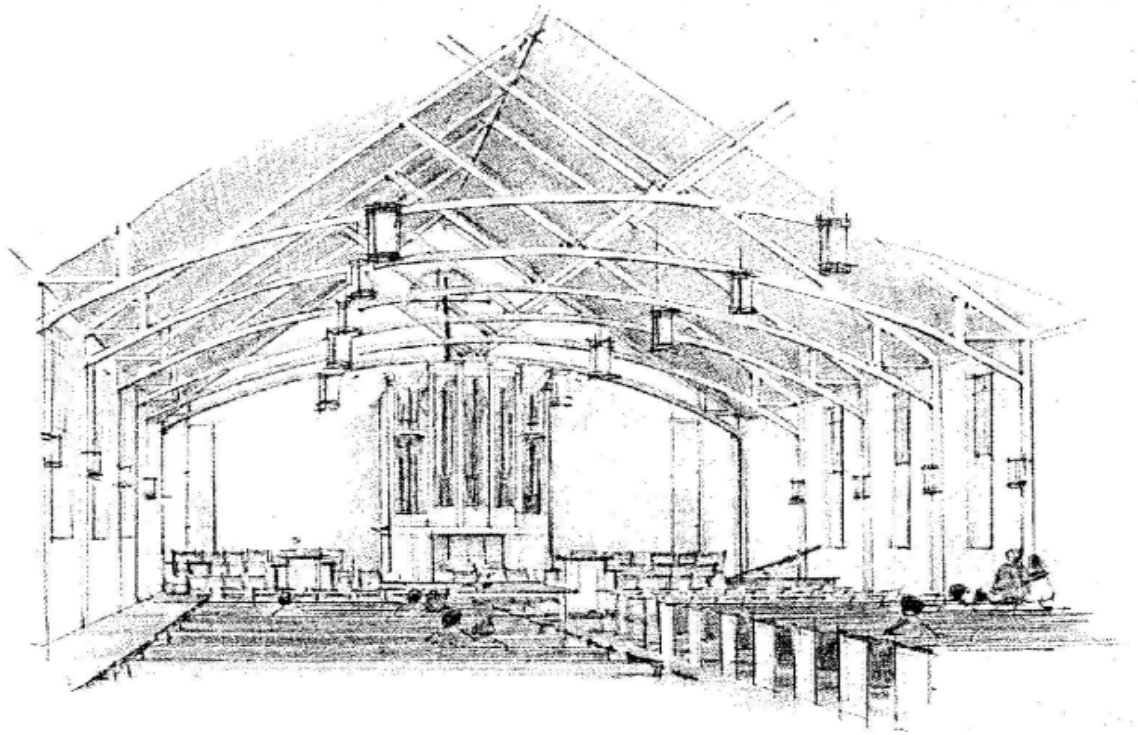


# Wilton Presbyterian Church



## 2021 Annual Report

Presented to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting

January 23, 2022

*"We are a welcoming and diverse Christian community living our faith in God and affirming the gifts of all of God's people. We are dedicated to serving those in need, demonstrating our faith in action by following the teachings of Jesus Christ."*

*Statement Adopted by the Wilton Presbyterian Church Session, May 2018*



## 2021 Annual Report Table of Contents

Staff Contact Information .....	4
Church Officers .....	5
Meeting Enabling Motions.....	5
Pastor’s Report.....	7
Committee Chairs .....	11
Buildings & Grounds: Sanctuary .....	13
Children, Youth and Family Ministry .....	15
Deacons.....	21
Endowment Committee.....	23
Faith In Action .....	27
Memorial Garden.....	29
Music.....	31
Nominating Committee .....	33
Open Doors Shelter.....	35
Personnel .....	37
Realm .....	39
Session .....	49
Social Media .....	51
Stewardship .....	53
WEPCO .....	55
Worship and Music .....	57
Appendix: Transitional Pastor Information .....	59

\*\* The Finance Report stands alone in a separate document \*\*

# WILTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## Staff Contact Information

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Interim Pastor

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**Carolyn Parker**

Office Administrator and Director of Communications

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**Zachary Wright**

Music Director

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## WEPCO

### Staff Contact Information

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**Max Gil**

Facilities Custodian

# WILTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## Church Officers

### SESSION

#### Class of 2021

Buck Burnaman  
Forrest Close  
*Berta Hull (Clerk)*  
Jason Rice

#### Class of 2022

Bryan Campbell  
Forrest Close  
Patty Connor  
Jason Rice  
Jock Wright

#### Class of 2023

Cathy Ratcliffe  
Reshan Richards  
Alison Wood

#### Class of 2024

Sam Halsey  
Gail Schneider

*Berta Hull (Clerk)*

### DEACONS

#### Class of 2021

Sonny Kern  
Dee King  
Becky Shroyer

#### Class of 2022

Rachelle Bernabei  
Becky Shroyer

#### Class of 2023

Patti Dormer  
Julie Stein  
Ann White  
Marianne Wilson

#### Class of 2024

Joshua Sharp  
SooJung Sharp  
Susan Stofega  
*Cathy Thomas (Moderator)*

*The Session guides the operational and financial life of the congregation.*

*The Deacons are the congregation's lay pastors caring for each and all.*

## 2021 Annual Meeting of The Congregation

### Meeting Enabling Motions

1. That the congregation receive, as information, the narrative reports of the Session, Board of Deacons, and Session committees;
2. That the congregation receive, as information, the 2021 financial reports of the Church Treasurer and the 2022 Operating Budget adopted by Session.



# Pastor's Report

A Wee Word from your Interim Pastor Dr. Jeffrey Weenink



It In ancient Roman mythology, “Janus” is the god of beginnings and transitions, the god of gates, doors, and thresholds. Janus is depicted as a god with dual profiles, looking at once to the future and to the past. “January” was named in honor of this threshold – inhabiting Janus. Now, I confess that I know this not because I am a classics scholar. I know this because for years we held a 529 college savings plan for our girls with “Janus Investments,” and this two-faced image of Janus has been stamped on our statements for the last twenty-plus years. My contribution to this annual report can only look back over less than half of 2021 with you. While I look back, I will sneak a peek into 2022 with the Janus outlook.

The wisdom of ancient mystics were quick to claim: “A threshold is a sacred thing.” There are physical thresholds, there are metaphorical thresholds, there are spiritual thresholds... These are all ‘thin places’ where there is a crossing over. Our lives are a continuum of borders, crossings and thresholds which open-up into the new and leave the old.

Thresholds can be places of uncertainty that invite trust and courage. A threshold, an in-between space, summons forth a variety of emotions. Excitement, trepidation, risk, openness, fear, trepidation and adventure are all mixed up together. Wilton Presbyterian Church – WPC-- is at a threshold.

Thresholds call forth our identity - not giving into the people and pressures that pull us this way and that. Who are we as a community of faith as we enter into 2022? What does “church” mean to you? The body of Christ? A port in a storm? A great group of people? A place to worship? A place to serve? A place to learn? A place to be comforted? A place to be challenged? A place to be changed?

Change has been one of the ‘**C**’ words we have come to know all too well. (We all know what the other **C** word is, so I won’t bother to mention it.) Change is inevitable, (except from a vending machine...) It is said that no one likes change, except a wet baby. Yet, says Faith Baldwin, “Time is a dressmaker specializing in alterations.” This time of change, these events of transition, this threshold occasion finds Wilton Presbyterian Church searching for a path to **regroup, rebuild, and,**

*in essence find a re-set button to press.* WPC reengaged in-person worship and activity (circa June 2021) after a long hiatus that began March 22, 2020. On Rally Day, last September, we had an energetic showing of renewal. We endeavored to ride that wave throughout the Fall with a sermon series and Stewardship Theme of **Renewed in the Spirit**. All this involved a *full-press* effort directed toward a complete return to In-person work, worship and programming. We were able to hold a joint Jubilee outdoor worship celebration with St. Matt's to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> year of our collaboration.

The pages of this Annual Report will certainly bear witness to the fine efforts that have taken place to push the **re-set button**. It is beyond the scope of this section, (not to mention repetitious) to recount the ways. The various reports will detail accomplishments. The Clerks Report will provide some statistics. The finance section will give you a sense of how your church has been a prudent and faithful steward of the resources entrusted its care. The purpose of this annual report is to represent and reflect upon the wondrous ways we have been **Renewed in the Spirit** in service to God and the community through 2021.

The Covid (there's that other **C** word) 19 crisis crimped the momentum that was gathering as many venues, regrettably, had to be postponed or curtailed. This, of course, had some stifling effect on the full benefit of this carefully planned process. But WPC has not held back. Since returning, WPC has worked faithfully to be resilient in the face of this continuing pandemic and has made the necessary adaptations, adjustments, and modifications to stay open; protect and keep everyone safe. WPC has stayed the course. There are some implications and outcomes that should be noted. They are healthy indicators of engagement.

### **Staff**

Carolyn Parker, Julie Fowler and Zachary Wright are all relatively new in their capacities. In several cases the bulk of their tenure on the WPC staff has been in the midst of this pandemic and time of transition. All should applaud their efforts, hard work, resiliency, and determination under exceptionally complex circumstances.

### **PROGRAM**

#### **Youth and Family Ministry**

Youth Ministry involvement, church school staffing and church school involvement has shown stability and is experiencing an up-swing. Julie Fowler's report will note the **regrouping, rebuilding** and **re-sets** that were offered.

#### **Music Ministry**

Choir returned. The Bell Choir resumed. Music Sunday was provided once again. Zachary Wright's report will note the **regrouping, rebuilding** and **re-sets** that were offered.

#### **Worship**

Our average worship attendance has remained below previous averages. This is also an indicator of engagement. I am convinced we can do better, especially since we offer the hybrid model of in-person as well as virtual worship. We are grateful to the Stream Team that makes it all happen.



Sunday worship, while traditional, is always an event. We have undertaken some innovations and they have been well received. A high-quality worship experience has been provided for WPC every week.

### **Giving**

The work and witness of WPC is completely dependent upon the generosity of members and friends. As was demonstrated in previous years, that same generosity continued. It does need to be noted, however, that the number of Pledges returned and received are following a multi-year decline. Yes, there are greater opportunities to meet the potential. But this too is an indicator of engagement.

### **Marketing**

A faithful group of folks met weekly to evaluate ways to project the image of WPC into the community through digital media, signage and a new logo.

### **Social Media**

A social media team is now in place working to not only network, but showcase via photos and messaging what WPC is doing.

### **Communication Strategies**

Our communication mechanisms have been evaluated and refined. A weekly e-mail communication (The WPC Weekly) brings us all up to date on events, cares, concerns, and other matters to note. The newsletter will come out quarterly (The WPC Quarterly) with more expansive articles, information, and in-depth stories of interest.

### **REALM**

Realm is a real asset for WPC. It has helped with Finance. It will also help with our community life, connections, and communication. Please carefully read a separate section in this Annual Report about how you have a role to play with REALM.

### **Transitions**

During Covid, there was an enormous housing boom, not only in Fairfield County, but elsewhere. It redefined where many worship, work, live, move, and have their very being. Many WPC members took advantage of the hot housing market and downsized or re-located. Consequently, we of WPC will need to become ever more intentional in our efforts to become even more member focused, curb inactivity, track visitors, and aid in assisting that every member finds their meaningful place to minister.

### **A Forward Look**

These words of the cleric, poet and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson resonate in my mind as I reflect upon my time with you. "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." In the first quarter of 2022, WPC will enter into a self-study with a consulting group known as Holy Cow Consulting. Holy Cow Consulting specializes in guiding congregations through a time of self-assessment. Everyone will be invited to participate in

something known as the C.A.T. – Congregational Assessment Tool. Concurrent to this time of self-study in the first quarter of 2022, a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) will be formed. This will set the stage for the pastoral search to commence. With the Janus look forward, Emerson’s words resonate: “It is the presence of God’s spirit **within us**” that marks in so many ways our ministry together. The prophet Jeremiah put it this way: “*Thus says the Lord: Stand at the crossroads and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your soul.*” *Jeremiah 6:16*

The cleric who penned the words to “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (Phillip Brooks) said it best: Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger (people). Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be the miracle.”

