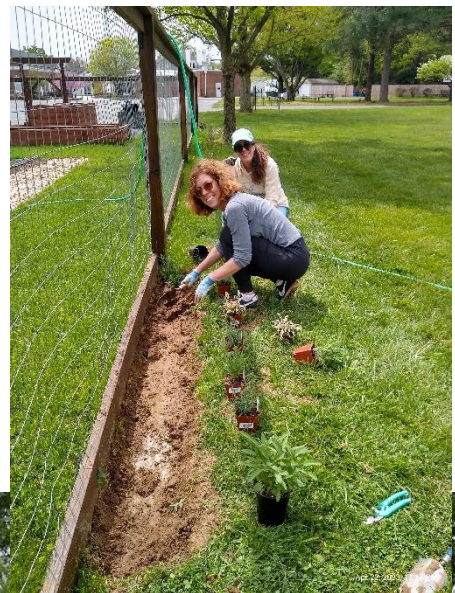


First Presbyterian Church of Moorestown

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONGREGATION January 1-December 31, 2023



The Mustard Seed Cooperative Garden is feeding our neighbors fresh produce! Our garden has produced lots of vegetables in its first season and we've shared it with the Moorestown Ministerium Food Pantry and other agencies who serve the food-insecure. The mission of our garden is to serve our church family and community by providing fresh produce for free, particularly to those who cannot afford to buy it.

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VISION STATEMENTS

At the January 28, 2020 Session meeting, new vision, mission, and why statements were approved. These statements have been carefully crafted and will serve as our “guides” for all we do here at First Presbyterian Church of Moorestown. We invite you read them thoughtfully, come back to them often, and use them to guide and reinforce activities in worship, programming, outreach, and all phases of church life.

VISION STATEMENT

We aspire to be beacons of God’s love and truth, growing together in faith and relationship with Jesus Christ.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to:

- Worship God faithfully
- Connect Spiritually
- Serve Christ locally and globally.

WHY STATEMENT

We follow the Great Commandment: *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind ... [and] you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

(Matthew 22:37, 39 NRSV)



THE 25 WAYS

As people who've experienced the merciful welcome of Jesus Christ, we belong to Him and to one another. In our desire to grow deeper in our faith, stronger in our love, and more effective in our service, we've outlined the following *ways* based on God's Word, to be the foundation for creating a culture or an atmosphere "thick with love." They're not rules or laws to be obeyed but rather the *ways* we train, remind, and encourage one another to be the church. Every week we will focus on one way in worship, in meetings, in rehearsals, in small groups, in our interactions. A complete listing of these principles and what they mean can be found throughout the church building, and on our website www.fpcmoorestown.org. Each week the Way of the Week is shared in committee meetings, gatherings, on the weekly bulletins, in communications, and illustrated in an individual graphic image.

Way	Ways Concept
1.	Be Third
2.	Speak the Truth with Love
3.	Listen Generously
4.	Always Encourage and Celebrate
5.	Assume Positive Intent
6.	Forgive . . . Again
7.	Celebrate our Unity, Savor our Diversity
8.	Jump In
9.	Pray First and Pray Again
10.	Join Hands
11.	Make Others at Home Here
12.	Own Our Church
13.	Open Doors for Others to Lead
14.	Grow Faith
15.	Welcome Change
16.	Give Cheerfully
17.	Show Who You Really Are
18.	Ask for Help
19.	Accept and Don't Cast Stones
20.	Find Strength in Belonging
21.	You're Sent, Now Go
22.	Rest and Reflect
23.	Worship with Your Whole Self
24.	Tell Your Story
25.	Rejoice Always

STAFF DIRECTORY 2023

Allen, Rev. Wes.....	Associate Pastor
Asciutto, Holly	Director of Family and Children's Ministries
Bass, Martin.....	Contemporary Worship Leader
Caraballo, Sam.....	Maintenance Assistant
Cashmer, Steve.....	Groundskeeper
Chavarria, Frances	Administrative Assistant (temporary placement)
Coombe, Amy	Nursery Coordinator
Duffy, Barbara	Webmaster and IT Specialist
Fauvell, Dave	Youth Director
Gage, Earl.....	Director of Administration
Gunsallus, Kathy	Associate Director of Music
Jagiela, Linda.....	Director of Outreach
Kim, Tyler.....	Music Intern
Krott, Joel.....	Director of Music
Mackey, Alison.....	Administrative Assistant
Margerum, Chelsea	Hospitality Helper
Margerum, Steve.....	Property Supervisor
Martin, Michael	Music Intern
Martin, Jan.....	Office Manager/Admin. Assistant, Pastor
McBride, Ann	Clerk of Session
Roberts, John.....	Interim Youth Director
Slane, Angie	Administrative Assistant
Spencer, Rev. Stuart	Pastor and Head of Staff
Vandergrift, Norman	Accounting Manager

Step by Step Christian Preschool: Director Amy Delgado; **Teachers:** Cheryl Craft, Donna Clark, Carol Clark, Helen Dominy, Jonnene Dunne, Rachel Howell, Jessica LaGrou, Jennifer Landesman, Lauren Muhlschlegel, Tina Rosser, Arlene Walker, Christine Woltjen; Administrative Assistant Kristi Illum

Office Volunteers: Sherrell Fitts, Lissa Herman, Susan Kenuk, Donna Leatherman, Winnie Lyall, Nancy Meyer, Jane Murphy, Sue Piper, Betty Schurmann, Joyce Wenzke, Anne Woolley

With grateful appreciation for your ministry and servant's heart

Martin Bass.....	Contemporary Worship Leader
Jonnene Dunne.....	Administrative Assistant, Preschool
Michael Martin.....	Music Intern
Angie Slane	Administrative Assistant
John Roberts.....	Interim Youth Director

Boards of the Church 2026

Elders (Session)

Class of 2024

Paul Booker
Leonard Fitts
Peg Madorno
Kristen Perkowski
Sarah Rotter
Gil Warren
Jim Wiggans

Class of 2025

Rebecca Castellanos
Lorenzo Eagles
Cheryl Gaskill
Paul Grossmann
Matt Livingston
Frank Manion
Joyce Wenzke

Class of 2026

Pam Engle
Gayle Payne
Melody Ransom
Dave Rebuck
Ginny Weber

Clerk of Session: Ann McBride

Deacons

Class of 2024

Alice Conley
Janet D'Angelo
Kourtney de la Cruz
Steve Drzaszcz
Gail Sorin
Susan Winner
Jason Rose

Class of 2025

Jenna Cole
Helen Dominy
Andrew Ehala
Laurie LaMonica
Rachel Long
Diane Samuel
Tamara Trzeciak
JoAnn Reynik

Class of 2026

Dave Barr
Owen Dietz
Karen Hynoski
Mike McNeil
Susan Shaffer
Bobbi Vogelsong
Alex Wilkie
Jessica Zorn

Moderator: Kourtney de la Cruz

Trustees

Class of 2024

Brian Catanella
Bill Conner
Rich Corbin
Paul Lewis

Class of 2025

Wendy Dougherty
John Miller
Matt Moxhay
Mike Welch

Class of 2026

Pete Honeyford
Joe Molloy
Bill Mueller
Tim Powell

President: Pete Honeyford
Vice President/Budget Chair: Bill Mueller

Secretary: Wendy Dougherty
Treasurer: Bill Conner

Updated 8/7/2023

CHURCH LEADERSHIP 2023

Ministry Area	Church Leaders
Session Committees	
Adult Spiritual Formation Committee	Elders Sarah Rotter and Lorenzo Eagles
Discipleship and Prayer Committee	Elders Pam Engle and Joyce Peacock
Discipling Children & Youth Committee	Elder Cheryl Gaskill
Membership & Nurture Committee	Elders Gayle Payne and Joyce Wenzke
Missions Committee	Elders Kristen Perkowski and Peg Madorno
Music Committee	Elder Melody Ransom
Nominating Committee	Elders Gil Warren and Matt Livingston
Personnel Committee	Elders Jim Wiggans and Dave Rebuck
Stewardship Committee	Elder Ginny Weber
Technology and Communications Committee	Elder Frank Manion
Worship Committee	Elder Paul Booker
Boards	
Session	Moderator Rev. Stuart Spencer, Elder Ann McBride, Clerk of Session
Board of Deacons	Moderator Kourtney de la Cruz
Board of Trustees	President Pete Honeyford
Church Ministries	
Floral Guild	Fran Green
Mustard Seed Cooperative Garden	Dr. Leslie Spencer
Presbyterian Women	Moderator Edith McFalls
Stephen Ministry	Doris Kahley



REPORTS OF THE LEADERSHIP AND STAFF

REPORT OF THE PASTOR / HEAD OF STAFF

Rev. Stuart H. Spencer

For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them."

- Matthew 18: 20, NLT

A line from the hymn, "O God, Our Help from Ages Past," states, "*Time, like an ever-rolling stream.*" Time and the years roll so quickly. However, some years roll by with a bigger impact than others do. 2023 hit me with a wallop, in hard ways and good. This past year rolled past me and left its mark on me.

A Huge Loss: happened when my Dad, Philip Spencer died on Saturday, June 10. My father-in-law, Dick Harrison, died six hours later on Sunday, June 11. No matter your age or the age of your parent, losing your Dad is vast. When I think of my father, I am so grateful for him, for our relationship and for the many good years we enjoyed. I miss him greatly. I think of him often. Leslie and I have sought to comfort our sons in the face of losing both of their grandfathers together.

A Big Trip: In July, I went on a trip of a lifetime. Early last year, Dr. Bruce Main reached out to me with an offer to join him and a team of supporters of Urban Promise International to visit Malawi. When he mentioned that the trip included a biking fundraiser—on mountain bikes, no less—I was all in. In the end, our team consisted of eleven people, including a few friends from Malawi. The biking was fun, even if there were more hills in Malawi than I anticipated. The young Malawian leaders especially impressed me. These young women and men, most around the age of 30, serve their communities with the creation of schools, trade centers and farms. Working with few resources but great faith in God, they are likely changing their nation.



A Gigantic Challenge/Opportunity: From time to time in a sermon, I'll speak to the current state of the Church in the United States. I do so recently, and the news isn't good. On Sunday, January 7, I began preaching by saying: "*On this, the first Sunday of 2024, the state of the Church in the United States is, in a word, sad. By some measures, two out of three churches are dying. According to a recent study, forty million Americans have stopped attending church in the past 25 years. That's something like 12 percent of the population, and it represents the largest movement of people, either in or out of the church in American Church history.*" Most church attenders are aware of these discouraging statistics. I am, I know.



Last year, I invited our three leadership boards — Session, Deacons and Trustees -- to join our Program Staff to consider, discuss and pray about these concerns. I believe that these challenges contain many opportunities to trust God and work for the growth of God's Kingdom, in and through FPC Moorestown. Our leaders, joined hands, to borrow one of our Ways, and met from May until August. We conceived of some 30 initiatives that allow us to pursue every opportunity. My thanks to **Paul**

Grossmann, Session Chair of our Long Range Planning Committee, who has led and been chief cheerleader for this important work. Now, I invite you to learn more about the Grow the Kingdom initiatives. I also ask you to participate in the work of growing the Kingdom. See the four-step invitation on the next page.

A Great Kingdom Win: This past year also brought something wonderful and new to us. The Mustard Seed Cooperative Garden, like all gardens do, started small but grew beautifully. In the summer of 2022, a small group of our members formed to plan the creation of a garden on our grounds.

The Garden's mission is, *"[providing] fresh foods to promote the well-being of everyone in our community. We look to join hands with our Moorestown Ministerium churches and other members of our community to nourish and nurture our neighbors by raising and sharing fresh produce. Children, youth, young adults and their families are encouraged to come to help tend the gardens and enjoy this beautiful place."* We grew and gave away produce to the



food-insecure through the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the St. Matthews Lutheran Church Food pantry. This wonderful mission was even more impactful this summer.

I begin 2024 feeling grateful for all that the Lord is doing here now and excited for how the Spirit of God will grow the Kingdom in and through us.



FPC MOORESTOWN: GROW THE KINGDOM
Inviting the Congregation to Grow God's Kingdom

¹¹ So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May He give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do. ¹² Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live, and you will be honored along with Him. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.

(2 Thessalonians 1: 11 – 12)

God's Kingdom encompasses all that God desires to bring and to do on earth through God's people. The Kingdom was central and primary in Jesus' teaching. The Kingdom of God is the restoration of God's rule over all things. When we believe the Gospel, we're stepping into something far bigger than ourselves.

As we commit to growing God's Kingdom, every member and friend of FPC Moorestown is invited into a covenant with *four* commitments. Specially, we look to members and friends to pray often for God's leading and provision. We ask others to come to FPC Moorestown and, most importantly, know Jesus. Members and friends offer their time and their hands to support and aid our mission and ministry. Finally, our people give financially in consistent ways and sometimes sacrificially.

Each commitment has a first and second step. Step one is an initial but necessary step, while step two a more expansive, faith-requiring step. As we invite our people to participate, we also provide training for each area.

1. I will pray.
2. I will invite.
3. I will serve.
4. I will give.

I will pray. I pray regularly for the ministry and mission of FPC Moorestown.

- Step 1: I will pray for needs and work of our congregation so that we may fulfill God's Kingdom purposes. Those who pray use a daily prayer guide.
- Step 2: I will regularly pray with other members and friends for the community and congregation. I'll join a prayer group or find a prayer partner with whom I'll regularly pray.

Training/Equipping: Saturday, January 21, 2024; 8:30 a.m. to noon Women's Morning of Prayer.
Saturday, January 28, 8:30 to noon, Men's Day of Prayer.

I will invite. I will invite people into the life of FPC Moorestown, ultimately to know, follow, and serve Jesus.

- Step 1: Inviting others each week to worship and/or church activities like small groups or retreats.
- Step 2: Inviting others into a relationship using DBS or other means of evangelism, with the goal of making disciples of children, youth, young adults and adults of every age.

Training/Equipping: Love Your Neighbors Crash Course: A course taught by Corrine and Stephen Herman. Sunday evenings at 7:01 pm for exactly 59 minutes every week at 207 Eastbourne Terrace in Moorestown beginning on February 3, 2024.

continued

I will serve. With my time and using my talents, I participate in the ministry and mission of FPC Moorestown.

- Step 1: I offer my services for the work of the church by volunteering to help with a church program or ministry.
- Step 2: I seek to serve our community with acts of kindness and mercy through the guidance and direction of the Deacons and Mission Committee.

Training/Equipping: Following a morning of preparation in early March, opportunities for volunteering will be offered.

I will give. I financially support the work of FPC Moorestown with intentional, sometimes sacrificial giving.

- Step 1: I regularly give to FPC Moorestown.
- Step 2: I plan to give to special needs or projects.



REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Rev. Wes Allen

Dear Church Family,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we reflect on the past year in reading and reviewing the various reports contained in our 2023 Annual Report, I am reminded of these words from the Apostle Paul's letter to the Romans (12:12-13): "Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers." These timeless words from Paul, I believe, capture the essence of our work in 2023 and illuminate our path forward for 2024.

