



Mission Covenant Church
53 Pleasant St.
62 Cheney St.
Orange, MA 01364
Rev. Tracy Spiegel, Pastor
www.eastcoastconf.org
www.covchurch.org
www.missioncovorange.org



DECEMBER 9, 2021

Dear Mission Friends,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As you gather for your congregational annual meeting, I want you to know how much I appreciate you and our partnership in the Gospel. Together we share and tell more of God's story. Thank you for the many ways you have proclaimed and demonstrated the love of Christ. This is who we are: a Gospel-centered people, grounded in the Scriptures, and unified in our shared mission.

Our mission is to join God in God's mission to see more disciples in more populations in a more caring and just world. **This mission advances through the mosaic of churches of which we are all a part. Together we bring hope and transformation to a world weary with despair and confusion.**

Missional traction flows from our relationship with Jesus and with each other. The Holy Spirit continues to do amazing things on, in, and through the Evangelical Covenant Church. Yes, we have many challenges, we are working through those challenges, and we will emerge stronger on the other side.

I recently visited two vibrant Covenant churches on a Sunday morning. Although the churches were 22 miles apart and different in ministry style, I was delighted to hear both pastors preaching on the Holy Spirit. A conscious dependence on the Holy Spirit is one of our Covenant Affirmations. As a mosaic of mission friends, we continue to listen to what the Spirit is saying to churches. May we have ears to hear and hearts to respond.

As we navigate the days ahead, let us hold fast to the enduring promises of God's kingdom. May we remain centered by asking the three Covenant questions:

- **Where is it written?**
- **How goes your walk?**
- **Are you alive in Christ?**

I am confident that these questions will help to keep us focused on what matters most and on mission.

Remember that you are not alone. You are part of a union of churches, over 900 strong throughout North America. Together we share the Gospel in word and deed in more than 50 countries. Together we see more people transformed by the love of Christ. Thank you for all the ways you remain faithful in giving to our shared mission. We can do more with God and for God as we join our hearts and hands for mission. I encourage you to stay connected and encouraged by signing up for Covchurch Now, a weekly email communicating the stories of God's work among us. You can sign up online [here](#).

I pray that in the coming year, God blesses you and your congregation in every way. May your congregation overflow with joy and thanksgiving as you celebrate the work of God in your midst.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13).

In Christ's love,

John Wenrich, PRESIDENT, EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH



Dear Friends in Christ,

I have great joy in bringing your greetings in your congregational meetings in 2022.

Saint Luke, in his Gospel (2:10-11) tells us that at the first Advent, angels appeared to the poor and humble shepherds of Israel with these life changing words:

“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.”

After more than two thousand years the Gospel story remains the central declaration that gives human history and every person an enduring focus, purpose, and meaning.

In the midst of all that elicits fear, *we have reason not to be afraid.*

In the midst of all the bad news, *we have been given good news.*

In the midst of so much darkness, *we have great joy – joy for all people.*

Luke tells us that the Savior was born in the midst of anguish; God’s Son entered the world to embrace our predicament, and to overcome our bondage. He assumed our broken existence to heal our foolish resistance. Christians, still today, are entrusted with the enduring enterprise of bearing witness to this great message – a message that transforms hearts, homes, and cultures as the Messiah, the Lord, becomes central.

Since 1889, The East Coast Conference has been a servant to, and extension of, this message and mission for Covenant churches and mission agencies. Together we are weathering our second pandemic (the first was in 1918). Today offer churches an array of resources including consulting, church planting, leadership coaching, pastoral development, clergy credentialing, and spiritual direction. Our churches and agencies, battened down, bruised, and weary – are still afloat and advancing together on the seas of adversity. We are lashed together to Christ, bound one to another in love, in fellowship, and in mission. As we meet to reflect, to pray, to plan, and to renew our promises as God’s people – may we celebrate our deep and enduring connection as a diverse fellowship of Covenant friends – mission friends.

Yours because of Him,

Howard K. Burgoyne, *Superintendent*

Interim Pastor's Report-Pastor Tracy Spiegel

"They'll know we are Christians by our love."