Pray with me for the work and witness that God has entrusted to us – that we may all, individually and collectively be diligent in **Regrouping, Rebuilding, and pushing the Re-set buttons** – for God’s Glory alone.

I take great delight in calling into account the good things that God is accomplishing in your midst. I covet your prayers for the strength and ability to faithfully forge forward. We can boldly do so with confidence, because God’s spirit is at work **within us** and therefore the fruits of the spirit will bear fruit.

Yours in faith

~Jeffrey~

Rev. Dr. Jeffrey D. Weenink  
January 2022

## Committee Chairs: 2022 Contacts

Bells	Zachary Wright
Buildings and Grounds	David Hull Sonny Kern
Endowment	Anna Marley
Faith In Action (Mission)	Cathy Ratcliffe
Family Ministries: Nursery – 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Julie Fowler
Finance	Mark Bohrer Frank Mabley
Memorial Garden Maintenance	Nancy Gorkin
Memorial Garden Steering Committee	Jennifer Gabrielson
Music/Choir	Zachary Wright
Nominating	Patty Connor
Open Doors Shelter	Sherry McReynolds (serving) Rachelle Bernabei (food prep)
Outreach	Judy Grimm
Personnel	Buck Burnaman Jason Rice
Stewardship	Bryan Campbell Kit Smith
Table Guild	Irla Landry
WEPCO	Stephen Connor (WPC) Tom Carlson (SMP)
Worship	Chris Jones



## Buildings & Grounds: Sanctuary

WPC's Building and Grounds Sanctuary expenses decreased by \$2581 (17%) in 2021. This is likely attributable to the sanctuary's limited use due to Covid, although we did host AA and began in-house services beginning in July. We are maintaining an expense line of \$15,000 for 2022 as we are open for regular services and will have Wilton Singers practice ongoing starting in January.

The largest Buildings and Grounds expense continues to be utilities (oil and electricity). Sonny Kern has improved the oil delivery process, thereby resulting in reduced to no spillage. He is also addressing the high use electrical components to assess where there might be opportunities for savings. Additionally, we are continuing to monitor and change our commercial rate vendors should alternative rates become available for savings.

The following items will need to be addressed by WPC on an on-going basis:

1. Sanctuary Painting: Every 8 to 10 years depending on condition (last 2016).
2. Window cleaning: Perform as needed.
3. Standby emergency battery service: Check every Spring.
4. Sanctuary Lighting: Replace as needed.
5. Boiler/Air Conditioner: Service as needed.
6. Sanctuary Entrance Doors: Refinishing and hinges
7. Service air scrubber components

### Specific Projects

Thanks to a joint site team including Reshan Richards and Jock Wright, the entire facility's **wireless infrastructure** was updated to provide greater coverage, more bandwidth, and greater security. (The prior set up did not cover key areas of the facility, was slow, and was not secure). The work also provided network connectivity that has enabled live streaming from the sanctuary balcony.

**Live Streaming** equipment was purchased to allow streaming from the sanctuary. Key items included:

- Dedicated PC
- Monitor
- HD PTZ Camera (Pan/Tilt/Zoom) and joystick
- Audio Mixer
- Live Stream Microphone

WPC's existing **YouTube/Channel** now serves as the Livestream platform for all services that are shared live. Links can be scheduled and shared in advance of service. And the services are automatically and immediately converted to videos that can be played back. (The prior setup was

individuals recording service on a mobile phone and then manually transferring it and publishing a link after the service.)

The **music** portion of our live streaming has been less than satisfactory. We intend to address this issue in 2022.

It has been identified that the **organ pipes** will require cleaning and a prevention service as the result of a ladybug infestation. This will be done in 2022.

Similar to previous years, expenses incurred in 2021 were for basic operating costs to keep the sanctuary open, maintained and comfortable.

We continue to carefully monitor the Building and Grounds Sanctuary expenses. If anyone has ideas for cost savings and/or improvements, they are always welcomed.

We would like to thank Max and Andrew, Jock and Reshan for their assistance in improving and maintaining the WPC Sanctuary.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Hull  
Sonny Kern

## Children, Youth and Family Ministry

Greetings Congregation! I am honored and pleased to serve the families of WPC. The start of 2021 began just as 2020 ended. The physical building remained closed for the duration of the youth ministries calendar season. I am ever grateful for the technology which enabled connection even from our homes as well as the support received from the families of our children and the Congregation as a whole. Last year I spoke about the possibilities Covid gave us instead of the impossibilities and how we were able to learn, model, and live out as a group, as a church without physical walls. Well... following that statement we continued to stay connected on any given Sunday as we had as many as 17 church school students, Pre-K to 5 on our zoom lessons. Youth Ministries sent a message that we are here and we value that you are here too. We aren't giving up on you. God is walking with you through all of this and we are here to share that message with you all each week.

Church School mailed lessons home with crafts. Each year God gives us what we need; what our hearts, minds and spirits need. Youth Ministries did their very best to meet the needs of the youth to continue to water their seeds, feed their spirits and calm their unrest. All in preparation for sharing space once again. Our annual Bible class for 4th grade students shifted to a 5th grade opportunity. Many 4th grade students chose to wait until WPC was back in person. The class was a success and our 5th grade students received a certificate of completion for their in depth work into their Bible series.

Confirmation pressed forward in person all year as a smaller group and completed the year with confirming two students from the class of 2020 and five from the class of 2021. Confirmands and mentors worked with one another to complete unique ways to satisfy their service hour requirements. They built their relationships through hikes, cleanups, toy drives and even sitting in the memorial garden. We congratulate Charlie Greene, Ben Mrakovcic, Lily Archibald, Matt Darien, Grace Ratcliffe, and Aiden and Caleb Sharp. Ceremonies were held outdoors in the fresh May air and well attended by our congregation.

Youth Groups made a valiant effort to remain connected via zoom offerings. Zoom fatigue is real and although well attended over the course of the spring, an appreciation for being together in person was apparent. The thought expressed was that the sharing of oneself emotionally and spiritually is far more fulfilling and trust building than over the internet. We, the high schoolers, Kathryn Stein and Eleanor Greene and I delivered goodies for Valentine's Day and Easter all in an effort to feel a part of something bigger than ourselves.

WPC graduated five seniors this past spring, Emma Caldwell, EJ Fasano, Eleanor Greene, Maddie Pfeiffer and Maggie Rowe. Senior Sunday was a beautiful ceremony outdoors and a lovely reception was held to honor those onto the next exciting chapter.

Summer Church School was a successful four-week series of lessons from both the New and Old Testaments. Over the course of the summer 5 students joined in as we shared our time together

keeping the momentum as we prepared for vacation bible school. Following a wonderful series of stories, vacation Bible School resumed as JCCEC sponsored "Compassion Camp 2021," where youth became superheroes of, "Lovingkindness." This five-day morning based gathering opportunity brought out the superpowers in all of us as we take on the world one relationship at a time in the name of kindness. VBS was proud to graduate ten superheroes that week from various Wilton Churches who took an oath to pass along God's hope for all of us to find the inner strength to share compassion.

At the year's conclusion, I want to just touch on being back. Youth Ministries hit the ground running. We are still on a momentum high that is catching on. In youth ministries the idea of starting new is thought in group terms. We gather as a group, a team, a collection of people who belong to one another.

Church School is thriving here at WPC. To kick off Church School welcome back, a balloon maker spent coffee hour making balloon creatures for all the children. Coffee hour was filled with goodies and was shared outside on the beautiful September day. On any given Sunday following the Children's Message 8-10 youth head back to class to explore the wonderful stories and lessons from the "Shine On" Curriculum used for grades Pre K-7. This, fall the children and teachers immersed themselves in stories in the Bible with messages of strengthening our relationship with one another and with God. A new Acolyte opportunity was introduced here at WPC this year. G.L.O.W. (God Lights Our Way,) began as an engaging inclusion of youth in Sunday Worship. Through Zachary Wright's leadership, a youth choir assembled for the first time in preparation for Advent and the Christmas Pageant. Young angelic voices practiced after church on fall Sundays.

Confirmation continues to begin another journey for our very special 8th graders. An introspective group, discussions have proven thoughtful and inquisitive. The confirmand/mentor dinner allowed for honest discussions of varied spiritual experiences and individual faith journeys.

Youth Ministries resumed in person youth groups this fall. A kick-off barbecue allowed our teens to share a meal outside and be together again. Teens are assisting in our live streaming when help is needed. The hope is for many members to really see the high school youth as active participants in all aspects of WPC programming. Middle School youth enjoyed welcome back taco night and enjoyed a lively whole church hide and seek as they appreciated and focused on the quiet time they experienced while hiding. We explored the benefits of quiet time in a very special place and how that can bring peace and offer an opportunity to draw closer to God.

October was built with team and partnership building for all ages! WPC and St. Matthews celebrated 50 years of partnership at the 50th Celebratory Jubilee. The church school youth performed an interactive prayer for both congregations demonstrating unification through Joint Ministries. The following week, we gathered 14 of our 6-12th graders and headed to Sharon, CT to spend a day 20 feet in their air, at one point depending on and trusting in our peers who became our foundation and safety nets. Some of our youth conquered fears that day. Some



wanted to keep trying to improve their performance. Some felt very confident that they were good with their feet on the ground being the foundation for the rest. Everyone cheered so loudly for everyone. Those cheers were not just for completing a rope challenge. To me those cheers were for being out and together again; for celebrating spirits coming together, as well as for the foundation and safety net the church as a group provides for them. For faith shared. A few cried tears of joy, relief, pride. It was a day of release. That release opportunity was not coincidental. Those were spirits ready to be renewed. Once again Rise Against Hunger saw many youth volunteers as they packed meals for school children around the world.

November continued as a theme of giving back defined the fall months. WPC successfully initiated a food drive for the Wilton Food Pantry. Lauren Hughes from Social Services of Wilton wrote a letter of thanks to our youth for their efforts following the collection of 4 boxes of food for their shelves. Give A Smile bags were also assembled sending warm thoughts and wishes to those names offered as recipients. We resumed Rake N Roll this year 23 strong. For two hours grades 6-12 cleaned and beautified an overgrown yard restoring plants and gardens. In preparation for Advent, Advent Calendars were again sold to help raise funding for programming. Comments were shared that they brought joy to those WPC recipients of all ages!

Advent season brought a period of waiting with service and fun! The month of December kicked off with the annual High School Christmas Party. Over 16 youth and leaders joined together for a Christmas dinner of baked ham and scalloped potatoes. The ever-favorite gift exchange continued as everyone enjoyed giving over receiving. As this is a lighthearted fun exchange, we have one gift that has been regifted and making the rounds for over 13 years. Continuing with tradition, the Middle School youth traveled once again to Wilton Commons to perform and lead in a caroling event. Over 25 seniors at Wilton Commons gathered to sing with our group and share in some sweet treats following the performance. A note of thanks was later sent to our group expressing how much our annual sing-a-longs mean to the residents. WPC's annual chili luncheon was expanded to include our friends across the courtyard as we continued the 50th Anniversary Celebration. Kathryn Stein, Grant Stein, Ben and Emily Mrakovcic along with Caroline and Sofia Blessing spent hours setting up for this year's Chili Luncheon. Over 100 people attended this Joint Youth and JCCEC sponsored event. A live animal nativity scene and potluck chili luncheon held outside under patio heaters was a crowd pleaser for all ages. The high school students led crafts and cookie making for the children and a mitten tree was filled up for donation. The second of our opportunities for partnership came with an invitation from Faith In Action to help in their annual Open Door Shelter Adopt A Family. This year a family with a single mother of four children was the recipient of WPC's blessing of generosity. Bikes, computers, slippers, games, toys and books were delivered by Mary Wright of Faith In Action and two of our younger youth, Brady and Colby Fowler.