Rejoicing in Hope

This past year was marked with several challenges and uncertainties as we continued to find our identity in a post-pandemic world and came to grips with the reality of a reduced budget. Throughout, First Presbyterian Church of Moorestown did not run from the challenges, nor did we insulate ourselves, but we found strength in the hope that comes from our faith in Jesus Christ. The leadership of our church remained diligent throughout 2023 and was committed to charting a new path forward,



aided by the Holy Spirit, in what has become known as our Grow the

Kingdom initiative. Through this continuous process of discernment, we acknowledge that our hope is not rooted in worldly circumstances but in the unchanging love of our Savior who time and time again has proved faithful to the people of Israel, the Christian Church, and our faith community.

Being Patient in Suffering

The path forward has required considerable patience as we've painstakingly come to terms with these new realities and sought God's wisdom in the face of such trials and obstacles. As a community, we sought to embody the patience that Paul speaks of – patiently enduring, trusting in God's sovereignty, and supporting one another through the challenges. It has not been easy, but long-suffering never is. This patience required sacrificial living as we came to terms with unwanted budget reductions impacting our missional giving and benevolence. Through it all, our commitment to patience in suffering allowed us to grow stronger in our reliance on God and deeper in our bonds of fellowship in navigating these murky waters together.

Persevering in Prayer

Prayer continues to be the heartbeat of our congregation, and I trust it will continue to be a major driving force as we seek to encourage more members of our church and community to participate in the intentional and regular practice of prayer.

I find many of you as a source of great inspiration for my own prayer life. Thanks you



for this gift and the reminder that we can always grow and mature as disciples of Christ. Through prayer, we witnessed healing, transformation, and a renewed sense of purpose. Yet, another reason to rejoice in hope at what God is doing among us!

Contributing to the Needs of the Saints

Our commitment to one another as members of the body of Christ has been evident in our active participation in meeting each other's needs. Whether through acts of service, financial support, or emotional encouragement, we have strived to fulfill the biblical mandate to contribute to the needs of the saints. This year, we have seen the impact of our collective generosity, through Stephen Ministry, the Mustard Seed Cooperative Garden, local benevolence and support of our Deacons and our continued support of the global church through missions. We rejoice in the work of the church and its commitment in supporting the communities with which God has entrusted us.

Extending Hospitality to Strangers

In obedience to Paul's exhortation, our community has embraced the call to extend hospitality to strangers. In 2023 we noticed a considerable uptick in visitors and guests and began putting in place intentional strategies to welcome new faces to FPC Moorestown. Our doors and hearts have been open to all, reflecting the inclusive and welcoming nature of God's kingdom. We seek to be a church that continues to welcome people from varied walks of life and diverse backgrounds and ways of viewing and navigating the world.

I believe wholeheartedly that a church committed to welcoming all people and relying on the Spirit of God for changing and transforming repentant hearts is the best way forward. In many ways this practice is liberating as we free ourselves from asking others to conform to us and instead ask them to conform and respond to the Spirit at work in their lives. In turn, this allows us to focus on welcoming and loving people as they are, just like us, sinners in need of God's redeeming.

I am proud to say that the number one reason people become new members of FPC Moorestown is due to the welcome they receive from each of you on a weekly basis. Thank you for this gift and for taking seriously this call. In 2023 we began forming hospitality / welcome teams and established two welcome centers, one in the Narthex and another in the Miller Commons Lobby. We have assembled a team



and will continue to develop and add to this team in 2024.

Having said all of this, I am EXCITED. I am excited at what God has done and is doing. I look forward to journeying with you all in 2024 as we seek to Grow the Kingdom through prayer, invitation, service, and giving. May we continue to live out the principles outlined in Romans 12:12-13. May our rejoicing in hope, patience in suffering, perseverance in prayer, contributions to the needs of the saints, and hospitality to strangers be a testament to the transformative power of God's love working through us.



REPORT OF THE CLERK OF SESSION

Elder Ann McBride

THIS YEAR has been one of readjustment as we were able to enjoy ministry together post-pandemic. As we have returned to a new normal, Session is still working hard to seek God's will for our church as we move forward.

Session is especially thankful for the leadership of our Moderator, Pastor and Head of Staff, **Stuart Spencer** and for the gift of our Associate Pastor, **Wes Allen**. Their ministry leadership has been invaluable.

Session welcomed 27 new members into our church family during this year, including three (3) from the CREDO (youth) class. Session also reinstated three (3) members previously removed from the rolls. We celebrated the baptism of eight (8) children and learned of the deaths of 17 of our dear saints, many of whom were long-time members. As of the end of 2023, our total membership was 784.



The average worship attendance for 2023 was measured in two different categories: in-person and on-line. We continue to have a large number of people worshipping virtually. Average in-person worship attendance was approximately 196 per Sunday (this was measured by our weekly usher head-count). Average on-line attendance was approximately 161 per Sunday.

Long Range Planning, headed by **Elder Paul Grossmann**, launched the "Grow the Kingdom" initiative which has occupied much of Session's energy since the Spring (see Long Range Planning Report for full summary). Session is grateful for all in leadership roles who have answered the call to work on this initiative which seeks to move us forward as a church, both in our discipleship efforts and in our desire to assure sustainability financially.

Our emphasis on prayer has certainly been the foundation on which we are able to maintain our focus on leaning on God's wisdom and strength and not our own.

Session is also grateful for the important work of the Deacons and Trustees. In addition, Session acknowledges the arduous and challenging work of the Budget Committee under the leadership of Jeff Legath. Session passed the 2024 Budget at its regular November meeting and elders continue to pray with gratitude for the generosity of our church family.

Session continued to stay steeped in our "25 Ways" this year and we continue to encourage you to keep these Ways in the forefront of discussion at your committee meetings and in your homes. These Ways have proven to be a vital part of ministry that continue to bless us.

Please continue to pray for your Session members and all in leadership in the coming year.

continued

New Members 2023

Tad and Anne Wooley
Joshua Leonard
Linda Lockart
Laura Leder
Dann Scannell
Keith Wright
Daniel Macbride
Sam Speers
Lisa Heisler
Robert and Sue Hill
Tim and Ginny Powell
Carson Cristella
William Gaskill
Alex Perkowski
Jeff and Karen Erbig
Jeff Sapp
Bill and Carolyn Pettit
Brian and Alene Dover

Reinstated 2023

Catherine Schneider
Michael O'Connor
Jared Nutter

Baptisms 2023

Jay Clayton Mitchell
Hannah Ellen Joyce
Scarlett Elizabeth Schneider
Harper Jo Dugan
Mila Valentina Macbride
Caroline Ann Gordon
Lane Gregory Cole
Richard Joseph Sakowski

Necrology Report 2023

Jeannette Muir (Elder)

Cornelius Salvaterra

Gary Bender (Elder)

Joane Huff Doulong

Audrey Tippin

Louise Langerhans (40+ year member)

Millie Salvaterra

Ruth Stotsenburg (Elder)

William Ellis (50+ year member)

Donald Wetherill (50+ year member)

Richard Neindorff (Elder)

Shirley Somers (40+ year member)

Edwin Tippin, Sr.

Anthony "Tony" Cistone (30+ year member)

Richard Warner

Elizabeth Ann "Bonnie" Haag (60+ year member)

Roger Graham (60+ year member)



REPORTS FROM THE SESSION COMMITTEES

REPORT OF ADULT SPIRITUAL FORMATION COMMITTEE

Elder Lorenzo Eagles and Elder Sarah Rotter, Chairs

Rev. Wes Allen, Staff Liaison

Adult Spiritual Formation (ASF) continued its efforts to revamp and revitalize ministries in the Sunday School hour. Over the course of the past year, three classes were offered, each focusing on in-depth study of Scripture. The classes were as follows:

Spring 2023: A Study of Acts

This 12-week series, led by **Lissa Herman** and **Lorenzo Eagles**, followed Justin Holcomb's "Knowing the Bible" study guide and incorporated teachings of both NT Wright and John Stott on the book, exploring the founding of the Church and the spread of the Gospel. In the process, the class examined how early Church leaders like Peter and Paul proclaimed the Gospel to both Jew and Gentile. Nearly 50 people attended at least one session of the class, with an average weekly participation of approximately 35 people.

Summer 2023: Gathering Serious

During the modified summer schedule, ASF met after the conclusion of the morning service, following the Gathering Serious model from last year. Approximately 15 people met to read the Scripture from the Sermon and discuss personal takeaways from the Pastor's message.

Fall 2023: The Sermon on the Mount

Fall kicked off with another focused scripture study, this time on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. The class again incorporated the writings of Wright and Stott into the study. **Paul Gordon** and **Paul Grossmann** joined **Lissa Herman** and **Lorenzo Eagles** in leadership. As the class moved through Matthew's account, it examined the challenging principles that still sit at the heart of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. The class again attracted nearly 50 people, with average weekly attendance of 35 people.

Fall 2023: Study on "The Chosen"

Led by **Dick Herman**, this series met in the Herman's household and spent eight weeks watching the popular show and reflecting on its portrayal of Jesus' life. The course averaged approximately 10 people per meeting.

Advent 2023: Video Series featuring Dr. Ken Bailey

Lissa Herman led a four-week class of reflections on the Christmas Story by renowned Middle Eastern scholar and professor, the late Dr. Kenneth Bailey. Each class featured a 30 minute video of Dr. Bailey followed by conversation facilitated by Lissa. Approximately 25-30 people attended each week, with everyone learning something new about the Christmas Story through Dr. Bailey's expertise.

Throughout the course of the year, the ASF Committee also worked on developing long term goals. First, the committee worked on expanding the number of teachers interested in leading adult Sunday School offerings. This year, classes were taught by five different teachers. Efforts were also made to improve class recordkeeping and communication by more effectively using both the Church Center app and the Planning Center communication system. Finally, the committee continued to discuss plans for expanding Sunday morning options, hoping to offer multiple classes in the 2024-25 academic year.

REPORT OF DISCIPLING CHILDREN AND YOUTH COMMITTEE

Elder Cheryl Gaskill, Chair

1. Step by Step Christian Preschool
2. Family and Children's Ministries
3. Family and Youth Ministries

REPORT OF STEP BY STEP CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

Amy Delgado, Director

When First Presbyterian Church decided to open a preschool decades ago to serve as a mission for the church, they opened it trusting that families would come and teachers would serve. They had no idea if it would work or how long it would be open but they did it seeing a need in the community. As the years go by so quickly and the world seems to change more and more, Step by Step Christian Preschool, through the grace of God, remains so close to what it was when it opened its doors decades ago. Although it has grown in size, the mission remains the same. We work to serve the Lord and our families through our teaching each day.



We are “old school” in our ways – remaining close to what preschool was like when we first opened. Screen time does not exist but rather lots of outdoor time, play and messy activities with plenty of academics and discovery. We have monthly Chapel Time, whole school activities and more to form a cohesive school. In each classroom, children work in small groups, large groups and individually. Students are taught their ABCs and 123s. They do science experiments and learn about their country, the seasons, how to write letters and words, community helpers, measurement and more. In so many ways, we are like other preschools. However, we have a niche and excel. This niche has allowed us to remain in business while competition seems to grow in leaps and bounds all around us. One day, Step by Step Christian Preschool may close its doors, but for now, with God's blessing, the

school is here to love and serve. The families who chose Step by Step Christian Preschool love what is offered.

Our staff is incredible. They love these children and their families like their own. They spend countless hours at home and in school preparing for exciting, age-appropriate lessons. They are not paid close to the salaries of public-school teachers. There are no benefits, no large increases in pay, no pension. While all of those elements are important and good for teachers across the country, the staff at Step by Step Christian School work without any of them. They excel at their jobs and could work anywhere. However, they choose to teach at Step by Step Christian Preschool. Their love for the classroom, the students and each other is very apparent. Most staff know not just the students in their class but the students in other classes as well. The staff has a great time working together. Teachers here are selfless and do things for one another often. We joke and laugh together but also cry together when called for. Together, we have been through illnesses, diseases, and deaths of family members and grieve with one another and care for

each other. While observing us, you would never know the pain that each staff member carries on any given day because we remain upbeat while working and do not let what may be bad impact our job. The staff is a huge reason Step by Step has remained successful in the last several years despite the push public school (either free or reduced pricing) is making on the available clientele. Working this year were **Arlene Walker** (head teacher), **Carol Clark**, **Donna Clark**, **Mary Colbeck**, **Cheryl Craft**, **Amy Delgado**, **Director**, **Helen Dominy**, **Kristi Illum**, **Jessica LaGrou**, **Jennifer Landesman**, **Lauren Muhlschlegel**, **Jenna Tickner** and **Christine Woltjen**.

The families that attend Step by Step Christian Preschool are among some of the most down to earth, friendly, kind people you will ever meet. From these awesome families, come awesome children! All of



these families share common expectations for the school. They want the best for their children, are involved in school and daily life and extremely appreciative of all that Step by Step Christian Preschool has to offer. Families love the half day, "old school" program. Most children leave before lunch but some take advantage of our Lunch Buddies and Extended Day options. Parents comment on the commitment of the staff and the love and care their children receive. Usually, once a family comes to the preschool, their siblings follow. Last year, we had several children graduate who were the baby of the family; these families had been at Step by Step for years! Mrs. Walker has been here for over 30 years and now is teaching her first student's children. How amazing is that? Step by Step Christian

Preschool has become a place having a multigenerational impact.

Our year was fairly typical, thank goodness! We did, however, have two events that were new and impressive. One was our Family Fundraising Night. In the months leading up to our Family Night, our parent committee was busy. The night of the event, we had artwork, pizza, face painting, games and more. It was a fantastic night of fellowship and fun. We saw so many preschool families and many brought their older children (former students). The second new event was changing our End of Year Picnic into more of a carnival. There was a petting zoo, Mr. Softee and outdoor carnival type games like ring toss, potato sack race and spoon race families could play together. Families commented on how incredible the picnic was and how much fun they were having! Events like these make Step by Step a special place.

If you looked at the playground this year, you may have noticed a few things. In the spring, the preschool had a large shade cover installed. There are tables underneath the shade cover. It can be used as an outdoor classroom, a spot to cool off on hot days and a space to do activities during our Extended School Year. Over the summer, a track was installed on the playground. We purchased a few tricycles and big wheels and had several donated as well. The children love riding around the track daily and many of them spend their entire playground time working their muscles on the bikes. In addition, pavers were put down under the shade cover to create even flooring and proper drainage. All three of these were excellent additions to the outdoor space and all were paid for using grant money the preschool applied for and was awarded.



This fall, we expanded our offerings by adding an extra day add-on option for our two-day three-year old class. Some in the two-day class added it and some did not but the flexibility was certainly appreciated by those who took advantage of the extra day.

As always, the maintenance crew of the church continued to help the preschool. **Steve Margerum** along with **Steve Cashmer** and **Sam Caraballo** always did what it took to make sure the preschool's spaces were clean, safe and ready to go. **Mr. Gaskill** helped as well during his part-time work. One of our favorite new things was a place to store our blocks that was made by the guys over the summer.

