

The Congregational Church of Belmont
United Church of Christ

751 Alameda de las Pulgas
Belmont, California 94002-1606

Jan Heise
Moderator

55th Annual Meeting
January 30, 2009

Report from the Church Vision Committee

October 2, 2008

by Tom Thompson, Church Council Member At Large.

Council Volunteers: Tom Thompson, Richard Morgan, Kristi Denham and Thomas Crosby

Church Life... Doing the work of the church

- 1) Examine (and cull) Old Traditions and Build (a few) New Traditions.
- 2) New Men's and Women's Social, Spiritual and Service Groups.
- 3) Be a "teaching church" by including a PSR Intern in our annual budget. (about \$4,500 Year Cost).
- 4) Expand Sunday School to serve young families.
- 5) Bring on a Part Time Christian Education Coordinator responsible for expanding Sunday School and other family related Christian education programs. To occur when income exceeds 10% above 2008 budget. (about \$12,000 Year Cost) Reports to Pastor.

Daily Operations... Management of the church:

- 1) Bring on Part Time Buildings and Grounds Business Manager responsible for accounting, paying bills, banking, property management and promoting the rental usage of the church. To occur when income exceeds 15% above 2008 budget. (about \$12,000 Year Cost) Reports to Trustees.
- 2) Bring on a Part-Time Marketing Director to grow the membership of the church and raise community awareness of the church. To occur when income exceeds 20% above 2008 budget. (about \$12,000 Year Cost). Reports to Council.
- 3) Adopt a ONE PAGE Business Plan with people goals, money goals, and target dates... in simple language everyone can understand by 7/1/09. (Get us all on the same page.)

This old Church... Taking Care of our Property and Building:

- 1) Goal of \$100,000 or more in capital reserves fund by end of 2014.
- 2) A long term 10 year capital improvement plan for the property by 7/1/09.
- 3) Decision on sanctuary A/V technology needed by 7/1/09.

Money... Fun(d) Raising

- 1) Much higher and positive awareness of the need for pledges to budget and expand church operations.
- 2) It's OK for Congregational Church of Belmont to be prosperous. God put all that money out in the world so we can have abundance, help each other and assist our community. We expect to be successful.
- 3) It's OK to include Congregational Church of Belmont in your estate planning.

Evangelism... Growing the church and the budget:

- 1) Grow membership 8.5% per year for 5 years (50% compounded)
- 2) Grow Budget 12% per year for 5 years (75% compounded)
- 3) Adopt "Identity Tag Line" of 5 words or less & Mission Statement of 12 words or less by 12/31/08.

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55th Annual Meeting Agenda

January 30, 2009

6:00pm	Dinner	All
6:45pm	Cleanup	All
7:00pm	Call to Order	Jan Heise, Moderator
	Quorum Check	Micki Carter, Parliamentarian
	Prayer	Kristi Denham, Pastor
	Announcements	
	Agenda Review ~ Additions, Revisions & Approval	

Old Business

Approval of 2008 Annual Meeting Minutes	Richard Morgan
Visioning Process	John Tanner
2008 Financial Report	Jeff Mannie, Treasurer
Acceptance of 2008 Annual Reports (excluding Nominating & Budget Reports)	Jan Heise

New Business

Nominating Report	John Tanner
2009 Budget	Jeff Mannie, Treasurer
Chocolate Fest Plans	John Tanner
Rummage Sale Plans	Micki Carter
Goals for 2009	Jan Heise

Closing

**Annual Meeting of the
Congregational Church of Belmont
January 25, 2008**

Bob Carter, moderator, called the meeting to order at 6:58.
Micki Carter, Parliamentarian, confirmed that we have a quorum.
Kristi led the group in prayer. We read the Mission Statement prayerfully.

Announcements: Shrove Tuesday, which was moved to Shrove Sunday, will be moved back to Tuesday since that Sunday is Super Bowl.

Agenda: We are adding by-laws and constitution revision after the annual reports.

2007 Minutes: approved by acclamation.

Annual Reports except for the Treasurer's and Nominating reports: approved by acclamation.

Treasurer's Report: Jeff Mannie

Special thanks to Mike Venturino for all the years he served as Treasurer. Thanks to Larry Keiffer for filling in on a day to day basis.

We end the year with a strong Balance Sheet.
Jeff went through and explained some of the income and expenses on the report sheets. Discussion followed about the items for which special projects funds were spent. It was questioned if all had been approved by council. All had been approved.

Report accepted by acclamation.

**Constitution and Bylaws revision for 2008: Lois Shouse
to be revised before the annual meeting 2009**

Changes- Lois stated that this is basically a band aid to get us through this year.

- Numbers of members for Boards were added.
- Clarification as to what certain people are doing.
- There will be a committee next year who will rewrite the bylaws.
- We left in the words "the board or council" can act on things.

Lois moved and Carol Patterson seconded that we accept these changes.
Approved.

Nominating Report: Jan Heise

Jan moved that the report be accepted,

Additions: Danielle Chamberlin will serve on Pastoral Relations

Marcia Rapozo-Hilo will co-chair the Rummage Sale with Micki Carter.

Lois suggested that the format under Trustees be changed. Kristi will work on that. Mike Venturino suggested that Bookkeeper and Bill Payer be deleted as they are not elected positions. Approved.

An Historian and an Auditor need to be selected by the Council. Jan asked that we pencil in Bob Shouse as historian. Mike Venturino will be auditor.

Report was approved.

2008 Budget- Jeff Mannie

Jeff moved and Mike Venturino seconded that we approve the report.