These service opportunities for our youth of all ages model and exemplify the fundamental approach, "Our Hands, God's Work." The experiences offered to our youth within programming provides a personal and group effort of service as a way of moving closer to God and strengthening the relationship with Him. We are grateful for the return of these hands-on blessings.

As the year came to conclusion, youth became the storytellers of the birth of our Savior in the Annual Christmas Pageant. This year's title, "Making Our Way to the Cross," followed Mary, Joseph, the angels, shepherds and wisemen on their journey. We remain ever acknowledging to the angel who brought peace to the hearts of Mary and Joseph and to the innkeeper who finally showed mercy and offered a manger for shelter. Over 17 youth from grades Pre K- 12th narrated and acted out the beautiful story. They had practiced all fall and sang the songs learned in the youth choir. WPC is grateful to all those who helped make the production a very special experience for both children and adults alike.

Christmas Eve Service once again in person allowed for the interactive fun of a special family service offering. Scores of wise ones, shepherds and angels told the A-Z story of the birth of Jesus with carols from our choir and concluding with a candlelight Silent Night.

In conclusion, what is most striking in remembering programming interrupted was learning and also reaffirming what it is about WPC Youth Ministries that remains strong: service and mission. It continues to be a successful foundation for guiding our youth in their faith journey. Youth were eager to continue to find ways to serve and model selfless behavior through their volunteer efforts. This remains a team effort and I am thankful for Samantha Trolice who has been a great example of leadership for our youth and Ralph Bernabei who is a regular participant in our group games and discussions. I am grateful to the partnership of the committees within WPC. I am also thankful to the parents of our youth and congregation members who support and encourage their participation, my vision and the Church's mission for their spiritual growth. I am grateful to our church schoolteachers for helping plant and nurture the seeds of our young. Becky Shroyer, Jessica Jones, Jeanne Weenink are dedicated educators with big hearts. Finally, I am grateful to Dr. Jeffrey Weenink who is always supportive of my vision and integration of youth as a more visible entity within our Worship and life at WPC.

A glimpse ahead...

This year I will also continue to be an active, visual support within the community as a face of WPC and continued support for and committed to our youth. As Covid- 19 and regulations continue to dictate some of the scope of programming, I continue to lead with a vision of, "One size does not fit all." I have been exercising ways youth ministries can continue with diversity within our curriculums in an effort to have a little something for everyone whether it be through games, music, news articles or even varied field trip opportunities. Celebration for Children is back on the calendar, Body and Relationship Seminar will offer its ever-popular spiritual development series, Easter Egg Hunt will resume with our friends at St. Matthews, Tartan Sunday will make its premier, family game opportunities will be offered and we will Confirm our 8th graders and celebrate our wonderful graduating high school seniors! Ralph Bernabei is assisting in a couple of opportunities to reach out with Midnight Run as we jump back into that important mission offering! Let's do it together. As well as all the fun experiences we share, I have been moved by the individual attention and outreach made possible by encouraging staff. I feel blessed to be a vessel of such support offered to our youth during this time in their lives. As my role continues, our relationships will strengthen. I hope to reach those where they are even if youth

groups are not a constant of furnace for them. I will continue to offer support and encouragement for our youth. I look forward to continuing relationship building and meaningful fellowship under a guise of fun and community.

Sincerest Blessings,  
Julie Fowler



## Deacons

2021 was a difficult year for the Board of Deacons. We started the year with a full roster of 12 deacons and ended the year with only 9 due to one deacon moving out of town and two more who resigned. Many felt the weight of the congregation's sadness and withdrawal due to covid, so our meetings in the first half of the year often dwelt on ministering to one another. The resignation of our pastor Shannon White also impacted the group.

With the arrival of our interim pastor, Jeffrey Weenick, in September and the resumption of in-person church services after Labor Day, the Board has been more active in pursuing activities to bolster church spirit. We hosted the Homecoming/Welcome Coffee Hour after services on 9/12 and two 'Meet & Greet' gatherings with Jeffrey and his wife Jeanne in late November and early December. We have also been engaging in a series of discussions about how to focus/restructure our role to be more enriching and fulfilling. We enter 2022 with eight deacons (having lost two to terms ending in January 2022 and the addition of one new deacon to be installed by end of this month) and a new plan that will hopefully revitalize the deacon function and purpose within WPC for the coming years.

Submitted by Cathy Thomas, Moderator (since October)



# Endowment Committee

12/31/21

## **Purpose**

The Endowment Committee (“Committee”) of the Wilton Presbyterian Church (“WPC”) was originally established in 1986 to promote and encourage perpetual stewardship to enable the Church to expand its ministry and mission beyond the annual stewardship support of its members. The Committee is charged with identifying projects that are needed and important, but which fall outside the annual Church budget.

## **2021 Donations**

The Committee welcomes designated or undesignated gifts of all sizes to the fund that will further its work of expanding the ministry, mission, and capital-related expenses of the Church. In 2021, the endowment fund did not receive any donations.

## **2021 Endowment Grants**

The fund’s bylaws call for annual grant distributions to be up to 5% of the average of the prior year’s quarter-end values of the liquid investment portfolio. There are several designated grants within the Fund with a significant amount targeted to annual maintenance of the Memorial Garden.

The Committee recommended, and the Session agreed to distribute up to \$29,658 for 2021 consisting of (1) new 2021 Grants of up to \$27,625 based upon 5% of the average 2020 quarterly portfolio balances of \$552,502 and (2) a carryover of undisbursed 2020 Approved Grants of \$2,033.

Grants requested and recommended to Session for approval in 2021 totaled \$29,658:

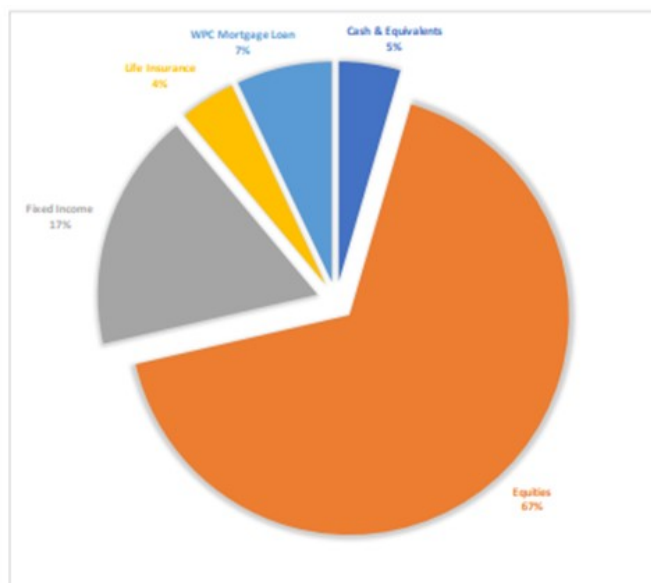
- \$ 6,883: 2021 Memorial Garden Maintenance
- \$ 3,000: Rise Against Hunger Inc
- \$ 8,200: Living Waters of the World
- \$ 3,175: Virtual Church
- \$ 2,100: Pastoral Staff Tech Essentials
- \$ 1,800: WPC – Youth Space
- \$ 2,500: WPC – REALM Roll-out
- \$ 1,000: WPC – Faith in Action
- \$ 1,000: WPC – Music Fund

## **Asset Allocation & Investment Performance**

The total fund value of the Endowment Fund was \$789,066 on December 31, 2021. Of this amount, \$708,179 represents the securities investment portfolio held by Charles Schwab Investment Management.

In addition to the securities investment portfolio, there are two large holdings in the endowment: WPC mortgage (roof repair loan) and a life insurance policy, which totaled \$80,887 on 12/31/21 and are illiquid investments. These illiquid assets are not used when calculating the Grant Pool 5% target amount for grants. The Endowment Fund loaned WPC \$107,690 in 2010 to pay for a new flat roof. WPC is repaying this loan, without interest, in the amount of \$5,385 per year, over 20 years. At 2021 year-end, \$48,458 was outstanding on the WPC Mortgage Loan.

The present asset allocation (Dec 31, 2020) of the WPC Endowment Fund is consistent with our long-term investment strategy:



All securities investments are made through Schwab mutual funds and ETFs.

The overall WPC Endowment Fund – *including cash contributions (\$103), cash disbursed (\$24,383) and investment performance (\$122,654)* increased to \$789,066 by year-end 2021. Once again, we thank Kit Smith for his diligence, insights, and leadership in managing our endowment investments in the volatile 2021 financial markets.

<b>Beginning Portfolio Value (12-31-20)</b>	<b>\$ 690,692</b>
Add: Cash Donations	103
Add: Investment Performance	122,669
Less: Grant Disbursements	(24,398)
<b>Ending Portfolio Value (12-31-21)</b>	<b>\$ 789,066</b>

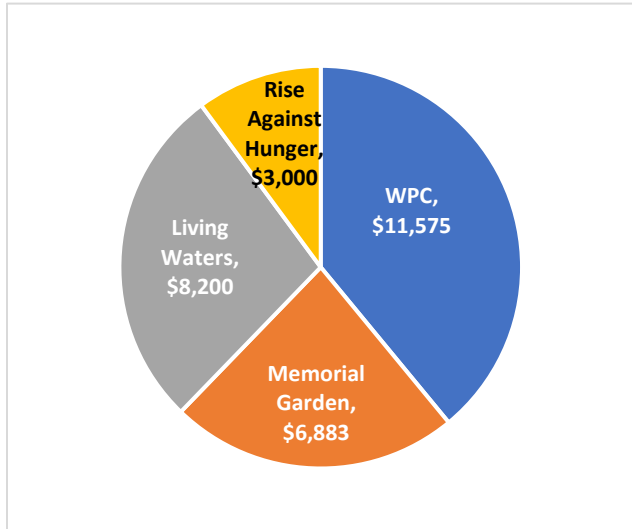
### 2022 Endowment Committee Members

Class of 2022: Anna Marley (Chair)  
 Class of 2023: Ralph Bernabei, Nancy Gorkin  
 Class of 2024: Stephen Connor, Chris Kelley, Dave Lowrie



## Chairman's Comments

This year, despite the ongoing challenges from COVID, we were lucky to have a substantial pool of funds to distribute both locally and to other organizations that are supported by our larger Presbytery.



In total, 62% of the funds were used for WPC projects (\$6,883 or 23% for the Memorial Garden and \$11,575 or 39% for WPC specific items (as detailed on Page 1 of this report)). We also were able to continue to support Rise Against Hunger, an important cause that was initially funded by the Endowment Fund, with a \$3,000 grant, which reflects roughly 10% of our total grant pool. Finally, the committee was excited to be able to donate to Living Waters of the World, which is working to bring clean water to the Village of Tabi, Q. Roo, Mexico, reflecting a \$8,200 grant or 28% of the total grant pool.

The past year continued to present a volatile market. By patiently waiting for recovery, the endowment portfolio performed well and is at its highest level ever. Again, we are indebted to Kit Smith for his insights and market sense in these turbulent investment times.

As we look forward to the next year, I'm excited about our strong membership and our solid and growing investment portfolio that will serve WPC well in the years ahead.