In addition, I would like to thank the Preschool Board for its tireless work in meetings and for ensuring the preschool continues down a path of excellence. Your time was very appreciated.

Step by Step is a special preschool, having served the community for decades. We thank God for his blessings upon it.



REPORT OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Holly Asciutto, Director

This past year 2023 was a year of growth both in attendance and in discipleship. Jesus is always at the center of our Children and Family Ministries. We delved deeper into our faith, building upon our previous knowledge. One unique gift of meeting our children face to face each week is the opportunity I have to watch them grow physically, emotionally, and, best of all, spiritually. Watching what God is doing in their lives and continuing to build Christ-centered relationships with them and their families is a blessing. Providing them with Discipleship resources is one of many ways First Pres cares for families and children.

For Lent, I made a Lent-in-a-Bag kit for families to journey through Lent with devotions and activities. Lent is a time for all of us to put aside time and dive deeper into our faith. The annual Easter celebration on April 1, 2023 happened with many teen helpers to help hide eggs. Our teens at First Pres are genuinely impressive and always willing to step back into Children's Ministries to help our younger members.

In **Kingdom Kids (K-3)**, we continue to grow with new community children through VBS and word of mouth. I find it brave for the children to walk into a brand new program without their parents or prior connections. Now, these children are thriving and have made friends who are helping to teach them about the love of God. Our groups are very connected, praying and supporting each other without my prompting. God is moving in our children. These new family members bring with them wondering and searching questions that help move the group into deeper conversations and a deeper understanding of God's Word and His mighty love for us.

Crossing Zone (4th-6th) experienced similar growth with community children regularly

attending, which has also helped move conversations deeper. I am grateful for God's provision and the Spirit's direction with Wednesday Night groups. I am thankful for **Cheryl Gaskill**, who has assumed leadership of Wednesday night dinners and created a more family-oriented atmosphere! This has helped our volunteer base each week. (Thank you Family Dinners volunteers!) If you haven't attended, come out, enjoy some delicious Georgetti's food, and connect with your church family. I am also grateful for **Jonathan Nawrocki, Sawyer McNab, Katie Donahue, Frances Chavarria, and Will Gaskill**, helpers on Wednesday night with Kingdom Kids and Crossing Zone. They make lasting friendships with our children and give them positive Christian role models.

In Wednesday night fellowship groups, scripture lessons teach us who God is and how he moves in our lives. We do crafts to help us remember that God is always with us. Sometimes, we do a service project to be the hands and feet of Jesus, sharing His love with others. And finally, we play games as children learn that church can be fun!



Children attended **Stellar** Vacation Bible School from June 26-30, 2023. Our halls were alive with approximately 95 students ages 5-11 who learned about the love of God from many of our church members and over 40 teens. We are so thankful for the consistent dedication of our VBS staff to share the Gospel with community children. The teens are always exceptional and

dedicated, displaying both maturity and devotion. Our annual slip and slide had a new addition this year with an inflatable water slide. It was a big hit! We had great fun learning about Jesus and His love, care, and provision for us.

We kicked off Sunday School with a pancake breakfast in September, and students had an excellent time catching up in their new classes. We are so grateful for all our teachers:

- **Jenny Legath** and **Karen Alecxih**, who share interactive Bible stories, music, and crafts with our littlest ones in Kindergarten-1st grade
- **Donna Douloug** and **Lori Bell**, who teach our 2nd-3rd graders, share fun Bible stories and crafts
- **Leslie Spencer** and **Philip Jagiela**, who teach 6th-8th grade, lead in new creative ways that help students dive deeper into what our faith means in everyday life. This class is learning the Apostles' Creed.

I oversee the nursery that operates on Sunday mornings. **Amy Coombe** is our coordinator. I pray our families know and appreciate all Amy does. We are grateful for her care of our little ones.

I continue my duties on the Step by Step Christian Preschool board and teach three chapels a month. **Amy Delgado** works hard to benefit all our students while being mindful of sharing our Ways of the Week with the teachers.

This year, I took on a project connecting our children to what it might have been like in Bethlehem during the birth of Jesus at our Advent event on December 2nd. With the help of **Earl Gage**, **Steve Margerum** and their team, we designed and created a space that moved through Bethlehem's Town Center with detailed reminders of stories from the life of Jesus.

Leaders were dressed in costume, and each classroom had a theme and a story. Families entered through the Commons Lobby, drawn in through a stone wall gate to enter a time long ago including a bakery, spice shoppe, wool shop, toy shop, and even a fishing area. Children made cinnamon bread, fished, created a frankincense necklace, and created their own toy from clay. The adventure ended at the stable where children could interact with Baby Jesus, sheep, a stuffed camel, donkeys, and hay and take their picture. I hope it was meaningful for the families that attended.



Unfortunately, as I was setting up, I fell, ended up at Urgent Care, and missed the event. But God provided excellent leadership in **Rebecca Neindorff** and fantastic support through our costumed storytellers, **Steve** and **Chelsea Margerum**, **Jonathan Nawrocki**, **Alice Conley**, **Susan Kenuk**, **Donna Douloug**, **Frances Chavarria**, **Gail Sorin**, and **Joann Nawrocki**. I am amazed and eternally grateful to all who "Jumped In" to help.

With God's help, I continue to create learning environments that honor our Lord and Savior. I hold these children close in prayer each day so that they will grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus (2 Peter 3:18). I am always looking to our Mighty God for guidance as He goes before me, walks alongside me, and hems me in behind. I am humbled, blessed, and grateful to serve FPC's families. God is gracious to me.

REPORT OF FAMILY AND YOUTH MINISTRY
Cheryl Gaskill, Chair, Discipling Children and Youth Committee
Dave Fauvell, Youth Director

Thankfully, 2023 marked a return to a “normal”, post-COVID look to FPC Moorestown’s youth activities. During the first half of the year, our youth groups were led by **John Roberts** (area director of Young Life Burlington County), with additional leadership support from **Cheryl Gaskill, Liz Greene, Chelsea Margerum** and **Delaney Cushing** at middle school gatherings, and from **Dave & Sami Fauvell**, and **Carl Krott** at the high school gatherings.

In early 2023, **Pastor Wes Allen** led a CREDO class, and the congregation welcomed three new young members into our church membership in April.



In the summer of 2023, we welcomed **Dave Fauvell** as our permanent part-time youth director. Prior to his hiring, Dave was already a committed volunteer youth leader at FPC Moorestown for a number of years. In early 2023, Dave felt God was leading him to take on a larger role with our youth, and we are grateful that Dave followed that lead! Dave’s hiring as a part-time staff member marks a commitment by our church family to a more comprehensive approach to the discipleship of our young people. It is no longer solely the job of a single youth director to lead our young people to Christ. (*News flash - it never really was!*) Instead, we are now focused on building intergenerational relationships throughout our church family, with our more mature members sharing what it means to them to be disciples.

Concurrent with Dave’s hiring as youth director, a new Discipling Children and Youth Committee

was formed and meets regularly to support our children’s and youth activities. That team includes **Cheryl Gaskill, Lorenzo Eagles, Evan Dempster, Rachel Long, Jessica Zorn, Rachel Gordon, Kristen Perkowski, Steve Margerum, Jenny Legath, Steve Drzaszcz**, and staff members **Holly Asciutto** and **Dave Fauvell**. Thank you to all who have committed to supporting our ministry to young people by serving on this team!

Summer youth activities included a middle and high school Wednesday evening gathering to discuss the book, *More Than A Carpenter*. Additionally, we had many teen volunteers leading in Vacation Bible School and several of our young people attended summer camp at Camp Johnsonburg in Warren County NJ.

In the second half of 2023, the High School Youth Group met at the home of Dave and Sami Fauvell on Sunday evenings. The group begins with enjoying a meal together, and then delves into a discussion of what it looks like to follow Christ. Additionally, as part of our effort to build intergenerational relationships, the group has enjoyed dinner and discussion at the homes of **Stuart & Leslie Spencer, Steve & Tamara Trzeciak**, and **Jeff & Jenny Legath**. We are looking for more dinner hosts! Please contact Jenny Legath (our committee’s dinner coordinator) if you are interested in hosting a dinner, either in your home or at the church.

Middle schoolers meet on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 pm, with Family Dinner beforehand. Family Dinner is for our ENTIRE church family, not just kids! Please come out and enjoy a meal (catered by Georgetti’s) and get to know your brothers and sisters in Christ,

including our young people. Dinners resume on February 7, 2024 and begin at 6:00 pm.

In the fall of 2023, all of our previous volunteer leaders continued their leadership roles. Additionally, **Jess Zorn** has joined the leadership team for both middle and high school youth groups. Jess grew up in our church and recently graduated from college. It is a joy to have her come “full circle” and lead our young people with energy and enthusiasm! We are also grateful to have **John & Grace Roberts** continue their leadership on a volunteer basis at our Sunday evening high school gatherings.

Sunday School offerings for youth include a Middle School Sunday School class, led by a rotating team, including **Pam & Steve Engle, Paul Grossmann, Sue Piper, Ann McBride, Adrienne & Dave Barr, and Cheryl Gaskill**. High school students join our larger church family at Adult Spiritual Formation classes.

In early December, the High School Youth Group attended a fun Winter Weekend retreat at Lake Champion as a joint retreat with Young Life of Burlington County.



In addition to our weekly youth group meetings, several Discovery Bible Study groups comprised of middle and high school students met throughout 2023 led by **Joel and Sandra Krott**. The DBS program seeks to engage participants to seek a personal relationship with Jesus Christ by

reading stories from the Bible together and exploring three key questions:

1. What does this story tell us about God?
2. What does this story tell me about ourselves (humans)?
3. Since God has taught us today, what behavior must you change? (“I Will” statement)

In terms of outreach, more than 50 college students received care packages this fall as part of the Church Has Left The Building service project. Thank you to all who volunteered to assemble these packages, which included handwritten notes of encouragement for each student.

Looking ahead, the committee plans to host a Mid-Term Study Day at the church in January, explore new inter-generational service opportunities, and hopes to begin a mentorship program for young adults later this year.

As we move into 2024, I encourage each of you to pray for discernment as to how you can support and encourage our young people in their spiritual development. There are many opportunities to serve, ranging from a commitment of just a few hours to a larger, ongoing commitment. Don’t like being “in the spotlight”? That’s OK, because we have many “background roles” that still make a big impact! Please feel free to contact any member of our committee or our pastoral or program staff if you would like to join the work of discipleship to our young people.

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.

- 1 Peter 4:10

REPORT OF THE LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Elder Paul Grossmann, Chair

In January, Paul Grossmann and Stuart Spencer met to discuss how the Long-Range Planning (LRP) Committee should help address the issues which had become critical in Q4-2022. The **Grow the Kingdom (GTK)** concept emerged from this meeting. The focus of GTK was to improve the discipleship of our congregants, while simultaneously enhancing the financial sustainability of the church. Quite simply, the ministries of FPC Moorestown represent our Discipleship, and our Revenue-Expense status determines if we can expand or must contract these ministries. If we wished to Grow the Kingdom, we would have to address both **Discipleship and Sustainability**.



During Q1, the committee worked with church leaders to develop a plan, which was introduced to Session in its April meeting. The GTK program would use the approach which had been successfully employed to address COVID. This approach would empower six (6) teams to discuss and make recommendations in a variety of areas. Each team would be led by an Elder and include members of Session, Deacons, Trustees, and staff. Teams would meet from May-August and address one of the following subjects with a focus on how to improve (1) Discipleship and (2) Sustainability:

- Team 1 - Current Activities of the Church
- Team 2 – Outreach
- Team 3 – Visitors (those who have found us either in person or online)
- Team 4 – Wider Community (those who have not yet met us)
- Team 5 – Revenue Sources
- Team 6 – Long Range (5-Year) View (membership, participation, and financials)

The Grow the Kingdom Kick-off meeting was held on May 16, 2023 and included over 40 participants. The GTK Program was reviewed, and teams commissioned to meet during the summer and develop 3-5 recommendations. Each team was able to fulfill its commission and team leaders presented over 30 recommendations to Session in August.

The Long Range Planning team crafted several of these recommendations into Proposals (which included deliverables and the parties responsible for implementation) which the Session approved at its September 2023 meeting. These first six proposals would be followed by additional proposals in 2024. Session approved these Proposals:

1. **Hospitality Team** – Create Hospitality Desks and implement programs to be more welcoming to visitors and congregants
2. **Child & Youth Committee** – Develop ways to get Youth more involved in life of the church specifically via Youth Sunday and exploring High School Service Program for Graduation Credit
3. **Membership** – Create a Young Adult (20-35 years of age) Feedback Group

4. **Budget Committee** – Create a rolling 3-year Strategic Budget with the objective of being Balanced by Budget Year 2026.
5. **Step-by-Step Preschool** – Expand daily operations (hours) and calendar (full year if possible)
6. **LRP Workgroup** – Maximize the impact of our Sunday Morning Experience

Note: Five of these teams (1-5) were already in place and in some cases already moving in this direction based on the GTK recommendations made to Session in August. The **LRP Workgroup** (#6) was created as an Ad Hoc Team in December 2023 and includes representatives from Worship, Music, Child and Adult Sunday School as well as staff.

While the efforts of these teams may not be realized for several months, the **Hospitality** team has already made several improvements in the way we meet and greet visitors and congregants. They have also implemented an improved follow-up system for visitors. The **Budget Committee** has accepted the challenge to present a balanced budget by 2026, and the 2024 Budget includes several important actions that will help ensure that we reach this critical objective.

Beyond these five teams, the LRP Committee is developing the next set of Proposals (based on the August recommendations) and will be presenting these to Session in Q1, 2024.

I am grateful for the overwhelming support that church leadership and staff have given to the GTK process. The keys to this process have been:

- Large number of participants, representing many groups within the FPC Moorestown family
- Open and sometimes difficult discussion of our problems and opportunities
- Consideration all suggestions and collaborative creation of recommendations and plans,
- Willingness to create and accept Proposals with Targets and Accountability



Perhaps more than anything, this process has reinforced the value of intentionality. If we intentionally focus on Discipleship and Sustainability and ask how our plans enhance these two Prime Goals, we can will make things better, sometimes in a very short timeframe.

In the end, this is how we as a Church Family can and will Grow the Kingdom.

REPORT OF THE MEMBERSHIP AND NURTURE COMMITTEE

Elder Gayle Payne and Elder Joyce Wenzke, Co-Chairs

Our committee consisted of wonderful members who helped immensely all year: **Elder Gayle Payne** and **Elder Joyce Wenzke**, co-chairs; **Mary Christensen**, **Eric Davis**, **Sherrell Fitts**, **Jan Martin**, **Karen Molloy**, and of course, our advisor **Wes Allen**. Our Elder Chair Gary Bender passed away on March 13, 2023 from injuries due to an auto accident and we miss him very much.

Our attention this season was to activate our members and get them involved; connect with others; be more hospitable

We hosted three Inquirer Classes in 2023: February, April, and October 2023. There were three class meetings.

