on the good foundation laid last year to emphasize heart devotion to God and the generosity that results in all aspects of life: time, talent and treasure. Personnel offered oversight and wise counsel to various human resource issues throughout the year. The Governance Committee reviewed and proposed changes to our Bylaws, led the onboarding of new Elders, and will soon implement a Board Policies Manual.

Turning to the budget, there is work to be done before our June 30 fiscal year end. Year to date giving as of April 30 is \$148K under budget and \$7K less than last year. Diligent expense management has resulted in spending that is \$37K below budget. We will need strong giving in June to make budget for the year. Planning for Fiscal Year 2019 has involved careful discussion, prayer, and discernment of our spiritual and financial priorities, including input from Pastors, ministry leaders, administrative staff, the Personnel and Finance Committees, and the Elders. The FY19 budget envisions a conservative 2.9% increase over last year, which itself marked a partial financial restoration of previous years' budgets. The Elders unanimously approve this budget and commend it to the congregation.

The board extends heartfelt thanks to retiring Elders Beth Bergman, Valerie Gammage, Neil Hindle, Bob Newton, and Ed Sunoo. We are grateful to these Elders for their prayerful presence, servant leadership, and thoughtful contributions. We also wish to thank Hal Knox for his exemplary service as Treasurer; he has worked faithfully to oversee our finances and ensure they are stewarded well. Anticipating congregational approval at our Annual Meeting, we extend a warm welcome to incoming Elders Cindy Conarro, Jen Deinard, Justin Luehman, Melodie Moss, and Christine Walker, as well as incoming Treasurer Scott Mohr. We are grateful that they have heard and answered the Lord's call to serve Stanwich Church at this important time.

It is a privilege to serve as Elders. We take to heart the sacred responsibilities entrusted to us to offer spiritual leadership, encourage Pastors and staff, and safeguard the unity of the church. Please know that we are holding you, and the entire body at Stanwich, in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Bergman and Valerie Gammage, Co-Chairs

Rocco Abbate, Mark Curtis, Emily Dreas, Neil Hindle, Eric Kampmann, James McArdle, Ed Morgan, Bob Newton, Ed Sunoo, and Bill Voth

Report of the Clerk

Regular Worship

During this past year, we have continued to have three regular Sunday worship services at 9:00am, 10:45am, at the Greenwich Campus and 6:00pm at the Stanwich Stamford Campus. During the summer, from June 11th, 2017 through Labor Day Sunday, September 10th, we had one morning service at the Greenwich Campus at 10am.

Special Services

On November 23rd, 2017, we held a service on Thanksgiving Eve. On December 6th, we held our seventh annual Service of Remembrance and Hope here at the Greenwich campus for those who had suffered loss during the past few years. We also had a reception in Emmaus Hall following the service. We held three Christmas Eve Services, 10am, 4pm, 6pm at the Greenwich campus and 11pm in Stamford. All four services had candlelight and traditional carols. The Greenwich campus services followed the same format except for the Children's Choir (no adult choir) singing only at the 10am. This involved our adult choir, soloists, and string quartet. All Greenwich campus services were streamed live for those who wanted to watch from home. The Stamford service was a candlelight service held at 11pm. On Sunday, December 31st, we held a communion and blessing service at 10am. For Lent, we had our traditional Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday February 14th. Palm Sunday was March 25th. We held the Maundy Thursday Dinner on the 29th with communion in Emmaus Hall. We once again had only the traditional Passover food with projected explanations of the different food items. We also had 4 small cups at each place, three of which were consumed during the meal. A prayer vigil was held from 9pm on Thursday evening through noon on Good Friday with an additional open prayer service held in the basement of the church that went until midnight. On Good Friday, there was a service at 12:30pm on the last words from the cross. On Resurrection Sunday, April 1st, we held three services – 6:30am, 9am and 10:45am in Greenwich. There was no 6pm service in Stamford on Resurrection Sunday.

