

First Presbyterian Church of Yorktown



Grounded in Gratitude
Forward in Faith

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

February 7, 2021

LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH

2020

Session of Ruling Elders

Clerk of Session: Gordon Braudaway Moderators: Reverend Chip Low, Reverend Tami Seidel

The Session is the governing body of our Church. It consists of “ruling elders” elected by the members of the Church. One class of about six members is elected each year, serving for three years in a rotating membership arrangement. In addition, two Youth Elders are elected each year for one year terms.

Class of 2020

John Bentley (Communications)
Nancy Caswell (Congregational Life)
Jeff Kephart (Mission)
Liza Placido (Faith Formation)
Matt Sheridan (Budget & Finance)
Nance Thompson (Personnel)
Luke Torres-Rossi, *Youth Elder*
Ashley Leftwich, *Youth Elder*

Class of 2021

Jane Amato (Stewardship)
Beth Gruber (Budget & Finance)
Matt Hager (Operations)
Bill Herman (Worship)
Emily Monk (Congregational Life)
Linda Swift (Communications)
Kate MacDonald, *Youth Elder*
Benjamin Low, *Youth Elder*

Class of 2022

Abby Cross (Worship)
Nicole DeCintio (Faith Formation)
Lynn Edling (Faith Formation)
Eric Kreuter (Mission)
Ian Spence (Operations)
Bill Winsted (Congregational Life)

Board of Deacons

Moderator: Jean Post-Winget Secretary: Christine Lazarus

In the Book of Order:

“The Office of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of sympathy, witness and service after the example of Jesus Christ. It is the duty of deacons, first of all, to minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress both within and beyond the community of faith.”

The primary work of the Deacons involves responding to the needs of our congregation.

Deacons also serve 3 year terms.

In addition, two Youth Deacons are elected each year for one year terms.

Class of 2020

Pam Darreff
Jean Post-Winget
Andy Torres

Ethan Brown, *Youth Deacon*
Daniel Hager, *Youth Deacon*

Class of 2021

Susanne Caruso
Wanda Diaz
Debra Farrell
Ryan O’Hare

Daniel Hager, *Youth Deacon*
Marina Wheeler, *Youth Deacon*

Class of 2022

Diane Hawlk
Dana Mordue
Christine Lazarus
Nancy Paskin

AGENDA

OPENING PRAYER

READING OF THE CALL TO CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Clerk Christie Herman

“The Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation of the First Presbyterian Church of Yorktown will be held virtually over ZOOM on Sunday, February 7th, 2021 following the 10 AM Worship: to review and approve the Co-pastors’ Terms of Call, to receive the Annual Reports, including the report of the Auditors, to elect five Members-At-Large to the Nominating Committee; and to conduct any other business which may properly come before the meeting.”

REPORT OF MINUTES READERS FOR 2021 CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Minutes of February 2, 2020 Annual Meeting

Alice Chin and Connie Knapp

Minutes of December 6, 2020 Special Meeting

Debbie Bernardini and Nancy Caswell

APPOINT MINUTES READERS FOR 2021 ANNUAL MEETING

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF GORDON BRAUDAWAY

NECROLOGY REPORT (page 6) AND MEMORIAL PRAYER

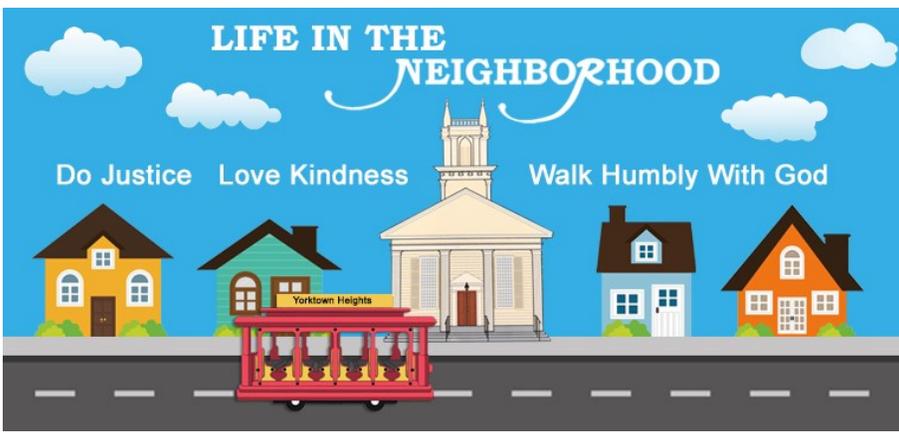
ANNUAL REPORTS

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NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