Respectfully,

Anna Marley, *Chair*

### 2021 Endowment Committee Members

Ralph Bernabei, Stephen Connor, Tim Cummins, Nancy Gorkin, Chris Kelley

### Additional Non-voting Members

Buck Burnaman (Session Representative), Jeffrey Rutishauser (Treasurer), Kit Smith (Advisor), Jeffrey Weenink (Ex Officio), Shannon White (Ex Officio)

## **APPENDIX – PRIOR GRANTS**

### ***Excerpt from 2018 Annual Report***

Grants approved by Session in 2017 and paid in 2018 totaled \$10,401:

- \$ 462: Nate Dove Psychological Testing (required by Presbytery)
- \$ 2,939: Worship Times website
- \$ 7,000: Faith-In-Action Grant

Grants requested and recommended to Session for approval in 2018 totaled \$22,016:

- \$ 754: Nate Dove travel reimbursement
- \$ 6,883: Memorial Garden Maintenance
- \$ 500: Nate Dove Farewell Gift
- \$ 1,000: Pastor's Fund
- \$ 1,050: Pastor's Portraits & Framing
- \$ 6,000: New Hymnals (partially reimbursed by member donations)
- \$ 829: Church Windows accounting software
- \$ 2,000: Accounting software implementation consulting
- \$ 1,000: WPC Grounds & Trees maintenance
- \$ 2,000: Intern (Andrea Wood) stipend & travel reimbursement

### ***Excerpt from 2019 Annual Report***

"Grants approved by Session in 2018 and paid in 2019 totaled \$2,000:

- \$ 1,000: WPC Grounds, Trees & Maintenance
- \$ 1,000: Andrea Wood (Intern) Stipend

Grants requested and recommended to Session for approval in 2019 totaled \$19,100:

- \$ 10,000: Pastor White Sabbatical (2/3 of \$15,000 total cost)
- \$ 2,100: Software fees/consult. for Church Windows and Quick Books
- \$ 7,000: 2019 Memorial Garden Maintenance"

### ***Excerpt from 2020 Annual Report***

"Grants approved by Session in 2019 and carried over to 2020 totaled \$7,305:

- \$ 7,000: 2019 Memorial Garden Maintenance
- \$ 350: Church Windows & QuickBooks

Grants requested and recommended to Session for approval in 2020 totaled \$28,341:

- \$ 10,000: REALM Software Implementation
- \$ 1,250: "Big Giver" Distribution for 2019 Wash DC Trip
- \$ 6,500: Fire Panel Upgrade (WPC portion)
- \$ 6,883: 2020 Memorial Garden Maintenance
- \$ 3,500: Pastor's Fund
- \$ 208: Church Windows & QuickBooks"

# Faith In Action

## **Members at Large**

Patti Dormer  
Kerianne Fannelli  
Sonny Kern  
John McReynolds  
Madison Ratcliffe (youth representative)  
Lynn Saphire  
Mary Wright

## **Co-chairs**

Cathy Ratcliffe  
Linda Rost

*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10*

This year was very challenging for Faith in Action, and beyond, as we continued to deal with COVID and how to support organizations in a way that was comfortable for all. We also thought a lot about why our work mattered. WPC has always been a place for mission, and we made efforts to bring focus back to how we as a congregation can offer our skills and services to those in need, and to groups and organizations that our members are connected to in spirit and in current volunteerism. Our committee made a commitment to offer boots on the ground service opportunities as well as continuing our allocation of financial grants.

## **Holiday giving**

As such, we have heard that opportunities to share in service with the **Open Doors Shelter** is important to our congregation. This year many families helped serve Thanksgiving dinner at the shelter. We adopted an Open Doors family for Christmas again and managed the collection and distribution of gifts from a wish list. A new and creative project in 2021 was delivering Welcome Home baskets filled with daily necessities (again donated by our congregation) of starting a new home for families that transitioned out of the shelter into the apartments.

## **Keeping it local**

FIA also made a decision to keep an eye on our nearby community. Instead of the traditional Thanksgiving baskets we have delivered to **Wilton Social Services** in the past, we provided a donation to the food bank. COVID restrictions didn't allow for the baskets this year.

We want WPC to be part of supporting the youth of our Wilton community. The mental health crisis still lingers amongst pandemic fatigued students and their families. These are challenges no one has been taught to parent through, much less understand how to find your way as a young person during ongoing years of living with stress no adults in their lives have experienced. But

there is light in the **Wilton Youth Council**. We are proud to continue to offer financial support to their family programming.

And let us not forget the wonderful work of **Stay at Home in Wilton**. We support organizations in many unique ways, for example, recognizing the outstanding dedication of one of our very own congregants on the occasion of the group's anniversary.

### **Community neighbors**

FIA again supported the **Triangle Center, Norwalk Hospital staff, and Pivot Ministries**.

The **Fairfield County Trauma Response Team (FCTRT)** offers pro bono therapy services to First Responders during the pandemic. FCTRT's focus was primarily on medical personnel, including doctors, nurses, paramedics, and administrators. FIA provided funding to deal with the considerable administrative costs; the team of clinicians receives no monetary compensation.

A truly outstanding effort came together with a food drive and financial support for **IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services)** for evacuated Afghan refugees to begin the process of becoming self-sufficient and independent in their new communities in Connecticut. Another service project to support the Afghan families was a school supply drive, led by WPC youth, who collected over \$1K of supplies that were also delivered to students arriving to Connecticut that didn't have the luxury of new backpacks filled with all the keepings of what is needed for a basic school day. Let us not forget to look to our own WPC youth for incredible leadership and perspective on the little things that make a difference. They raised this money, managed this collection and loaded vans headed to IRIS on their own.

Other organizations that received FIA grants were **Liberation Program**, a Fairfield County resource for addiction recovery as well as **Bridge of Hope**, helping to secure lodging for families of cystic fibrosis patients traveling to the US for treatment. And lastly, we gave to **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance** who offer aid to communities in the US that are victims of natural disasters.

Of note: We did not forget **Homefront**. In 2020, we made a donation to be applied to work to be completed in 2021.

We want to take this opportunity to offer heartfelt thanks to our committee members, who took the time and the associated risks at various times during the year to collect and deliver, meet via zoom and a few times in person with enthusiasm and a sense of purpose as well as humor. It is a special group, and we welcome new members! Please reach out with any questions.  
work.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Ratcliffe  
Linda Rost

## Memorial Garden

The garden was lush and beautiful this past year as we were blessed with a good deal of rain. We continued to use Plantscapes, Inc in Fairfield for our annual maintenance contract. The contract was supplemented with garden maintenance by Francesca Monro through Earth Garden and through volunteer efforts. A special thank you goes out to Karen Lourd whose continued pruning efforts are especially helpful. The costs to maintain the garden are underwritten by the WPC Endowment Fund and the Memorial Garden fund. Should you wish to make a donation to either fund, we are extremely grateful.

Pastor Shannon White continued to use the gathering circle as a meeting place for pastoral care.

Three interments took place this year. Jack Blessing's remains were interred in May. The service was administered by Shannon White. Jack's son David and his family are active members of WPC. Robert Evans remains were interred in June. The service was administered by Shannon White.

One of the founding members of WPC and resident bagpiper, Glenn Shattuck, was laid to rest in the garden in late October. The service was administered by Jessica Jones. A bagpiper was present at the graveside service organized by his wife Alice Ayers. It was a beautiful service followed by a moving service in our Sanctuary.

Submitted by,

Nancy Kline Gorkin  
Memorial Garden Committee Chair



# Music

It has been a joy to make music at WPC this year! While we were not able to meet in person for the first half of the year, the choir was still dedicated to providing music for worship services virtually. For our Lent and Easter services, the choir prepared several virtual musical offerings, including the “Hallelujah Chorus” from Handel’s Messiah. These virtual choir recordings were not easy for the choir to put together, but nevertheless each member of the choir graciously shared their time and gifts to create meaningful music for our worship services. Fortunately, the bell choir was able to meet during the early part of the year to record music for our Holy Week and Easter services and make music in person!

While we still have COVID protocols in place, the summer of 2021 saw the return of congregational singing in our worship services. In September, our choir resumed in person singing to celebrate the arrival of our Interim Pastor, Dr. Rev. Jeffery Weenink. The Chancel Choir and Bell Choir were able to meet consistently throughout the fall, preparing music for weekly in person worship services.

Many thanks to the members of the Chancel Choir and Bell Choir for their constant commitment to our Music Ministry at WPC!

- Sopranos: Amy Bender, Sherry McReynolds, Alison Wood and Marian Wulffleff
- Altos: Lisa Bettke, Jane Celentano, Jan MacEwen, and Cathy Thomas
- Tenors: Bill Caswell, John Celentano, Joel Jones
- Basses: Andrew Jones, Steve White, and Doug Wulffleff
- Bell Choir: Lisa Bettke, Lisa Caswell, Jane Celentano, Carol Kern, Nancy Smith, Ed MacEwen, Jan MacEwen, Alison Wood

Singing in the choir and ringing bells is a wonderful way to be a part of the worship service and we would love to have a few more people join us. Please let me know if you are interested!

We had the great pleasure of singing with the choir at St Matts to celebrate the 50th anniversary of WEPCO. This was a wonderful joint musical effort that we hope will happen again.

A new addition to our Music Ministry is our newly formed Youth Choir. A group of children and youth met monthly in the fall to prepare songs for Music Sunday and the Christmas Pageant. Many thanks to Julie Fowler for all of her efforts in coordinating meetings and rehearsals. And many thanks to the parents who got their kids involved!

Finally, it was discovered this year that a small ladybug infestation has caused some damage to a few reed pipes on the organ. This issue was brought to session, who approved the repairs that will be necessary to prevent further damage to the organ.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Zachary Wright  
Director of Music





# Nominating Committee

Over the last few months of 2021, the WPC Nominating Committee met several times to pray and discern names of people from among our membership to serve on the Board of Elders, Deacons, Endowment Committee, and the Nominating Committee.

**We are pleased to recommend & nominate the following slate of new officers at our Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 23, 2022:**

For the **Board of Elders\*** (Class of 2024):

- **Sam Halsey**
- **Gail Schneider**

*\*NOTE: In Mid-Year (May of 2021), we nominated **Bryan Campbell** (Class of 2022) to serve on our Board of Elders. Bryan will be finishing out the term of Elder, John Stewart who moved out of the state for a job opportunity. This is Bryan's 2nd gig as an Elder. Thank you, Bryan!*

For the **Board of Deacons** (Class of 2024):

- **Susan Stofega**
- **Joshua Sharp**
- **SooJung Sharp**

For the **Endowment Committee** (Class of 2024):

- **Dave Lowrie**

For the **Nominating Committee Members-at-Large 2022:**

- **Tobin Bassani**
- **Kristen Campbell**
- **Cindy Ely**
- **Sherry McReynolds**
- **Nicole Volavka**

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following committee members for their time and dedication to WPC:

## **Elders**

- Buck Burnaman (term expired in 2021)
- John Stewart (Class of 2022-stepped down, moved away)

## **Deacons**

- Sonny Kern (term expired 2021)
- Dee King (term expired 2021)
- Liz Archibald (Class of 2022-stepped down)

**Endowment**

- Tim Cummins (Class of 2023-stepped down)

Respectfully submitted,

WPC Nominating Committee

Patty Connor - *Chair*

Jennifer Butler

Cindy Ely

Nicole Volavka

# Open Doors Shelter

*– Feeding those in need of a hot meal in our community*

Open Door Shelter has a dining facility as part of its homeless shelter located in South Norwalk on Merritt St. Every day, community organizations prepare and serve a hot lunch to those in need. WPC has been providing and serving meals for over 30 years.

We have WPC volunteers provide the food and volunteers prepare meals to feed people six times a year. The hot food is prepared in the WPC kitchen, then delivered to Open Door. Another group of WPC volunteers serves the hot lunch 12 times a year in Norwalk on the second Tuesday of the month. Dedicated servers from WPC take turns serving.