New Members

A total of sixteen (16) new members covenanted with us on December 3rd and April 29th. We welcomed Susie Copley, Philip and Erika Farese, Kathryn Guimard and David Mali, Elizabeth Tolla, Enpa Lee, Sharlene Cameron, Raymond and Yvonne St. John, Mitzi and Ron Lumbra, Kim and Brion Tingler, Shannon Renyolds, and Isabel Gonzalez.

As of May 15, 2018, our total active membership is 446.

Funerals/Memorial Services

We held six funerals/memorial services at Stanwich Church during this past year. The services were for: William Schenck, Frances Adams, Joseph DeRuvo, Dick Impastato, Beverly Puris, and Donald Ewald Degling. In addition, one service was held off-site and officiated by a Stanwich pastors for Roger Sharp.

Baptisms

During this past year, there were eight infant baptisms: Elizabeth Grace Henkes, Charlotte May Sanders, Kaitlyn Daniella Ouimette, Edwin Sanders Prince, Joseph Chen Squillante, Guiliana Chen Squillante, Kieran Leo Charles Flanagan, and Hunter Christian Hansen. We also held immersion baptisms for Dana Jensen, and rededication of baptismal vows by immersion for Jessica & Tommy Diehl, Rob Benevich, Laurie and Sam Curtis, Daniella Arroyo, Caroline Dunn and Tai Martin.

Weddings

There were three weddings officiated by our pastors here at Stanwich Church: Jessica Beattie & Rocky Bryant, Kate Knetzger & Mark Vitale, Teresa Molinara & Lance Svendsen. There were three weddings that were held at Stanwich and officiated by non-Stanwich Pastors for Sarah Shasberger & Kevin Pfister, Teddy Hess & Sarah Haig, Grace Preston & Victor Evans. We had two marriages held off-site and officiated by one of our pastors for Jessica Sturm & Tommy Diehl, and Sara Zimmerman & David Mercer. Finally, we had one renewal of vows held off site and officiated by one of our pastors for Robin and Jennifer Prince.

Meetings

The Annual Meeting for 2016-2017 was held on June 12th, 2017.

Respectfully submitted in His love,
Kimberly O'Hara

Cemetery Report

This is my third report since I was appointed Cemetery Superintendent which covers the financial data for this fiscal year to date through April 30th, and interments since last year's report.

Cemetery fund balances, revenues, expenses

Beginning balance 7/1/2017: \$212,621

Revenue: \$5,050

Fund Performance: \$10,000

Expenses: \$10,906

Balance as of 4/30/18: \$216,766

Interments

Joseph DeRuvo, Sr., June 24, 2017, cremains, Sarge's Garden Plot #59

Luise Meyer Calderbank, September 7, 2017, cremains

Richard Impastato, September 9, 2017, cremains, Sarge's Garden plot #89

Beverly Puris, September 18, 2017, cremains, Sarge's Garden Plot #79

Baby Davis, November 11, 2017, cremains, Sarge's Garden Plot #24

Sales of Plots

Three sites have been sold during this period; two sites in Sarge's Garden and one in the main cemetery.

Events/progress over the past year:

Preferred monument and engraving provider – Don Foley of Fairfield Monument in Darien has been very helpful this past year and he is getting to know the cemetery quite well. While families always are given a choice, we feel, as we did with the gravedigger, Kevin Godfrey, that relying on one person tends to pay dividends.

Landscaping maintenance has improved and the Greco landscapers have been more diligent about removing old items left at gravesites. Some footstones which had been moved have been put back straight.

Winter storms: after several hard hitting winter storms, we had Dan Agro cut away a few fallen trees that had damaged the split rail fence on the northern border of the cemetery. A significant spring cleanup was also done at that time, in late March, 2018. The Stanwich Cemetery sign had come down again and that was repaired.