Key areas are listed in the annual report. Some specifics we discussed were:

- Long term rentals – Science Camp income not included to full amount – Korean Church may chose to not use the space so we need to be aware that we could lose these funds.
- Trustees want to pay down some of the mortgage when the B of A CD's come due in February. Some of this money will come out of other funds besides the general fund.
- It is recommended that \$4,072 be put in the Capital Projects Fund. Trustees wanted to put some of the income from the Science Camp into the Fund. It turned out that they couldn't balance the budget that way, but hope that rental income will allow that money to be put back in the Fund.
- Right now there is no money for a minister in training.
- Salaries are a big part of the budget.
- Jeff explained the difference between cash flow and net income.

A long discussion took place about whether we want to be a "teaching church." Close to \$2200 has been pledged so far to create a fund to hire an intern for next school year. We discussed ways in which we can raise the money if we do indeed put this as a priority. Some people think it should be through the general fund, some through special fund raisers. Others feel there are many more important priorities. Many agreed that there should not be an appeal for funds for a special interest just before the annual meeting and budget discussion. Jeff Mannie stressed that we can't agree to pay for something from a fund without having sufficient balance in the fund to cover it.

No final decision was made. We may set up a fund and when it is up to the amount we need, we can hire an intern for the following year.

Mike Venturino moved to amend the budget to add \$3,600 to the line item entitled minister in training. It was seconded. Discussion followed. Motion failed.

Marcia Rapozo Hilo moved and Lois Shouse seconded that we eliminate the Cost-of-Living increase on auto allowance and professional development in the minister's pay package. Motion failed.

Vote on the budget: 2 people voted no, one abstained. It passed.

Chocolate Fest will happen. Rummage Sale will happen also.

Carol Manahan's ordination will be Sunday afternoon, April 27th.

The following goals discussed at council were read:

The council shall name a parliamentarian who will be given the task of calling a Constitution and Bylaws committee, with a representative from each board, to meet throughout 2008 to revise all parts of said document, using the lessons learned during our two years of "temporary fixes," and that this committee will bring a revised Constitution and Bylaws to the 2009 Annual Meeting for congregational approval.

The council will create a committee to undertake regular evaluations of the church's professional staff during 2008 and to update job descriptions as needed. The committee also will examine, in the process, the general state of the church and report to the congregation.

They were accepted.

Bob passed on the gavel to Jan Heise.

We all thanked Bob for his years of service as Moderator.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:40.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laurie Carter

Congregational Elevator Meetings April 20, May 18, and June 22, 2008

At the April 20th meeting we discussed all our options.

At the May 18th meeting we voted affirmatively to do the project. There was a quorum for this vote. A paper ballot was used and the final vote was 24 yes and 2 no. The meeting was tabled until further research on locations could be done.

On June 22 the final decision was made to locate the elevator off the kitchen balcony on the north of the building, assuming all permits and feasibilities work out.

Submitted as summary of meeting minutes by Laurie Carter.

Pastor's Report

by Kristi Denham

2008 was a good year – a challenging year – a year to stretch and a year to grow. As your pastor I have been humbled and awed by what good work we have accomplished and what new work we have begun.

Worship has always been central to our life together. This has been a year of creative explorations, beautiful music and new ways of expressing the holy together. It was in the creation and honoring of the sacred that the arts (music, dance, visual arts, poetry and prose) were first invented. Our worship services continue to be opportunities for us to discover and explore the sacred in our lives. Our children now more regularly participate in worship leadership and our music program continues to expand. With Thomas Crosby, our Intern, adding his delightful perspective to the mix our Sunday services have continued to surprise and inspire us.

We have embraced the reality that we are truly a teaching church, which means we are also all about learning. Our Intern, Thomas, has given us wonderful new experiences of how children can bring a sermon to life. As his mentor I have appreciated the mutual respect and collegiality of our relationship. He is an open learner. He is also my teacher.

I continue to mentor one Pacific School of Religion student, Sonja Ingebritsen, as she prepares herself for a call to ministry. We meet monthly and I will attend her next meeting with the NCNC-UCC Committee on Ministry, Section A, as she renews her In Care status with the conference.

I also continue to act as Treasurer for the Golden Gate Association Board, which represents UCC churches as far south as Pescadero and as far north as Eureka, through the Peninsula, San Francisco, Marin and Sonoma Counties. We are the largest regional association in the Northern California Nevada Conference of UCC churches. This job uses my past life skills as a bookkeeper and allows me to participate in the wider church in a concrete and useful way.

I am the current President of the Board of the Peninsula Clergy Network which brings together over 400 faith leaders in San Mateo and Northern Santa Clara Counties to learn more about the values we have in common while we build bridges of understanding to one another as well as to civic and community leaders in government and education. I presided at an exciting 20th Dialogue we hosted at the Franklin Templeton Company which focused on ways we can continue to expand on seven years of commitment to undoing prejudice and strengthening community after September 11, 2001. It has been and continues to be rewarding work.

Locally, our Belmont Clergy Group hosted two interfaith potlucks this year – the first at Temple Beth El in San Mateo, the second at our church. We are hoping to gather again in February or March at the Yaseen Foundation Mosque in Belmont for continued conversation to help us all grow in understanding of one another.

I am a Belmont Police Chaplain and am occasionally called to respond to a school crisis, a sudden death or a community disaster preparedness drill. I volunteer at the San Francisco Airport when they do major drills. It is an honor to be asked to serve.

As our children grow in numbers and in age I have been frustrated that I can't be both upstairs and downstairs in Sunday School every Sunday morning. I continue to lead

teenaged girls in our weekly afternoon Sacred Circle. And I've started meeting with preteens and their moms in our "Triple G's – Girls Gone Good" group that gets together for fun and learning on Friday evenings approximately twice a month. I led a First Communion Class in the early fall for those who wanted to really understand this sacrament of the church and then had those who participated help with communion on their First Communion Sunday.