Each class began with meeting at the Wednesday Night Family Dinner then moved to the Hayes Room for a meet and greet session. The Saturday morning meeting featured Stuart or Wes and other members of FPC Moorestown to learn more about what it is to be a Presbyterian. The third meeting on Sunday, after the worship services, was to meet the Elders of Session and have new members give their Statement of Faith. We received 21 new members and 4 CREDO (confirmation) members in 2023.

What brought these new members to our church were interests in our Bible Studies, the music, the choirs, the friendliness of our congregation, the Strawberry Festival, being with people who believed in God, welcoming feeling as they worshipped here, and being with family are all reasons that kept them coming to worship at First Presbyterian Church of Moorestown.

Our committee was very active connecting with the New Member classes from 2020, 2021, and 2022. Our focus is to have a reception for these new members who joined during the pandemic era. We joined forces with the Deacons to host an Ice Cream Social and Member Reception on Sunday, July 30th, a Fifth Sunday. The combined worship service was in the Miller Commons which encouraged everyone to come to the Social in Fellowship Hall. It was a wonderful success! The annual Ice Cream and Member Social will be held in 2024 on the June Fifth Sunday (June 30, 2024).



Our resident corresponding secretary has been very good at sending cards to each new member and those who are ill.

According to our Clerk of Session we have 781 active members. We continue to follow up with inactive members and to monitor attendance electronically with the assistance of **Hank Heidler** who keeps the records of attendance through the Church Center app.

REPORT OF THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE
Elder Kristen Perkowski and Elder Margaret Madorno, Chairs
Linda Jagiela, Director of Outreach

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

- Matthew 28:19-20 NIV

Missions Committee: Kristen Perkowski, Margaret Madorno, Steve Engle, Donna Leatherman, John Pierce, Jennifer Allen, Sally Bishop, Kathy McIlroy, Laurie LaMonica, Wendy Dougherty, Jean Kunkel, Alice Conley, Pat Joyner, Dan Scannell, Mike Baker

Overview

The mission committee met ten times this year both in person and virtually. In 2023, our missions committee took an intentional "hands on" approach with our mission efforts this year giving the congregation many opportunities to get involved in our efforts and to get to know our missionaries. These efforts included mission trips, fundraising events, dinners and volunteer opportunities.

Mission Trips

Greece

We celebrated our 2022 Greek mission trip with a Greek luncheon in March for the congregation. Trip participants cooked an authentic Greek meal of pastitsio, Greek salad and Greek desserts and presented information on Nadia Ayoub's work with Ukrainian immigrants in Katerini. A free will offering raised \$1,000 for programs in Katerini.

- **India (Linda Jagiela and Debbie Heller).** With our mission partner, GTi Hope, we traveled to Southeastern India in February to see firsthand how their indigenous India partners are delivering the Gospel in areas where converting to Christianity and preaching the Gospel could cost them their lives. We visited home churches, prayer cells, and church plants. We attended literacy classes where individuals from the lowest casts are learning to read using bible tracts. We visited fishing villages hit by the 2004 tsunami still struggling to recover. We celebrated a new study bible translated in a local language, Tamil, with 300 pastors. We celebrated the trip with the church in April hosting an ice cream social. A free will collection raised \$700 for GTi Hope.
- **Baltimore (Linda Jagiela, Debby Gerhardt, Susan Kenuk, Luwani Ghambi, Carol Clark).** Our team traveled to Baltimore in December for a fun three-day trip working on the assembly line at an Operation Christmas Child warehouse sorting, inspecting and packing boxes then preparing them for shipping to their final location before being sent throughout the world to areas where children have never heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Mission class at VBS

Vacation Bible School missions' class students learned about our missionaries in India and Greece drawing comparisons to the Apostles Paul and Thomas. Our missionary, Maclean Onsewa, from Seeds of Promise in Malawi assisted teaching part of the week telling students about the life of children in impoverished

areas of Malawi. The class was taught on the third floor with sets designed as Areopagus, the Acropolis, and a village in India by **Alex** and **Kyle Perkowski**. Students contributed to our collection of \$500 to buy Bibles for children in India.

Alternative Gift Market

Our Alternative Gift Market allows congregants to purchase tribute gifts for their friends and loved ones while gifting our mission efforts around the world. Alternative giving raised \$4,200 for our missionaries. Praise the Lord! **Bethany Trzeciak** created the beautiful artwork for this year's card.



Missions Connections

Four issues of *Missions Connections* were published keeping our congregation informed throughout the year about our mission efforts.

Carol's House

Carol's House remained occupied with missionaries the entire year and is committed for the entire year of 2024. Three years ago, an anonymous donor committed \$125,000 for Carol's House over a five-year period. We have received the third installment this year toward that commitment. This generous donation allows us to host missionaries who have come off the mission field for various reasons to stay at an affordable rate without taxing the church's budget. Maintenance on the house included power washing, cleaning the gutters and removing four pine trees along the driveway.

Missionwares

The Missionwares store closed for repairs throughout the summer and fall, and reopened in December.

Fundraising and other mission activities

The Mission Committee hosted the Haiti Outreach Ministries Board Meeting and Spaghetti dinner in April which raised \$930 from the free will offering. Pastor Leon Dorleans preached to the congregation focusing on the hope for Haiti in light of the current civil unrest.

In April, the Mission Committee hosted Christian Caring Center 40th anniversary banquet. The Christian Caring Center raised \$20,000 from their banquet.

In May, we hosted a baby bottle collection and baby shower for Options for Her raising \$945. Debbie Biskey, Executive Director of Options for Her, gave an update on expanded services the organization now offers including opening two new sites in Trenton and Ocean City.

The Mission Committee operated the Straw-berry Festival hamburger stand in June raising \$830 for Haiti Outreach Ministries.

During the summer, we prepared a barbeque lunch and took it to Atsion Lake feeding a Vacation Bible School class from Bridge of Peace Community Church in Camden. We also brought a team to Wildwood to serve Urban Promise students when they visited the Children's Fresh Air Home.

In September we hosted an Iron Hill Brewery Dine and Donate event raising \$492 for mission trips.

A World Refugee Collection totaled \$1,293 supporting the program efforts of our missionary in Greece Nadia Ayoub.

In October, we attended the Hymn Sing at America's Keswick and heard a presentation on their Addiction Recovery Ministry.

Our team oversaw the meal prep and served meals at the Urban Promise Summit in November for two days serving three meals and snacks to 250 attendees.

The most visible hands-on effort occurred in November when our church served as a drop off relay station for Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child. For eight days, sixty volunteers staffed Miller Commons' lobby collecting shoeboxes and then packing them into 250 shipping boxes. We collected over 4,000 boxes with 225 of them donated by our congregation! We loaded up trucks and cars to take them to the



collection point where they were filled into tractor-trailers to head to a sorting location. In December, we took a mission trip to Baltimore where we stood in huge warehouse and worked an assembly line sorting and filling shoeboxes for three days. What an incredible experience!

On a personal note, Linda Jagiela, attended classes throughout 2023 and received two certifications from the Nonprofit Center at LaSalle University: Certified Nonprofit Executive and Certified Fundraising Executive.

Disbursements:

Organization	Amount
Kennedy, Darren (Outreach Foundation)	3000
Medical Benevolence Foundation Embangweni Hospital Malawi	4000
Medical Benevolence Foundation Good Shepard Hospital Congo	8000
Medical Benevolence Holy Cross Hospital Haiti	6000
New Church Development Egypt (Outreach Foundation)	2000
Outreach Foundation Cairo Seminary Egypt	4000
Presbytery of WJ Ayoub, Nadia	4000
Antioch - McReynolds, Chris	2000
Antioch - Wehmeyer, Donald and Martha	2000
Coalition for Christian Outreach - Walker, Beth (COO)	6000
CRU - Cassel, Joe	6000
Glad Tidings India	12000
Haiti Outreach Ministries	12000
Hekima Place	5000
Hekima Place University Scholarships	2000
Hope Alive Clinic Haiti	5000
Operation Mobilization USA -Hendricks, Jim and Stephanie	5000

Services along the Nile - Soliman, Dr. Emad	5000
SNEHA Primary/High School India (Global Development)	8000
TEAM- Miller, Jeff /Geri	5000
Urban Promise Honduras	8000
Urban Promise International Malawi	10000
Urban Promise International Yamba	5000
Urban Promise International Calm	8000
Urban Promise Intl UPSEL Leadership Training/Fellows	10000
Camden Forward School (students) Urban Promise	15000
Camden Forward School (gifts) Urban Promise	100
Children's Fresh Air Home	5000
Christian Caring Center	5000
Feeding 5000	5000
Fellowship of Christian Athletes	5000
InterVarsity	3000
Options for Women	5000
Seeds of Hope	5000
UP After School Outreach	7000
UP High School Academy-Teen Leaders/Trekkers	8000
UP Summer Camps	7500
UP Summit Dinner/Summer Interns	300
Church Has Left The Building	2006
Young Life	6000
Admin. of Missions and Outreach travel, mission trips	1500
Alternative Gift	600
Carol's House Fund	10000
Total	\$236.000

Note: the difference between the \$215,000 and the \$236,000 was funded through remaining funds of a \$20,000 anonymous donation to missions in 2023.



REPORT OF THE MUSIC COMMITTEE

Elder Melody Ransom, Chair

Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. - Psalm 95: 1

Committee Members:

Joel Krott, Greg Connlain, Jean Gandy, Tom Gilman, Kathy Gunsallus, Amit Joshi, Laurie LaMonica, Ann McBride, Patrick McIlroy, Joann Nawrocki, Peg Pierce, and Melody Ransom

The Music Committee contributes to the spiritual dimensions of our worship experiences. Through the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the music program at FPC Moorestown has sustained vibrancy. Our gratitude goes out to the dedicated leadership of Joel Krott, who encourages spiritual development and influence over all with whom he works.

Kathy Gunsallus accompanies the Adult and Chapel Choirs, and directs our Bell Choir. Her responsibilities include organ and piano accompaniment and assists with choir directing. We are very grateful for Kathy's professional contribution to our music program and especially for her generous spirit.

Choir is an adjunct to Christian Education. There is a consistent effort to thoroughly understand the Scriptural content of all the pieces and to apply them to life.

The support of many youth choir mothers assisted Mr. Krott with rebuilding and recruiting for the youth music ministry. Stewardship of these parents' time is deeply appreciated. God plays for keeps, and work done by and through Him is eternal. The Music Committee is appreciative of this group of supportive youth choir parents. We as members of FPC Moorestown know well the efforts of our choirs, leadership and listening pleasures reflect a qualitative element beyond a quantity of singers in the program.

We believe God used our choir vocalists to continue singing through the pandemic obstacles. The Music Committee believes the

rewards to singers and listeners were in many ways greater because sacrifice had been involved. The FPC choirs include: Primary Choir (K and 1st grade), Junior Choir (2-3-4th graders), Choristers (5th-8th), Chapel Choir (9th-12th) and the Adult Choir.

We are grateful to our talented accompanists, **Rebecca Neindorff, Carol Manion, Sawyer McNab**, and **Karen Molloy**. We depend on the faithful assistance of **Alison Mackey** in the church office for administrative support.



Special Events concerts included an Epiphany Concert in January, A Palm Sunday concert featuring the West Jersey Chamber orchestra and Adult Choir featuring the Haydn "Theresa Mass," the resumption of youth choir with orchestra in May (another recovery of an event lost in COVID years), and a concert featuring many of our young musicians in solo performances and also two youth choirs.

The Music Committee assists with administrative responsibilities of our music program and collaborates behind the scenes to help bring the beautiful church music to us each week. We collaborate with the Worship Committee to assure our visions are in sync. We are grateful for all who participate.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Elder Gil Warren, Chair

The work of our committee was difficult as we searched for candidates to serve our church as Elders, Deacons and Trustees for the Class of 2026. Our goal as always was to fill the 7 Elder, 8 Deacon and 4 Trustee positions that are open each year. Some of these positions were filled with current board members who were eligible to serve a second term and multiple positions on each board would need to be filled by individuals that were new to the board. Ultimately all positions were filled with the exception of two (2) Elder positions.

As you are reading this, the committee is already actively at work through prayer and meetings to fill the positions for the Class of 2027 as well as filling the 2 currently empty Elder positions for the Class of 2026.

Please join us in prayer that God would provide servants willing to serve in each of these roles. If you know someone that you feel would be a good leader on any of the boards including possibly yourself, please reach out to any of the committee members listed below and pass the name(s) along.

Members of the Nominating Committee are:

- Gil Warren – Chair, Elder, Stewardship
- Matt Livingston - Elder
- Joyce Wenzke – Membership
- Jason Rose – Deacon
- Mike Welch – Trustee
- Laurie LaMonica – Deacon
- Chris Catanella – at large

A CALL TO SERVE



ELDERS

DEACONS

TRUSTEES

REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Elder Jim Wiggans, Chair

As a committee of Session, the Personnel Team provides guidance and support for the church clergy and staff. We also serve as liaison between the Session and staff. Those on the team are available to the full-time staff on an as-needed basis, assisting in a variety of ways. At the end of the year, we had six team members: **Alecia Connlain, Jeff Legath, Matt Moxhay, Dave Rebeck, Stuart Spencer** (*ex officio*) and **Jim Wiggans** (Chair). We meet monthly and otherwise as needed. All meetings this past year were via electronic means.

At the end of 2023, the staff at FPC Moorestown was composed of one ordained Senior Pastor, one ordained Associate Pastor, ten additional full-time employees (seven salaried and three hourly) and three part-time employees. Staffing changes this past year were as follows:

- Hired **Dave Fauvell** as the part-time Director of Youth Ministries
- **Martin Bass** retired from his worship leader position with the contemporary service
- **Angie Slane** retired from her part-time administrative assistant position

The Personnel Committee was involved in the following initiatives in 2023:

1. Members of the team continued efforts in forging closer relationships supporting full-time church staff.
2. The team remained focused on the safety and well-being of the church staff.
3. The team continued to support the committee seeking a permanent youth director.
4. A formal process was continued again this year to provide meaningful

performance feedback to the senior pastor.

5. Updates to the staff organization chart were finalized this year, which included input provided by the team.
6. The team has been involved with review of the updated *Child and Personal Protection Policy* manual prepared for church staff. This document will be made available to all staff members early in 2024.
7. The team has spent considerable effort discussing the personnel budget. As the largest line item in the overall church budget, discerning a way to meet the salaries and benefits portion of the budget for our staff was of utmost importance.
8. The team provided input associated with annual staff reviews for 2023 and budget considerations for staff compensation in 2024.
9. The team discussed and approved a future change in staff contributions to the healthcare package offered by the church.

Moving forward into 2024, there are specific financial sacrifices made by three staff members which should be noted. These details are also mentioned in the Trustees report. To help meet a balanced budget for this coming year, and with awareness by the Budget Committee and Session, members of the personnel team held a series of conversations with **Earl Gage, Joel Krott, and Norman Vandergrift**. They have each agreed to voluntary reductions in salaries and benefits which total approximately \$62,000 over

2023 levels. In 2024 there is an associated reduction in expected work hours for Earl and Norman. Joel will continue with his current schedule and programs. As a church, we are all indebted to these individuals for their willingness to help in achieving a balanced budget for 2024.