Future needs:

The driveway entrance: I made some inquiries to the town, and the town does not pay for "skirts" which is asphalt paving eight feet in from the road. The hole in the entrance is getting worse, and Joe DeCrescenzo and I will get some estimates on how much this will cost to repave.

Pachysandra will be replanted in the entrance to Sarge's Garden.

Entrance gate: needs to be adjusted so it works more smoothly.

Respectfully submitted,

Trey Reynolds
Cemetery Superintendent

Stanwich World Missions Committee Report
STANWICH WORLD MISSIONS
*Proclaiming the gospel in word and works of compassion
across the world and across the street.*

“Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”
(John 7:37-38)

Jesus uses the image of living water to show us what it looks like to follow him. He wants his life-giving water to flow *to* us and *through* us, sending it downstream to nourish and sustain others who also thirst and are far from him.

This is missions: A river of living water flowing through us as a community and as individuals.

As a Community: Stanwich World Missions Fund

As a community, we pool our resources through the Missions Fund to support others who meet the physical and spiritual needs of a hurting world. The fund focuses on outreach to people with low access to the Gospel; in recent years, we have been able to respond to new opportunities for proclamation created by the global refugee crisis.

The fund supports a balanced mix of ministries across geographic boundaries and four ministry categories: Outreach & Discipleship, Christian Recovery & Community Compassion, Global Medical Mission & Community Development and Christian Education.

In 2017-18, the Missions Fund supported these Partners and Projects:

Bridgeport Rescue Mission – serving the hungry, homeless and addicted throughout coastal Fairfield County.

Care4Leaders (Ingrid Davis) -- caring for ministry leaders around the world, especially in under-resourced areas.

Children’s Village (Co Holby) – helping troubled teens become educationally proficient, economically productive and socially responsible members of their communities.

Elim Fellowship – equipping missionaries to provide culturally sensitive witness and disciple Muslim-background believers.

FOCUS – ministry to high school students in New England.

Global Hope India -- bringing critical resources to some of the poorest villages in India.

Global PEHT – working to end human trafficking in New England.

Kairos Prison Ministry -- bringing the light and friendship of Jesus Christ into the lives of prisoners and their families.

Last Call Ministries – providing quality education rooted in the Christian faith for elementary school students in Guatemala City.

Lemonade International – using education, gang prevention and community relief to break the cycles of poverty, violence, and injustice in Guatemala.

Living Water Church (Daouda Zonga) -- ministry to West African immigrants, many who are of Muslim background.

Manhattan Christian Academy -- Christ-centered school with a Preschool through Grade 12 program.

Nireekshana ACET – AIDS clinics in India.

Pivot Ministries -- Christian residential treatment program for men challenged by alcohol and substance abuse.

Project Bako – medical mission in Mali.

SIM (Gail and Quentin Friesen) Healthcare leadership training.

Tyndale Theological Seminary -- interdenominational, evangelical seminary training pastors, teachers, missionaries, church planters and denominational leaders.

Young Life -- introducing young people to Christ

Young Lives – Young Life for teen moms.

2017-18 PROJECTS (SHORT-TERM)

American Bible Society – translation of study Bible into Bambara (spoken in Mali).

Chicago Hope -- church plant in inner city Chicago.

Christian Mission to Gaza – ministering to the physical and spiritual needs of refugees in the Middle East.

Mali Poultry Project – establishing sustainable revenue stream to support local ministries in majority-Muslim context.

Russell Zimmermann – serving refugees in the Middle East.

As Individuals: Compassion Outreach/Hands-on Service

As individuals, we are called to act out of the unique gifts God has given us, performing direct acts of service, such as feeding the hungry, visiting the prisoner or praying with the sorrowful.