Women's Spirituality Group continues to bring together creative and thoughtful women of the church who share their stories and inspire one another as they practice and deepen their faith through spiritual practice. I am thankful for the support of all those who participate and continue to hope that men in our congregation will feel inspired to start a Men's Group.

Our Adult Education Series, Living the Questions, Saving Jesus (from the Fundamentalists), coordinated by Thomas Crosby and Paul Anderson, has been a thought provoking and exciting series. It is a way we grow together and I love it.

The Adult Bible Study has been meeting twice a month for many years now. We started at the beginning of the Gospel According to Matthew and are now well into the letters of Paul. We read. We question. We discuss. We learn historical critical context. O and we share a great meal beforehand. We've been meeting on Wednesday evenings and will meet on Thursdays for at least the first three months of 2009.

Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE) has worked to support low wage earners on the Peninsula and had a vivid success very shortly after I joined. We had a young woman come speak to us in worship who had been working to try to bring a union to food workers in Silicon Valley. She lost her job for her efforts. A group of clergy, including me, went to talk to the company that contracted with her employer. Within weeks she was rehired, with back pay and union workers were allowed into the company. It is exciting to see such concrete results from our efforts. We will continue to work together to stand against injustice in the future.

I love my life. I love my work. I love this church. I love you! Together we do so much more than any one of us can do alone. I look forward to an exciting 2009. God has done great things for us and more is to be revealed.

Minister in Training Report

by Thomas Crosby

It has been my privilege and honor to serve as your Minister-In-Training this year and last. The Congregational Church of Belmont is a wonderful place for a seminary student to come and experience ministry. CCB provides so many opportunities to learn.

Working with our children is one exciting opportunity for me. The first Godly Play lesson I did last year had one child. Since September, 2008, we have averaged over nine children a Sunday. Last summer I became a certified Godly Play trainer and will probably take more training when offered. This learning opportunity has helped me understand how Godly Play's method teaches our children and has provided me an opportunity to create or modify lessons used in class.

The greatest joy I have had this year was on Children's Sabbath when I preached with seven of our youngest members and witnessed most of our children participating in worship. We are moving to include our older children in worship allowing them to be a part of worship on a regular basis.

Our Saving Jesus series has provided our adults an opportunity to learn about the historical Jesus and the times in which he lived. This series has created more questions than answers for us which means it is achieving its goal.

As we move forward I am excited about the future opportunities here.

Vision Report

by Richard Morgan

This year the Church Council initiated a process of gather together the hopes and visions the entire congregation has of what sort of church we want to be in the future. The Church Council devoted all of their July meeting and part of their August meeting to this process, and we held a congregational meeting on August 17th to collect the ideas and priorities of the entire congregation.

A sub-committee of the Church Council was then appointed to shape all of this information into a set of suggestions for the Church Council. The report of that committee was presented at the October Council meeting. Based on the report and the entire vision process, the 2008 Church Council has made some recommendations for 2009 and the information is provided to help the 2009 Church Council and the Congregation in planning for the future. See the inside cover of our Annual Report for a summary of our Church Vision from the Church Vision committee.

Moderator's Report

By Jan Heise

God has been truly gracious to our little church on the hill this last year, in fact one might even say that grace abounds. Our membership has increased, our income from pledges has grown, gifts from individual members have been true blessings and most amazing of all, the number of children in our Sunday School has nearly double. Believe me when I say, this has truly been none of my doing! In fact, my recommendation to the congregation for next year is that we continue to do whatever it is that we have been doing and then lace it with a whole lot of prayers of thanksgiving.

However, in addition to an abundance of grace, I am aware of lots of individual people whose time and talents contributed greatly to this last year. John Tanner, as Vice Moderator, actually functioned as a Co-Moderator, alternating the task of presiding over Council meetings, writing periodic Messenger articles, and spearheading a variety of working committees ... not to mention Chocolate Fest! John, you deserve a year off now, but you're not getting it because we need you in 2009!

In all fairness though, John did get a lot of help. Mary Coleman, Elizabeth Mye, and Sally Stewart worked hard on the evaluation process of Kristi and Stephan. Paul Anderson, Tom Thompson, Richard Morgan and Thomas Crosby worked literally months on the visioning process. These were two difficult tasks which were long overdue and will make a lot of difference as we set our priorities over the next couple of years

Another area of grace came from Christin Schmidt and a whole crew of others who kept the Sunday School program operating under sometimes heroic conditions. In fact, some Sundays, when a large crowd of youngsters miraculously appeared for the Time with the Children, it was almost laughable how many adults got up from their pews and headed downstairs to see how they might help. One of the delights of this year was watching so many members, including those who were not even involved with Sunday

School, reach out to our younger members to make an emotional connection and to let the children know they were valued by all of us. And speaking of delights, the Christmas Pageant and the Children's Choir were real show stoppers thanks to Sarah Thornhill and Elizabeth Mye and all their many helpers.

This old building gave us it's usual touch of grief and that always creates some fear that this might be the time when an unexpected expense suddenly surfaces. But Greg Thornhill and his trusty crew plus Paul Anderson and his financial gurus, kept both building and budget in good shape for yet another year. However, that time will surely come when the pipes under the building finally burst or the furnace gives its last and so they do well to keep reminding us that we need to have reserves in place for when that day arrives.