While evidence of the COVID-19 pandemic still exists, the church staff and associated operations have emerged favorably through those threats. We continue to be diligent and guarded, as the pandemic continues to present challenges to society in general. We are appreciative of the continued understanding and willingness to help discern an appropriate way ahead from both our staff and the congregation. A byproduct of that effort has resulted in formalizing a hybrid work arrangement for some staff, coupled with more clarity around the expectations of in-office or remote schedules for each member of the church staff.

Again this year, the committee is especially grateful for the assistance provided by **Earl Gage**. His feedback and knowledge of day-to-day operational matters with the staff are of great value during our discussions. Also of note are the efforts of **Michael Hock**, who rotated off the team in the spring following several years of service. **Brian Catanella** also completed service at that time. In addition, long-time member **Jeff Legath** rotated off at the end of 2023. We appreciate his willingness to contribute to our discussions and provide insight relative to the many challenges of this year's budget process.

We continue to seek additional members for our team who have appreciation and genuine concern for the well-being of our staff. The church certainly benefits from the team's time, talents, and expertise. All church staff and members of the congregation benefit greatly from their service.



REPORT OF PRAYER AND DISCIPLESHIP COMMITTEE

Elder Pam Engle, Chair

“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.” - Colossians 4:2

Committee/Prayer Team Members: Nancy Burkley, Jim Cole, Melissa Corbin, Steve and Pam Engle, Joyce Peacock, Joe and Arlita Winston, Jan Amos. We also welcomed members from the Discipleship Committee at our first combined October meeting: **Joyce Peacock, Kelly Eagles, Pete Honeyford.**

- **Purpose Statement:** The Prayer and Discipleship Committee of First Presbyterian Church of Moorestown has been formed to exalt Christ through initiatives that encourage growth in disciple making and intimacy in prayer as we meet to pray and see the Lord’s guidance regarding what is on His heart to grow us as a praying body of disciples.
- **Prayer Times and Leaders:** Praying for our church, the greater church, the nation, the world, as well as prayer requests that are received. Meeting by Zoom or at the church. Contact Pam Engle to join or for more details.
 - Sundays 9:30 am Jim Cole (available to pray in the Prayer Chapel with anyone following the 9:00 worship)
 - Mondays 9-10 am Jim Cole (Prayer Chapel)
 - Tuesdays 9:10 am Jim Cole and Jan Amos (Prayer Chapel)
 - Thursdays 12:30-1:00 pm Pray for discipling with the Pastors (Zoom)
 - Thursdays 7:00-7:30 pm Evening Prayer Service (live stream/recorded)

ONGOING ACTIVITIES FOR 2023:

- **Prayer** – As a major part of each of our committee meetings, we pray for the Discipleship initiatives; the church staff, pastors, and their families; church family and current requests; our communities, state and nation as well as Christians around the world as our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- **Prayer Team** – The Prayer Committee members make up the Prayer Team and respond immediately to prayer requests (texted or received from online form). We commit to praying for the individuals and situations and keeping requests confidential.
- **Prayer Chain** – congregants can text any member of the Team to share immediate or urgent prayer requests. These requests will immediately be communicated to the Prayer Team.
- **Online Prayer Request Form** – Easy to use! Found on FPC Moorestown’s website on the drop-down bar under Ministries; Prayer and Discipleship then scroll to “Visit Our Prayer Team Page”. Each of the Prayer Team members receive the requests immediately as well as the pastors. Requests can be anonymous if preferred.
- **Prayer Room** – The Prayer Room is available to anyone for a quiet time of prayer. Team members will be happy to meet with anyone at his or her request. Prayer Request cards are available and are checked regularly to be distributed to the Prayer Team.

- **Sunday Mornings Pray with a Team Member** – Jim Cole has been available Sunday mornings in the Prayer Room following the 9:00 worship service for those with requests and who would like prayer. (We are thankful for Jim Cole and his faithfulness for being in the Prayer Room).

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS DURING 2023

- **World Day of Prayer March 3rd (First Friday in March)** – This prayer initiative was started in the 1800's by women, including Presbyterian women, concerned about missionaries throughout the world. The now disbanded Church Women United (Moorestown churches) sponsored for many years an annual event and dinner for local churches to pray for missionaries around the world. Our committee planned a Zoom time of prayer with a list of missionaries and their projects supplied by Linda Jagiela and the Mission Committee.

- **National Day of Prayer May 4th** – congregants were encouraged to join our nation in prayer on the 1st Thursday in May. Some materials from the National Day of Prayer Committee were used along with our own prayer guide. A 3-hour Zoom Prayer Time was scheduled inviting all to join according to their schedules. Committee members were on Zoom in pairs to lead.



- **Evening Prayer on the Porch** – this summer the congregation was encouraged to attend a quiet time of prayer “in the cool of the day” (when God walked with Adam and Eve) on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 7:00 for 30-45 minutes. All who attended were blessed and appreciated the time to gather for prayer requests.
- **Prayer Vigil for Nate Mann** - It was a privilege for our church family to participate in our most important vigil for Nate, member and Moorestown High School student, who underwent heart transplant surgery this past summer. We scheduled a 24-hour vigil around the day of surgery and followed by 3 days during his recovery. Prayer Team members were available on Zoom to guide prayers. Participants were invited to offer prayers or to be in silent prayer. We were so thankful to see friends of all ages join the Zoom meeting, especially so many young people, as well as parents. Nate remains on our list for continued prayer in his recovery and beyond.
- **Consecration Sunday (stewardship) and The Church Has Left the Building.** In October we held a 12-hour Prayer Vigil to pray for these events. Participants used the church website to register for 30-minute time slots. A prayer guide was sent to all who participated which included guidelines and suggestions to pray for both events. The Prayer Team held a time of prayer for the CHLTB weekend on Saturday morning in the Lounge and Sunday morning in the David Room to pray for the worship service and our guest preacher, Luke Maxted, as well as the day's activities.
- **Operation Christmas Child** – As suggested by Samaritan's Purse, Linda Jagiela asked the committee to join their team at times during the week scheduled for return of collected boxes from other churches in south Jersey as well as individuals who organized groups to fill boxes. Some of the people delivering could be “people of peace: that could be open to our offer of prayer. Committee members were available to offer prayer support to anyone who dropped off boxes. Several requests for ongoing prayer were received and added to our Prayer List.

- **Advent Devotional** – This year the committee decided in early October to put together a booklet with daily devotions written by committee members, our pastors and staff, as well as members of the congregation. The format was similar to the devotional booklets prepared by **Ruth Stotsenburg** for Advent seasons years ago. Pastor Stuart suggested we could follow the theme of each Advent candle for each week and that we dedicate this devotional to the memory of Ruth. The committee agreed and copies were distributed throughout the church (the Narthex, Commons Lobby, the church office) and also offered online on the church website.



- **Combining Prayer and Discipleship Committees** –As the Prayer and Discipleship Committees were joined in October, we are now working together to bring about the growth of a praying life within the congregation as well as bringing opportunities and special events to learn more about being disciples of Jesus Christ. As we focus on prayer and growing our members' spiritual journeys, we are encouraged by how the Lord is guiding us. We would love to see more people involved. We encourage our church family to contact anyone on our committee with any questions or suggestions and to find out how you can join us in Growing the Kingdom.

Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. - Ephesians 6:18

- Adult DBS will be offered as timing becomes apparent.
- The Engagement Project and similar opportunities promoting loving one's neighbor are awaiting scheduling.

2023 DISCIPLESHIP REPORT **Elder Joyce Peacock**

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples...teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you ..."
- Matthew 28:18-20

Discipleship has now joined with the Prayer Committee.

DBS - Discovery Bible Study, a simple but effective way to seek and hear from God through Scripture, has been effectively used this year.

- 2 enthusiastic youth DBS groups completed the core study plus more, meeting regularly under the leadership of **Joel Krott**.
- An adult DBS was completed under the leadership of **Rumiko Sinunu, Paul Booker, and Paul Gordon** from January to May 2023.
- **Melissa Corbin** led an ongoing DBS on Wednesday evenings with a group of women.
- An adult group of about 24 met for 'refresher' leader training through review of the core concepts followed by simulation modeling by **Joel Krott** in November. Various ones are now ready as the Lord leads and calls groups together in 2024.

DISCIPLESHIP/PRAYER –

- In conjunction with the Prayer Teams throughout the week, specific prayer for discipling and offerings at FPC has been ongoing.
- Members of FPC Moorestown have been praying Tuesday mornings with a broader group focusing on teaching, disciple making and the Harvest Prayer taught by Jesus to His disciples.
- Thursday lunch time Zoom prayer led by our pastors Stuart and Wes focuses on FPC discipling. Consider joining from 12:30-1:00pm. Link available through the church office.
- Praying daily throughout the month of February, Pray the Word for Your Church: 31 Prayers That Seek God's Purposes and Power by Tiece L. King was the challenge to our leadership, Elders/Deacons/Trustees, launched at the January 2023 Leadership Retreat. Feedback was received by about 33% of participants.
- Prayer partners with a heart for discipleship and desire for more compassionate interaction are welcome!

FURTHERING DISCIPLESHIP –

- The Fall was a time of planning follow-up on the Grow the Kingdom initiatives. Grow the Kingdom teams identified further instruction and opportunities to grow in discipleship as a strong top priority.
- Half Day of Prayer opportunities will begin with two days designated for men and for women in January.
- Use of materials in the Essentials of Discipleship will also begin in 2024 with men's and women's groups.



REPORT OF THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Elder Ginny Weber, Chair

Stewardship Committee – Janet D’Angelo, Jan Martin, Matt Moxhay, Steve Shaffer, Norm Vandergrift, Gil Warren, Ginny Weber (chair)

Stewardship Program – The Stewardship team was responsible for the following:

- Per Capita – February 2023
- Legacy Giving/Wills Emphasis Sunday – June 4, 2023
- September 12th Fund – September 12, 2023
- Consecration Sunday – October 15, 2023
- Giving Tuesday – November 28, 2023 – *new in 2023*

The theme for the Consecration Sunday 2023 was *Our House – God’s House* recognizing that the oldest portion of the house was built in 1923 making Our House 100 years old (!) but it is also God’s House. One hundred and seventy-seven families have committed \$1,382,000 to support and continue the ministries of the church for 2024. *“Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself.” – Ephesians 2:20*



Below is a chart of the Stewardship giving for the past five years:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
# giving units	198	185	194	190	177
Total pledged	\$1,581,800	\$1,450,488	\$1,501,200	\$1,390,350	\$1,382,000

Legacy Giving Sunday was held in June and Earl Gage gave a wonderful presentation describing how Legacy giving has sustained his Presbyterian Church in Salem, NJ. Many of the repairs to our buildings and closing budget gaps over the years were due to Legacy gifts from our many faithful members – Would you consider leaving a legacy gift?

September 12, 1888 is the date that the First Presbyterian Church of Mooretown was founded. Each year at that time the congregation is asked to support the September 12th endowment fund of our church by giving some form of the year 2023, i.e. \$2.02; \$20.23; \$202.30 ... This fund was started when the Reverend Dr. Bryant Kirkland was here over 30 years ago. Financial contributions to the fund are held and invested for the care and protection of our church. A designated portion of the earnings are distributed each year for current church needs.


NEW: Giving Tuesday 2023 was the first year that the Stewardship Committee participated in Giving Tuesday. This is a global event where millions of people give generously to support local causes. The donations received helped to cover the projected deficit.

Thank you to the entire church family for your continued support of FPC Moorestown!

REPORT OF THE TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Elder Frank Manion, Chair

The congregation continues to utilize and rely on virtual platforms for worship, prayer services, group meetings, and educational opportunities. A few highlights:

- **Communications:** We have seen a constant increase in our social media outreach. Facebook/Instagram posts are done almost daily highlighting events, giving hyperlinks and details about upcoming services and meetings, and posting of videos and pictures about ‘happenings’ at the church. Our website is updated regularly and is a constantly growing source of materials and information for our members and the community. We link current events pages to the website, Friday e-blast, and Church Center app, and post *Connections* and sermon series recordings.
- 
- **Live stream viewership** remains strong. Monthly statistical reports show that even though FPC Moorestown has returned to two in-person services, the numbers of people worshiping virtually is substantial. We live stream weddings and memorial services (an option particularly appreciated by families) and find that people from far off regions and countries are watching. For examples our five Christmas Eve Services totaled 561 unique views on BoxCast/YouTube – in 2022 our total was 321 unique views, and 206 views in 2021. All told, we had a total of 17,881 views of our services in 2023 with an average viewership per service of 169. These figures do not include weddings, funerals and other special events.
 - **General technology:** A major upgrade was made to the computer servers in the office in late 2023 as our server required replacement. We are currently planning an upgrade of the church’s wi-fi network in early 2024. This should improve often spotty wi-fi service throughout the buildings.
 - **Many meetings, classes and events** continue to meet via Zoom and utilize the church’s account

We can always use volunteers for technology help! There are far more possibilities (better wi-fi for example, hybrid conference rooms, and robust infrastructure) that can be implemented more efficiently, at lower cost, and sooner with more Tech volunteers. We are grateful to **Steve Drzaszcz**, who provides expertise and oversight to our church’s many technological needs.

We have paid volunteers to produce streams in VMix software for the Sanctuary and Commons and welcomed **Matt Miller** to the audio-visual team this year as live stream operator for the Contemporary



Worship. Matt is doing a wonderful job, and was also cross-trained on the Sanctuary system. Previously we needed to utilize paid professional operators outsourced from DFX at a significantly higher cost. **Jonathan Nawrocki** continues to capably handle live stream duties for the Traditional Worship. We also welcomed recent member **Joshua Leonard**, who has been trained on the Sanctuary audio system, backing up **Harris Ransom**. **Taylor Adair** coordinates the contemporary audio and has been a welcome resource for special event work as well, particularly with the departure of **Martin Bass**. We often need production for funeral and wedding coverages and as members of the audio-visual team. Training is available!

REPORT OF THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Elder Paul Booker, Chair

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name, worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.

- Psalm 29:2

Committee Members: Nancy Bender, Paul Booker, Donna Conway, Steve Connlain, Kevin Fauvell, Melody Ransom, JoAnn Reynik, Vicki Terry. **Staff:** Pastor Stuart Spencer

Mission and Responsibilities:

The primary mission of the Worship Committee is to oversee and support the worship of the church. In the Policy and Procedures of the church it is stated that Worship Committee alongside the staff is to be committed to the preaching of the Word, the celebration of the Sacraments, corporate prayer, and praising God through song and music. The committee has the specific responsibilities for Communion, the participation of Elders in worship, ushers, review and approval of Baptisms and weddings and presenting them to Session for final approval, scheduling certain protocols for worship corresponding to the church calendar, and supporting our music program.

Overview:

At the end of 2022, the Worship Committee continued to anticipate that COVID potentially was a continued threat to the church, group meetings, and worship. Discussion related to the continued need for outdoor worship if COVID variants posed a threat. Fortunately, this did not occur and this year, we have accomplished the goal of bringing back all aspects of pre-pandemic worship. All features of our church's worship protocols have been reinstated.