Stanwich World Missions offered many opportunities for mission and engagement:

- Operation Christmas Child –the congregation sent 352 boxes containing toiletries, school supplies, clothing and stuffed animals to children in need.
- Three times a month, volunteers serve at the Bridgeport Rescue Mission’s mobile soup kitchen in Norwalk.
- We prepared and served 600 meals for the men at Stamford’s Pacific House shelter.
- We prepared and served 400 lunches at the New Covenant Center in Stamford.
- Our clothing ministry collects clothing and distributes it at the New Covenant Center and Midnight Run.
- In connection with Pivot Sunday, we held a food drive for Pivot Ministries.
- We sent two teams to the Bridgeport Rescue Mission’s Great Thanksgiving project, distributing clothes, turkeys and fixings in Norwalk and Bridgeport.
- We sent out four mission teams:
 - ... to Guatemala to work with mission partners Last Call Ministries and Lemonade International
 - ... to West Virginia (a combined trip of Stanwich and Pivot Ministries men)
 - ... two teams went to Houston working on clean-up and restoration after Hurricane Harvey
- We clothed, fed and ministered to the homeless in New York City on a Midnight Run (in conjunction with Allen Temple Church).
- A team of faithful Stanwich parishioners drives Adam Fairbanks to church weekly.
- Several members of the Stanwich congregation minister to those in prison through Kairos Prison Ministry.

Engaging the Congregation

Missions Celebration

In October, we held the 3rd Annual Missions Celebration with the theme “Rivers of Living Water.” It brought together many of our missions partners and members of the congregation to celebrate God’s work in and through us. It was well received and well attended (attendance doubled over the previous year).

Communications

We continue to use all available communications vehicles (monthly Moments for Mission, monthly missions newsletter, SCN, Facebook, prayer cards) to inform and engage the congregation about mission activities. We migrated our monthly newsletter to an electronic format, which allows us to use different media, such as videos and links to online resources. In addition, we established a centralized, on-line sign-up for service opportunities, making it easier to sign up and manage compassion outreach events.

Looking Ahead

Our goal is to continue to increase the impact of Stanwich World Missions through growing the congregation's engagement with mission. This includes increasing the number of people engaged, and the level of their engagement by deepening our commitment to the Great Commission.

In Christ's service,

Stanwich World Missions Committee: Zahya Beall, Christian Davis, Laura LaSpalluto (chair), Brett Matkins (treasurer), Ellen Morrison, MaryAnn O'Connor, Steve Reedy, Sharon Sunoo, Christine Walker

Compassion Outreach Coordinator: Bob Caie

Stanwich Congregational Church Internal Auditor Report
June 6, 2018

As required by the By-Laws of Stanwich Congregational Church, I have reviewed the accounting processes, reporting and internal controls and other aspects of the Church's operations, as in effect during the current fiscal year of the Church. The processes and controls are documented in (i) the Stanwich Congregational Church Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual, (ii) the Stanwich Congregational Church Children's and Youth Ministries Policies/Guidelines, and (iii) the Stanwich Congregational Church Personnel Policies Manual. These policies, procedures and guidelines were used as the basis for my review.

My review included discussions with the following individuals during the Church's current fiscal year: Sheila Hyland, the Business Director; Matthew Lund, the Bookkeeper; and Judy Fine, the Financial Secretary. As part of those discussions, I performed an audit of the financial records of the Church for two calendar months of the current fiscal year. All individuals with whom I spoke were cooperative and knowledgeable about the controls and processes they oversaw.

The materials and functional areas that I reviewed related to the following:

- Collections/other donations and related deposits
- Check disbursements and supporting documentation
- Credit card expenditures and employee reimbursements
- Budgeted vs. actual expenditures
- Bank and investment account statements and associated reconciliations
- Procedures of the Children's Ministry
- Designated missions donations
- Prior reports of internal and external auditors

Based on my review, I can confirm that (i) the Church currently has in place financial and operational controls and processes that are designed to reduce the risk of material fraud and misstatement of financial results as well as other relevant operational risks and (ii) no material issues came to my attention during my review indicating that those controls and processes are not functioning effectively to reduce such risks.