~ Text and music by Peter Scholtes; based on John 13:35

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

~ 1 Thessalonians 5:16

As was shared at my installation service, I did not grow up religious. Some might consider this a disadvantage for a person called to the pastorate - I did myself for many years - but existing as we do now in a time where following Christ is seen by many as a fringe hobby at best and evidence of narrow-mindedness and bigotry at worst, I now view my early years as a blessing from God, and his way of preparing me to be a pastor in *this* social and cultural moment. Because I have personally experienced the doubt, the cynicism, and, yes, even the hostility toward the faith that many in our culture feel today, I can say with a fair amount of certainty that what many churches are offering will not be enough to bring people to their doors.

We live in a time of great need - the 'good life' offered by the world is very often not so good - and people need to know there's an alternative available to them, that God offers a wonderful alternative in Jesus. Our task as Christians, our calling, I believe, is to model that alternative, holding up the love, the priorities, the ethics, of Jesus for everyone to see; making the alternative so attractive that people want it for themselves, their families, their friends. I pray that I can do this personally as Interim Pastor and that I can help, encourage, and support Mission Covenant to do so, too, as a congregation (in whatever ways they aren't already).

As I write this, I've been serving at MCC as Interim Pastor for only six weeks. In that time, I have:

- Planned and conducted services (in collaboration with the Music Director) for Thanksgiving and Advent, and have Christmas Eve and a Lessons and Carols service for Dec. 26th (something new for MCC) scheduled
- Contributed two Advent 'messages' to a community ecumenical outreach
- Made some changes to the worship and communion services (bringing it back, hopefully, more in line with where it was under previous pastors)
- Facilitated the restarting of weekly children's Sunday School
- Met with several members of the congregation privately for conversation

Plans for January include the launch of an adult Bible study using the Casket Empty resource (www.casketempty.com), and a revamp of the church's website.

Already, I feel incredibly blessed to be a part of the Mission Covenant family. Thank you to all for the warmth of the welcome my family and I have received.

Annual Report from the Chairman 2021

Once again, we come to the end of the fiscal and calendar year for Mission Covenant Church. 2021 has been a year of difficulties, challenges, triumphs and blessings. Included with these situations, we can count numerous firsts that can be considered unprecedented and set a new course for our church.

The church was blessed by continuing remote pulpit supply by Rev. Stephen Cushing. Stephen served us online until Easter Sunday which was the first time he came in person as we met outside in our Cheney Street parking lot. Stephen installed Ronnie Cherichetti as our newest church member that day and that served as his final pastoral act before having to return to other responsibilities.

Following Easter, our former pastor, Rev. Jeff Black, worked remotely with us for several months. Jeff was unable to continue following a family tragedy, but his sermons were reused on screen as we began meeting in the sanctuary once again and continued to provide an online service to those who could not attend in person. Additional remote sermons were provided by Reverends Brad and Jenna Frost of the Monadnock Covenant Church in Keene. We also had an in-person visit from Jim Lake from the Gideons Society as recent pulpit supply. A great deal of thanks go out to our contributing pastors, Ministry of Worship Leader/Music Director, A/V team and musicians who assisted in the planning and contributing to providing weekly worship services.

Since Pastor Mary Hendrickson resigned in October 2020, our parsonage was left empty. It was recommended by LT and voted by the congregation to sell the parsonage to reduce maintenance requirements and expenses. As congregants came together to prepare the parsonage for sale, Four Columns Realty found a ready, cash buyer and the sale provided net proceeds of \$144,888 to the church after all debts and obligations were completely paid off. The buyers, Daniel Kimball and wife, Deirdre, ironically turns out to be a direct descendant of one of the original founders of our church (John Sands). The church voted to invest \$88,114 in residual funds in a Covenant investment account.

Several inquiry possibilities were reviewed for the use of our Cheney Street building, including a "non-disclosure" unknown entity, Franklin County Community Meals Program and the Town of Orange. The congregation voted to have an exploratory committee and later voted that MCC lease the new section of the Cheney building for emergency housing for some town offices and the Council on Aging.

