



**hope central
church.org**

Annual Report 2012

Submitted at The Annual Meeting February 2, 2013

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Slate of Candidates for 2013:

Leadership Circle :

Betsy Walsh
Ellen Snoeyenbos
Gina Boisse
Megan Jewett (if an opening comes up in May)

Nominating Committee Openings:

Angela Letizia
Pam Wylie

Offering Coordinator:

Foy Chu

Offering Counters:

AM:

Michael Fiorentino
Pam Wylie
Mary Lou Steeden
Mary Ann Rodriguez
Marie Kaczorek
Megan Jewett
Beth Chandler
Jill Seaman
June Leonard

PM:

Gina Boisse
Erica Rose
Kolya Lynn Smith
Kate Dare-Winter
David Malone
Kathy Bermingham
Nancy Azar
J. Conlon
Abbi Holt (backup only)
Alan Bone (sub)

Hospitality:

Pam Wylie will head up

Teaching Parish:

Anne Broyles, coordinator
Nancy Doherty
Daniel Verinder
Anne Rousseau
Nancy Azar

Leadership Circle Slate Biographies

Gina Boisse:

“Since moving to Boston in 2006 from Worcester, I had been sporadically church-shopping... but none felt like home. In the summer of 2011 I realized the sign at the church across the street from me had changed and I looked at the Hope Central website and decided to give the service a try. There were only about 30 people at service that day, but when the first hymn began I nearly jumped out of my skin. It sounded like there were 100 people singing! The door was open and I remember thinking "wow, if I had been walking by, this place would have drawn me in". It felt like home. It is home. Hope Central Church is a blessing in my life I could not do without, and my commitment to the life of our church and my love for my fellow covenant partners is an unbreakable bond!”

Betsy Walsh:

“I first came to Hope Church in 2005 for the baptism of my godson, Ian. I was drawn in by the music that lifted my spirit and the love so freely shared and I became a Covenant Partner in 2006. I have been so loved and carried by this community and supported in my own growth, both physical, with the pregnancies/ children, spiritual, as my faith has deepened. I have received so much and want to give back so when asked to serve, I said, “Yes!” “

Ellen Snoeyenbos:

“Growing up in a liberal Christian church, I had drifted into affiliation with Unitarian Universalism, but hadn’t found it spiritually deep enough. My daughter, Gretchen, found the church called Hope Church at the time, and I had an “aha” moment of coming home. I could explore my faith and my doubt, ancient ritual and challenging scripture, find abandonment in the powerful music, and laugh and cry with others. When Robin Joyce gave a challenging testimonial this year, I thought to myself, “It’s time to really commit to what you believe in, Ellen.” I think that Hope Central has a healing message and is a hopeful model for Christian practitioners everywhere. We have a delightful obligation to flourish as a church community and take the risks inherent in our faith that God is Love.”

Proposed By-Law Changes

Our bylaws in section III.A.i states, "The Annual Meeting shall be held on a Sunday in January . . .,"

The proposed amendment is this, "The Annual Meeting shall be held on a Sunday in the first quarter of the year, not later than March 31, . . ." Further, a reference to the January Annual Meeting in section X.B.iv, "The Leadership Circle reviews the draft budget, makes any changes it may deem necessary and submits it to a congregational vote at the January annual meeting," would be amended by striking the word, "January."

The reason for the proposed amendment is to ease the business of preparing for the Annual Meeting, budget and nominations during the Advent and Christmas season.

Sincerely,
Abbi Holt and Pam Wylie

Annual Budget Cover Letter

Dear Beloved of Hope Central Church,

In accordance with our bylaws for fiscal stewardship of our community, the Leadership Circle in conjunction with the Finance Team presents the attached copy of three proposed budgets for 2013. We will vote on a budget at our annual meeting and ask that you please review the attachment. If you have any questions, please talk to someone in the Leadership Circle or Finance Team.

The Finance Team worked vigorously to devise a budget that was financially responsible and in alignment with the vision of Hope Central Church as a nurturing and sustaining community. This difficult task consisted of having the numbers reflect our core functions as well as what we believe our church is capable of achieving. Therefore, we present three budgets: an austerity budget, a conservative budget (*recommended*), and a prosperity budget.

The Austerity Budget reflects the basic necessities in achieving our vision and presents a balanced budget of **+\$3,285**. We calculated our pledge income to be \$140,632 using an average of the past three years' pledge fulfillment percentages (2010- 91%, 2011-93%, and 2012-96%) multiplied by our 2013 pledge amount (93% x \$151,217). The Pledge offerings combined with plate offerings, fundraising income, and rental income comes to a total income of \$295,038 projected for 2013. We rolled forward from the previous year a majority of our budgeted expenses which include Minister Compensation, Wages/Benefits, Music Ministry expenses, Childcare, and Administration expenses. We lowered our Fuel Heating, Water, and Repair and Maintenance expenses due to research in finding a new energy efficient heating system. To achieve a balanced budget, we removed the church financed retreat and hospitality supplies, additional childcare staff, and the Pastor's travel expenses. These changes result in Total Expenses of \$291,752 project for 2013.

The Conservative Budget (*recommended*) reflects our core functions as well as competitive compensation to our devoted staff, Lisa Pilat and Vanessa Morris, as they continually strive to provide us with their sheer excellence each week. This budget presents a deficit of **\$7,614**. We calculated our pledge income to be \$140,632 using an average of the past three years' pledge fulfillment percentages (2010- 91%, 2011-93%, and 2012-96%) multiplied by our 2013 pledge amount (93% x \$151,217). The Pledge offerings combined with plate offerings, fundraising income, and rental income comes to a total income of \$295,038 projected for 2013. We rolled forward from the previous year some of our budgeted expenses which include Minister Compensation, Wages/Benefits, and Administration expenses. We increased our Building Manager, Music Director, and Childcare expenses and lowered our

Fuel Heating, Water, and Repair and Maintenance expenses due to research in finding a new energy efficient heating system. These changes result in Total Expenses of \$302,652 project for 2013.

The Prosperity Budget reflects what Hope Central is capable up achieving if the financial opportunity presented itself. The full pledge fulfillment amount of \$151,217 combined with fundraising income, rental income, and increased plate offerings due to church growth totals income of \$307,623 projected for 2013. We would increase our Minister Compensation, Building Manager, Music Ministry, Janitorial Wages, and Childcare expenses and budget for an Associate Pastor. We would still lower our Fuel Heating, Water, and Repair and Maintenance expenses due to research in finding a new energy efficient heating system. These changes result in Total Expenses of \$355,068 project for 2013. This budget presents a deficit of **-\$47,445**.

