

# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH BENNINGTON, VERMONT ANNUAL REPORT 2023

194TH ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING  
HELD JANUARY 28, 2024



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## CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of our Heavenly Father, to associate ourselves with this church in its united effort to promote God's will on earth, we therefore solemnly enter into agreement with one another and with the Lord Jesus Christ. That we will strive to live a new and holy life, walking together in love as disciples of Jesus who said, "This is my commandment to you, to love one another as I have loved you... by this shall all men know that you are my disciples." That we will seek to emulate the teachings of the New Testament: laying aside falsehood and speaking the truth. We will be kind one to another that we may live as children of light, standing firm as men and women of mature character and of clear convictions as to everything which is God's will. That we will sustain this church in its worship, teaching, and missionary interests home and abroad by our regular attendance at its services, and will contribute, as God prospers us, to meet various needs of the Kingdom; knowing that this is the only way we can keep the church strong and its work progressive. That we will aim to maintain private family devotion, create a Christian atmosphere within our homes, encourage cheerfulness, a right appreciation of prayer, and a balance of Christian life. That we pledge ourselves to maintain individual liberty of conscience to strive with all Christ's followers in a courageous effort to bring our social relations into harmony with all society and government, to promote peace, and a better understanding among mankind. That should we move from this community we will as soon as possible unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

### 194TH ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA-JANUARY 28, 2024, 11:40AM

The First Baptist Church of Bennington, VT, will hold its 194th annual meeting on January 28, 2024, beginning at 11:40AM in Colgate Hall.

#### A. CORPORATE BODY

1. Ratification of the actions of the Board of Trustees
2. Voting on all board members for a one year term

#### B. BUSINESS MEETING

1. Approval of the minutes of the January 22, 2023 annual meeting.
2. Presentation of the Financial Report
3. To hear and act upon the report of the Budget Committee.
4. To hear and act upon the report of the Nominating Committee.
5. To transact any other business that may properly come before this meeting.

—Lisa Flynn, Church Clerk

## MINUTES OF THE 193RD ANNUAL MEETING

The 193rd meeting was held on Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> immediately after the service held in the chapel. Church members were in attendance as well as trustee members. Byron Spafford, Randy Bates, Duane Shortt, Allyn Lindsey, Sue Hoag, Allyn & Theresa Ingalls, Lisa Kramer, Aleta Bryant-Boutin and Lisa Flynn (clerk).

- There was a motion made to accept the minutes from the 192<sup>nd</sup> annual meeting. Aleta Bryant Boutin seconded the motion and was so moved.
- A motion was made to ratify the actions of the board of trustees, Allyn Lindsey made the motion and was seconded by Jean Shortt. All were in favor and the motion was so moved.
- A motion was made to continue the serving board members as continuing to serve on the board of church Life and the Board of Trustees. Jean Shortt made the motion and Sue Hoag seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion was so moved.
- Byron Spafford gave a report about the continued maintenance of the church.
- There was motion made to accept the budget as written, Jean Shortt made the motion and Sue Hoag seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was approved.
- The meeting was adjourned at 11:55am.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lisa Flynn Church Clerk

## REPORT OF MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

**TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AS OF 12/31/22: 239** (Resident Members, 168 Non-Resident Members 71)

**Welcoming New Members:** Leslie Limoges 01/29/23.

**Membership Transitions:** Bea Miller-passed 04/25/23, Marion Riddle-passed 05/17/23.

**TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AS OF 12/31/23: 238** (Resident Members 167, Non-Resident Members 71)

## NOMINATING REPORT-OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS FOR VOTE

**Officers:** Lisa Flynn-Clerk, Byron Spafford-Financial Secretary, Grace Wilson-Moderator.

**Current Board Members Trustees:** Randall Bates, Lisa Flynn, Lisa Kramer, Sue Hoag, Allyn Lindsey, Duane Shortt, Byron Spafford.

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The church continues to be without a permanent pastor; however we have not been lacking a wonderful cast of pastors who have been filling the pulpit. We continue to have rotations of Pastors who preach the sermon and conduct services; Pastor Joe DeWitt preaches the first Sunday of each month, Dr. Alan Ingalls preaches the second and fourth Sunday of each month, and Pastor John Brigham preaches the third and fifth Sunday of each month. We also benefit from the hospitality of pastor Richard McSherry, who conducts pastoral care, funerals and this past Christmas Eve service was conducted by Pastor Richard. Their sermons have been bringing hope and inspiration to members through CAT-TV video recordings; you can also see these recordings on the church website. <https://fbcbennington.org/> .