After much deliberation, the church approved the formation of a Pastoral Search Committee. Following some meetings of this new committee, a resolution to the LT was drafted urging the hiring of an Interim Pastor and budget funding; both were unanimously approved. Subsequently Pastor Tracy Spiegel was hired as the Interim Pastor following one full year without a sitting resident pastor. Her position will be reviewed every six months by the LT and renewable as needed. From this point, each committee and team will have dialogue with the pastor, who is well-experienced in administrative duties within the church.

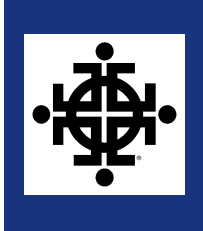
Sunday School has resumed for children after two years and plans are to start up pastor-led Bible study after the New Year. The pandemic is still reason for caution within churches, but we maintain use of face masks, social distancing and contact tracing sign in.

Mission Covenant Church has been greatly blessed through holding continuing online worship and in-person worship services. We are blessed by a dedicated core group of congregants and individuals willing to serve in leadership and to fill positions essential to maintaining weekly church operations. God is blessing our church by a slow, but consistent return of congregants to worship. We continue to pray for an end to the Covid pandemic as we strive to adapt to a new normalcy and maintain opportunities to worship and serve the community.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth M. Johnson, Chairman

Treasurer's Report/Budget



Mission Covenant Church

P.O. Box 299, 53 Pleasant Street
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(978) 544-2803

Annual Budget 2022

	<u>Jan - Dec</u> <u>22</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
40000 · Support	
4000 · Tithes/Offerings	73,000.00
4003 · Camp Fund	500.00
4200 · Donations - In Kind	<u>7,300.00</u>
Total 40000 · Support	80,800.00
4702 · Sisca Support	<u>600.00</u>
Total Income	81,400.00
Expense	
50000 · Operating Expenses	
5000 · Donations	
50003 · Pilgrim Pines Donation	814.00
50004 · Seafarers Donation	407.00
5001 · East Coast Conference	2,849.00
5002 · Evangelical Covenant	<u>5,291.00</u>
Total 5000 · Donations	9,361.00
50019 · Annual Health Licenses	100.00
5012 · Office Expense	1,800.00
5013 · Pulpit Supply	1,500.00
5015 · Discretionary Account	200.00
5490 · CORI Checks - On Behalf*	<u>700.00</u>
Total 50000 · Operating Expenses	13,661.00

50018 · Mercy, Compassion & Justice	
500181 · Missions	300.00
500182 · Training	100.00
500183 · Programs/Supplies	<u>200.00</u>
Total 50018 · Mercy, Compassion & Justice	600.00

51000 · Salaries and Benefits	
5100 · Pastor - Salary	20,000.00
51001 · Pastor SECA	1,530.00
5104 · Pastor - Conferences and Meetin	1,000.00
5110 · Music Director	6,500.00
51101 · Payroll Taxes	500.00
5111 · Guest Music	25.00
511101 · Contemporary Music (on-behalf)	1,800.00
5213 · Workers Comp Insurance	<u>650.00</u>
Total 51000 · Salaries and Benefits	32,005.00

52000 · Occupancy Expense	
5200 · Church	
5120 · Janitor *	3,300.00
5201 · Janitor/Supplies	100.00
5202 · Repairs/Maint	1,500.00
5203 · Electric	1,800.00
5204 · Heating Fuel	4,000.00
5205 · Water/Sewer	300.00
5206 · Telephone/Internet	2,000.00
5212 · Property Insurance	8,200.00
5226 · Snow Removal	1,000.00
5227 · Grounds Maintenance	<u>500.00</u>
Total 5200 · Church	22,700.00

5220 · New Building	
52201 · Janitor Supplies	100.00
52203 · Janitor Salary*	2,200.00
52205 · Repairs/Maintenance	1,200.00
52207 · Electric	1,000.00
52208 · Heating Fuel	2,000.00
52209 · Propane	60.00
52210 · Water/Sewer	150.00
52214 · Snow Removal	699.00
52215 · Grounds Maintenance	650.00