As you can see, the Leadership Circle and Finance Team worked relentlessly to provide options that were visionary yet financially responsible. We are recommending the Conservative budget because we are a strong faith-based congregation that believes the work we are doing is pleasing to God and with your support and commitment, we can achieve great things! So, would you carefully read and pray over this budget?

In Warm Regards,

Submitted by Erica Rose

Treasurer, Hope Central Church

ericanrose@gmail.com

Hope Central Church 2013 Budget Proposals January - December 2013			
Income	2013 Budget Austerity	2013 Budget Conservative	2013 Budget Prosperity
4100 Congregational Income			
4100 Pledge Offerings	\$ 140,632	\$ 140,632	\$ 151,217
4150 Plate Offerings	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 14,000
4155 Fundraising Income	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
4160 Share Campaign Income			
Total 4100 Income	\$ 158,632	\$ 158,632	\$ 171,217
4300 Rental Income			
4330 Long Term Rental	\$ 102,700	\$ 102,700	\$ 102,700
4340 One Time Rental	\$ 4,821	\$ 4,821	\$ 4,821
4350 Parking Rents	\$ 28,885	\$ 28,885	\$ 28,885
Total 4300 Rental Income	\$ 136,406	\$ 136,406	\$ 136,406
4500 Interest Income			
Total Income	\$ 295,038	\$ 295,038	\$ 307,623
Expenses			
5100 Minister Compensation			
5120 Minister Salary	\$ 41,000	\$ 41,000	
5120C Central Congregational Pastor			
5120H Hope Interim Pastor			
5121 Ministers SS Offset	\$ 4,904	\$ 4,904	
5125 Housing Allowance	\$ 23,000	\$ 23,000	
5170 Minister Health Insurance	\$ 7,296	\$ 7,296	
5171 Minister's Installation			
5172 Travel			
5173 Supplies & Materials			
5174 Minister Continuing Education	\$ 500	\$ 500	
5175 Minister Retirement	\$ 9,687	\$ 9,687	
Total 5100 Minister Compensation	\$ 86,387	\$ 86,387	\$ 90,349
5200 payroll reimbursement to ccc			
5210 Guest Preachers			\$ 37,275
5300 Minister discretionary fund	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
5310 Ministers Discretionary Fund-Discretionary			
5320 Ministers Discretionary Fund-professional			
Total 5300 Minister discretionary fund	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 38,775
5800 Church Administration Wages/Benefits			
5810 Church Admin-Wages	\$ 19,760	\$ 19,760	\$ 19,760
5871 Church Admin-FICA	\$ 1,512	\$ 1,512	\$ 1,512
Total 5800 Church Administration Wages/Benefits	\$ 21,272	\$ 21,272	\$ 21,272

6400 Utilities			
6411 Fuel Heating	\$ 18,532	\$ 18,532	\$ 18,532
6412 Gas/Electricity	\$ 5,837	\$ 5,837	\$ 5,837
6413 Water/Sewer	\$ 2,890	\$ 2,890	\$ 2,890
Total 6400 Utilities	\$ 27,259	\$ 27,259	\$ 27,259
6500 Building and Grounds Expense			
6511 Rent			
6512 Repair & Maintenance	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
6513 Waste Removal	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
6514 Grounds Keeping	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
6515 Building Supplies	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
6516 Janitorial Wages	\$ 18,084	\$ 18,084	\$ 21,300
6517 Fire Alarm Service	\$ 900	\$ 900	\$ 900
6518 Sexton Fee	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
6521 Building Insurance	\$ 7,866	\$ 7,866	\$ 7,866
6522 Insurance WC	\$ 2,247	\$ 2,247	\$ 2,247
6531 Building Manager Salary	\$ 24,700	\$ 26,000	\$ 27,300
6571 Building FICA	\$ 1,383	\$ 1,383	\$ 1,629
6572 Building Manager FICA	\$ 1,890	\$ 1,989	\$ 2,088
6599 Misc Repair & Maintenance			
Total 6500 Building and Grounds Expense	\$ 73,570	\$ 74,969	\$ 79,831
7100 Social Justice Ministry	\$ 15,263	\$ 15,263	\$ 16,522
7111 Contributions/Mission			
7115 SJM Supplies			
7119 SJM Events			
7199 SJM Misc			
Total 7100 Social Justice Ministry	\$ 15,263	\$ 15,263	\$ 16,522
7140 Seminarian In Care Support	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500
7150 Ordination Expenses	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300
7160 Ecclesiastical Council Expenses			
7170 Psychological Exam Expense	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 600
Total 7140 Seminarian In Care Support	\$ 1,400	\$ 1,400	\$ 1,400
7200 Music Ministry			
7211 Musicians	\$ 12,480	\$ 12,480	\$ 16,640
7212 Director of Music	\$ 15,600	\$ 18,200	\$ 20,800
7220 Music Director FICA	\$ 1,193	\$ 1,392	\$ 1,591
7221 Music Director SS tax			
Total 7212 Director of Music	\$ 16,793	\$ 19,592	\$ 22,391
7213 Guest Musicians	\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 400
7214 AV Tech	\$ 1,560	\$ 1,560	\$ 1,560
7216 SS Expense			

7217 FICA			
7215 Music & AV Supplies	\$ 700	\$ 700	\$ 2,200
Total 7200 Music Ministry	\$ 31,933	\$ 34,732	\$ 43,191
7250 Worship and Hospitality			
7251 Worship Materials and Supplies	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
7253 Set Up/Take Down			
7255 Guest Minister Honorarium (deleted)			
7257 Hospitality Events			
7258 Hospitality Supplies	\$ -	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,500
Total 7250 Worship and Hospitality	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,500
7300 Religious Education/Childcare			
7311 Coordinator Childcare/Education			
7312 Childcare Staff	\$ 2,600	\$ 6,500	\$ 2,600
7315 Childcare FICA	\$ 199	\$ 497	\$ 199
Total 7312 Childcare Staff	\$ 2,799	\$ 6,500	\$ 2,600
7314 Supplies Religious Ed/Childcare	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 150
7321 Youth Group			
7331 Religious Education/Adult	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ 100
7332 Church Retreat	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
7333 Field Education Expense	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000
Total 7300 Religious Education/Childcare	\$ 7,049	\$ 12,750	\$ 8,850
7400 Fundraising Expense			
7500 Missions and Memorials			
7511 Missions			
7512 Memorials			
7513 Flowers	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300
Total 7500 Missions and Memorials	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300
8200 Church Growth/Marketing	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
8211 Printing			
8212 Mailings/Advertisement			
8213 Web Page Expenses			
8217 New Marketing Initiatives			
Total 8200 Church Growth/Marketing	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
8500 Dues and Fees	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
8511 Denominational Dues			
8519 Misc Dues/Fees			
Total 8500 Dues and Fees	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
8900 Administration			
8910 Copier Lease	\$ 1,404	\$ 1,404	\$ 1,404
8911 Telephone	\$ 2,646	\$ 2,646	\$ 2,646
8912 Travel/Business Expense			