The building has not been the only thing around here that has done some struggling. We have had our share of human pain and loss as well. We are fortunate to have a whole network of people who quietly work on one of the Ministries of Care Teams: meals get prepared, rides are provided, visits to homes and hospitals happen, cards are sent and prayers are offered. Sometimes it seems that the work of the Deacons and their many support groups are never ending and yet their work is rarely seen. Where would we all be without the silent saints among us?

We also serve beyond our doors: with Family to Family, Habitat, the Heifer Project, the monthly Aids luncheon, the Interfaith Hospitality Network family shelter, and the Puente de la Costa Sur program for farm workers and their families on the coast. Some of these programs will change this coming year however and we will have the opportunity to re-explore how we might serve the wider community. Given the world around us, the options should be abundant. If you have any great dreams, this is the time to speak up.

And finally, thanks to all the folks that just made things happen! - the new and improved Website, the new signs and banners that help let the community know we're here, the Rummage Sale which many of us thought we would never do again, the Chocolate Fest for the 26th time and even a Holiday Boutique just because we had an abundance of Christmas leftovers. Yes, two years ago we promised ourselves that we were NOT going to be a congregation of Type A workaholics yet once again it somehow just seemed to happen. Maybe the secret is that we stopped trying so hard and just allowed the Holy Spirit to guide us instead. Whatever the mystery was, it's been a grace filled year and I pray it will continue into our future.

Church Clerk's Report

	2008	2007
Baptisms	3	4
Marriages	4	1
Renewal of Vows	0	0
Memorials	2	2
New members	12	8
Inactive members	9	21
Congregational membership at the end of 2008	106	105

Rummage Sale

by Micki Carter

After a one-year hiatus, CCB's Rummage Sale returned in 2008 as a one-day Saturday sale with a Friday night pre-sale.

It appears the community didn't forget us since we made about \$8,500 in this "smaller" sale. The income was split, according to our all-church fundraiser policy, with \$4,250 going to Capital Improvements, \$2,550 to the Mission Fund, and \$1,700 to Special Projects.

In fact, we had so many beautiful Christmas items that we decided to have a Holiday Boutique in November. The \$1,800 that sale brought in was dedicated to the effort to hire a Sunday School coordinator.

Special thanks to Barbara White and Marcia Hilo for their help with the sales. We had an excellent crew to handle individual sale areas (Mary Hughes, Bob and Ella Mae Donovan, Mary and Jerry Coleman, Laurie Carter, Anna Sanchez, Jane Fernald, John and Gretchen Brooke, Jan Heise, Jan Huss, Irene Hall, Gary Brandenburg, Mike Venturino, Doris Brown, Kirsten Kennedy, Dorothy Skanderup, Larry Keiffer, John Tanner, Ming Lai and many others) and the clean-up crew (Paul Anderson, Maura Whitmore, Greg Thornhill, David Salgado and Chris Moropoulos and his children) were wonderful.

We were especially helped by Goodwill in San Francisco which sent a huge truck to cart away all our leftovers.

We also managed to be as green as possible. Virtually every paper and cardboard scrap went to be recycled which allowed us lots of free space in the waste container. Next year we can do with a smaller (less expensive) one.

The Rummage Room is already filling up for next year's sale, and I've agreed to be one half of the chairmanship. For the other half, I need someone with a truck (and a strong back) who will manage the pickups. Without that person stepping forward, the 2009 Rummage Sale (also one-day with a preview night) is in jeopardy.

Because the first Saturday in August is Aug. 1 this year, I propose we set Aug. 8 as the Rummage Sale date with the preview on Aug. 7.

Chocolate Fest

by John Tanner

Chocolate Fest launched into its second 25 years with a successful event Oct. 10-12 under new management including co-chairs Sarah and Greg Thornhill, John Tanner and Ming Lai. The fundraiser netted close to \$14,487 that will be shared among the following church funds: Building Maintenance (50%), Mission (30%), and Special Projects (20%).

The co-chairs used a management by committee approach that seemed to be effective for the most part. Periodic meetings were held at the Thornhills, and festival information was stored on a SharePoint web site. A special thanks goes to the following managers:

- Bob Carter, staffing
- Carol Patterson, kitchen
- Marcia Rapozo Hilo, product
- Bill Patterson, lighting
- Bette Henley, boutique
- Jerry Coleman, Laura McKenzie and Kris Morgan, vendors
- Jerry Coleman, prizes
- Kris Morgan, music
- Mary Hughes, tickets
- Maura Whitmore, decorations
- Paul Anderson, cleanup
- Micki Carter, publicity
- Mike Venturino, finance
- Peter Barnes, operations
- Mary Coleman, quilt

Some of the changes made for 2008 were well received by the vendors and participants (i.e. larger boutique area in the sanctuary; band outside; dimmed lighting; additional water/tea/coffee station on veranda; fall decor). There were a few surprises like a more formal public health inspection process than in past years and the lights went out Friday night due to an overloaded circuit.

If you'd like to be part of the planning for Chocolate Festival 2009, please speak to any of the 2008 co-chairs or Rev. Kristi.

Deacons Report

Submitted on behalf of our 2008 Deacons: Belinda Sims, Martha Woodman, Dorothy Skanderup, Jake Shoemaker, Grace Yoshida, Kristin Morgan and Jane Bradley.

The work of the Deacons goes on quietly behind the scenes. We make sure that worship leadership is provided. We serve lunches to those attending Inquirers Classes. We visit the sick, feed those of our members in need, provide transportation when needed, send notes to cheer and to celebrate, give comfort in healing touch, guide and inspire worship, help with communion and baptisms and just generally create the warm and loving atmosphere that allows CCB to be such a joyful loving community of faith.