This year due to Covid, in January, March and May, we continued to solve the dilemma of the closed WEPCO kitchen by asking for monetary donations from our providers. Due to these donations, we were able to provide the necessary food, but we also had a bit extra to fund a few more meals. The rest of the year’s meals were made as planned which was wonderful as this service provides the cooks with much needed camaraderie. Norwalk was hit particularly hard, needing to serve well over 100 meals, as most cities across the country were, so alleviating some of the burden on the city, I am sure, was impactful.

Year after year, our Mac & Cheese and Kielbasa dinner has been considered one of their favorite meals. Our cooks, Rachelle Bernabei, Sandy Shifrin, and Mary Wright all cooked from home when required. We also had help from Nancy Gorkin and Ralph Bernabei as substitutes. Dave Hull and Ralph Bernabei made the deliveries of Mac and Cheese, fresh salad and dressing, frozen vegetables, cookies, coffee and powdered drinks.

**This year, we lost several food providers due to moves, and other reasons. If you feel the desire to help, please contact [rachellebernabei@gmail.com](mailto:rachellebernabei@gmail.com). You will not be asked to spend more than \$20 per meal or a total of \$120 for the year. To keep this program going, we need people who are willing to add an item to their weekly grocery shopping and drop it off at the church.**

Our many thanks go to our food providers/financial contributors:

Rachelle Bernabei	Lisa Caswell	Patty Connor
Ralph Bernabei	Katie Nugent	Angela Rice
Mary Wagner	Brian Fanelli	Ann White
Gail Moskow	Irla Landry	Berta Hull
Carol Rowe	Lee Ann Schneider	Nancy Gorkin
Jan McEwen	Mary Wright	
Cathy Thomas	Sandy Shifrin	

Unfortunately, we were not able to have servers on meal days. Hopefully we will be able to start that part of our service in 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachelle Bernabei,  
Open Door Shelter Food Coordinator

# Personnel

The Personnel Committee was perhaps less active than usual as the Interim Search Committee fulfilled its charter, connecting WPC with our Interim Minister, Dr. Jeffery Weenink. Reverend White's departure in June was both celebrated and necessarily brief. The Committee applauds the many volunteers who helped manage church services and WPC affairs during the interregnum – no simple task during the ongoing pandemic. Dr. Weenink's arrival in September returned WPC to a more normal function for the interim period, while the congregation will soon undertake a search for a permanent minister to hear our call for service.

Our church staff managed capably through this leadership transition while coping admirably with the constraints imposed by Covid protocols. Music Director Zachary Wright has initiated a youth choir, while adapting choir attendance and alternative music selections to compensate for changing attendance requirements due to the pandemic. Similarly, Julie Fowler has managed our Family Ministries changing attendance requirements adeptly, having become the sole director a year ago and shouldering an increased workload. Carolyn Parker, now Office Administrator and Director of Communications, has kept the congregation and friends of WPC informed of changes and the many new initiatives undertaken by our session and operating committees.

Our 2022 Personnel budget is modestly increased from 2022, as we have fewer staff, but budgeted compensation increases reflective of certain increased work requirements and responsibilities, along with cost-of-living pay raises. We look forward to assisting in the call for a permanent minister to continue the work of WPC.

Submitted by the WPC Personnel committee:

Buck Burnaman (interim chair)  
Max Gabrielson  
Janet Johnson  
Susan Mathews



# Realm

## Realm Roll Out

January 2022

[First Time Setup](#) | [Using Realm](#) | [Focus on Groups](#) | [Profile & Account Settings](#) | [Download & Use the App](#)  
[Realm Online Documentation & Videos](#)

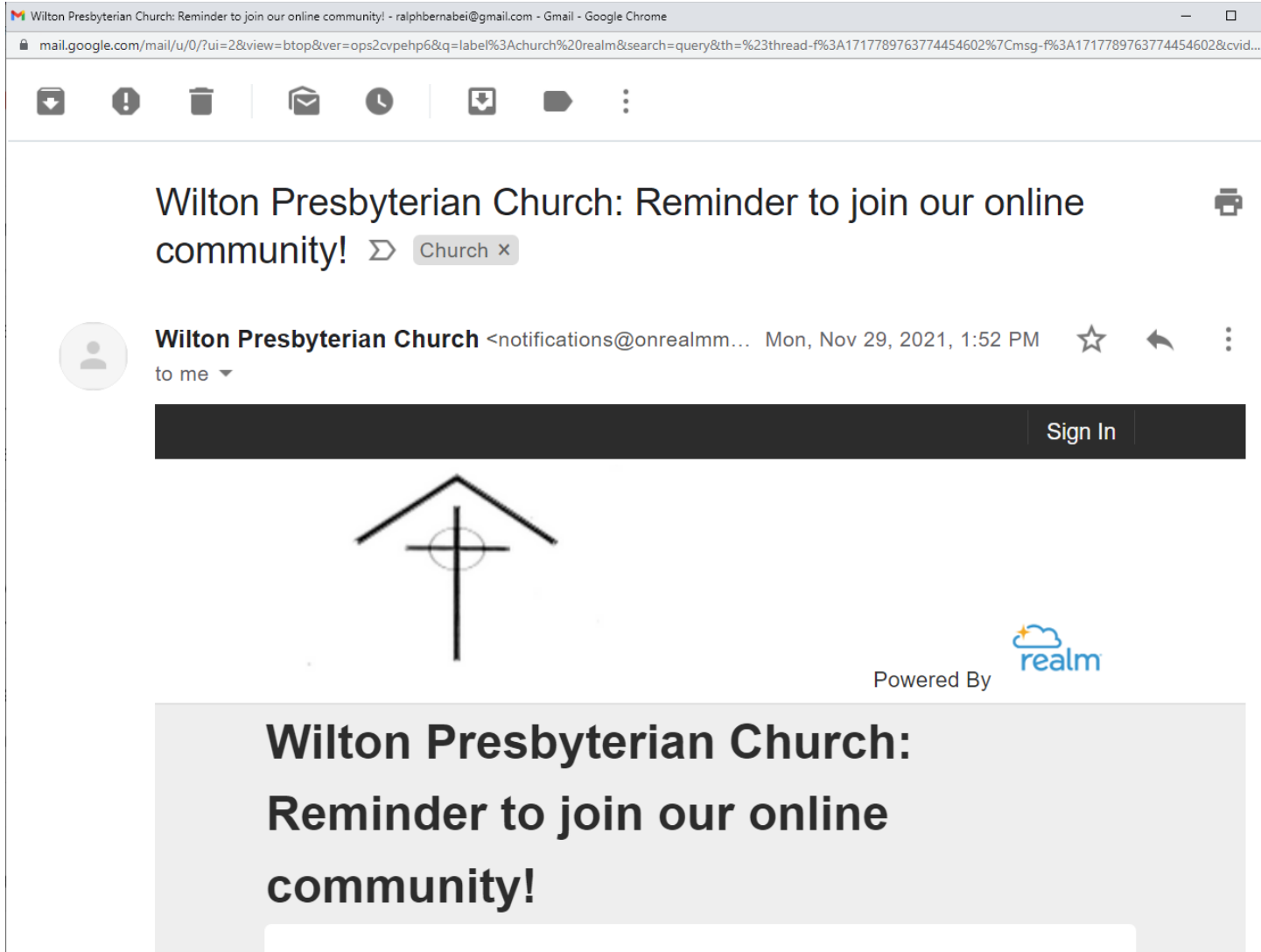
REALM? What is REALM? Realm is a **cloud-based church management solution** that helps users in church administration, accounting and community management. Realm is a ministry tool and communication platform that includes online giving, event registration, group communication, messaging, and an online directory. We are excited for you to get connected to Realm which offers a variety of opportunities to support the way you are involved in our church. Realm is an online ministry tool designed for real time connection. It helps our church connect with you and you connect with us. If you consider yourself part of this church family, you'll love it. It will make it easier for our church family to connect with each other, keep up with what's going on, and grow as a connected community. Realm allows you to manage your personal information and who is allowed to see it, control your giving, and keep in touch with the groups that matter to you.

Every member of WPC church will establish their own unique profile. Your profile contains everything you want people in our church to know about you. Your profile also enables you to join a group, track your giving, update your contact information, change family details, set notification preferences, identify your skills and interest, and a photo of yourself/family. (Very important for continuing to build community!!!)

Therefore, we encourage everyone to create an account with our new Realm software system. Realm is available through both its website <https://onrealm.org/WiltonPresbyterian/> and the Realm Connect app. Realm is a great resource for committees and service groups to maintain their communications, calendar events and shared files. If you are on a committee or service group at WPC, you will likely be asked to use Realm for its communications. Once you see all the benefits of using Realm for committee functions you will certainly appreciate the ways Realm can help WPC provide better ministry to help fulfill our Mission.


### First Time Setup

By now all active WPC members should have gotten an email like the one below from Realm inviting them to set up such an account. If you have not gotten such an email, please check your spam or junk folder. The emails are automated and are identified as spam by some programs. Also, email invitations expire after 72 hours. If you need a new email invitation, then please contact Carolyn Parker at: [carolyn.parker@wiltonpresbyterian.org](mailto:carolyn.parker@wiltonpresbyterian.org) to send you a new one.



When you click on the “Create Realm Account” link you will be directed to a page like the one on the following page. In Realm the username is your email address, which is easier to remember.






## Register

Sign-up is easy, and it's free! Get started by completing the fields below.

**Email Address**  
 ✓

**Create Password** (6 character min)

**Confirm Password**


I'm not a robot 

By clicking the register button below, you agree to the [Software Services Agreement](#) and you are 13 years of age or older.

[Register](#)

Already have an account with University Presbyterian Church? [Sign In](#)

You then must create a password. It must be at least eight characters and have a mix of upper and lower-case letters and numbers or symbols. If your password is acceptable, you'll see a small green check to the right of what you typed. If not, you'll see a red marker. When you have set your password, click on the blue "Create Realm Account". You will then receive another email asking you to verify your email address. Check your email and click on the link to verify. This will put you into Realm and you will be directed to the "News" page that will look something like this: **Screen Shot COPY of WPC Register & NEWS**






Search 
Jeffrey ▼ ↗ ?


## News

Community

Communications

- News
- Inbox
- Chat
- Events
- Giving
- Groups
- Serving
- Directory



**Ralph Bernabei**  
MIDNIGHT RUN/BREAKFAST RUN  
20 days ago via Web



DEC  
20

**Todays meeting**  
Monday, 9:00pm - 10:00pm

we are having a meeting tonight

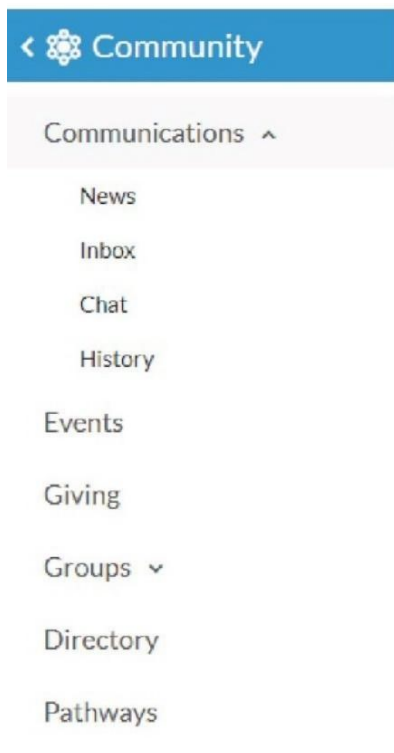
1 person is going.

[1 Attachment](#)

### Using Realm

Log into Realm at. The "Community" area of Realm represents the social media portion for church group communications. Realm will default to the "News" page and will display any recent news posted to any of the Groups that you are a participant. Everyone is part of the Wilton Presbyterian Church group.



The left menu pane shows the available Community functions...

“**Inbox**” and “**Chat**” will display any messages that have been sent to you and is where you can send messages to other members without needing their email address. Once a message is sent the recipient will receive an email they have a message on Realm and also a notification on their smartphone if they have the Realm Connect app.