Total 5220 · New Building	<u>8,059.00</u>
Total 52000 · Occupancy Expense	30,759.00
53000 · Deacons Expenses	
500184 · Sisca Support	600.00
5310 · Flowers	150.00
5320 · Gifting	600.00
5330 · Church Service Supplies	125.00
5340 · Printing and Publications	150.00
5350 · Training	<u>200.00</u>
Total 53000 · Deacons Expenses	1,825.00
54000 · Christian Education	
5420 · Church Camp Scholarships	500.00
5450 · Supplies	<u>500.00</u>
Total 54000 · Christian Education	1,000.00
56000 · Music Director Expenses	
5610 · Conferences and Retreats	25.00
5630 · Music	25.00
5640 · Equipment	<u>25.00</u>
Total 56000 · Music Director Expenses	75.00
57000 · Audio/Visual (A/V) Expense	
5018 · Website Expense	750.00
5740 · Software Licenses	<u>700.00</u>
Total 57000 · Audio/Visual (A/V) Expense	1,450.00
59000 · Worship Ministry	
5920 · Programs/Supplies	<u>25.00</u>
Total 59000 · Worship Ministry	<u>25.00</u>
Total Expense	<u>81,400.00</u>
Net Ordinary Income	0.00

Due to the early January Congregational Meeting, the Profit and Loss Statement, Treasurer's report and the Auditor's Letter will not be included at this time. The financial books need to be closed first for these to be done. This cannot happen until all December statements are received later in January. To receive a copy, contact the Treasurer-George Hunt.

Worship and Music Annual Report for 2021

Worship life at Mission Covenant is still evolving in our second year of the Coronavirus pandemic. While we have needed to avoid singing in person due to the Coronavirus, the technology of recording music has allowed us to continue sharing this ministry. I am very grateful to our singers, Ken and Will Johnson, Rachel Gonzalez and Jenn Gray, for adding their recordings to my own keyboard pieces, to build a new music library. We are also very appreciative of all the work done by our AV specialists, George Hunt and John Sylvester, in helping us adapt to the new technology needs.

Many thanks also go to our scripture readers Ron Cherichetti, Debbie Fifield, Marcia Sims, Claire Chenausky, and Ken and Will Johnson. Thanks also to Sharyn Scott, who has also been very helpful with our bulletins. Our Christmas decorations would not have been so complete without the help of Mercedes Clingerman.

We had only online services from the beginning of the year until Easter, April 4, with Rev. Stephen Cushing providing videotaped sermons. On that day we had our first drive-in worship with communion and the installation of a new member, Ron Cherichetti, with Pastor Cushing presiding for the last time. We met in the parking lot of our Cheney Street building, with congregants bringing their own folding chairs or sitting in their cars, wearing masks, and listening to pre-recorded music from our singers and our former praise band.

From April 11 to July 4, our former pastor, Jeff Black provided video sermons, and we used pre-recorded music for our drive-in worship. It was a major blessing when, on June 6, we were able to move back to the sanctuary at Pleasant Street for in-person services, using pre-recorded music and sermon videos. The Deacons served communion using prepackaged kits for safety. At our first service there, we had 13 attending, and continued our online services for those who were unable to be with us in person. Covid protocols of masking, social distancing and logging in for contact tracing were observed. Attendance numbers have been steadily increasing since then.

We next turned gratefully to supply pastors for sermons as of August 1st. Our guest preachers included Tracy Spiegel, who preached in person, and Jenna and Brad Frost from Monadnock Covenant, who sent videotaped sermons. Jim Lake from the Gideon Society also came one Sunday to provide a message. We continued using previously recorded music.

A momentous event happened on November 7th, when Pastor Tracy Spiegel was installed by Rev. Howard Burgoyne as our new interim pastor. Tracy had been serving with us live in the sanctuary throughout the fall, and we were delighted when she accepted the new position. She has brought us welcome spiritual direction and a pastoral presence in worship.

As we finish 2021, we are going to return to having live singers for Christmas Eve and the Lessons and Carols service on December 26. All efforts will be made to follow Covid protocols as determined by the Board of Health. If all goes well, we hope to make further progress in our return to a new normal.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy L. Johnson

Music Director and Interim Worship Ministry Leader

Deacon Ministry Report 2021

According to the New Compact Bible Dictionary, Special Crusade Edition, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Minn. MN, the word deacon means basically a servant. The word in the NT is usually connected with the supply of material needs and service. Acts 6:1-8 says, "In those days, as the number of disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint by the Hellenistic Jews that their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution. Then the Twelve summoned the whole company of the disciples and said, 'it would not be right for us to give up preaching about God to wait on tables. Therefore select seven men from among you of good reputation and full of the Spirit and wisdom whom we can appoint to this duty'. The proposal was well received"

The Deacons had four formal meetings in 2021; March, April, May and June. Deacon Ministry members are Sandra Warren, Will Johnson and Betty Sylvester, Chair.