This has been achieved through the efforts and hard work of the staff, Session, Deacons, Trustees, church committees and all those committed to optimally glorifying God through worship.

Through the dedicated work of **Vicki Terry** and assisted by **Melody Ransom** and the Communion Committee, full communion was reinstated. Intinction was primarily used providing individual juice/wafer cups as a means to insure the safety of our congregants. When the threat of life threatening COVID lifted, full communion was reinstated. In providing full communion, continued safety protocols were vigilantly followed.

The pandemic impacted the number of ushers available during worship. John Miller worked diligently to fill the ranks and this was accomplished. Both **John Miller** and **Steve Connlain** have worked with the ushers to emphasize welcoming and engaging interactions as congregants enter our church for worship. All worship services were adequately staffed by ushers throughout the year.

Following traditional protocol for reformed worship, the committee worked to introduce liturgical paraments depicting colors of the church seasons into the Contemporary Service. A modern acrylic lectern and paraments were purchased. **Melody Ransom** was generously involved in the purchase of the paraments and **JoAnn Reynik** sewed and modified the paraments upholding a contemporary design.

Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that can not be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe.

- Hebrew 12:28

The Worship Committee found it necessary to address voiced concerns about the 8:30 am hour scheduled for traditional worship. Those with young families and senior congregants expressed challenges coming to church at that hour. We conducted a church-wide survey to accurately evaluate the problem; 121 congregants responded to the survey and a majority agreed that the 8:30 am time was difficult to attend and expressed concern about the time.

In addition the survey evaluated the use of live stream worship. A large majority indicated that in-person worship is necessary for a complete worship experience and live stream worship is not a substitute for in-person worship. However, the committee saw the value of live stream for those who are infirm, away, or challenged in attending in-person. The committee engaged in significant discussion exploring many options in moving the 8:30 am worship time.

Session finally approved moving the Traditional Service to 9:00 am. This action created some shifts in the Education Hour and the start of the Contemporary Service. The Worship Committee continues to assess certain challenges in changing the time. It was projected that changing the time would increase attendance and that is occurring. The time change may be one factor in the increase in attendance.



Our church continued to be filled with beautiful music thanks to our choirs and the leadership of **Joel Krott** and **Martin Bass**. Martin and **Christine Bass** retired in November. Pastor **Wes Allen** was instated to direct the music in the Contemporary Service. See the report of the Contemporary Worship service in this report and the Music Committee report under Session Committees.

Elder Kevin Fauvell worked diligently to coordinate the scheduling of Elders serving communion and filling the role of Sunday morning Beadle. Our Elders carried the Bible into the church at the start of the service, a Scottish tradition emphasizing the centrality of Scripture in our worship. A new tradition of carrying the opened Bible at the end of the service signified bringing the Light of the World out of our church and into our community.



Our church has continued to be a witness to an outstanding music program filled with God's grace and glory. We were blessed during worship with the presence of a Living God. Particularly inspirational were our worship services during Easter and Christmas. Our numbers continued to increase particularly during Christmas where over 1,500 congregants participated in our four Christmas Eve services either in-person or via testament to a living and all loving God through our beautiful music, our deep and humble participation, powerful preaching, and love for each other as Disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP REPORT

Rev. Wes Allen, Contemporary Worship Leader

The 11:00 AM worship service continued to grow in 2023. In December 2022 we averaged approximately 50 congregants in worship and in December 2023 we averaged about 70 participants, a 27% increase over the prior December. This is extremely encouraging news. Further, we continue to see new members of FPC Moorestown as well as visitors regularly attend on a weekly basis. In addition, we have developed strategies to engage and welcome them each week.

In October 2023 **Martin Bass** announced he would be retiring on November 26th. We were saddened to see Martin's ministry end but were excited for Martin and Christine to have more flexibility to travel and care for Martin's 92-year-old mother. Following Martin's retirement, several paid musicians, **Barry Overton** and **Don Stevens**, and vocalist **Cheryl Stevens** decided to leave as well and pursue other opportunities. We thank each of them for their years of dedication and their individual roles in keeping the Contemporary service a vital and meaningful place to worship.



In November, under the direction of **Stuart Spencer** and our Personnel team, I began developing worship plans and assembling musicians with the intention of assuming Martin's responsibilities effective December 3, 2023. Our current list of volunteer musicians and vocalists includes:

Vivian Allen* (vocals)
Audrey Barr* (vocals)
Andy Cross (bass/guitar)
Michelle Davis (vocals)
Ivan Dennisov*
(bass/guitar/keys/trombone)
Norm Dorell (percussion)

Steve Drzaszcz (vocals)
Jamie Farmer (percussion)
Winnie Jiang (vocals)
Rebecca Neindorff (piano/vocals)
Tony Schranak (percussion)
Bethany Trzeciak* (vocals)
Joe Wichterman* (guitar)

Our audio and visual team includes: **Taylor Adair, Jennifer Allen, Vivian Allen*, Alice Conley, Joshua Leonard and Matthew Miller***

*High school and middle school participants



Our hope is to continue adding new musicians, vocalists and tech people in 2024.

We feel that including a variety of musicians encompasses the inclusive nature of the contemporary service and hope to continue to engage the worship participants in attendance.

Our more immediate needs are adding keyboardists/pianists.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DEACONS

Kourtney de la Cruz, Moderator

The Board of Deacons serves members of the congregation as well as our local community, attempting to put into practice the love and compassion of Jesus. The board is composed of 23 Deacons and is organized in three areas: (1) Providing for Ministry, (2) Performing for Ministry, and (3) Promoting Ministry. All members of the congregation are invited to join the Deacons as we strive to accomplish the mission as set forth in the Book of Order and as outlined in Scripture.

Board of Deacons Structure 2023

Providing for Ministry

Moderator	Kourtney de la Cruz
Treasurer	Jenna Cole
Recording Secretary	Karen Hynoski
Corresponding Secretary	Bobbi Voglesong
Staff Representative	Wes Allen

Performing Ministry

- **Community Welfare** – Works with and supports service organizations leading food and toiletry drives for the congregation, and the Thanksgiving turkey drive. **Coordinators: Susan Shaffer, Mike McNeil**
- **Hospitality** – Receptions and special events. Prepares and serves food for congregational luncheons, organizes Fifth Sunday receptions, and may be called on to assist with other church functions. **Coordinator: Tamara Trzeciak**
- **Local Benevolence** – Gathers and collates financial data and mission statements from local charities to determine need and viability of the organizations under consideration for financial support. There are occasions when principals of the charities are interviewed in the data gathering process. The board periodically reviews funding and budget information to make disbursement recommendations to Session. **Coordinators: Rachel Long, Karen Hynoski**
- **Visitation and Care** - Coordinates care visits and connects to those members in need; oversees transportation needs; supervises flower delivery for Christmas and Easter flowers, as well as third Sundays; and organizes Meal Trains for those members experiencing life-changing events. **Coordinators: JoAnn Reynik, Gail Sorin, Bobbi Voglesong**
- **Church Has Left the Building** – Coordinate annual church-wide service event. Cast vision and structure for the day, coordinate projects and volunteer service with ministries. **Coordinators: Mike McNeil, Susan Shaffer**
- **Mustard Seed Garden Cooperative** – Support the setup, planning, coordination, maintenance, and distribution of goods of the Mustard Seed Garden Cooperative. **Coordinators: Susan Shaffer, Owen Dietz**

Session, Trustee and Committee Representation:

Each month a representative of the Board of Deacons attends Session and Trustee meetings. Several Session committees, such as General Budget, Nominating, Membership, and Missions also have a representative from Deacons as one of their members.

General Budget	Karen Hynoski
Trustee Representative	Karen Hynoski
Nominating Committee	Jason Rose
Missions Representative	Alice Conley
Stewardship Representative	Janet D'Angelo
Technology Representative	Steve Drzaszcz
Youth and Discipleship	Jess Zorn

The Board of Deacons is an active organization that does the work of our Lord by reaching out to our congregation and community. The Board of Deacons encourages members of the congregation to participate in Deacon Stewardship activities.

Throughout the year the **Corresponding Secretary** sent cards and letters to members and friends of our church. We offered encouragement, comfort and sympathy, and celebration for birthdays, birth announcements and promotions. We also sent thank you notes to speakers and visiting guests.

Community Welfare:

The Community Welfare Committee works with various service organizations to lend support to those in need in our community. Recent programs included Blanket Sunday, in partnership with Church World Service; and Manger Sunday, assisting Oaks Integrated Care. Additionally, this committee coordinated and supported Your Food Bank at Thanksgiving through a donation of turkeys for the holiday.

Hospitality:

The Hospitality Committee organizes and hosts events and receptions for the congregation. In the past this has included organizing the Congregational Luncheon, serving ice cream and strawberries at the Strawberry Festival, Fifth Sunday etc. In 2023, the committee was able to organize Fifth Sunday receptions and organize support for the Strawberry Festival and the New Member Ice Cream Social. The committee is always on standby, ready to provide meals or refreshments for special events and is looking for new ways to create fellowship opportunities for the congregation.



Local Benevolence Committee (LBC):

Through the research and commitment of the Local Benevolence Committee, the Deacon Board financially supported several local non-profit organizations. This committee supports Christian charities but also provides funding to local groups doing the Lord's work within programs that cannot declare His work as part of their goals due to receiving federal or local government funding.

As a result of financial contributions from FPC, and the efforts of the Local Benevolence Committee, there is good work being accomplished locally that might not otherwise happen. The Deacons' budgeted distribution of \$18,367 helped these organizations operate to provide an increased level of care to those they serve.

In 2023, the Deacon Board continued meetings and discussion to transform our approach in managing the financial support for charities. Our primary goal is to make our donations more game-changing for the community we serve. In 2023, Deacons personally contacted each organization to inquire how funds specifically are being used, what impact our donation has, and how our congregation can deepen our relationship with the organization. With the information gathered, Deacons were able to hold a series of (albeit difficult) conversations about streamlining our giving efforts in 2024 in order to be better stewards of the funds budgeted for Local Benevolence. As an outcome, in 2024, the organizations are categorized by priority and funded accordingly.

The list of non-profit charities supported by Local Benevolence in 2023:

Good Samaritan /St. Vincent	Family Promise	CCD - Providence House
Moorestown Friends	Feeding 5000	MEND
Enrichment	Cathedral Kitchen	Arc of Burlington County
Camp No Worries	Moorkids	The Tender
Christian Caring Center	CCD - Emergency & Comm.	Foster the Family
Contact Burlington County	Service	

Visitation and Care:

The Visitation and Care Committee supports our members and some non-members who are in need of care, due to many different circumstances. They visit nursing facilities, convalescent homes, hospitals, and shut-ins. When asked, they supply transportation to church functions, and doctor visits. This year, we were able to continue our flower deliveries (on a monthly basis) to those needing a care visit. Committee



members also reached out to our older adults with phone calls and notes or cards. We coordinated the delivery of Christmas poinsettias and Easter flowers to those in need. The Meal Train ministry has been very active this year, organizing and providing hundreds of meals to those members in need of care. Our Deacons and many dedicated volunteers from our congregation prepared and delivered these meals to families

suffering an illness, surgery, or loss of a loved one. *This committee actively seeks and welcomes those who would like to help with our flower deliveries and meal preparation throughout the year.*

Family Promise (formerly IHN):

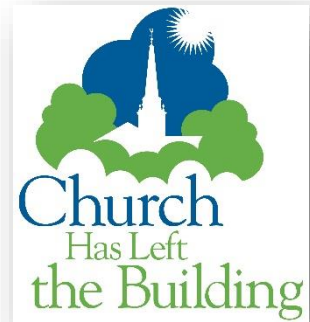
Due to shifts in ministry operations, church-wide consistent volunteer support is not needed in the same way it was prior to the pandemic. The Deacon Board has voted to dissolve this committee, but still provide much-needed financial support to this important ministry that functions right in our neighborhood.

Church Has Left the Building:

The Church Has Left the Building was held on Saturday, October 28th and Sunday, October 29th. One hundred individuals participated in seven projects:

- Carol's House – outdoor raking and clean up.
- FPC Moorestown – Exterior trim and courtyard painting
- Christian Caring Center- 25 casseroles were prepared.
- Seeds of Hope and Christian Caring Center – 1,000 “holdover” bags were assembled.
- Feeding 5000- participants made and distributed lunch to the homeless in Philadelphia.
- College care packages were assembled.
- Mustard Seed Cooperative Garden – work was done to winterize the garden.

A team of deacons worked through the summer months and into the fall preparing the projects, planning, and coordination with the different organizations. The “holdover” bag assembly was especially successful because it enabled a large group of young and old participants to do something impactful for many recipients in need. The committee is thankful for the church participation and for the donations made to the varying projects.



Mustard Seed Garden Cooperative Garden:

Under the oversight of the Board of Deacons, the 7-member MSCG planning committee meets monthly throughout the year to oversee all aspects of growing, harvesting and distributing produce from the garden. In 2023, we grew a selection of popular crops in the spring, summer and fall which were donated weekly to the Ministerium Food Pantry and the Our Lady of Good Counsel meal delivery program. Thirty (30) individuals volunteered with the garden during the year. They ranged from elementary school to senior citizens.



REPORTS FROM CHURCH MINISTRIES

REPORT OF THE MUSTARD SEED COOPERATIVE GARDEN

Leslie Spencer, Coordinator; Board of Deacons Oversight

The Mustard Seed Cooperative Garden met or exceeded its goals for 2023:

- Goal 1: Construct durable, high-quality raised garden beds on a section of the church property with access to sunlight and a water source. Construct an attractive fence to protect the garden from animals eating the produce. The garden will be designed to be accessible to people of all abilities and to be a beautiful addition to the labyrinth and fire pit areas, forming a park where people can relax in nature. **We met this goal and also included garden signage to increase the garden's visibility and explain its cooperative approach to collectively growing and donating food.**
- Goal 2: Successfully grow a selection of popular crops in the spring, summer and fall of 2023 to be shared for free with all who attend FPC Moorestown through special events planned during the growing season. **We exceeded this goal by donating produce each week to both the Ministerium Food Pantry and the Our Lady of Good Counsel meal delivery program.**
- Goal 3: Engage church members of all ages in the garden through education, training and coordinated garden care and maintenance activities. **Thirty individuals volunteered with the garden during the year. They ranged from elementary school to senior citizens. This goal was clearly met.**

Goals for 2024 are as follows:

- **Goal 1:** Remove all grass, extend in-ground beds and add wood chipped paths to remaining areas. This will increase the growing area and eliminate the need for mowing the small grassy areas in the garden.
- **Goal 2:** Add one new donation site in the Moorestown area for produce distribution.
- **Goal 3:** Grow flowers to give away with the produce.
- **Goal 4:** Implement a strategy for crop selection, planting and maintenance that will maximize the output of vegetables that are in the greatest demand by those who receive them.