The structure of our board this year was a bit more specific than last year but we found few times to meet together and so the sense of clarity and support for one another

was lacking. We are hopeful that this coming year 2009 will see us once more coalesce as a vibrant and active team.

The Ministries of Care Teams have been renewed and their work will continue behind the scenes. The Worship Team has been added to the list this year. These folks have volunteered to share their suggestions and ideas for worship music, format and theme each week. If you would like to join this email group, please let Pastor Kristi know.

The new slate of Deacons for 2009 looks strong and asks always for your support as they do the work of the church.

Altar Guild Report

by Maura Whitmore

Flowers on the altar this year were provided by Doris Brown, Micki Carter, Jan Huss and me. If you would like to help with this simple work of the church please let me know. Each of us takes one Sunday a month. Having help with that occasional fifth Sunday would be lovely.

All members are invited to sign up to dedicate the flowers in honor of a memory, celebration or special event in the Altar Flower Book. Simply make a \$15 donation to CCB (with flowers on the memo line) and the flowers will be provided by the Altar Guild team. You are encouraged to take the flowers home after Sunday service.

This has been a quiet year for the Arts in Worship team as the committee members had a variety of life events intervene in their plans. If you are interested in creating special alters for specific Sundays or Seasons of the year, talk to me and we'll get a new team going.

There is approximately \$635 in the altar Guild Fund as of this writing. In addition to flowers, Deacons use this fund to purchase worship and kitchen supplies when needed.

Music Committee Report

By Kristin Morgan

We had an *extremely* successful year musically at CCB! The music program continued its expansion this year in several significant ways. Stephen Lind continued as our music director and organist. Progress included:

- The choir received a boost in participation and performed more demanding works (such as the pieces by John Rutter and others);
- Elizabeth Mye added significantly to the choir, performed several solo numbers, and started a children's choir;
- The Children's choir performed at major church services to great acclaim, and expanded its number of participants;
- Special Music brought in a wide variety of experienced musicians who were new to the church, such as harp, jazz combos, lute/vocal, oboe/vocal, in addition to our repeat performers on guitar, piano, and in-house vocalists.
- Through Gary Brandenburg's gift, we acquired a concert-class grand piano.
- Donna and Herb Stanger contributed a lovely baby grand piano for practice and performance downstairs.
- The congregation has generously supported the jam sales whose proceeds have supported the special music program.

Most importantly, based on a non-scientific survey of comments and feedback, the congregation is enjoying the quality and diversity of music; musicians are enjoying performing at CCB; participation in music by our members increased (especially among children); and the overall quality of performances is very high and continues to improve—which motivates more participation, support for the program, etc., creating very positive forward momentum for the program.

Moving forward in 2009:

- The weekly emails on services now include information on the music on the bulletin for the upcoming Sunday, and the online church calendar will now be updated with music performance and rehearsals.
- The Epiphany Sunday all-jazz service was excellent, and we most likely will continue this as a tradition for the first Sunday in the new year.
- Next year, due to the addition of the children's choir on the schedule, we will have fewer Sundays during the non-summer months for special music. The result is that we can be choosier about special music, and pay for higher quality performers. We are currently booking dates in March with new musicians who would like to perform for us, and our network of musicians is broadening.
- We are expanding the special music role, when appropriate, to also have the guest musicians play along on the hymns during the service and perform the postlude. This gives us more music for the money spent, and the musicians like to have more time to perform and feel a part of the service.
- We attempted doing after-service concerts in the afternoon, but have not found these terribly successful due to low attendance. This is not an idea that we are continuing in its current form.
- However, we are exploring ways to connect with musicians interested in using our grand piano and sanctuary as a mini concert or recital space. Through our various networks into colleges and music teachers, we will be exploring a modest rental program based around the acquired piano and our convenient location.
- There have been information discussions about removing the front pew immediately next to the piano to allow more space and accommodate wedding attendants; this will be a topic brought up in future meetings.
- One subject to think ahead about is how the music program will adapt to the summer months when there is no adult choir, and we will have more slots for special music. I'll be working on ideas to share with the music committee about this timeframe.

A hug and thank you to all the members of the in-house music groups for a fabulous year of music that touched our hearts and lifted our spirits. Special kudos to Elizabeth Mye for starting the Children's Choir, Gary Brandenburg for his gift of the piano, the Stangers for their piano gift, and to the CCB accounting crew who make sure guest musicians are greeted on their performance Sunday with a payment envelope.

Ministries of Care

by Kristi Denham

Our Ministries of Care Teams continue to do the work of the church behind the scenes. The Food Team has been kept busy this year and is thankful for all the meals provided for all the families in crisis of grief and health. The Transportation Team has done a good deal of driving. The Writing Team took one month each to provide birthday cards, condolences cards and just plain thoughtful notes to many members throughout the year. The Hands on Healers worked occasionally behind the scenes and sometimes on Sunday mornings to give comfort and healing prayer to folks who desired it. The Visitors Team has attended to many of our home bound and hospital stay members. The Prayer Chain is quietly there with support we often don't realize consciously but can feel in our bones.

We also have a Worship Team that has now been added to the list. They provide me with suggestions of themes, music, format and sermon ideas for Sunday worship. Each week I send them the scripture lesson and my ideas for worship and they respond with ideas that add richness to our service. Sometimes several on the team respond. Sometimes only one or two. Always their contributions add to the life of our worship together.

The full list of Ministries of Care Teams is found on the back of the Nominating Report at the back of this Annual Report. If your name is on the list in error, or if you would like to be added to one of our teams, please let me know. And thanks for another year of compassionate care for one another.