There were three combined meetings of Ministry leaders: Deacons, Worship, and Outreach in January, February and March.

There were four combined meetings of Ministry leaders with the Leadership Team in January, April, May and July.

Because of Covid19 we limited our contacts and did most of our communicating via phone or computer. The Prayer Ministry continued and one person was interviewed for membership to be received into the church on Easter Sunday.

In April the Deacons assumed responsible for Sisca and decided to take a special offering for her each Communion Sunday. Total offerings collected were \$512. We also helped Sandra with hospitality packs that she would hand out to people getting rides from her to various appointments. Each packet had a snack, something to read, a scripture, some hard candies, etc. Sandra said they were appreciated.

Communion was served each month first online and then on Easter outside with Rev. Cushing presiding. We continued to use prepacked kits for bread and juice when we returned to indoor worship.

When Pastor Tracy Spiegel was installed as our Interim pastor by our Superintendent on Nov 7th Communion was led by both pastors.

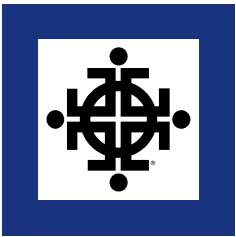
We thank God for keeping us safe through this difficult time.

Betty Sylvester

Men's Ministry

We have closed down the Men's Ministry this year due to COVID concerns and lack of participation. We may start back up again in the future depending on the needs of the Church and the community.

George Hunt



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We have slowly returned to regular in person services and now starting live singing We are continuing to get our services available to as many platforms as possible to allow all our congregants and those outside the church a chance to worship with us.

The website is continuously being improved and postings have been going up quite frequently. The link to the sermons is posted there for ease of finding each week's service.

We have purchased a new computer and software to make all the presentation tasks (both live and online) easier.

We are always looking for help to run the services or any other tasks as they come along, so please don't hesitate to ask if you are interested.

Thank you all for your continued support and we look forward to another year of serving the Lord.

Your A/V "Crew"

George H. and John S.

Report from the Pastoral Search Committee 2021

Our church went without a sitting resident pastor for most of 2021 since the resignation of Pastor Mary Hendrickson at the end of October 2020. Many in leadership roles urged the formation of a customary Pastoral Search Committee to allow for the recommendations for new pastoral candidates from the Conference.

The Leadership Team finally approved the formation of a search team and we held nominations to elect a committee. An organizational first meeting by Zoom took place in August consisting of Betty Sylvester, Sandra Warren, Judy Anderson, Marcia Sims and Ken Johnson making up the new Pastoral Search Committee and was hosted by Associate Superintendent, Barbara Ettinger. Barbara instructed that our work was considered “holy work” and that we were accountable to the congregation and that the efforts of the committee remains confidential from the interim pastor. The committee voted to have Betty act as secretary, Marcia as vice chair and Ken Johnson as chair.

Our Conference Superintendent suggested several possible pulpit supply pastors to our church. One of the proposed individuals, Pastor Tracy Spiegel, agreed to offer her services for pulpit supply as needed. With this fresh face in our midst and positive responses from the congregation and the leadership, our search team drafted a resolution to the Leadership Team to appropriate funds and offer Pastor Tracy a “call” to become our Interim Pastor. This move would serve to provide pastoral counselling, pastoral involvement on the LT and a new start to spiritual programming within the church. The move was unanimously voted and Pastor Tracy was installed by Rev. Howard Burgoyne in an unprecedented installation ceremony for an Interim.

To prevent a future lapse of pastoral leadership, the Pastoral Search Committee will continue to remain active to assure that pastoral leadership continues uninterrupted into 2022. The committee is open to any additional pastoral candidates suggested by the Conference for review as a permanent pastor.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth M. Johnson, Pastoral Search Committee Chair