8913 Accounting/Bookkeeping	\$ 893	\$ 893	\$ 893
8915 Bank/Processing Fees	\$ 700	\$ 700	\$ 700
8916 Insurance Admin			
8921 Legal			
8929 Supplies	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,400
8931 Computer Expenses	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500
8932 Office Equipment Expenses	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200
8933 Postage	\$ 400	\$ 400	\$ 400
8998 Office/General Administrative Expenses			
8999 Miscellaneous Admin Expenses	\$ 2,100	\$ 2,100	\$ 2,100
Total 8900 Administration	\$ 11,243	\$ 11,243	\$ 11,243
9100 Non-Operating Expenses	\$ 8,876	\$ 8,876	\$ 8,876
9111 Search Expenses			
9112 Building Reserve Set-Aside			
Total 9100 Non-Operating Expenses	\$ 8,876	\$ 8,876	\$ 8,876
Purchases			
Uncategorized Expense			
Total Expenses	\$ 291,752	\$ 302,652	\$ 355,068
Net Operating Income	\$ 3,285	\$ (7,614)	\$ (47,445)
Total Other Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Net Other Income	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Net Income	\$ 3,285	\$ (7,614)	\$ (47,445)

Reports

Pastor's Report

Dear Beloved,

I thank God for you. 2012 has been a good year for Hope Central Church. God has been working with us, and more and more, we are able to align ourselves with God's purpose for us.

We are a congregation growing in spiritual depth, in willingness to lead in our congregation according to our spiritual gifts, in doing the things we love, in knowing each other by participating in small groups, by visiting across services.

We worshipped together a lot this year, about 114 times (127 if we count our services at the Rogerson House). We had good worship and Spirit moved us. We tried some new things. We worshipped at the neighborhood sprinkler park and in our yard. We baptized Eliza and dedicated Calhoun. We laid our Alice Pollock to rest, blessed backpacks, bicycles, the Leadership Circle, sent Kevin Baker Rooks and Stacey Schamber on their way, and married Jan and Mary up from Ashville, NC. We said a lot of prayers, sang a lot, grieved and gloried together.

The team that makes worship happen at Hope Central, the Worship, Arts, Music Ministry (WAMM) has had a good year. WAMM has two subcommittees, the Worship Planning Team and the Sacristy Team. This year, as the Worship Planning Team has become more experienced, we have been able to work further ahead, which has allowed more room for creativity in worship—and this has been a lot of fun. The Sacristy team, led by Suzanne Wolk, has done a fabulous job this year. Their holy work of preparing communion for us, twice a week, has been spectacular. They also prepare the sanctuary for worship, decorating, doing small and large things to make our worship experience meaningful. Ellen Snoeyenbos has provided homemade communion bread and bought all the juice we used.

Since our merger, Hope and Central, in February 2010, we have had two services every Sunday, so that no one would feel as though their service was taken away from them. The services were identical, as best as we could make them. People identified themselves with the service they attended. Now, little by little, those services are evolving. We are working to design services that allow us to do the worship and work of the whole congregation. We continue to pay close attention to the way God is calling us, sometimes having joint services so we may be together. We already know that in July, we will have services only in the morning, and in August we'll have services only in the evening. We will continue these practices based not on what has been done in the past but on prayer, vision, community need, and capacity.

I give thanks for Javier Cartegena and Neil Helme, who tend our sound system during our services. If we can't be heard, we might as well go home, and Javier and Neil make sure that we are heard.

Our music program continues to grow under the leadership of Vanessa Morris. We are blessed to receive her musical gifts and leadership. Vanessa is a great colleague, a valued member of our worship staff. I believe that the better she plays, the deeper I fall into prayer in our services. Vanessa leads our music team, Gillian DeLear, Neil Helme, and Bobby Hall. Together, they play interesting, unorthodox, fresh church music that is like heaven.

We have been committed to learning our tradition through Bible Study, following the liturgical year, and biblical preaching. We are building a Sunday School for our children, finding space dedicated to their education, finding and supporting our teachers, using curriculum that opens up the wonder of the Divine, of God, for our children. We hired a consultant for children's Sunday School, the Rev. Karla Miller, to help us support our teachers, to help build infrastructure, to recruit volunteers. Patti Ryan, and then Matt Mulder, with volunteer support have carried Sunday School in the morning. Emmie Barnard, now with Karla Miller, have carried the evening Sunday School.

In 2013 we will need to step further, more boldly, into building our children's Sunday School. We need to do this because our children deserve the best we can offer, because their spiritual training, with their parents, schools, and communities, is up to us. We need to build this Sunday School to be more self-sustaining. We have been depending on a few folks, but we need a broader base of support—parents, but not just parents. More of us need to take part.

For adults, all year, we've had weekly Bible Study led by Deborah Malone on Wednesdays. With Terry Steeden's coordination, we have had adult Sunday School since September, just before and now just after the morning service. Terry, Lance Wiser, and John Brock have taught these classes. Lillian Fuchs led retreats on Mindfulness, pairing Christian practice and teachings with the wisdom of Thich Nhat Han. Lillian and I led Enneagram classes, for the learning of our ways together as community. In September, I started a monthly class on Christian Mysticism.

With the leadership of Kathy Bermingham, our congregation provides a monthly opportunity for the residents of the Rogerson House to worship and take communion. Kathy often preaches. Our worship group consists of Kathy, Courtney Jones, Nina Swift, and me.

We continue our work as a teaching congregation. Peter Johnston from Boston University School of Theology, Hope Central's first field education student, completed his placement with us in May. In September Courtney Jones from Andover Newton School of Theology began her placement with us. I love working with Courtney, and find her to be rewardingly interested in learning the work of pastoring. She is sincere, funny, and talented in the work of ministry. She gives much to our congregation, and works hard. I think she is a great asset to us.

Our Leadership Circle has led us wisely this year. It was a transition year for the Leadership Circle, moving from handling every detail themselves to giving work away to other teams, circles, and committees, and managing oversight of the congregation. The Leadership Circle went from meeting twice a month to a monthly meeting. I praise them for their commitment and flexibility.