Total revenue for the Mustard Seed Cooperative Garden in 2023 was \$17,756 and total expenditures were \$17,756. As of December 9, 2023, one outdoor storage shed and a total of \$5,000 have been pledged and/or raised to cover the operating expenses for the coming year. Donations to this ministry may be made at any time throughout the year.

REPORT OF THE PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Edith McFalls, Moderator

All women who are members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are considered part of Presbyterian Women (PW). Further all women in the community who support the purpose of PW are welcome and encouraged to participate in all activities whether they are a member of our congregation, belong to another church or are without a church home. Presbyterian Women has a history dating back more than 200 years. Two centuries later, women have a voice in the church and in the world.

At First Presbyterian Church Moorestown, our PW has four **Circles** which are considered small group Bible studies. Circles meet on different days, at different times, once a month, to accommodate the needs of the women of the church. We are currently studying "Sacred Encounters" using the PW/Horizon Bible Study. We are learning about the power and presence of Jesus Christ in Luke and Acts. In the beginning of the year, we studied "Celebrating Sabbath" accepting God's gift of rest and delight. An additional fifth Circle is service oriented, aiding various ministries.

Our Circles meet for three yearly PW **Gatherings**. The Winter Gathering was on January 23. The speakers were from Dawn's Place, Sr. Meaghan Patterson, Executive Director and Ann Marie Jones graduate and peer specialist.

The Spring Gathering was on June 8th and was combined with other PW of the Presbytery for Southern New Jersey. We hosted a panel of three women **Jennifer Allen, Rev. Dr. Debby Brincivalli** and **Dr. Leslie Spencer**. The topic was "What's a Christian Women to Do?" The Fall gathering was on September 18th the speaker was Arlita Winston providing an introduction to our study "Sacred Encounters."



PW has three bulletin boards within the church to decorate. We change the decorations three times a year following the seasons of the church.

PW was challenged to again bake and serve 300 cakes for the Strawberry Festival in June 2023. We are not sure of the number but we baked enough to provide for all in attendance and then some with much help and donations from our friends church-wide.

In late November we did one of our favorite things; we decorated the Chrismon tree in the Sanctuary. **Melody Ransom** researched the meaning of all the ornaments on the tree and wrote a beautiful pamphlet with pictures and the biblical meaning of each ornament. These special Chrismons were created more than 50 years ago by members of FPC Moorestown Presbyterian Women.

We continued our **Missions** work in financially supporting the PW Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly through our pledge, and contributed to grants in the US and internationally through the Thank, Birthday, and Least Coin offerings. Our Coordinating Team voted to support ministries that help women

(and their children) in acute need. This means they receive immediate shelter and assistance in times of crisis. These three Missions groups include: **Dawn's Place**, for women rescued from sex trafficking; **Good Counsel Home**, for women who are pregnant and homeless; **Providence House**, for women escaping domestic violence. This year we held a new Holiday Bazaar to raise money for these three organizations. It was a huge success raising over \$2,600.00.

We support a child through an organization called **Little Children of the World**. Their mission is to help develop Christian communities for the world's children at risk. Through them we support **Hesekiel Agbon**, a nine-year-old boy in the Philippines. We provide for his Christian education and his families medical coverage.

The **Knitting Network** created handmade items (scarves, hats, mittens, bereavement sets, prayer shawls and blankets) that were distributed to Urban Promise for their African Mission. The network sold some of their creation collecting \$458.00 to support our missions. The network provided tangible comfort and loving support to many in 2023 by donating 6 shawls, 1 sweater, 2 lap robes, 30 baby hats, 8 bereavement blankets and 1 baby blanket.

Some of PW accomplishments are:

- Provided two dinners at Seeds of Hope for 15 men from My Father's House
- Knitting Network gave donations to Good Counsel and Options for Women
- PW Bylaws were updated and approved
- Job descriptions were updated
- A new trifold pamphlet was created and will be given to all new members and available around the church
- The PW Yearbook was corrected and published in August for the 2023-2024 year
- Provided food baskets at Easter for families of incarcerated individuals
- Undie Sunday collected pajamas, socks, and underwear for Seeds of Hope
- Had a baby shower for Options for Women filled baby bottles with coins
- Created a new event, a Holiday Bazaar on November 11. There was a table for free treats for veterans and flags lined the walkway. PW plans on doing this bazaar annually.

FPC Moorestown PW have made the following Mission donations

Mission	Amount
Good Counsel Home	\$1,076.00
Dawn's Place	\$1,228.00
Providence House	\$1,076.00
Little Children of the World	\$689.00
PW of the Presbytery for Southern New Jersey	\$1,200.00
Thank Offering	\$362.00
Birthday Offering	\$346.00
Least Coin	\$52.00
Total	\$6,029.00

REPORT OF THE FLORAL GUILD

Fran Green, Chair

Mission: To provide fresh floral arrangements for each pedestal flanking the pulpit in the sanctuary during the early worship service, transferred to the commons for the contemporary service at 11am, as well as smaller arrangements for the commons lobby and reception desk in the main office. Additionally, baptismal families are presented with a single stem rose and specialty displays are created for Harvest Sunday, Good Friday, the 3rd Sunday of Advent (poinsettias), and Easter Sunday (spring plants). The Guild is responsible for design and maintenance of artificial Christmas greens adorning the sanctuary from the start of Advent through Jan 6. Arrangements are often funded/donated in memory of a deceased family member or friend of a congregant.

Membership: 12 active members work either alone or in tandem each week to create designs. Church family members of all abilities are welcome to join, guided by a learn-as-you-go philosophy; experienced designers mentoring those new to the craft. Members sign up quarterly to lead or assist. Balanced participation is the goal, with no member assuming too much or too little responsibility; however, vacations, other obligations, and illness can create disparity, which is assumed and not problematic.

Process: The Director of the Guild, Fran Green assembles the schedule on a quarterly basis, and shares with all members and church office staff (**Jan Martin/Alison Mackey**), and serves as point-person for any issues throughout the year, e.g. use of pulpit flowers for a Saturday funeral, date/time of delivery of plants for display in sanctuary, need for baptismal roses. Members unable to fulfill their scheduled date are responsible for finding a replacement or

arranging a switch, which must be communicated to the office staff for proper notation in the bulletin. If a member cannot cover a vacancy, the director is notified to find a replacement. Flowers are purchased weekly by a member of the assigned duo (usually leader), with assembly of arrangements in the Commons Kitchen either on Friday or Saturday. The cost of flowers and other essential supplies is reimbursed, up to \$90/week, via submission of completed expense form and receipts to **Norm Vandergrift** in the church office.

Budget: The limit to weekly spending is \$90 which, if met 49 Sundays per year, would amount to \$4,410 outlay from collected funds. Since the flowers are paid for by dedicated donations, this figure isn't firm and spending as little as possible for quality materials is encouraged. If a team goes over budget, it is their responsibility to absorb additional cost. This year, the Guild came in well under budget, claiming only \$1,715 of \$3,300 in donations. Some members pick up containers/supplies as a gift to the church.

Floral Demonstration: In March we invited floral experts from the Haddonfield United Methodist Church to come to our church for a demonstration. Four people from Haddonfield came and demonstrated complicated arrangements and tips for arranging our flowers. Several members of our church attended and some expressed interest in joining our group. The demonstration was followed by lunch. We felt that it was very successful.

Holiday Bazaar: Members of our group contributed dried flower arrangements to the new PW Holiday Bazaar.

REPORT OF STEPHEN MINISTRY

Doris Kahley, Stephen Leader

Rev. Wes Allen, Staff Liaison

*Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ
(Galatians 6:2)*

Stephen Ministers are members of FPC who have received 50 hours of training to provide high-quality, one-on-one, Christ-centered care to people in the congregation and the community experiencing life difficulties.

FPC has had many dozen Stephen Ministers across the three decades-plus of our involvement in the ministry. Currently we have fourteen active Stephen Ministers, nine of whom are serving Care Receivers.

In April of 2024 FPC Moorestown will commission four newly-trained Stephen Ministers. In addition, **Philip Jagiela** has completed the Bridge Leader's Training Course, a live, interactive online training experience that prepared him to serve as a Stephen Leader. This brings our leadership up to six (6) Stephen leaders plus Pastor Wes Allen.

A Stephen Minister provides a 'safe place' for a person to talk, when your world has crashed, when you still need to talk and your family is tired of listening, when your head is spinning with the demands of life or you can't evaluate the options before you, or even identify what they are. Our Stephen Ministers are passionate about caring for, listening to, and praying for you. At the same time, we know that only God provides the cure.

If you, or someone you know, is experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or relocation, contact **Pastor Wes Allen**, or Stephen Leaders **Doris Kahley** (609) 220-8163 or **Peg Pierce** (609) 330-0623.



FINANCIAL REPORTS

REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

Earl Gage

2023 WAS A TRANSITIONAL YEAR in the life of the Church for various reasons. Due to a projected decline in revenue and concerns for the long-term sustainability of the Church's mission, the Grow the Kingdom initiative was formed. This initiative involved over sixty participants, including leadership, lay members, and staff. A broad range of topics were discussed, all with the goal of growing God's kingdom, not just financially but spiritually as well. Others will devote more time to this, but I want to note that this effort and the resulting dialogue that it inspired was a tremendous inner reflection of where we are as a Church and where we want to be as a Church going forward.

There were also transitions in our staff this year as well. We said goodbye to **Angie Slane** and **Martin Bass** as they both retired. And we welcomed, after a long search, Dave Fauvell as our Youth Director. We were blessed to have Dave join us on a more formal basis, and we wish only the best for Martin and Angie. Wes Allen will assume in 2024 the role of Worship leader replacing Martin.

The 2024 budget process was especially rewarding as God continues to answer our prayers and provide the opportunity and the desire for our congregation to give generously to the mission of the Church. The 2023 year-end results and nearly balanced 2024 budget were achieved by this generosity. However, sacrifices are being made in 2024 that should be noted here. Working closely with the Session and the Personnel Committee, Norm, Earl, and Joel were asked, and they agreed to take voluntary reductions in salary totaling \$62,000 with a partial reduction of hours for Norm and Earl beginning in 2024. Joel will continue to work his regular schedule and programs. Many thanks to these three gentlemen for their sacrifice to help balance and adjust the 2024 budget.

As you will see in the following Trustee reports, many capital projects were completed by our hardworking and caring property staff. These upgrades and improvements ensure the comfort and safety of our facility. All of our program staff and the projects and special events that they led show almost a return to pre-COVID numbers in participation. Our program staff continues to highlight the love of Jesus through innovative and fun programs.

Our boards and committees continue to show wisdom and leadership in the management and policies they set in caring for our Church and staff. I want to personally thank the leadership and friendship of **Stuart Spencer, Wes Allen, Jim Wiggans, Jeff Legath, Rich Corbin, Mike Ramage, Bill Mueller, Bill Connor, and Pete Honeyford**. I am grateful for the volunteer hours and care they put into their positions. I also wish to thank and acknowledge our hard-working staff. Each member of staff brings their unique talents to the positions that they hold, all with the foundation of being believers in the one true God.

On a personal note, my family and I also transitioned this year as we lost my wife, Randi. I would like to thank you all for the kind words, visits, and support offered to me and my family during this loss.

We have set up 2024 to the best of our collective abilities financially and with a strong desire to plan long-range for the ultimate goal of stability and growth for our Church here in Moorestown. I am honored and privileged to work here. There is always more work to do, more projects to complete, and more people to reach. But I am eternally grateful for all of you who worship, serve, or attend our Church.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Pete Honeyford. President

Officers

President	Pete Honeyford
Vice President	William Mueller
Secretary	Wendy Dougherty
Treasurer	William Conner

Committee Chairs

Budget	Jeff Legath
Investment/Endowment	William Mueller
Property	Rich Corbin

The mission of the Board of Trustees is to support the overarching mission of the Church to bring the word of God and the teachings of Jesus Christ to our congregation and communities. The Board provides fiduciary oversight and guidance for the Church's staff and Session to help promote the long-term stability and best interests of the Church, including specifically:

- Financial guidance to promote the stability of the Church's budget and finances;
- Management of and investment strategy for restricted funds and other investments of the Church; and
- Guidance for the care and maintenance of the facilities and properties owned and controlled by the Church.

The Trustees fulfill this mission through active committees of the Board, working collaboratively with other leadership groups including the Session, Deacons, Missions, Personnel and Stewardship Committees and other groups, and by offering guidance to the Administrator and CFO of the Church.

The Church financially began 2023 relying heavily on the use of restricted funds due to a significant decrease in projected revenue of \$327,200. The utilization of \$107,000 in restricted funds and the reduction of overall expenses still left a projected deficit of \$98,250. It quickly became apparent that work needed to be done during this year to make necessary changes to restore the financial integrity of the Church.

The Trustees, working in collaboration with Session and other leadership, addressed the short-term reduction of expenses and belt tightening necessary to not only balance out 2023 but craft a workable budget going into 2024. The Grow the Kingdom initiative saw Churchwide participation with many meaningful and insightful ideas that have encompassed not only the fiduciary concern but the desire to grow God's kingdom here in our Church. As a Church and with the generous contributions of our congregation we were able to eradicate the deficit and produce a carry forward balance starting 2024 with \$30,245.

However, sacrifices are being made in 2024 that should be noted here. Working closely with the Session and the Personnel Committee, Norm Vandergrift, Earl Gage and Joel Krott were asked and they agreed to take voluntary reductions in salary totaling \$62,000 with a partial reduction of hours for Norm and Earl

beginning in 2024. Joel will continue to work his regular schedule and programs. Many thanks to these three gentlemen for their sacrifice to help balance and adjust the 2024 budget.

All Capital monies were removed from the 2024 budget with the hopes of having a successful Capital campaign in the first quarter of 2024. Most departments also saw a slight decrease in funding. We also saw an increase in pledges of \$23,000 and an increase in miscellaneous income of \$37,000. Combining the reduction of expenses with a slight increase in projected income resulted in an adopted 2024 budget that shows no help from restricted funds other than the formulary benefit of the September 12th and Spencer Powell funds and a slight projected deficit of \$54,000. Historically a deficit of that size is easily made up at year end with the generous contributions from the congregation.

The budget team, led by **Jeff Legath**, was able to close out 2023 strong and meeting our year-end obligations was a remarkable example of careful planning, active financial management and most importantly the unwavering generosity and dedication of our congregation. The budget team was able to produce a budget that shows the result of this financial turnaround. Clearly this is the work of God's hand. Leadership, staff and congregation all saw the problem, and working hard and generously together has made it possible for 2024 to see a clear path forward to financial stability.

Here is a synopsis of the 2023 financial results:

2023 Financial Results

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	Difference
Revenue	\$ 1,881,797	\$ 2,028,023	\$146,226
Expenses	\$ 1,980,046	\$ 1,997,778	\$17,732
Ending Balance/Surplus		\$30,245	

INVESTMENTS

The Investment Committee, led by chair **Bill Mueller** and with detailed analysis and support throughout from Treasurer **Bill Conner** and the rest of the committee, oversaw our investment portfolio with a steady hand during a volatile year. The Investment Committee targets an investment allocation of approximately 65% equity and 35% fixed income funds. Investments are invested with Vanguard including passively and actively managed equity and bond funds and money market alternatives.

