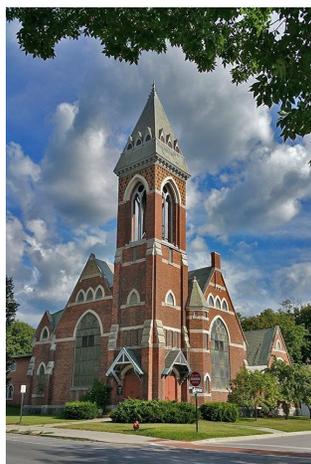


# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH BENNINGTON, VERMONT ANNUAL REPORT 2024

195TH ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING  
HELD JANUARY 19, 2025



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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

### 195TH ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA-JANUARY 19, 2025, 11:40AM

The First Baptist Church of Bennington, VT, will hold its 195th annual meeting on January 19, 2025, 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 28, 2024 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 194TH ANNUAL MEETING

The 194th meeting was held on Sunday, January 28th, 2024. The meeting was brought to order immediately after the service in the Chapel. Church members and trustees were in attendance. Trustees in attendance; Byron Spafford, Allyn Lindsey, Randy Bates, Sue Hoag, Lisa Flynn (church clerk) Grace Wilson (moderator).

There was a motion made to accept the minutes from the 193rd annual meeting. Melody Burke made a motion to approve the minutes and Allyn Lindsey seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

A motion was made to ratify the actions of the board of trustees. Allyn Lindsey made the motion and was seconded by Aleta Bryant.

A motion was made to continue trustees remaining in their current positions unless someone else was interested to run for a position on the board. Sue Hoag made the motion and Jean Hoag seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was so moved.

Lisa Flynn made a motion to accept the financial reports. There was discussion about the rollover of funds from the "Shoe Fund" into the Deacon's fund. An error of the dates of the Deacon's Fund was noted; the balance should read as "of 12/31/2022 and 12/31/2023". Alan Ingalls seconded the motion and all voted in favor of approving the financial reports.

A motion was made to approve the budget for 2024. Alan Ingalls made the motion and Allen Lindsey second the motion. All were in favor of approving the budget for the upcoming year.

Lisa Flynn made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Sue Hoag second the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:46.

*Respectfully, Lisa Flynn,*  
Church Clerk

## REPORT OF MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

**TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AS OF 12/31/24: 238** (Resident Members, 167 Non-Resident Members 71)

**Membership Transitions:** Josie Shepherd-passed (10/08/24)

**TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AS OF 12/31/25: 237**(Resident Members 166, 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 and we continue to have a rotation of Pastors who preach the sermon and conduct services on Sunday morning. Pastor Joe DeWitt and Pastor John Brigham have both discontinued serving as pulpit supply at First Baptist Church. Fortunately Dr. Alan Ingalls continues to preach, as well as assist with filling the pulpit on the second, third and fourth Sundays of each month. Many of the pastors who fill the pulpit are associated with the Northeast Baptist College. Their sermons have been bringing hope and inspiration to members in person and through CAT-TV video recordings; you can also see these recordings on the church website. <https://fbcbennington.org/>

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 Executive office of American Baptist Churches of Vermont and New Hampshire have announced the new executive minister position has been filled. Please see the letter below.

December 2, 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is with deep joy and grateful hearts that the American Baptist Churches of Vermont and New Hampshire announce Rev. Jay Noll as our new Executive Minister. His starting date will be March 3, 2025. We thank the Lord for His leading and we pray daily for Jay as he prepares for and carries out the shepherding of our churches.

Again, I would like to thank the Search committee. They worked faithfully and followed the guidance of the Holy Spirit through the search process. I'm so blessed by the time we spent together. Thank you for continual prayers and support.

Have a Glorious Christmas season,

Rev. Linda Foye Hirtle

ABCV/NH Search Committee Chair

The goal of the trustees of the First Baptist Church of Bennington continues 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.

A major change made in 2024 was the removal of the 621 building located next to the church. The building was demolished and removed; the spot will be used for parking.

There have been proposals made to the board by two separate organizations. The first proposal was to obtain a more permanent occupation of the Nichols building including the church building and would be used as an education center and a church.

There was also another proposal made to only obtain possession of the Nichols building and would be used as a community center associated with drug rehabilitation. These proposals are being considered and there will be a vote going out to the congregation for consideration.

The trustee board encourages the congregation to be involved with this decision making and participate when it comes to vote.

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 families in need 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 2025 and we continue to pray for the growth and prosperity of this church.