“**Events**” will show any calendar events posted for the congregation or for any of the groups you belong to. If you belong to multiple committees, having the Committee meetings as calendar events makes it easy to remember when they occur. If you respond to an event that you will be attending, you will receive an email reminder the day prior to the event.

“**Giving**” will show your giving to the church. The default setting shows your giving for the current calendar year, but if you click on the “funnel” shaped icon above the “year to date” indicator, you can filter the results to show different date ranges. The print icon will allow you to download a .pdf of the giving record that you can print. The right pane will show your current and

past pledges. **Once a pledge campaign is active, you can update your pledge as well.**

**NOTE:**

No one except you and the Accounts Receivable Finance Committee person has the ability to view your giving information. If you have questions about any of the giving information, please contact the church [wpchurch@wiltonpresbyterian.org](mailto:wpchurch@wiltonpresbyterian.org).

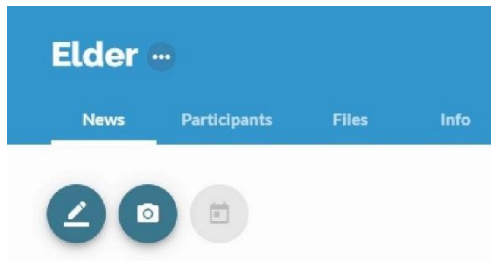
“**Groups**” will list the groups or committees you are a part of. Everyone should have “Wilton Presbyterian Church” as a group. The Groups section is the heart & soul of Realm. For that reason, there is dedicated section called “Focus on Groups” that will go into much more detail on using Groups.

“**Directory**” lists all active WPC members. Clicking on a member’s name should pull up a page with contact and personal information that that person allows you to see. To send a message to the person, click the “Message” icon under the person’s name and follow the prompts. Note that only Realm users who have updated their Privacy to “**Everyone in Our Church**” will have their contact information show in the Directory. For this reason, it is important that you have your privacy settings set in this way. Refer to the Manage Privacy section for instructions to update your privacy setting.

**Focus on Groups**

It’s been said that Facebook is the social media tool for individuals while Realm is the social tool for Groups. Realm is focused on making church groups work better through communication

leading to improved ministry. You can quickly access your groups by expanding Groups in the left navigation pane and selecting your group of interest.

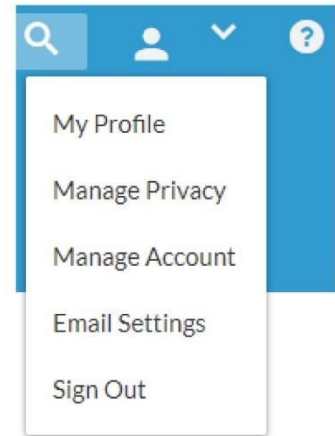


When in a group site such as Elder shown above, there are many functions available to members of the group. Use the three circular icons to add a new post, add a photo, or add a calendar event. The five Group tab menu functions described below.

- **News** will provide all the posts and events activities with the most recent activities at the top. Select any of the posts or events to reply and add to the discussion. If you attach a file to your post then the file will show both within your post as well as the Files tab.
- **Participants** will show all the members of the group. If you are a Group Leader then you will have additional information for each participant as well as a “Manage participants” button to add or remove a participant.
- **Files** is one of the best features in Realm. It provides a central place to share files within your group. As an example, the Elder currently shares files for The Book of Order, The Book of Common Worship, and Session Agendas. This way, Committee information is always available for all current committee members even if the author of the file leaves the committee.
- **Attendance** is an optional feature but is very handy if it is important to track who attends a committee meeting or event. Typically, only a Group Leader would have rights to take attendance on Realm. A requirement is to first setup a calendar event. Those events will show under the Attendance tab after the date of the event. All group participants are shown so the Group Leader can check the members that attended. Each event that had its attendance marked will remain under the Attendance tab for reference.
- **Info** shows the description of the group and lists the Group Leaders. It also provides a quick glance of the amount of recent activity in the group.

## Profile & Account Settings

You can update your profile and account settings by selecting the drop-down menu from the person icon in the upper right corner as shown in the screen shot to the right. This is where you can update your personal contact information that will update the membership database used by the church office.



It is important that you at minimum review and update your **Skills, Privacy,** and **Email Settings.** Skills is where you enter your Time & Talents volunteer opportunities. *You can select your volunteer opportunities here in lieu of completing a paper Time & Talent survey.* Email Settings is where you select the frequency of your email notifications for each Group that you belong.

- My Profile – Select “My Profile” to review your contact information.



Then select “Edit Profile” to edit any of your contact or personal information. There is a “Contact Information” tab and “Personal Information” tab.



- Contact Information – select the “Contact Information” tab if not already selected. Edit any of your contact information shown as needed. Press “Save” at the bottom of the screen. Your updated contact information will integrate with the ACS People module used by the church office for all church communications. In this way you can maintain your family’s current contact information without having to contact the church office. This information is used for the church directory, church mailings, and email.

Personal Information – select the “Personal Information” tab to update your Time & Talent survey selections. *This feature is currently in development.*

- Skills – Scroll down to the skills area as shown in the screen shot below. If you have previously submitted a Time & Talent then those selections should already be shown. Use the drop-down to list all the skills and select the checkbox for all volunteer opportunities you wish to participate. A group leader will contact you about your participation with that opportunity.

- Manage Privacy – Privacy is in regards to your contact information such as address, phone, and email address that is shown to others on the Wilton Presbyterian Church Realm site. No one outside Realm could ever see this information on Realm. By default, your privacy settings are set so only Group Leaders + Church Staff can see your contact information.

It is important that you change your privacy setting to “Everyone in Our Church” so your contact information is available to everyone in the Realm Directory. This will make the Directory much more useful to everyone. Remember that all church members already have access to this information though the hardcopy church directory. So, enabling others to see your contact information on Realm really does not threaten your privacy but rather makes it more convenient for members to communicate with each other.



Your contact and personal information can be seen by:

- Everyone in Our Church
- My Groups + Group Leaders + Church Staff
- Group Leaders + Church Staff
- Only the Church Staff

- Manage Account – this is where you can change the password for your account.
- Email Settings – select “Email Settings” to personalize the frequency of email notifications for each group that you belong. It is recommended to select “All content and replies” for each group so you don’t miss any group communications. Once you make a selection the setting is saved.

To further improve your notifications, it is recommended that you also download the Realm Connect mobile app from the App Store or Google Play. That way you will get instant notifications through your smartphone without relying on email. Go to the “[Download the App](#)” section for instructions to download and setup the app.

- Sign Out – select “Sign Out” to log out of Realm. However, if you do not sign out, Realm will keep you logged in as a convenience so you will not have to sign back in the next time you open Realm.

### Download & Use the App

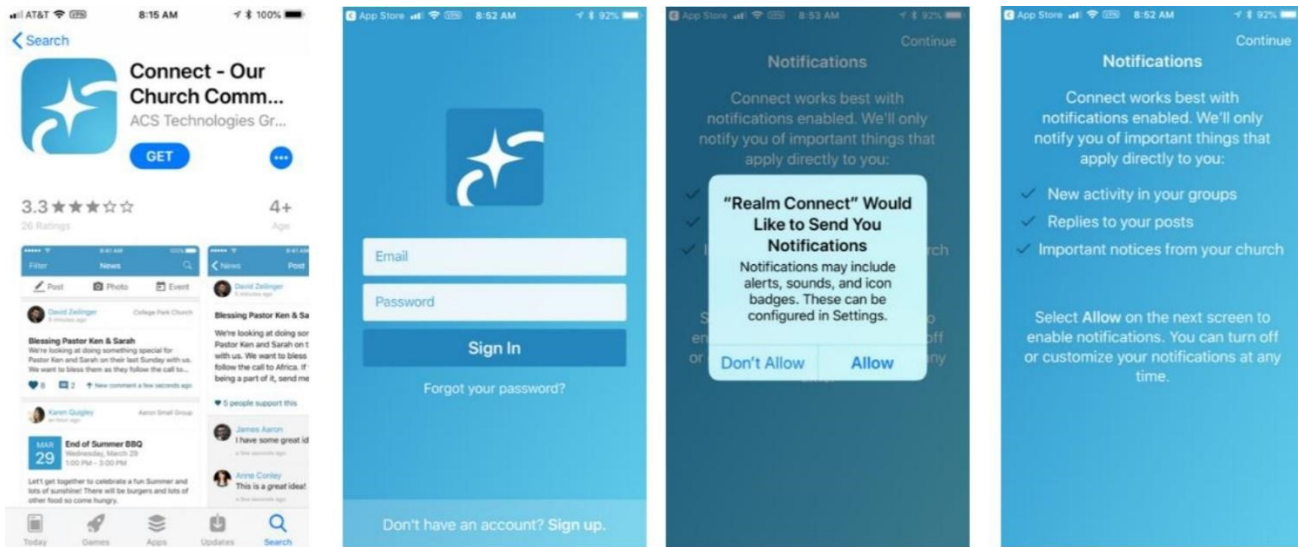
Using the free Realm Connect app on your mobile device will significantly improve communications of all Realm posts and calendar events for the Wilton Presbyterian Church group and all other groups that you belong. Once downloaded, notifications are setup specifically for the app and is separate from the email settings in the web version of Realm.

You must first have setup a Realm account and confirmed you are able to login to the web version of Realm before proceeding. Remember your login credentials for use in the app.

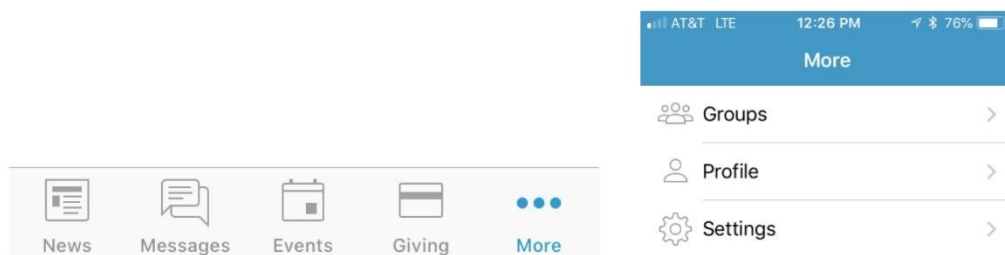
Download the app using your Apple or Android smartphone or tablet. If you have a large screen tablet then it is best to use the web version of Realm since app functionality is limited to submitting and reading posts and calendar events.

To download and setup Realm Connect app...

1. Go to the App Store (Apple) or Google Play (Android). Search on “Realm Connect”.
2. Select and download the app



3. Open the Realm Connect app and enter the same login credentials used in the web version of Realm. If you enter incorrect login credentials, you may be prompted for an invite code. If you receive that prompt, go back to the login and reenter the correct login credentials. Remember that your username is the email address used to setup your Realm account. If you do not remember the email address used then contact Carolyn in the church office for help to identify the email address used for your account.
4. Once you have access into the Realm app it typically does not prompt for login credentials again. Going forward, when you open the app it will go directly to your News feed.
5. Set your Notification Settings for your groups. At the bottom of the app screen, select “More” > Settings.



6. Your Group Notifications are shown listing all your groups. Select a group and then update the level of notification to either “All content and replies”, “New content only” or “Nothing”. If you are active in the group then it is recommended to set the notification to “All content and replies” so you get all communications instantly for your group.

You can use the app through the News, Messages, Events & Giving icons at the bottom of the screen.