Based on the 5-year rolling average value of our managed assets for the September 12th and Cemetery funds, a 4% distribution of each fund is taken each year as revenue from other income for our annual budget and utilized to meet operating expenses. The annual contributions contributed \$60,000 for 2023 operating expenses and are budgeted to contribute \$64,000 in 2024. See below for highlights of our 2023 restricted fund balances and performance results:

continued

Funds

Fund	Ending Balance	Change	Return (%)
September 12 th	\$ 1,786,183	\$ 215,197	5.0%
Perpetual Cemetery	184,813	24,090	7.4%
Rawlings/Robins (Trustee Funds)	61,069	6,101	7.4%
Fleming (Congregational Activities)	53,943	5,529	13.3%
Spencer/Powell (Pastor Housing)	372,707	46,113	14.6%
Money Market	195,357	12,001	12.1%
Music	17,097	2,177	14.1%
Grand Total	\$2,671,168	\$311,208	12.1%

The adopted 2023 budget included a transfer of \$107,000 of restricted funds, over and above the normal fund distribution of \$60,000 budgeted for 2023 for a total of \$167,000 of budget support.

PROPERTY

The Property Committee, led by current chair **Rich Corbin** and former chair, **Paul Lewis**, oversaw many substantial projects in 2023. Please see the attached detailed summary of property improvements and projects completed in 2023. Enormous credit is due to our talented property staff, in particular the leadership and dedicated efforts of our property manager, **Steve Margerum**. The Trustees were not able to provide necessary budgetary funding, however these appropriations combined with the remaining Joan Van Camp Bequest and the Margaret Palmer Bequest was sufficient to fund current property issues. Many of the projects noted were performed in-house by our talented staff. We will continue to prioritize the safety and upkeep of our buildings and grounds in 2024. However, as mentioned above, there are no monies appropriated for 2024 capital expenses. A Capital Sunday will be held in the first quarter of 2024 to hopefully fund the necessary projects in this year to protect the health and safety of our congregation, staff and visitors to ensure the longevity and proper care of our Church.

OUTLOOK AND NEXT STEPS

In conclusion, 2023 was a financially challenging year. However, with strong leadership from Rev. Spencer and Rev. Allen, the hard and diligent work of Session and our Board, the generous faith and support of our congregation, and the support and leadership of our dedicated staff we have managed 2023 and positioned our Church well for 2024. While we have made great progress during 2023 and in our year-end fundraising efforts, we must recognize that under the current restrictions we face our Church is still potentially dependent on one-time budgetary assistance from non-operating sources (including bequests and special gifts) to keep its finances balanced. In the long term, we must do what is necessary to develop the sustained ability to meet our annual budget without this type of special, one-time assistance. The Grow the Kingdom initiative is paramount in reaching that goal. There is still work to be done to ensure our long-term financial stability.

That said, we should be proud of the accomplishments we have made, thanks to the amazing support of our congregation, to successfully navigate 2023 and prepare for 2024 and beyond. I am reminded of the following Way of the Week (#12):

Own Our Church. *The work of the church isn't defined by pastors and staff alone; it comes from each member actively participating in the life of Jesus Christ. Claim ownership of FPCM's mission and programs. Each is an expression of how God is working among us! Support others. Be informed. Volunteer for a new role. Live like you're the church-because you are!*

Together we have taken ownership of our Church and helped bring our Church not only through the pandemic but through surprise financial challenges as well. Together with the grace of God we will continue to do so.



REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES' PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Rich Corbin, Chair

2023 Property Committee Members: Rich Corbin (Chair), Paul Lewis, Patrick McIlroy, Mike Welch, Steve Margerum (Property Supervisor)

Summary

The Property Committee oversaw many repairs, improvements, and upgrades to our facility and grounds in 2023. Property Supervisor Steve Margerum and his team very effectively addressed immediate issues as they arose and completed large-scale projects in an organized fashion with great attention to detail.

Below is a list of the larger, more extensive projects that were completed in 2023.

Replaced Commons and Commons Lobby Roofs

The Commons and Common Lobby Roofs were leaking and required replacement. Plywood sheathing was replaced during the process as necessary.

Rain Gardens

The church is required to maintain a stormwater basin management plan and complete required annual inspection and reporting requirements. There are two rain gardens on the property - one near the sanctuary and one off of the northeast corner of the large parking lot near Bridgeboro Road. The property maintenance team performed maintenance activities to ensure the gardens were functioning properly.

- Removed overgrown plantings and sediment.
- Reshaped the gardens to allow rainwater to drain in the correct direction.
- Added sand, top soil, and drainage stones.
- Added water-loving plantings and mulch.
- Enclosed the rain garden located next to the large parking lot with a split rail fence.

Additional Rainwater Management

Soil was added around the exterior of the building to redirect rainwater away from the building foundation.

Mission House

The following improvements were made to the Mission House (Carol's House):

- Weeds were removed, plants trimmed, and mulch spread around the property.
- The siding and roof were power washed.
- Gutters and downspouts were cleaned and flushed.
- Several trees were trimmed and removed.

Removed & Trimmed Trees

In addition to the tree work at the Mission House, three large dying trees were removed and 10 other trees were trimmed around the church property.

Missionswares Store

Plaster walls and ceilings were repaired and the room was fully repainted.

Step-by-Step Playground

Pavers were installed in the covered pavilion area and a three-foot wide asphalt path was added to allow children to ride tricycles around the perimeter of the playground. All costs for the pavers and asphalt were covered with grants and donations.

Door Security

A new access/buzz-in entry system with keypad was installed on the doors leading into the Commons Lobby area. This system allows office staff to communicate with guests before permitting them to enter the building.

Double-Doors in the Narthex (Bridgeboro Road side)

The double-doors were difficult to open and were allowing cold air to enter the Narthex. They were repaired and a new threshold was installed.

Double-Doors Across from the Van Camp Porch

There were several gaps allowing cold air to enter the hallway leading to the sanctuary and some rot around the exterior of the doors. All necessary repairs were completed.

Boiler & HVAC Repairs

Various HVAC repairs were completed during the year, as needed, to address air conditioning and heating issues. Repairs included replacing a control panel, a heat exchanger, and a low water cutoff sensor.

Other Projects Completed in 2023

- Three new LED fixtures were installed to replace the fixtures located in the sanctuary ceiling in front of the pulpit.
- As required by code, our kitchen suppression system was inspected and we added a strobe/siren alarm. Watertight outlet covers were also added behind the stacked ovens.
- Three additional parking spots in the area located closest to the sanctuary were converted into handicap-accessible spots.
- A hose was run to the new Mustard Seed Garden and a junction/shutoff was added next to the fire pit.
- Exterior trim around the windows on the upper floors of the mansion were sanded and prepped for painting.
- The interior courtyard was power washed and then painted during Church Has Left The Building Sunday.
- The church is mandated by the State to prepare and adopt a live shooter notification and evacuation plan. This plan was completed and submitted to the township.

Building & Grounds Repairs and Improvements Planned for 2024 and Beyond

The Property Committee maintains a list of high, medium, and low priority projects to be completed in the future.

Project	Priority
Large parking lot - Seal coat and re-stripe	High
Smoke detectors – Replace with addressable units	High
Roof air conditioning feeding the Commons Lobby - Replace	High
Big tree in the staff lot - Remove	High
Three or four additional trees around the property - Remove	High
Front porch facing the point -- Power wash, repair & paint. Repair light	High
Gutters outside the David Room - Replace	High
Kitchen alcove - Walls need to be power washed, scraped, repaired, and painted	High
Bricks/pointing around the property - Repair/replace	High
Outside area between Fellowship Hall & Commons - Add additional lighting	Medium
Fire escape doors on second and third floor - Replace	Medium
Fellowship Hall carpeting - Replace	Medium
Rooms 3 & 4 windows - Replace	Medium
Room 3/4 and 8 hallway carpeting - Replace	Medium
Missions office windows - Replace	Medium
Exterior windows of mansion - Repaint	Medium
Handicap ramp/porch fence/railing - Repair/replace	Medium
Rainwater management (sanctuary parking lot) - Add topsoil to redirect water	Medium
Driveway from big parking lot to the kitchen - Repave	Low
Staff entrance to the cemetery - Replace the fence adjacent to neighbors	Low
Garage roof - Replace	Low
Patio area outside of the Hayes room -- Repair/Regrade	Low
Main office carpeting - Replace	Low
Driveway area in front of the garage - Repave	Low
Rooms 6, 7, and 8 - Repaint	Low
3rd floor - Repaint	Low
Basement doors leading to the outside - Repair rot	Low
Crawl space - Clean out and add dehumidifier or vapor barrier	Low



2024 Budget Approved by Budget Comm. And Trustees					
	2022 Adopted Budget	2023 Adopted Budget		Adopted 2024 Budget	
REVENUE					
Offering-Pledged	\$ 1,445,000	\$ 1,358,797		\$ 1,382,000	
Offering-Postpaid Pledges	\$ 2,000	\$ 8,000		\$ 5,000	
Offering-Prepaid Pledges	\$ 25,000	\$ 5,500		\$ 6,000	
Offering-Unpledged	\$ 100,000	\$ 70,000		\$ 55,000	
Plate Offering	\$ 25,000	\$ 16,000		\$ 13,000	
Christmas Green/Budget Help	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000		\$ 90,000	
Per Capita	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500		\$ 11,000	
Miscellaneous Offering	\$ 35,000	\$ 6,000		\$ 3,000	
Step-By-Step	\$ 30,000	\$ 35,000		\$ 10,000	
Income Other	\$ 110,000	\$ 100,000		\$ 137,000	
September 12th	\$ 76,000	\$ 60,000		\$ 64,000	
Spencer Powell	\$ -	\$ 53,500		\$ 18,000	
Youth Director	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 24,000	
Balance Forward	\$ 225,000	\$ 22,000		\$ 30,000	
Total Revenue	\$ 2,165,500	\$ 1,828,297		\$ 1,848,000	
EXPENSES					
Salary/Wages	\$ 909,690	\$ 912,000		\$ 867,800	
Benefits	\$ 299,947	\$ 299,456		\$ 282,168	
Staff Development/Scholarships	\$ 18,500	\$ 12,000		\$ 11,000	
Total Compensation	\$ 1,228,137	\$ 1,223,456		\$ 1,160,968	
Mission Committee	\$ 260,620	\$ 215,000		\$ 220,000	
Special Missions Contribution	\$ 19,200	\$ -		\$ -	
Missions Pass Through/Trips	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000		\$ 5,000	
Deacons	\$ 50,000	\$ 37,000		\$ 37,000	
Presbyterian Women	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000		\$ 4,000	
Denominational/Per Capita	\$ 39,800	\$ 30,000		\$ 29,000	
Total Missions/Benevolence	\$ 376,620	\$ 289,000		\$ 295,000	
Office/Administration	\$ 60,000	\$ 55,000		\$ 52,000	
Property Management/Cemetery	\$ 200,000	\$ 195,000		\$ 200,000	
Contingency/Insurance Deductible	\$ 15,000	\$ 5,000		\$ 5,000	
Capital Fund	\$ 35,000	\$ 27,000		\$ 3,000	
Tech/IT	\$ 62,000	\$ 62,000		\$ 60,000	
Total Operations	\$ 372,000	\$ 344,000		\$ 320,000	
Adult Ministries	\$ 35,000	\$ 28,000		\$ 28,000	
Family Ministries	\$ 42,000	\$ 36,000		\$ 36,000	
Music	\$ 30,000	\$ 20,000		\$ 22,500	
Pastoral Expenses	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000		\$ 12,000	
Boards and Committees	\$ 5,000	\$ 7,500		\$ 7,500	
Total Program Expenses	\$ 124,000	\$ 103,500		\$ 106,000	
September 12th Contribution	\$ 10,000				
Fees Disbursed	\$ 40,000	\$ 20,000		\$ 20,000	
Total Expenses	\$ 2,157,757	\$ 1,980,046		\$ 1,901,968	
Fund Transfer/Deficit Reduction		\$ 53,500		\$ -	
Total Net Expenses		\$ 1,926,546		\$ 1,901,068	
Difference Income/Expenses	\$ 13,750	\$ (99,249)		\$ (53,968)	

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Fiscal Year January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023

Statement of Financial Position for Period 12 - December
Company#: 1 Name: First Presbyterian Church
Fiscal Year Beginning 1/1/2023

<u>Account</u>	<u>YTD</u> <u>Current</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Cash	
Republic Checking	\$166,974
Truist Checking	\$4,283
Petty Cash	\$50
Total Cash	<u>\$171,307</u>
Restricted Assets	
Vanguard - Fed MM	\$195,357
Vanguard - Rowl & Robbins Fund	\$61,069
Vanguard - Fleming Fund	\$53,941
Vanguard - Sept. 12th Fund	\$1,786,183
Vanguard - Cemetery Fund	\$184,813
Vanguard - Spencer-Powell Fund	\$372,707
Vanguard - Easter Music Fund	\$17,097
Total Restricted Assets	<u>\$2,671,167</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>\$2,842,473</u>
Fixed Assets	
Land	\$1,093,100
Buildings	\$1,658,629
Buildings - New Construction	\$5,075,078
Furniture, Fixtures, Equipment	\$363,900
Total Fixed Assets	<u>\$8,190,707</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$11,033,180</u>

Temporary Restricted Funds (Oper.)

Education / Scholarship Fund	\$44,460
Temporary Operating Fund	\$50,084
Memorial Gifts Fund	\$33,829
Capital Operating Fund	\$5,000

<u>Account</u>	<u>YTD</u> <u>Current</u>
Mission House Fund	\$70,801
Temporary Carry Forward Fund	\$12,532
Nursery School Fund	\$24,254
Peacock Theo. Discourse Fund	\$13,141
Denmark Fund	\$15,289
Arabic Ministry Fund	\$19,224
Total Temporary Restricted Funds (Oper.)	\$288,615

Perm. Restricted Funds (Inv.)

Cemetery Perpetual Fund	\$146,753
Fleming Fund	\$18,764
Rawlings & Robbins Fund	\$33,013
September 12th Fund	\$1,816,620
Spencer Powell Fund	\$365,256
Reserve Fund	\$100,000
Easter Music Fund	\$17,096
Rorke Memorial Fund	\$26,112
Property & Contents Fund	\$8,190,707
Total Perm. Restricted Funds (Inv.)	\$10,714,321

Total Restricted	\$11,002,935
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TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$11,002,935
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General Fund Balance	\$47,420
General Fund Balance-Current Year	(\$17,175)
General Fund Balance-Current Year-Total	\$30,245

TOTAL CAPITAL	\$30,245
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TOTAL LIABILITIES & CAPITAL	\$11,033,180
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Honor

Honor the Lord with your
wealth, with the firstfruits
of all your crops.

Proverbs 3:9

crosswalk



*The grass withers and
the flowers fall, but
the word of our God
endures forever.*

Isaiah 40:8

forever

crosswalk

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