Respectfully, *Lisa Flynn*  
Church Clerk

### REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

<b>Local Income</b>	<b>2024 Projected</b>	<b>2024 Actual</b>	<b>2025 Projected</b>
Pledges	25,000	24,325.00	25,000.00
Loose Offerings	1,000	1,139.50	1,000.00
<b>Building</b>			
Pledges	1,300.00	1,496.00	1,500.00
Special Gifts & Donations	As given	0.0	As given

The mission comparison for 2024 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

	2024 Projected	2024 Actual	2025 Projected
<b>Pledges</b>	2,800.00	1,119.00	1,100.00
<b>Pledges as Given</b>			
America for Christ	200.00	195.00	200.00
OGHS	175.00	145.00	150.00
RMMO	200.00	260.00	200.00
WMO	200.00	170.00	150.00
<b>Church Funds</b>			
Flower Fund	As given	923.54	As given
Memorial Fund	As given	1,100.00	As given
Scholarship Fund	As given	0.0	As given

**Distribution of 2024 Pledges is as follows:**

Coalition for the Homeless	89.63
Family Time	55.60
GBICS	279.09
Habitat for Humanity	40.76
Deacon's Fund	95.79
Northeastern Bible College	55.60
UM Basic Support	502.53
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,119.00</b>

### REPORT OF THE DEACONS' FUND

Balance as of 12/ 31/2023	Balance as of 12/ 31/2024
3,849.60	3,827.92

## 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>12/31/23 Balance</b>	<b>12/31/24 Balance</b>
Primary Share: Savings	8,398.75	8,901.94
Lester Nichols Dividend Account	14,574.44	587.17
JH HA White Dividend Account	2,202.03	204.54
Mary Edgerton Dividend Account	1,026.44	1,029.54
VT Community Foundation Grant	1,081.65	1,084.43
Building Fund	16,016.44	15,508.93
Mable Harris Dividend Account	8,917.59	8,940.03
American Baptist Women	2,261.76	2,267.52
Share Draft: Checking	43,475.25	17,029.95
<b><u>CDs</u></b>		
Scholarship Fund (3 month CD)	9,411.91	9,641.31
Video Fund (24 month CD)	2,033.19	2,088.29
<b><u>621 Main Accounts</u></b>		
Business Primary Share	26.83	29.94
Rent Security Deposit	.90	.90
Rent Account	8,259.37	157.10

The Primary Share is a combination of funds. The breakdown as of 01/01/25 is as follows: Flower Fund: 1,552.03, Memorial Fund: 5,139.52, Shoe Fund: 251.52, Scholarship Fund: 1,605.00, Dividends: 327.97 & Heritage minimum deposit allotment: 25.00.

The Building Fund is a combination of funds. The breakdown as of 01/01/25 is as follows: Organ R&M: 2,646.35, Sound System: 108.36, and Building R&M: 12,754.22.

### REPORT OF 621 MAIN

<b><u>Income</u></b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
Interest	8.59	7.61
Rent	n/a	n/a
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>8.59</b>	<b>7.61</b>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>		
Electric	312.66	82.93
Mortgage	6,909.82	14,713.42
Oil	n/a	n/a
Property Taxes	3,351.60	n/a
Repairs & Maintenance	340.69	22,380.05
Water and Sewer	723.41	n/a
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>11,638.18</b>	<b>-37,176.40</b>
<b><u>Net Income</u></b>	<b><u>-11,629.59</u></b>	<b><u>-37,168.79</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. The property was torn down in 2024. Cost related to the removal used appear under repairs and maintenance line item in the above report . Additional cost of removal and taxes on the lot appear under the 2024 and 2025 budgets.

### REPORT OF THE ENDOWMENTS

	<b>12/31/23 Balance</b>	<b>12/31/24 Balance</b>
LCP-Asset Management Acct	653,652.37	715,053.54
	<b>12/31/23 Balance</b>	<b>12/31/24 Balance</b>
Equitable-Annuity Acct	596,143.66	695,198.93
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>1,249,796.03</u></b>	<b><u>1,410,252.47</u></b>

**REPORT OF THE ANNUAL BUDGETS  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 AND PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025**

<u>Income</u>	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2025 Budget
Checking Interest	30.00	26.54	21.60
Local Income	43,532.48	49,552.85	42,894.48
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>43,562.48</b>	<b>49,579.39</b>	<b>42,916.08</b>
<u>Expense</u>			
621	n/a	28,037.81	1,150.00
Administrative	7,455.00	7,004.36	8,455.00
Building R & M	70,690.10	59,956.25	68,224.00
Christian Education*	1,500.00	0.0	n/a
Missional Works	1,500.00	1,459.04	1,500.00
Pulpit Supply**	12,750.00	12,750.00	12,750.00
Sexton Property	3,400.00	3,443.53	3,650.00
Staff Payroll Taxes	1,400.00	1,373.27	1,400.00
Staff Salary	25,864.80	21,678.75	24,554.00
Substitute Organist	206.00	618.00	200.00
Worship and Service	3,505.00	3,998.77	6,970.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>128,270.90</b>	<b>140,319.78</b>	<b>128,853.00</b>
<b><u>Net Ordinary Income</u></b>	<b>-84,708.42</b>	<b>-90,740.39</b>	<b>-85,936.92</b>
<b><u>From Endowment***</u></b>	<b>54,000.00</b>	<b>69,000.00</b>	<b>54,000.00</b>
<b><u>Net Income</u></b>	<b><u>-30,708.42</u></b>	<b><u>-21,740.39</u></b>	<b><u>-31,936.92</u></b>

\*The Christian Ed line item has been removed for fiscal year 2025

\*\*Due to a typographical error, the 2024 projected pulpit supply item originally read as \$15,750.00 in the 2023 annual report. This line item has been since been corrected.

\*\*\*Endowment included court fund dividends from the trust accounts.