The Leadership Circle has been led by our co-moderators, Abbi Holt and Pam Wylie. We have worked together well, closely, and often, to notice the work of the congregation, to notice God's call to us, and to move ourselves in the direction of that calling. I have loved working with them because together we have been willing to learn, grow, trust. Pretty thrilling.

We continue the work of the In-Care Team, caring for folks who understand their call to be ordained ministry. We are led by Annie Walsh, who is a model of leadership. She understands the importance of this ministry, she plans, schedules, follows up, and prays for our work and our candidates. Kudos!

Barbara McQueen leads our Called-to-Care Team, the group that works with me to provide pastoral care for our congregation. This team continues to evolve into a committed, spiritually sophisticated, caring people. I feel completely lucky to have this group help with the pastoral work of the congregation. Barbara is a great leader and is respected by our team.

We started a round of small supper groups, hosting supper in each other's homes once a month so that we may know each other, may see God in each other. Not every group has met yet, but the new year will hopefully bring groups together.

Our Finance Team is coming into its own, steering our congregation to better financial transparency and health. With the congregation's pledges and offerings, guided by the Finance Team, we are able to pay for the vision that Hope Central is called to do. The confidence we experience in our financial practices flows into confidence for our ministry. I am grateful for the progress we have made in this area, and pray it continues. Last year, we begged Judy Wagoner to be treasurer because we needed someone—and she did a great job. Now, also, I want to thank Erica Rose, who has stepped into the treasurer's role, exercising her spiritual gifts and enthusiasm for this work.

Our Communications Team continued to make us visible to the world. Nanette Savides kept up our website, through which most of our visitors come to know about us. She does an excellent job, really! Hilary Allen designed almost all of our ads, posters, flyers, and cards. Abbi and Yuliana Leon kept us posted on Facebook.

Our Outreach Team, led by Abbi Holt and Laura Everett, did a great job of helping the community know about our special services at Easter and Advent. They accidentally did a wonderful job of getting us press coverage this Christmas!

We built a new team in 2012, the Leadership Development Team. The team's purpose is to help imagine encouraging and building leadership for a growing congregation. We are growing, and in order to continue to grow, we need to imagine each of us as leaders, we need to fund for growth, make space for growth, hire for growth, encourage each one to step into his or her innate leadership based on spiritual gifts. Or we need to decide to stay the size we are, or even decrease in membership just a little. The Leadership Development Team is discussing these issues, and is responsible to the Leadership Circle. We've met five times in 2012, and have been learning from each other what we know/perceive about where our congregation is, and where it is going. We'll continue our work in 2013.

Another new team was created this year, the Personnel Team, headed by Nia Rodgers, to hire, advise, evaluate, and implement policies to help us treat our employees with respect. The first act of the Personnel Team was the hiring of Jen Kiok, who began on September 1 as Administrative Manager for the church. The work of this team has just begun and will continue in 2013.

I want to say thank you to our administrative staff, Lisa Pilat for our building; April Trussell-Smith, who left for California in June; Steve Vandergrift, who filled in last summer; and Jen Kiok, all these Administrative Managers for the church. Lisa has been with the church for about five years and works consistently at a high level. April, Steve, and Jen have made the congregation work, and I'm grateful.

Thank you to the Minister's Support Team. I trust them. They listen carefully, give great advice, talk me out of wild and bad ideas, and love me up. I love that about them.

Lastly, thank you to Lillian Fuchs and all who produced the Harvest Concert, and to those who organized the Swing Dance and Auction, principally Nancy Azar, Suzanne Wolk, and many others. Both events were wonderful, and they raised money, and we got to dance together.

In 2013, I believe God is calling us to growth—to spiritual growth, and through this to numerical growth. We are an in-between-sized church, too big for one person to lead, too small yet for more paid staff. But we are incredibly faithful to giving, to the process of learning, to helping out those in our congregation in need. We are learning how to show up, not take on too much, lead where we can, follow and participate where it is appropriate. Although we've not had a membership campaign, although we are not yet actively inviting our community and friends to services, we continue to grow. Our attendance is 30% higher than it was last year. Although we have lost a few members who have moved away, we have gained new members. As we grow and as we give, who we understand ourselves to be has changed a bit, and it is exciting to imagine who we are becoming. I think we are a congregation determined to be self-supporting, something we have almost accomplished this past year. I think we long to be doing the work of God in the world, but are not sure yet what that means for our Ministry of Justice and Compassion. I believe we are becoming a neighborhood church, being connected to the real people in our real neighborhood with real

spiritual longing. I believe we are becoming a congregation that has begun to understand the spiritual power we generate on behalf of the Kingdom of God.

I praise God for Hope Central. I love how we are not only a teaching congregation but also a learning congregation. I love how we begin things because we want to try, and when things are over, done, work or don't work, we move on to try something new. I love that when we make mistakes, we ask what we would do differently next time. It's thrilling that we dare to try to follow God's Spirit, and that the following is more important than the mistakes. I love that we have artists in our congregation, and I invite your art in our worship, in our building. Let's see where we might substitute art for words. Mostly, I love our congregation as a group, and its individuals, all of us learning to be spiritually well, grounded in God, seeking depth. I believe we are God-kissed, and we are noticing this for ourselves, and noticing on behalf of a world that longs, through justice and compassion, for a touch of God. I believe that this could be our duty and response to being beloved. Come, Spirit, come.

Love,

Laura Ruth

--

Laura Ruth Jarrett

Pastor and Teacher

Hope Central Church

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Student Minister Report

Dear Church,

In September, I was commissioned as the student minister at Hope Central Church. I can't believe how my year with you is flying! When I arrived, I was unsure what to expect. Maybe I would learn how to lead worship, preach, and attend some meetings. My education has been so much more; every day I learn from you all what it is to be church, and that has changed my understanding of what it means to do ministry. The genuine love in this congregation, how everyone brings their most authentic selves to the service of the Divine in work and play, has been the most inspiring and educational part of my time so far.

It is such a blessing to be growing into my identity as a minister in this community. What an exciting opportunity, to be part of an active, growing congregation as it discerns its mission! This church is full of strong leaders. Watching the Leadership Circle do business on behalf of the congregation, and seeing their dedication to this church, is inspiring. I have been moved by the pastoral care this congregation offers, including leading worship with our elders at the Rogerson House and learning from the Called to Care Team, a group that serves the congregation with grace and compassion. Most recently, it has been remarkable to see the way this church came together to reduce the deficit! But above all, it is the spirit with which you all do the work that makes me feel so blessed to be on this journey, and it is that spirit that will carry me into my ministry.