The American Baptist Church of Vermont & New Hampshire continues to have Executive Pastor Ron Bouthillette serving as interim executive pastor for the region.

We continue to search for a permanent part-time pastor, but the search has come to a standstill, as there are few pastors in the hiring pool.

The goals of this church continue to be; budget, legal obligations, building repairs and possible options for long term use. There continues to be major building structural repairs that should be made in the upcoming year. The removal of asbestos from upstairs flooring and the removal of 621 building are two of the highlighted projects for 2024.

The trustee board continues to meet every month to discuss church finances, building use, cost sharing opportunities, and events. Anyone who wishes to address the board may attend a meeting to discuss church business and operations.

The church continues to cost share with several non-profit businesses and organizations.

Alcohol Anonymous 7:00 AM

Family Time (a division of PAVE)

VCIL Vermont Center for Independent Living.

Red Cross Blood Mobile

Turning Point (Thursday night dinners).

The church annex currently has vacant office spaces available for occupancy. Cost sharing helps maintain the sustainability of the church.

Over the last few years, the board of trustees has essentially merged with the Church Life board, as there are too few members to have two separate boards.

The church held several rummage sales in the summer, in the fall and a Holiday Sale; which raised money to support the works of the church. The trustees also opened up the rummage sale rooms for Afghan families to shop for supplies.

John Harwood continues overseeing building maintenance and grounds as well as unlocking doors, closing up at night, and will be on call for safety and repairs. He will continue living in the house owned by the church, which will be compensation for his work around the church grounds.

Tim Pinsonneault continues as custodian who cleans the Colgate Hall building, chapel and sanctuary. The position is strictly cleaning only and will consist of 15 hours per week. For more information about this, please see the trustees.

We wish everyone a Happy New Year in 2024 and we continue to pray for the growth and prosperity of this church.

Respectfully Submitted,  
 Lisa Flynn, Church Clerk

**REPORT OF THE ALTAR GUILD**

During the past year, we have tried to keep the Altar attractive, and following the Christian seasons of colors and respect. Many people gave money for Easter and Christmas so that we could honor or remember people close to this congregation with flowers. I thank you all for the donations. Thank you to Aleta Boutin, Lisa Flynn, Jean Hoag, Susan Hoag, Grace Becker Wilson and any others that gave their time to helping on this committee. A special thank you to Byron Spafford for his time and keeping us on an even keel to keep things proper and safe. We are always looking for others to help-so if you desire to be on this committee, please let me know.

Respectively Submitted,  
 Allyn Lindsey

**REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

<b>Local Income</b>	<b>2023 Projected</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>2024 Projected</b>
Pledges	33,000.00	30,714.94	25,000.00
Loose Offerings	900.00	1,691.05	1,000.00
<b>Building</b>			
Pledges	3,000.00	1,503.00	1,300.00
Special Gifts & Donations	As given	0.0	As given

The mission comparison for 2023 and mission projections appear in the benevolence section of this report. Please contact me if you have questions about your giving. All records related to congregant giving are confidential and handled only by the financial secretary.

Respectfully Submitted,  
 Byron Spafford, Financial Secretary

### REPORT OF BENEVOLENCE

	2023 Projected	2023 Actual	2024 Projected
<b>Pledges</b>	2,800.00	2,894.53	2,800.00
<b>Pledges as Given</b>			
America for Christ	200.00	189.00	200.00
OGHS	200.00	175.00	175.00
RMMO	200.00	N/A	200.00
WMO	200.00	185.00	200.00
<b>Church Funds</b>			
Flower Fund	As given	817.20	As given
Memorial Fund	As given	1,460.00	As given
Scholarship Fund	As given	0.0	As given

**Distribution of 2023 Pledges is as follows:**

Coalition for the Homeless	231.83
Family Time	143.80
GBICS	721.86
Habitat for Humanity	105.60
Deacon's Fund	247.73
Northeastern Bible College	143.80
UM Basic Support	1,299.91
<b>Total:</b>	<b>2,894.53</b>

### REPORT OF THE DEACONS' FUND

Balance as of 12/ 31/2022	Balance as of 12/ 31/2023
1,182.50	3,849.60

## REPORT OF THE CHURCH ACCOUNTS

All checking and savings accounts and certificates of deposit (CDs) of First Baptist are lodged at the Heritage Family Credit Union (Bennington, VT branch).