- News – News provides the most recent activities for all of your Groups. If you have new activity it will show the number of new postings in a red circle by the icon. You can select any of the new posts and reply if necessary, from there.
  - Post – If you need to start a new post for one of your groups then select the Post icon at the top of the News screen. Select the group you want to submit your new post. If your post is to multiple groups then enable the “Post to multiple groups”. Enter a title and content and press “Post” when done.
  - Photo – Likewise to posts, you can select one or multiple groups to upload a photo. Realm will ask you to allow it to access your photos. Select OK and then select your photo for upload.
  - Event – You can add calendar events to any of your groups. Typically, you have to be a group leader to add a new event. Enter the event Title, details, Start Time, End Time and Location. You also have the option to setup a recurring meeting by selecting a Frequency. You can select weekly, every two weeks, or monthly based on the Start Time.
- Messages – Messages provides a way to send a note to specific people at WPC. Even if they do not have a Realm account, Realm will send an email to them with your message. The advantage of using Messages instead of email is that you never have to remember an email address. You just start typing their name and the matches will pop up for you to select.
- Events – These are calendar events for all of your groups. An event could be a congregation-wide event posted by the church office or it could be a committee meeting posted by the Committee chair. Events provides an easy way to organize all the meetings you are invited to attend. If you respond that you will attend an event then Realm will send you a reminder the day prior to the event. Note that the Events section is where you can review all events that have already been setup. If you need to create a new event then you would do that in the News section.
- Giving – Giving will show both your history of gifts and pledges going back to 2020. Giving is integrated with the ACS Finance module to provide your giving history in a safe secure manner.

**NOTE:**

No one except you and the Church office has the ability to view your giving information. If you have questions about any of the giving information, please contact Mark Bohrer at: [wiggins306@yahoo.com](mailto:wiggins306@yahoo.com)

## Realm Online Documentation & Videos

For more information on using Realm please refer to the ASC Technologies Realm website for extensive online documentation and training videos. Here are some quick links to recommended help content on Realm...

- [Overview](https://www.acstechnologies.com/products/realm) – high level description of Realm with 1:16 minute video  
<https://www.acstechnologies.com/products/realm>
- [Self-Guided Tour](https://www.acstechnologies.com/products/realm/demo/tour?utm_source=site&utm_medium=cta&utm_campaign=sgt) – series of videos to introduce you to Realm and highlight different ways it can support our ministries. Recommend setting aside 30 minutes for the tour.  
[https://www.acstechnologies.com/products/realm/demo/tour?utm\\_source=site&utm\\_medium=cta&utm\\_campaign=sgt](https://www.acstechnologies.com/products/realm/demo/tour?utm_source=site&utm_medium=cta&utm_campaign=sgt)
- [Congregants Help](http://help.onrealm.org/?rp=Connect&ap=None&np=None&lp=Groups+Group+Members+and+Leaders#realm_congregants_landing.html) – Help documentation for common Realm user functions  
[http://help.onrealm.org/?rp=Connect&ap=None&np=None&lp=Groups+Group+Members+and+Leaders#realm\\_congregants\\_landing.html](http://help.onrealm.org/?rp=Connect&ap=None&np=None&lp=Groups+Group+Members+and+Leaders#realm_congregants_landing.html)
- [Group Leaders Help](http://help.onrealm.org/?rp=Connect&ap=None&np=None&lp=Groups+Group+Members+and+Leaders#realm_leaders_landing.html) – Help documentation focused on Group Leader functions and privileges to maintain their group.  
[http://help.onrealm.org/?rp=Connect&ap=None&np=None&lp=Groups+Group+Members+and+Leaders#realm\\_leaders\\_landing.html](http://help.onrealm.org/?rp=Connect&ap=None&np=None&lp=Groups+Group+Members+and+Leaders#realm_leaders_landing.html)



## Session

The Session of Wilton Presbyterian Church held eleven monthly Stated Meetings in 2021 in addition to the Annual Congregational meeting on February 2, 2021. Below are statistical highlights from the year showing little change from 2020:

The Lord's Supper: 12 Celebrations  
Baptisms: 0  
Deaths: 2  
Received into Membership: 2  
Transfers to Inactive Rolls: 8  
Deletions from Church Rolls: 9  
Total members: 268

Continuing with tradition, the Moderator opened each of our meetings with a devotional. The devotional centers, teaches and reminds us that we are the spiritual leaders of our church.

The Session, Personnel and Finance teams worked in conjunction with WEPCO to adopt a balanced budget for 2021. John Burgdorfer presented the budget to the membership at the Congregational Meeting on February 28, 2021.

On February 2, 2021, Rev. Shannon White announced to Session her intent to resign. Her last service at WPC was Sunday, June 13, 2021. Rev. Shannon Vance-Ocampo, the General Presbyter, attended our March meeting and explained the interim search process. The team of Buck Burnaman, Berta Hull, Cathy Ratcliffe and Jock Wright was formed to begin the search with guidance from Rev. Shelley Donaldson, liaison to the Committee on Ministry. Buck kept Session updated on the team's progress. At our May meeting, he reported that the search team had selected six candidates from a pool of thirty to interview. Subsequently, the search team proposed that The Rev. Dr. Jeffrey David Weenink be endorsed by Session and was approved with unanimous support. Dr. Weenink arrived in Wilton the first week in September and was in the pulpit on September 12th.

During our May meeting, Rev. White welcomed our two confirmands, Lily Archibald and Grace Ratcliffe. They each read their beautiful statements of faith, engaged in conversation with Session members and were accepted into the membership of Wilton Presbyterian Church.

And then on June 13th, Rev. White presided at her final service at Wilton Presbyterian Church. It was a beautiful and emotional service which was followed by an outdoor reception that allowed everyone to bid her a fond farewell. She will be missed by all.

John Burgdorfer, chair of finance, met with Session quarterly to keep us abreast of our financial position which remained steady throughout the year and was enhanced by two PPP loans. The WPC balance sheet remained healthy with combined assets of \$4.5M. The finance team of Mark

Bohrer, Frank Mabley and Carolyn Parker became proficient with using the Realm cloud-based financial platform during the year.

Session liaisons kept us informed about the activities of our committees: Bryan Campbell-Outreach Team, Reshan Richards-Live Streaming, Berta Hull-WEPCO, Alison Wood-Worship, Cathy Ratcliffe-Faith in Action and Buck Burnaman-Endowment and Personnel.

Bryan Campbell reported in September that it was the consensus from the deacon-elder meeting held on September 1st to reach out to new neighbors through Good Morning Wilton (GMW) rather than with a direct mailing. He followed up with the editor of GMW to inquire about her thoughts and her willingness to do an article on Dr. Weenink; then down the road, a broader piece to include all faith-based communities in Wilton.

Reshan Richards kept us updated on the progress of the installation of the hardware for live streaming our services. Reshan, Jock Wright and Jason Rice first installed internet wires from parish hall to the sanctuary to determine whether the connection would be strong. It was! NVL Computers was selected from three bids and commenced with the installation. Reshan created a list of seven easy-to-follow instructions for the volunteers who manned the streaming controls. Concurrently preparations for in-person services were underway. Air scrubbers were installed in the sanctuary thanks to our building and grounds team. Session conscientiously following all CDC guidelines when making decision regarding mask wearing, numbers of people in attendance, singing, child care and coffee hour. The first in-person service was held on Sunday, April 25th. As pandemic guidelines changed, we approved the singing of hymns by mid-July, all other restrictions remained in place. It was agreed that the choir could begin singing during services when they were ready.

At our December meeting, Ralph Bernabei gave us an in-depth presentation of the Realm people module. Realm offers many possibilities, such as allowing members to maintain their own personal information and giving countless ways where groups can benefit from better communications, i.e., posting and archiving agendas, report documents and minutes. Session will begin using Realm for these purposes as early as January, followed by the Deacons and the rest of the congregation.

Also in December, Alison Wood updated us on the ladybug infestation in the pipe organs. Session approved the recommendation from the Worship team to accept the proposal that would fully repair the pipes and cover them to prevent infestations in the future.

Bryan Campbell agreed to chair the 2022 stewardship campaign that ran through the month of November. Kit Smith joined Bryan in leadership of the campaign, and they were joined by a team of ambassadors who shepherded members throughout the course of the campaign. Thank you, Bryan and Kit, for your hard work and a successful campaign.

Respectfully submitted,  
Berta Hull  
Clerk of Session

## Social Media

In the final quarter of 2021, a group of faithful folks have met weekly to examine multiple ways we can communicate Wilton Presbyterian Church's presence to the Wilton Community and to our neighbors in Fairfield County. Applause goes to: Sonny Kern, Don Challis, Sandy and Julie Stein, Ken Fadner, Jessica and Andrew Jones, Ed Macewen, Cathy Ratcliffe, Sandy Shifrin, Berta Hull for their efforts. Andrew Jones, Jessica Jones, Julie Stein, and others have provided a steady stream of photos and posts via Facebook and Instagram. We are grateful for their efforts as our Social Media team begins to get some traction.



# Stewardship

The *Renewed In The Spirit Stewardship* Campaign commenced in mid- October. A congregational mailing was sent to all potential giving households.

133 Pledge Cards were mailed out. 71 Pledge Cards were received.

The table below shows the five-year trend in financial support of WPC.

Year	Actual Pledges Received	Total Dollars Pledged	Actual Received
2017	104	\$411,100	\$444,500
2018	100	\$413,200	\$403,800
2019	106	\$434,100	\$437,000
2020	99	\$385,600	\$392,000
2021	90	\$343,900	\$341,200
2022	71	\$335,100	



# WEPCO

WEPCO (Wilton Episcopal Presbyterian Corporation) works on behalf of both Wilton Presbyterian Church and St. Matthews Episcopal Church. WEPCO is responsible for maintaining the shared spaces at our church complex which includes the outdoor grounds and all indoor spaces except for the two sanctuaries. The upper core, the lounge, parish hall and all church school spaces are examples of the 15,000 square foot complex that WEPCO maintains. WEPCO functions via operating and capital budgets approved each year by both churches.

2021, like 2020, was a challenging year for WEPCO managing through the Covid pandemic restrictions which entailed establishing masking, social distancing, and vaccination policies. Our permanent tenants returned to the building in June 2020, following strict guidelines, while renters (i.e., Boy Scouts, AA, Kiwanis) returned in June 2021. Andrew Arevalo assumed the role WEPCO Facilities Coordinator in February after the retirement of Sandy Muschler who served in the role for 22 years.

Chris Jeanes resigned his co-president role in April due to his family's relocation to Florida. Tom Carlson took over Chris's role on the Wepco Board at that time.

On the financial front WEPCO continues to be diligent about monitoring operating expenses having reduced them by 30% over the past five years. WEPCO, through WPC's application, received and was forgiven a PPP loan of \$21,000.

## **CAPITAL PROJECTS**

WEPCO, along with WPC and STM, completed the upgrade of the Wi-Fi system which will greatly enhance live streaming capabilities of Sunday services and to accessibility to the internet.

Tuckpointing, roofing repairs and painting projects were completed which will prevent future water damage.

WEPCO completed a campus-wide landscaping project of shrub and tree pruning in December. We will see the results of this effort in the Spring.

Spearheaded by WEPCO, and joined by the churches, we will be implementing an Integrated Calendar/Work Order software program (eSPACE) which will make scheduling the use of rooms more efficient and alleviate conflicts. The system should be operational in early 2022.

WEPCO started the installation of a security system to include a card-key reader and surveillance cameras which should be completed by March 2022. We received a \$50,000 grant from the State of CT Non-Profit Organization Security Infrastructure Competitive Grant Program for this project and as a result, there was no cost to either church.

The parking lot was re-stripped.

**OTHER**

WEPCO successfully hosted The Town of Wilton Vaccination Distribution Clinic serving the general public during the months of March and April.

WEPCO attracted a new renter, The Montessori Pre-School (serving 2–6-year-old children), who replaced MOTH. Many hurdles had to be overcome including safety, zoning, insurance, health, and inspection issues. This will generate significant additional revenue thus reducing the churches' WEPCO contributions. In addition, Montessori upgraded the playground area adjacent to their space at their cost.