I want to especially acknowledge my Teaching Parish Committee—Anne Broyles, Nancy Doherty, Daniel Verinder, and Nancy Azar—for their commitment to being part of this journey, setting aside time and space and sharing their energy and wisdom with me. They have been amazingly caring, insightful, and generous. Additionally, I cannot express strongly enough how grateful I am for Laura Ruth, whose supervision has been critical to helping me integrate and articulate my learning. She is giving me so many opportunities to find my voice, to grow as a spiritual person and as a leader, and her confidence in me is overwhelming. Her thoughtful leadership of this congregation is a great inspiration to me, as I know it is to you, and it is a joy to work with her. The education Hope Central is giving me will serve me well as a minister, so I cannot thank you *all* enough for opening your church and your hearts to me and for your support and encouragement this year.

Blessings,

Courtney

Moderators' Report

Dear Church,

As Laura Ruth described in her report, we have been wonderfully busy at Hope Central in 2012. The Leadership Circle met once a month this year and that reduction from 2 monthly meetings generally worked well since everyone on Leadership was also a part of a Ministry Team and would report in about the work of their team. In the spirit of reducing the workload, Abbi and I agreed to Co-Moderate this year and share the task of leading the meetings and the preparatory work as well. In addition to our monthly LC meetings, we met twice each month with Laura Ruth to review the issues of the church and prepare for the LC meetings. A lot of meetings for sure but they were rich in deepening relationships and spirit.

My favorite part of our LC meetings is the devotional led by Laura Ruth. She reads us a passage, usually from the coming Sunday's liturgy, and raises a question about how the spirit revealed in the text has been experienced in our lives and in the life of our community. We reflect, share and grow together in this process. As co-moderator this year, I feel that I have also grown in my understanding of how to be a spirit led leader. This is a challenge for me since I've been a project manager in construction for most of my working life and in addition to being organized, being firm and assertive are the tools that are used to lead teams in this industry. I believe that my last year's experience as moderator has helped me begin to understand that by supporting others, their voices, their truths, their perspective, the spirit as it is expressed through their experience will lead us. I will miss being on LC but leave grateful for the experience.

-Pam Wylie

Being co-moderator this year has been a wonderful experience for me as well. I have been so excited to see our community grow and mature this year, weaving together in new ways. I have also been delighted to watch and work with Laura Ruth as she has grown into her role as senior pastor. It will be with great confidence in the continuing and new members of the Leadership Circle and our pastor that I will step off of the LC after the next annual meeting. We are in good hands.

-Abbi Holt

Celebrated the marriage of Judy Wagoner to Sandy Prager in August

Witnessed and celebrated the marriage of Mary Kancevitch (age 71) and Jan Hastings (age 83) on September 8 (Partners for 17 years, they came to Massachusetts to be legally wed; they returned to their home state of North Carolina buoyed by the love of this community and the joy within their hearts)

Welcomed our student minister Courtney Jones in September

Honored the 25th anniversary of the relationship between our beloved pastor and teacher, Laura Ruth Jarrett and her love, Meck Groot in November

Final Note

One final act of 2012 was to update our long neglected records. The total number of active covenant partners as of 12.31.2012, not including children, was 112.

All this is testament to the vibrancy of this wonderful family. May 2013 allow us to witness more of God's work through us.

Your Clerk,
Nancy Azar

Building Ministry

The building Ministry was blessed with the support of many dedicated people and sub-teams in 2012. Our building manager Lisa Pilat, as always, stayed on top of day-to-day operations including everything from starting the boiler, trouble-shooting repairs, and collecting rents to coordinating with our neighbors on pest control. Lisa also helped us to identify and coordinate a number of special projects, list our maintenance priorities and achieve rental goals throughout the year.

The Rent Negotiation team successfully came to new terms with Iglesia Hispana and the Mosaic School. The new terms allow us all to have flexibility as we grow and as finances change. We continue to receive steady income from parking operations and facility rentals.

Grounds and maintenance received a boost from several volunteer work days and from youth groups that helped clean up our parking lot, playground and side yard. We somehow found room for installation of a new dogwood tree and a perennial garden at the corner of the parking lot. We also began thinking about making a contemplative garden.

There was plenty of work on the inside of the building as well. You may have noticed our “See It, Do it” posters reminding us all to take responsibility for our building. These posters and building repair forms have helped us stay on top of maintenance like repairing pews, watering plants and tidying the kitchen. 2012 also saw fresh coats of paint, updates to the sound system and a donation for new carpet tiles for the parlor.

Finally 2012 saw the start of some initiatives to make our building and grounds more green. The Garden team constructed two new, and highly visible, raised beds for vegetables and piloted a community garden style work and produce share. We learned a lot about dirt, weather, and motivation and we ate a lot of raspberries. However our biggest green initiative for the year is in the area of energy efficiency. We began research to find and price a new energy efficient heating system. Terry Steeden, along with Lisa Pilat are leading that effort and working with MA Interfaith Power and Light to identify the right system for our needs. Look for updates and ways to get involved throughout 2013.

-Nia Rodgers

Called to Care Team

In 2012 the called to care team continued our work as a confidence keeping ministry that attends to the pastoral needs within Hope Central Church. Our relationships with each other have gone deeper as we work and pray together to find the best ways to notice and attend to our congregation and each other.

This year Kathy Bermingham took leadership and began offering monthly services at Rogerson House and may expand to do a service at the Mount Pleasant Home as well. We have recently revived the practice of being available during communion in the back of the sanctuary to offer hands on prayers. The ministry of our team has also included one on one relationships with elders in the congregation, bringing meals and providing support for folks during times of illness or stress, providing rides to church for those who couldn't get to church any other way, and visiting new babies and parents with a meal and a small gift. We are grateful for the babies and small children that are part of our congregation.

Our team meets once a month. During these meetings we are learning about being a “divine presence” for others, supporting one another in our work and sharing the concerns and care of the congregation. We are blessed to be called to serve the Hope Central community and look forward to doing this work in 2013.

-Barbara McQueen

Christian Education

This year, Christian Education has had two areas to share...First, the continuing education of the young children during worship...Second, the new Sunday morning Christian Education for Adults...

While Christian Education for the kids has been operating for a number of years, there were some significant changes this year. As the new year began, Matt Mulder, Patti Ryan and Emmie Barnard took responsibility for educating and caring for our kids during worship. They have done a remarkable job together. Then, last summer, after years of serving, Patti found the need to discontinue this gift to the children. So Matt continued with the responsibility for the morning class, and Emmie for the evening class. We attempted to get more adult volunteers to help with both morning and evening gatherings, being more successful at some times than others.