Outreach Ministries Board Report

By Peter Barnes and Jerry Coleman on behalf of the board including AJ Modesti, Barbara White, and Jan Heise.

The board noted that no one in the congregation responded to the newsletter write up outlining last years distribution and requesting input to the pastor or board on content of new outreach goals for 2008. Additional board discussion continued on what areas of giving we felt were 1) in line with the congregation's interests, 2) were new areas that should be included and 3) areas where congregational interest may have waned. We would like to suggest supporting outreach efforts that might engage and involve church members as has happened with the Heifer Project Sale by our youth. In addition we continue to seek support for a social justice project still to be found; perhaps something like CLUE (Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice) which Pastor Kristi is becoming more involved with, or a program at Juvenile Hall.

Below is our distribution of the 2008 Mission Funds:

- Every Dollar Feeds Kids (Cuernavaca, Mexico)	\$1,000
- Interfaith Hospitality Network (homeless families, San Mateo Co.)	\$1,000
- Samaritan House (food, clothing healthcare & shelter, San Mateo Co.)	\$1,000
- Church World Service International Relief	\$1,000
- Heifer Project (added to youth bake sale funds)	\$1,000
- Bonnie Brae contingency funds (if requested)	\$500
- Outreach committee contingency fund ("Just in case" fund)	\$500

- UCC God is still speaking advertising campaign	\$100
- Interfaith Hospitality Network expenses during our weeks volunteering	\$300
- Contribution for Internship Fund 2008 (Thomas Crosby stipend)	\$500
- Children of Chernobyl	<u>\$300</u>
	Total \$7,200

Family Sharing Program: Each year at Christmas time we "adopt" five families from Samaritan House to quite literally "give" some holiday joy. This last season we added one family from our church who also could use the help. There was a total of twenty-three children and adults. In just two Sundays we raised over \$1,000 in cash donations. That went towards \$500 in food from Costco and a \$25 Safeway gift card for each person. A large stack of additional food was brought in by church members. Five of our families volunteered to contact the adopted families and to deliver our bounty. Gifts were provided for each person, usually clothing, plus a toy for each child. A rough guess is that the average gift was worth at least \$30. We also had a large number of toys given by the Beekeepers (who meet at our church each month), so that each child received several more. After church on the last Sunday before Christmas the enormous pile of food was divided up, the gifts were sorted and it was all delivered. Because we raised the needed money so quickly, we donated the funds from the last Sunday, as well as a large bag of extra toys, to Puente de la Costa Sur, a program in Pescadero for farm workers and their families.

Aids Clinic Lunch: Every month, on the second Tuesday, we provided lunch to the Edison AIDS Clinic at San Mateo County Hospital. We are one of about a dozen congregations who provide this outreach. A small but steady group of our cooks provide a salad, main course and desert for at least twenty persons. It is said that our lunches have such a reputation that they have had to bar hospital staff from the area on second Tuesdays at noon. In December we received word that the program will be moving from the hospital because the space is needed for other purposes. They will move to a larger AIDS service organization in Redwood City, which itself is moving to larger quarters. The lunch program will be suspended for a couple of months, and hopefully will resume in the spring.

Board of Christian Education Report

by Christin Schmidt

Our Sunday school attendance has ranged from 0-16 students, in ages from pre-school to middle school. Kimberly and Stephanie, our child care workers, have done an excellent job with the babies and pre-schoolers. Our biggest challenge has been providing for the needs of the school age children because there is such a wide age range. One large class became difficult to manage. We created a suggested cap at fourth grade for the younger children. The older children (fifth graders through middle school) could choose to attend Sunday School downstairs or stay upstairs for worship. Sunday School lessons ranged from poetry to yoga to our Godly Play curriculum to the Virtues book. Crafts, drawing/coloring, making God's eyes, pinwheels and reading stories were also shared.

We did not have sufficient teacher volunteers for two classes, so we tried to be very creative to meet the needs of the older children. The first two Sundays of the month Pastor Kristi would find ways for the older children to help with the worship service (ushering, reading liturgy, kitchen help, etc). The second two Sundays there would be a discussion group in the parlor for the older children. Finding teachers and door keepers for both age groups continues to be a challenge. From our visioning process, quality Christian education for our children arose as a top priority. Hiring professional help is one suggestion for getting us there.

We had an active year with the children. Some of our activities included:

- Making Valentine Cards
- Baking Prayer Pretzels
- Easter Egg Dying and Egg Hunt
- Earth Day-dumpster diving
- Heifer Project Sale (We raised a grand total of \$3353, including the Gates Foundation match).
- Children's Sabbath
- Halloween UNICEF boxes (We raised \$173 for vaccines, clean water, and improved nutrition for children overseas).
- Christmas Boutique (We raised \$1800 toward a Sunday School Administrator). Children sold home made soup and brownie mixes, ornaments, plants and baked goods; a percentage of other vendors' sales added to the total.
- Christmas Pageant (Mary was cute as pie, as were all the participants. The Silent Night bells never sounded so good).
- Christmas Ornament making and tree decorating
- Children's choir

Kristi continues to lead the Sacred Circle group weekly. Adult Bible Study is held bi-weekly. Three G's (Girls Gone Good), our new pre-teens and moms group, meets bi-weekly. And the Living the Question's Saving Jesus discussion meets bi-weekly.

It has been a full, if challenging, year and we look forward to 2009 with optimism as we begin to write a job description for a Sunday School Coordinator to be hired, hopefully in June of 2009.