<b><u>Church Activities Accounts</u></b>	<b>12/31/22 Balance</b>	<b>12/31/23 Balance</b>
Primary Share: Savings	7,094.11	8,398.75
Lester Nichols Dividend Account	0.38	14,574.44
JH HA White Dividend Account	0.07	2,202.03
Mary Edgerton Dividend Account	0.05	1,026.44
VT Community Foundation Grant	1,079.35	1,081.65
Building Fund	24,267.34	16,016.44
Mable Harris Dividend Account	0.22	8,917.59
American Baptist Women	2,257.01	2,261.76
Share Draft: Checking	48,967.00	43,475.25
<b><u>CDs</u></b>		
Video Fund (24 month CD)	2,009.25	2,033.19
Shoe Fund (3 month CD)	2,935.92	*Account Closed
Scholarship Fund (3 month CD)	9,295.87	9,411.91
<b><u>621 Main Accounts</u></b>		
621 Savings	26.75	1.82
621 Deposit Account	1,480.04	.09
621 Checking Account	9,941.24	8,285.56

The Primary Share is a combination of funds. The breakdown as of 01/01/24 is as follows: Flower Fund: 1,171.95, Memorial Fund: 5,039.52, Shoe Fund: 251.52, Scholarship Fund: 1,605.00, Dividends: 305.76 & Heritage minimum deposit allotment: 25.00.

The Building Fund is a combination of funds. The breakdown as of 01/01/24 is as follows: Organ R&M: 2,646.35, Sound System: 108.36, and Building R&M: 13,261.73.

\*In October of 2023, the Board of Trustees approved closing out the Shoe Fund CD and depositing the fund contents in the Deacon's Fund.

**REPORT OF 621 MAIN**

<b><u>Income</u></b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Interest	22.88	8.59
Rent	4,050.00	n/a
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4,072.88</b>	<b>8.59</b>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>		
Electric	363.45	312.66
Mortgage	6,378.48	6,909.82
Oil	808.40	n/a
Property Taxes	3,122.23	3,351.60
Repairs & Maintenance	2,189.50	340.69
Water and Sewer	868.36	723.41
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>13,731.02</b>	<b>11,638.18</b>
<b><u>Net Income</u></b>	<b><u>-9,658.14</u></b>	<b><u>-11,629.59</u></b>

In September of 2023 the Board of Trustees approved the procedure of demolishing the 621 duplex and to use the lot for surplus parking which was the original intent of purchasing the property.

**REPORT OF THE ENDOWMENTS**

	<b>12/31/22 Balance</b>	<b>12/31/23 Balance</b>
LCP-Asset Management Acct	636,034.25	653,652.37
	<b>12/31/22 Balance</b>	<b>12/31/23 Balance</b>
Equitable-Annuity Acct	512,920.21	596,143.66
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>1,148,954.46</u></b>	<b><u>1,249,796.03</u></b>

Endowments Note: In Dec of 2023, \$50,000 from the Equitable Annuity was removed from the annuity and deposited into the HFCU account. This annuity included proceeds from court trusts and the proceeds for the sale of the parsonage. The trusts share of the were deposited into the HFCU restricted accounts and the parsonage share was deposited into the HFCU checking account.



**REPORT OF THE ANNUAL BUDGETS  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023 AND PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024**

<b><u>Income</u></b>	<b>2023 Budget</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>2024 Budget</b>
Checking Interest	50.00	37.70	30.00
Local Income	51,479.48	53,287.97	43,532.48
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>51,529.48</b>	<b>53,325.67</b>	<b>43,562.48</b>
<b><u>Expense</u></b>			
Administrative	6,501.44	8,816.16	7,455.00
Building R & M	69,553.00	75,723.62	71,752.86
Christian Education	n/a	650.00	1,500.00
Missional Works	n/a	1,300.00	1,500.00
Sexton Property	2,868.07	2,915.57	3,400.00
Staff Payroll Taxes	1,100.00	1,366.72	1,400.00
Staff Salary	25,453.60	22,999.05	25,453.60
Pulpit Supply	12,300.00	11,075.00	15,750.00
Worship and Service	1,485.00	2,610.18	3,505.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>119,261.11</b>	<b>127,456.30</b>	<b>131,716.46</b>
<b><u>Net Ordinary Income</u></b>	<b>-67,731.63</b>	<b>-74,130.63</b>	<b>-88,153.98</b>
<b><u>From Endowment:</u></b>	<b>36,000.00</b>	<b>63,280.43</b>	<b>54,000.00</b>
<b><u>Net Income</u></b>	<b><u>-31,731.63</u></b>	<b><u>-10,850.20</u></b>	<b><u>-34,153.98</u></b>