Late this fall, after some suggestions and discussion, the Christian Education team along with Laura Ruth, determined to search out some professional help to build a program that would be grounded and solid, have great theological teaching that is age appropriate, that would be predictable, and that would help build a great reputation around the church.

We were delighted to find Karla Miller, who we knew from Godly Play training. We were pleased to find Karla available and have enjoyed and appreciated the skills she is bringing to this task. We also appreciate the response for our teachers and our parents as we begin to expand this infrastructure.

The second area, which is new this year, is adding a new Christian Education program for adults on Sunday morning. We have tried meeting before church and after church. The after church time works much better, so we meet at noon. The classes have been an eclectic mix of Bible overview, Jonah, and modern mystics. The classes for the new year are about to be announced and are likewise and interesting and changing set of themes. Each class runs typically 4 Sundays and then a different person takes the next four Sundays. We hope this becomes a permanent part of our ministries.

-Terry Steeden

Finance Team

What a wonderfully blessed year this has been for Hope Central Church! We have seen new faces, an amazing Swing Dance, and so much more.

In 2012, we generated a net income (**profit**) of \$13,287 through doubling our plate offerings, excelling in fundraising and long-term rentals, as well as meeting 99% of our budgeted pledge offerings (\$ value). As a devoted congregation, you have given your time, talents, and money to successfully surpass our budget goals.

The 2012 Financial Statement of Budget vs. Actuals, attached, shows our income of \$310,940 against expenses of \$297,669. Income exceeded budget by 3% due to, as stated above, an influx of support to reduce the deficit projected at the beginning of December.

Furthermore, we saw our expenses decrease through unforeseen events such as a change in our church administrator, no expenses for guest musicians, no church retreat expenses, lower childcare expenses, and our contributions to the Social Justice Ministry not being reflected in 2012 (which will be seen in 2013).

Thanks to everyone who made our 2012 success possible.

Submitted by Erica Rose

Treasurer, Hope Central Church

ericanrose@gmail.com

2012 P&L - Actuals vs. Budget

January - December 2012

	Total		
	Actual	Budget	% of Budget
Income			
4100 Pledge Offerings	\$ 145,166.65	\$ 147,000.00	99%
4150 Plate Offerings	\$ 16,844.32	\$ 8,000.00	211%
4155 Fundraising Income	\$ 6,576.22	\$ 6,000.00	110%
4160 Share Campaign Income	\$ 485.80		
4200 Special Gifts	\$ 1,570.00		
4210 Special Event	\$ 152.00		
4230 Memorial Fund Donations	\$ 50.00		
4299 Special Gifts-other	\$ 5,250.00		
Total 4200 Special Gifts	\$ 7,022.00	\$ -	
4300 Rental Income			
4330 Long Term Rental	\$ 103,639.30	\$ 100,698.00	103%
4340 One Time Rental	\$ 4,580.00	\$ 6,000.00	76%
4350 Parking Rents	\$ 26,675.00	\$ 33,000.00	81%
Total 4300 Rental Income	\$ 134,894.30	\$ 139,698.00	97%
4500 Interest Income	\$ 0.33		
Total Income	\$ 310,989.62	\$ 300,698.00	103%
Gross Profit	\$ 310,989.62	\$ 300,698.00	103%
Expenses			
5100 Minister Compensation			
Total 5100 Minister Compensation	\$ 88,094.25	\$ 87,177.00	101%
5300 Minister discretionary fund	\$ 602.11	\$ 1,500.00	40%
5310 Ministers Discretionary Fund-Discretionary	\$ 170.25		
Total 5300 Minister discretionary fund	\$ 772.36	\$ 1,500.00	51%
5800 Church Administration Wages/Benefits			
5810 Church Admin-Wages	\$ 24,063.75	\$ 29,640.00	81%
5871 Church Admin-FICA	\$ 1,347.52	\$ 2,267.00	59%
Total 5800 Church Administration Wages/Benefits	\$ 25,411.27	\$ 31,907.00	80%
6400 Utilities		\$ -	
6411 Fuel Heating	\$ 25,663.19	\$ 17,000.00	151%
6412 Gas/Electricity	\$ 5,856.24	\$ 5,000.00	117%
6413 Water/Sewer	\$ 3,912.17	\$ 2,500.00	156%
Total 6400 Utilities	\$ 35,431.60	\$ 24,500.00	145%
6500 Building and Grounds Expense		\$ -	
6512 Repair & Maintenance	\$ 24,776.85	\$ 18,000.00	138%
6513 Waste Removal	\$ 1,330.97	\$ 2,250.00	59%
6514 Grounds Keeping	\$ 3,440.00	\$ 8,000.00	43%
6515 Building Supplies	\$ 2,542.55	\$ 3,000.00	85%
6516 Janitorial Wages	\$ 18,084.00	\$ 17,274.00	105%
6517 Fire Alarm Service	\$ 666.25	\$ 900.00	74%
6521 Building Insurance	\$ 6,712.00	\$ 7,866.00	85%
6522 Insurance WC	\$ 2,117.12	\$ 1,617.00	131%
6531 Building Manager Salary	\$ 24,491.00	\$ 24,700.00	99%