Communications Board Report

by Micki Carter

The newly designed CCB website was this board's greatest accomplishment of 2008. Many thanks for the hard work of Barbara Todd who was able to turn the plans and wishes of Thomas Crosby, Richard Morgan and me into the gorgeous, eminently usable website you'll find at [www. Uccbmont.org](http://www.Uccbmont.org). If you haven't seen it — and moved around to all the pages — you're in for a delightful surprise.

While you're on the website, be sure to click on CALENDAR on the left side of the HOME page and keep up-to-date with all the happenings of CCB as well as the rentals scheduled for the various rooms of the building. You might be surprised to discover the

ongoing widespread usage of our building. Special thanks to Maura Whitmore and Paul Anderson for their continuing efforts to increase our building usage and the income from it.

We are incorporating more and more information in the calendar, including the music that the choirs (both sanctuary and children's) are singing on a particular Sunday and special music. That information is added by Ron Evans, Sarah Eggen-Thornhill, Kristi and me. If you have something you'd like to have included, send it to me at mickicartr@aol.com and I'll put it up.

Mike Venturino built frames for two new banners, by the mailbox in the front and at the outbound drive at Alameda. We used them to publicize the Holiday Boutique and the Christmas Eve services. I'm planning Holy Week banners and a Godly Play Sunday School banner for other times of the year.

The hanging sign that Bob Donovan built has been used for all special events. Remember that if you'd like to use that sign, contact me first. I have a template and some suggestions that will make the sign readable by a passing driver.

This September, CCB joined other Bay Area UCC congregations in participating in the KQED-TV Pledge Week. The group was listed as a sponsor and a special website was created to allow viewers to learn about us, find CCB and visit our website. We were promised an accounting of the number of "hits" the special website received and the number of times the CCB link was selected, but so far we haven't heard. It was expensive to participate (\$500) and I'm not sure we would do it again.

In 2009, now that the website is humming along, the Communications Board will be looking at more effective ways to spread the word about CCB, the best kept secret on the Peninsula! In addition to Barbara, Richard and Thomas, Oksana Diricco will be working with us. Send us your ideas!

Trustees Report

By Paul Anderson

Those of you who have held positions in the church know that the first thing we do when it is time to write our annual report is to look at the report for the previous year. I did that, and I could have copied some of it word for word. So if you want more detail, see last year's report.

The news in 2008 is good. Our operating results showed a surplus. Income exceeded budget in both individual giving and in building use. Both of our major fundraisers happened, were very successful, and thus provided the additional funding that we have come to expect. The large surplus we enjoyed in 2007 covered our mortgage principal payments for both 2007 and 2008.

Most of the news about 2009 is good too. You got involved in the visioning process and responded by increasing pledges by 11% over what was pledged at this time last year. In addition we expect building use this year to increase by at least 13% over last year's budget. Also due to the visioning process, we are increasing 2009 budgeted expense. Bottom line is that while we expect to cover operating expense this year, we currently expect to fall short of covering mortgage principal payments. Please keep this in mind as you look at the 2009 budget: while it shows positive net income, it also shows a negative cash flow.

Beyond financial reporting, Trustees are responsible for our building and grounds: see that report elsewhere.

Thanks to Greg Thornhill for his ongoing efforts on the elevator installation and everything else he does to keep this old church in good shape, and to Jeff Mannie for assuming the duties of Treasurer this past year, and to Lois Shouse and Sally Stewart, both of whom have finished their terms on the Board.

Buildings and Grounds Report

By Greg Thornhill

The major undertaking for 2008 was the Elevator. It's still a work in progress, with a current status of working with the city for appropriate permits and approval. Considerable effort was put in by many folks in researching the unit, costs, appropriate locations, building code implications, working with a structural engineer, etc. Of course, getting congregational approval for the location was no small task! We don't have a good estimate yet on when this will be complete but I'm hopeful for late spring, early summer depending on how fast the process with the city moves.

We also continue to fight the recurring maintenance issues that come with an old building. We've had water leaks through the balcony off the kitchen area, that have resulted in water seeping into CPNS rooms and another leak in the apartment plumbing that resulted in dining room ceiling damage in addition to CPNS ceiling tile damage. On the latter issue, it appears that the vulnerable plumbing is all replaced above the dining room – let's cross our fingers for no future issues. On the balcony, the work we're doing related to the elevator (which will be installed in this same area), is intended to also solve for this recurring water issue.

These are just a couple of examples of the day to day issues that pop up, but continued thanks to all of buildings and grounds members (Bob Carter, Lois Shouse, and Gary Brandenburg) for their continued support and taking care of things “behind the scenes” most of us are unaware of.

The final item to report for 2008 was the time spent amongst Buildings and Grounds, Trustees and even to some extent Council, on prioritizing our capital improvement projects for the next several years. The output of that process is in the table below:

Priority	Description	Estimated Cost	Comments
1	Drainage – South lot	\$1,000	Last year’s heavy rains caused flooding in neighbors downstairs. Need to install drain at edge of parking lot to drain toward the street
2	Reseal all balconies	\$1,000	Constant battle patching, especially in heavy rains. Need to redo entire surface
3	Replace Downstairs windows	\$12-\$15,000	Ideally include office window
4	Storage off of kitchen	\$15,000	Create covered storage on deck off of Kitchen side of building
5	Paint Exterior of Church	\$21,000	Lots of peeling areas, wood exposed. Buildings and grounds does prioritize some spot painting in the nearer term

Building Use Report

by Maura Whitmore

In 2008, revenue from the use of our building totaled \$105,772 which is 51% of our operating income. In 2009, we expect that percentage to increase to 53%. Here is a further breakdown for 2008:

Carlmont Parents Nursery School: \$35,600

The apartment: \$21,600.

OT4Kids: \$18,000.