The Spring and Fall 2021 Clean-Up Days were limited in their success due to COVID. These days rely heavily on the participation of parishioners from both churches and the Boy Scout troop. We will address the future feasibility of Clean-Up days to determine if a third-party contractor is needed to assist us in our efforts. These Clean-Up days help to maintain our beautiful campus and avoid additional costs. We strongly encourage all parishioners to participate.

Thank you to everyone on the WEPCO Board, the Clergy, Staff, WPC Session, St. Matthew's Vestry, and parishioners of both churches for their efforts to make our complex the exceptional place that it is for our missions of faith and the way it serves the broader community. Also, we appreciate everyone's patience as 2021 was a year of transition amid the pandemic.

Respectfully submitted,  
Thomas Carlson  
Stephen Connor

**2021 Board Officers and Members:**

Co-Presidents:	Thomas Carlson, Stephen Connor
Secretary:	Chip Newton
Treasurer:	Bill Brautigam
Other Voting members:	Andy Driver, Tim Cummins, Ed MacEwen
Ex-Officio Members:	Berta Hull (WPC), Brian Angerame (STM)
Facilities Coordinator:	Andrew Arevalo
Sexton:	Max Gil



# Worship and Music

The Worship and Music Committee serves as the support group for our staff members in planning and carrying out worship services offered by WPC. Our objectives are as follows:

- Assist staff and Session in providing welcoming, meaningful worship services.
- Facilitate encourage lay participation in worship services.
- Serve as a sounding board for staff; provide feedback and input on worship activities.

During the year 2021, our committee responded to the continually changing guidelines from the State of Connecticut and our own Presbytery regarding the pandemic. We started the year with online services only. Our first live service was an outdoors service on June 13. That service was also a farewell service to our long time and beloved minister, Reverend Shannon White.

Indoor services resumed on June 20. From June 14 until September 12, our congregation was without a minister. Our committee is forever grateful to members of staff for their valuable support during this interval. With the help of staff, our committee recruited guest preachers during that interval to provide a meaningful indoor service every Sunday. The guest preachers during that time included three congregation members, Cathy Thomas, and Reverends Gail Nicholas Schneider and Jessica Jones. Other guest preachers included Anthony Trujillo, the Reverends Shannan Vance-Ocampo, Mark Grorud, Chris Tate, Laurie McKnight, Susan Power Trucksess and Pastor Richard Williams.

Our interim minister, Jeffrey Weenink delivered his first sermon on September 12. On October 17, we held an outdoor joint service with our partner at WEPCO, Saint Matts.

Thanks to the efforts of Dave Hull and Reshan Richards, our services are now live streamed. These services alone with video messages from our minister are available to view live and at any time.

Our committee meets quarterly to review recent worship activities, as well as those planned for the next three to six months. Committee membership during the year 2021 included, Irla Landry, Alison Wood, Gail Schneider, Jeffrey Weenink and Zachery White, and Chris Jones. We continue to meet in the Zoom format.

Committee member Irla Landry has continued to organize the Table Guild. The Table Guild ensures that the sanctuary is in order before each service.

Our music program remains strong under the leadership of Zachery White. Bringing back music into the sanctuary for the first time since March of 2020, Zack has maintained and advanced our music program with the help of a loyal and devoted choir.

Also, a special thanks to Nancy Gorkin for her contribution of flowers and our custodian, Max Gil, for his creativity and thoughtfulness.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Jones, *Chair*

**Staff**

Jeffrey Weenink  
Zachary White

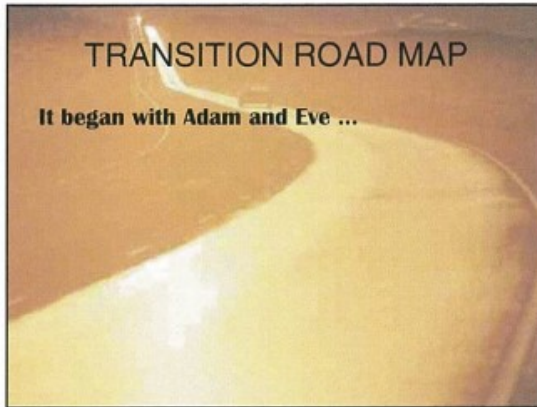
**At-large members**

Irla Landry  
Gail Schneider

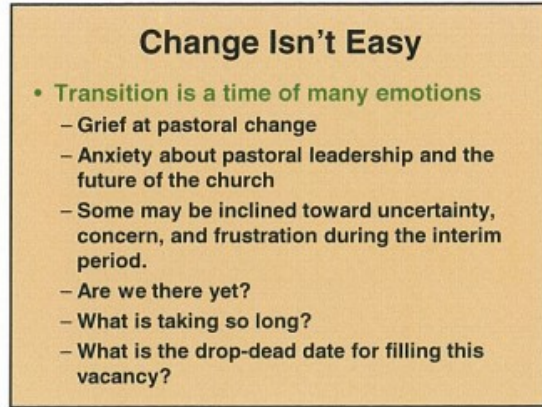
**Liaison from Session**

Alison Wood

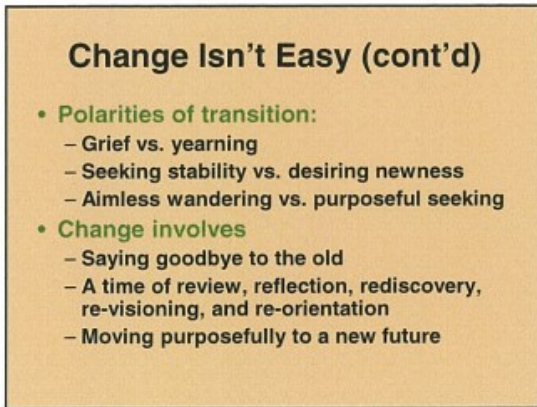
# Appendix: Transitional Pastor Information



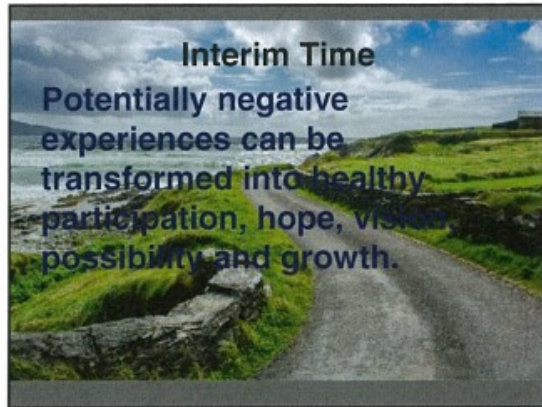
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## Stages in pastoral transition

1. The "lame-duck" period
2. The farewell
3. The post departure transition
4. The interim pastorate
  - A time to maintain normalcy
  - A time to explore new ways of being and doing
  - The self study
  - The pastoral search
  - Preparing for the new pastor
5. The welcome
6. The "honeymoon"

5

## Interim Developmental Tasks

- Coming to terms with past history
- (Re)discovering present congregational identity (context)
- Review organizational structure, leadership roles, operating discipline
- Allowing and empowering new leadership
- Renewing/validating/fortifying denominational connections
- Preparing for a new pastor and a new future

6

## Self Study

The Self Study process enables the congregation into an intentional time of discernment and discovery. It is a time to turn the trajectory of thinking from "what has been" to "what can be." It can be a rejuvenating time for reaffirmation, rededication, renewal, and rebirth.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cKaxIX2is8&feature=youtu.be>



7

## The MIF

- The Ministry Information Form is the profile of the church to candidates
- The MIF needs to be credible
- By what authority can a PNC complete it
- Congregational voice is key



8

## When Can We Elect a PNC?

- When authorized by COM
- Typically in-tandem with self study
- PNC is nominated by church nominating committee from active members
- Should have mix of roles, generations, years of membership
- COM transition liaison guides PNC

9

## ALPHABET SOUP – Definition of Terms

- WPC – That's us
- PNC – Pastoral Nominating Committee
- COM – Committee on Ministry
- MIF – Ministry Information Form
- PIF - Pastoral/Personal Information Form
- CLC – Church Leadership Connection

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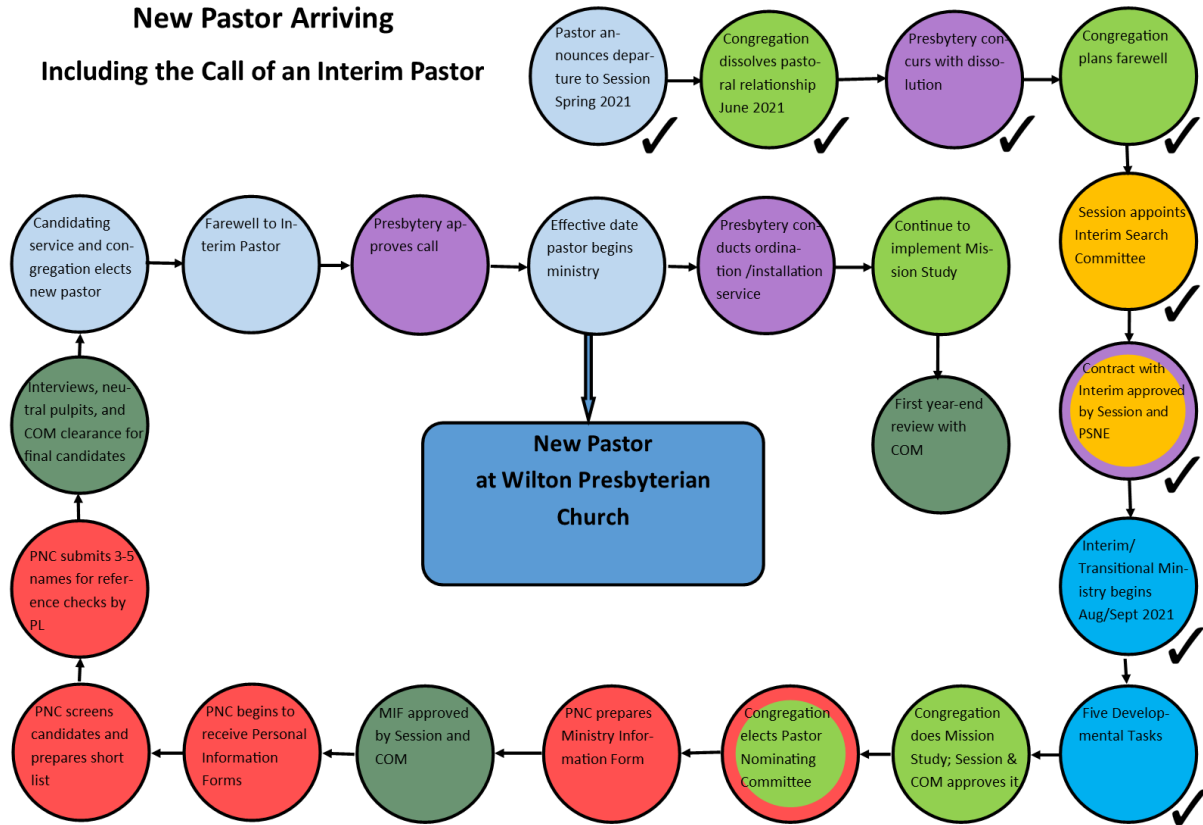


# Transition from Pastor Leaving to New Pastor Arriving

Including the Call of an Interim Pastor



**Transition from Pastor Leaving to  
New Pastor Arriving  
Including the Call of an Interim Pastor**



GP— General Presbyter PSNE—Presbytery Southern New England COM—Cmte. on Ministry PNC—Pastor Nominating Cmte. MIF—Ministry Information Form PIF—Personal Information Form



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