6571 Building FICA	\$	935.64	\$	1,321.00	71%
6572 Building Manager FICA	\$	1,383.74	\$	1,890.00	73%
6599 Misc Repair & Maintenance	\$	151.87			
Total 6500 Building and Grounds Expense	\$	86,631.99	\$	86,818.00	100%
7100 Social Justice Ministry	\$	2,700.00	\$	15,500.00	17%
7111 Contributions/Mission	\$	2,810.00			
7115 SJM Supplies	\$	32.73			
Total 7100 Social Justice Ministry	\$	5,542.73	\$	15,500.00	36%
7140 Seminarian In Care Support			\$	500.00	0%
7150 Ordination Expenses	\$	332.91	\$	200.00	166%
7170 Psychological Exam Expense	\$	300.00	\$	300.00	100%
Total 7140 Seminarian In Care Support	\$	632.91	\$	1,000.00	63%
7200 Music Ministry	\$	80.00			
7211 Musicians	\$	12,110.00	\$	12,480.00	97%
7212 Director of Music	\$	15,900.00	\$	15,600.00	102%
7220 Music Director FICA	\$	667.80	\$	1,193.00	56%
7221 Music Director SS tax	\$	230.55			
Total 7212 Director of Music	\$	16,798.35	\$	16,793.00	100%
7213 Guest Musicians			\$	960.00	0%
7214 Audio/Visual	\$	510.00			
7216 SS Expense	\$	21.42			
7217 Musician FICA	\$	7.41			
Total 7214 Audio/Visual	\$	538.83	\$	-	
7215 Music Supplies	\$	256.90	\$	500.00	51%
Total 7200 Music Ministry	\$	29,784.08	\$	30,733.00	97%
7250 Worship and Hospitality	\$	1,437.70			
7251 Worship Materials and Supplies	\$	560.91	\$	1,500.00	37%
7258 Hospitality Supplies	\$	293.36	\$	2,000.00	15%
Total 7250 Worship and Hospitality	\$	2,291.97	\$	3,500.00	65%
7300 Religious Education/Childcare					
7311 Coordinator Childcare/Education	\$	480.00	\$	-	
7312 Childcare Staff	\$	1,955.67	\$	6,240.00	31%
7315 Childcare FICA	\$	71.18			
Total 7312 Childcare Staff	\$	2,026.85	\$	6,240.00	32%
7314 Supplies Religious Ed/Childcare	\$	27.12	\$	300.00	9%
7331 Religious Education/Adult	\$	129.97	\$	500.00	26%
7332 Church Retreat	\$	(901.09)	\$	2,000.00	-45%
7333 Field Education Expense	\$	3,001.00	\$	3,000.00	100%
Total 7300 Religious Education/Childcare	\$	4,763.85	\$	12,040.00	40%
7400 Fundraising Expense	\$	752.49			
7500 Missions and Memorials	\$	200.00			
7511 Missions	\$	100.00			
7513 Flowrs	\$	45.19			
Total 7500 Missions and Memorials	\$	345.19	\$	-	
8200 Church Growth/Marketing			\$	3,000.00	0%
8211 Printing	\$	327.78			
8212 Mailings/Advertisement	\$	1,552.25			
8217 New Marketin Initiatives	\$	488.42			
Total 8200 Church Growth/Marketing	\$	2,368.45	\$	3,000.00	79%
8500 Dues and Fees	\$	2,453.40	\$	2,403.00	102%

8519 Misc Dues/Fees	\$	25.00		
Total 8500 Dues and Fees	\$	2,478.40	\$	2,403.00 103%
8900 Administration	\$	78.55	\$	9,000.00 1%
8910 Copier Lease	\$	1,444.47		
8911 Telephone/Internet	\$	2,491.09		
8913 Accounting/Bookkeeping	\$	926.31		
8915 Bank/Processing Fees	\$	724.90		
8929 Supplies	\$	2,358.83		
8931 Computer Expenses	\$	757.67		
8932 Office Equipment Expenses	\$	13.06		
8933 Postage	\$	473.58		
8998 Office/General Administrative Expenses	\$	2,064.38		
Total 8900 Administration	\$	11,332.84	\$	9,000.00 126%
Uncategorized Expense	\$	1,034.30		
Total Expenses	\$	297,668.68	\$	309,078.00 96%
Net Operating Income	\$	13,320.94	\$	(8,380.00) -159%
Other Expenses				
Total Other Expenses	\$	34.08	\$	-
Net Other Income	\$	(34.08)	\$	-
Net Income	\$	13,286.86	\$	(8,380.00) -159%

Hospitality

The Hospitality function at Hope Central Church primarily serves to maintain the weekly post-worship coffee hour. Acting on our vision to extend a radical welcome to all people, a small but dedicated crew has not missed a Sunday morning this year.

The core team managed the logistics for Sunday services, potlucks, ecclesiastic councils, and even an impromptu wedding for visitors from North Carolina.

Members of the congregation provided the sustenance in the forms of baked goods, casseroles, and a wedding feast featuring a spectacular sunflower cake; as well as the energy to set up and break down for special events.

Hope Central Hospitality in the upcoming year will take a new direction, rotating responsibilities for the weekly morning gatherings. We invite all members of the congregation to join us and to put their own special touch on our radical welcome.

-J. Conlon

In-Care Committee

Dear Church:

The faithful and faith-filled Hope Central In-Care Committee continues to support and endorse candidates for ordination in either the United Church of Christ (UCC) or The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The Committee meets with each candidate at least two times per year. These meetings are structured to question, support, challenge, bless, and love the candidate at each phase of the discernment and ordination process. The Committee represents the body of Hope Central Church as the “local church” as we support our members who seek ordination.

In addition to Rev. Laura Ruth Jarrett, Alan Bone, John Brock, and Annie Walsh comprise the group. The Committee bid a sad farewell to Kate Dare-Winters, Stacey Schamber, and Elizabeth Gagnon, who had so ably participated in the work of the Committee over the years.

2012 was a joyful year for the Committee:

Ordination:

- Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, February 19, 2012

Ecclesiastical Council:

- Nanette Savides, February 15, 2012

Four-way Covenants:

- Jasmine Beach-Ferrara
- Laura Everett
- Melissa Kreider

The Committee prayerfully looks forward to working with Nanette Savides, Bruce Baker-Rooks Lance Wiser, and Alex Shea Will as they continue on their spiritual journeys toward ordination.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Walsh

Chair

Outreach

This year the outreach team continued its work of inviting people to church through the giving of tasty fairtrade treats at various T stops and on the bike path. Again we engaged in caroling, and although at first the T rebuffed us, eventually we were invited back and the new general manager of the T actually came and caroled with us. In the end it was a publicity success and very fun to boot. We are also running regular ads in the JP Gazette and posting major events on the JP patch. Wonderfully, Hillary Allen has also stepped up into a coordinating role and has helped us craft a common look and feel to our outreach materials using her graphic design skills. As much work as the outreach team has been putting into all of this, remember, most folks come because they are invited by a friend, so go forth and invite!

-Abbi Holt

Personnel Team

This year we said goodbye to April Trussel-Smith and hired our new very capable Office Manager Jen Kiok. Jen brings a career of community activism as well as amazing organizing capabilities. Welcome!

The Personnel team decided to begin conducting annual reviews for Church staff as well as our Pastor. This is a way to formalize lines of communication between staff to both thank our staff and set new goals. The staff includes Lisa Pilat, Building Manager; Jen Kiok, Office manager; Leonel Cermeno, Sexton; and Vanessa Morris, Music Director.

The Personnel team also evaluated our lay staff compensation amounts as compared to other churches and other businesses. We made a recommendation to the Finance team to raise several staff members pay rate as well as work toward fair and just compensation. We believe that being a church doesn't mean we can indenture our staff. We will be codifying our recommendations for a yearly percentage increase as well as reviewing our payments for per diem staff like our musicians and sound equipment operator. We are also looking into ways that we can help our staff save for retirement.