Destination Science: \$11,500.

Other regular renters \$8,000

(AlAnon, Beekeepers, Breast Cancer Survivors, Pura Vida Salsa Co., Quilters, San Mateo County elections, AIDs Training & CPR, PFLAG meetings, Model Train Group, private office space rental).

One-time users: \$10,000

(weddings, parties, music recitals, memorials, christenings, 4-H, Bunker Hill School Fundraiser)

Many thanks as always, to Jake Shoemaker and Marcia and Lance Hilo, for making a success of our rentals with their labors and hostings. Thanks to Gary Brandenburg for keeping all of our musical instruments humming, bringing in the music

revenue. Thanks to Danielle Chamberlain for her work putting us on the Craigslist cybermap, to Barbara Todd for the wonderful website that is helping us make an internet footprint and to Micki Carter for keeping the on-line calendar working.

Thanks to all who spackle, paint, change things, put them back together, scrub, vacuum, dust, sweep, mop, take down, put up, clean up, touch up, wash up, tune up and generally help to make our building the community center that we want it to be.

Financial Secretary

by Mary Hughes

2008 had 36 families pledging \$79,552. A confidential record of individual pledges and designated giving are kept by the church financial secretary. Quarterly statements are give out to help families know where they stand in regard to their pledges. A weekly breakdown report is sent to Treasurer, Jeff Mannie and Bookkeeper, Larry Keiffer.

A treat for this year are the 2009 pledge envelopes. No crossed out old dates. Please use your envelopes as it speeds up the Sunday counting. If you want envelopes, please let me know, as there are plenty available.

EScrip Annual Report

by Scrippy aka Laurie Carter

Note: Some of our largest CCB earners don't shop at Safeway, but do use their credit cards at other grocery stores. If you do shop by credit card, please go into your EScrip account and make sure the cards you use are all up to date. Our goal for 2008 is to make sure we don't lose dollars we could be earning.

EScrip continues to be a fairly painless way to earn a bit of money for our church. By using credit cards or store cards at certain stores, merchants donate a small portion of the sale to CCB. To sign up, one need only go to EScrip.com and register a Safeway card or credit cards used at other grocery stores. Just indicate The Congregational Church of Belmont as your recipient. We average about \$100/month- not much, but every bit counts. About 35 people are participating, some of whom are no longer active members, but have kept our church as their recipient.

While we don't encourage shopping at any particular store, or using credit cards if you'd rather pay with cash or checks, if you are already using the participating merchants and using credit cards, the church might as well benefit. (You don't have to use credit at Safeway, just have their card which saves you money anyway.)

If people are interested in trying to earn more for this program, Macy's pays a higher percentage if you use their credit card. You can also look at the list of merchants on EScrip.com. There are other retail stores and restaurants that donate. Members don't even have to renew their Safeway Cards any longer, as I can do it all from the main list.

If you are not signed up and would like to help with this fund raiser, go to EScrip.com to register, or call or email me and I'll help you. Thanks for your participation.

2009 Goals

For 2009 Council recommends that we prioritize and continue to implement the Visioning Process, including but not limited to:

- sustaining a vital Sunday School program with a part-time Sunday School Coordinator
- actively seeking to grow our membership base
- exploring ways to expand compatible building use
- maintaining and enhancing our historic building and worship space
- continuing to be a dedicated teaching congregation

Ministries of Care Teams for 2009

Food Team

Mary Coleman*
Belinda Sims
Laurie Carter
Lynne Benson-Colbert
Jake Shoemaker
Bob Carter
Barbara Todd
Linda Howard
Dorothy Skanderup
Kris Morgan
Jane Bradley
Greta Betteo

Prayer Chain

Rev. Kristi*
Gretchen Brooke
John Brooke
Thomas Crosby
Jan Heise
Mary Hughes
AJ Modesti
Katie Naylor
Carol Patterson
Belinda Sims
Donna Stanger
Grace Yoshida
Ella Mae Donovan

Transportation Team

Barbara Todd
Jerry Coleman*
Paul Anderson
Laurie Carter

Jake Shoemaker
Bob Carter
Dorothy Skanderup
Peter Barnes

Hands on Healers

Rev. Kristi*
Belinda Sims
Jan Heise
Nicole Barnes
Martha Woodman

Visitors Team

Rev. Kristi*
Jake Shoemaker
Mary Hughes
Peter Barnes
Lois Shouse
Carol Patterson
Laurie Carter
Ashley Tan

Writing Team

Carol Patterson*
Barbara Todd
Susan Shimanoff
Mary Hughes
Lois Shouse
Jane Bradley
Ruth Giessner
Ella Mae Donovan

Worship Team

Rev. Kristi*
Mary Coleman
Micki Carter
Paul Anderson
Jake Shoemaker
Jan Heise
Michael Medwid
Richard Morgan
Susan Shimanoff
Thomas Crosby
Jane Bradley

*Coordinator of services for this team.

Mission Statement

(Article VI of the By-Laws)

As members of the Congregational Church of Belmont, United Church of Christ, we accept each other's diversity and remain open to one another's spiritual interpretations as we strive to:

- Worship together seeking spiritual growth, inspiration and inner peace;
- Develop a close relationship with God;
- Experience the joys and risks of allowing God to work within each of us;
- Be aware, with humility and love, of the individual struggles and joys within our collective lives;
- Minister faithfully and effectively to one another as an extended family within the local community;
- Do justice in the world God loves;
- Practice inclusiveness and openness to provide a sense of worthiness and acceptance of all people;
- Enable each of us to live a meaningful life.

We undertake this mission with the help of Jesus Christ.