Our next step is to conduct a review of our Pastor Laura Ruth and look at ways to solicit meaningful feedback from the congregation as a whole.

-Christie Dustman

Prosperity (Fundraising)

December 1, 2012 marked the 3rd Annual Swing Dance and Auction. Thanks to the generosity and talent of this gifted community, this year's profit is somewhere in the \$5,000 range (final receipts are still being tallied).

While smaller than last year, the auction was bursting with treasures from the hands and hearts of our congregation. Unlike previous years, the bidding wars were lively, and, in the end, strategy prevailed, and both the winners and the church benefited from the spirited exchanges.

The Fabulous Mood Swings Orchestra again lived up to their name and their reputation, keeping the largest crowd to date swinging and grooving all through the night.

Word is getting out that this is *the* event of the season; and with God's grace, it will continue to be so for a long, long time.

Nancy Azar, on behalf of the

Fundraising Team

October 13, 2012 marked the 3rd annual Harvest Concert. The Harvest Concert is an annual fundraiser that celebrates local music talent. It is unique in that all musicians and staff donate their time and talent. In 2011 & 2012, it has brought in between \$700-\$900 profit each year.

-Lillian Fuchs

Social Justice

Social justice has not finished its giving yet because we were waiting for funds to come in. Amazingly, you folks stepped up with end of the year gifts and we will be able to fund the full budgeted amount of the social justice giving. So far we have sent off checks to the denominational missions and to the St. Paul's clinic in Kenya, one of our long term projects for whom money is very tight, but hopefully we will meet soon to send off the rest of the checks. We have also funded at least 13 fast track grants for a total of around 5,500 dollars including funding to help a new DOC church start in Worcester for folks in that area without homes and a number of pastor fast track grants to help our own struggling parishioners.

-Abbi Holt

Stewardship

It was a wonderful year for stewardship. The community gathered and more deeply understood our responsibility for each other and our world. We explored the theme of providing sanctuary. This year 75 people or households (affectionately referred to as pledging units) pledged a total of \$148,495 and we received \$141,915.70. The range of pledges was from \$24 to \$16,000 with a median of \$1,200. We so proud that our last years pledge fulfillment rate was 96%!! This is fantastic! We are growing more deeply in providing a strong beloved community. Thank you all.

Robin Joyce, on behalf of the

Stewardship Team

Stewardship 2012:

75 people Pledged: \$148,495.05

Pledges Received as of 1/22/13: \$141,915.70

(96% of the total amount pledged)

Range: \$24-\$16,000

Median: \$1,200

Of the 75 people who pledged:

- 36% fulfilled over 100% of their pledge
- 28% fulfilled exactly 100% of their pledge
- 19% fulfilled between 50%-92% of their pledge
- 17% fulfilled between 0%-34% of their pledge
- Only 3 people gave 0% of their pledge

Teaching Parish Committee

In September, we welcomed Courtney Jones as our ministry intern/field education student for the year. We want to support her as she serves with us, grows in faith and learns about ministry. One of these supports is a Teaching Parish Committee, which Laura Ruth describes in this way:

The Teaching Parish Committee's work is to be Courtney's first Minister's Support Team, to help her notice what she loves to do and what she'd like to do, how she might do things differently, to help her process her experience with Hope Central, including helping her understand her work with me. Our standard of excellence is to be learning (it is not perfection!) The TPC should pray for Courtney, meet with her monthly, be present in services so she sees her support, and help her after she preaches, to praise her, God in her, and hold up a mirror for her understanding of herself as a preacher.

Hope Central's Teaching Parish Committee is a mix of clergy and laity, men and women with a variety of experiences to share. We will meet with Courtney once a month until she completes her time with us in May. Please join us in supporting Courtney by attending worship when she preaches and with your facial expressions and body language, encouraging her in this important work. One sentence from the above paragraph applies to all of us at Hope Central (and also applies to our relationship with our pastor, Laura Ruth). All of us can "pray for Courtney), be present in services so they sees our support, and help her after she preaches, to praise her, God in her, and hold up a mirror for her understanding of herself as a preacher." Any other ways you think of to offer Courtney support will be much appreciated.

We are all in ministry together at Hope Central. Please feel free to share your perspectives and opinions with Courtney or any of us on the committee.

Anne Broyles (chair)
Nancy Azar
Nancy Doherty
Anne Rousseau
Daniel Verinder

Worship, Arts, Music Ministry (WAMM)

The content of the report is an extract from our pastor Laura Ruth Jarrett's Annual Report, thus you will note the redundancy in what follows. But it's so good, it's worth repeating!

The Worship, Arts, Music Ministry (WAMM) at Hope Central has had a good year. WAMM has two subcommittees, the Worship Planning Team and the Sacristy Team. This year, as the Worship Planning Team has become more experienced, we have been able to work further ahead, which has allowed more room for creativity in worship—and this has been a lot of fun. The Sacristy team, led by Suzanne Wolk, has done a fabulous job this year. Their holy work of preparing communion for us, twice a week, has been spectacular. They also prepare the sanctuary for worship, decorating, doing small and large things to make our worship experience meaningful. Ellen Snoeyenbos has provided homemade communion bread and bought all the juice we used.

Since our merger, Hope and Central, in February 2010, we have had two services every Sunday, so that no one would feel as though their service was taken away from them. The services were identical, as best as we could make them. People identified themselves with the service they attended. Now, little by little, those services are evolving. We are working to design services that allow us to do the worship and work of the whole congregation. We continue to pay close attention to the way God is calling us, sometimes having joint services so we may be together. We already know that in July, we will have services only in the morning, and in August we'll have services only in the evening. We will continue these practices based not on what has been done in the past but on prayer, vision, community need, and capacity.

Many thanks to Javier Cartagena and Neil Helme, who tend our sound system during our services. If we can't be heard, we might as well all go home. Javier and Neil make sure that we are heard.

Our music program continues to grow under the leadership of Vanessa Morris. We are blessed to receive her musical gifts and leadership. Vanessa is a valued member of our worship staff. Throughout our services she plays with passion such wonderful choices in music, at one moment lifting our spirits, at another inviting us to fall deeply into prayer. Vanessa leads a talented music team including Gillian DeLear, Neil Helme, and Bobby Hall. Together, they play interesting, unorthodox, fresh church music that is like heaven.

The multitude of gifts shared with this congregation surely makes God smile.

For the folks of the WAMM,

Steve Vandergrift