PRAYER AND BENEDICTION



REPORT OF THE CO-PASTORS

We begin our report to you this year with the same quote by Melody Beattie that ended our annual report last year:

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life.

It turns what we have into enough, and more.

It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity.

It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.”

We would add that with God’s grace, gratitude can also turn crackers and grape juice on the couch into communion, strangers into neighbors, and a church into a neighborhood.

As we enter the third year of our capital campaign, ***Growing in Gratitude, Forward in Faith***, we cannot start this report anywhere else than with a deep sense of gratitude—

- gratitude for the call we share at FPCY,
- gratitude for the opportunity to be co-pastors among you all,
- gratitude for your commitment to our ministry even as we pivoted in 2020 in light of the pandemic,
- gratitude for your abundant generosity,
- gratitude for your participation in and openness to evaluating who we are as well as new ministry opportunities,
- and gratitude for the impact our ministry is having far beyond the walls of our church.

We have truly embodied our theme for 2020, ***Neighbors Together: Life in the Neighborhood***, even as we had to be neighbors in new and different ways.

When Tami and I launched the Life in the Neighborhood theme in January of 2020, it was motivated by our growing sense that being neighbors together is one of the core values of our church, what we call ***Radical Hospitality***. At the same time, we sensed the need to renew our awareness of that priority for our life together and for the kind of ministry we would be as we looked at the landscape of local, national, and global issues. It would be so tempting to set aside our calling and commitment to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to join in and fuel the self-centered, divisive forces in the world around us. Instead, our theme invited us to consider how to deepen our commitment to the way of Jesus Christ and to explore how we can make his love real as his body called First Presbyterian Church of Yorktown.

Being neighbors together was no easy task with all of the social upheaval, financial meltdown, economic uncertainty, racial tensions, and political incitement that happened in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. But looking back over 2020, we celebrate that we did indeed do just that, drawing on the ministry priorities we have identified to shape our life together. Beginning with ***Compelling Worship***, we grounded our neighborhood commitment in some core practices like our Lenten focus on *Worship: The Heartbeat of Faith* and our summer study of the Ten Commandments, *Words of Love for Life in the Neighborhood. Checking Our Pulse* together in worship and in our daily devotions helped us to live our purpose as a church and embody God’s love as God intends, not as we are tempted to define for ourselves.

Being neighbors together also meant that we would continue to put these core values in action, even when the pandemic made it unsafe to be together. Our Session created and hired a part-time Streaming Media Manager to enable us to move our worship services online. Our Pantry leadership dedicated themselves to the herculean task of remaining open as the need in our area increased unimaginably. Our Sunday School and Faith4Life teachers moved online to meet with our children, youth and adults to maintain connections and keep Growing In Faith Together. Our

Elders and Deacons continued to meet and lead our church through this very uncertain time. What wonderful displays of *Lifelong Faith Formation, Transformational Mission, and Intentional Fellowship!*

None of this would have been possible without your *Inspirational Stewardship* and faithful giving to keep both our regular operations and our Capital Campaign moving forward (albeit at a pandemic-adjusted pace). While some of us struggled with financial challenges, many others stepped forward and gave above and beyond their pledges to support the Silent Samaritan Fund, the Pantry, the general operating fund of the church and the Capital Campaign. In addition, we sought out and received alternative funding sources through the Payroll Protection Program and grants from the Hudson River Presbytery, the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Lilly Foundation. Your faithful generosity enabled us to fully compensate our hard-working staff and even develop new ministries, like the Mental Health & Wellness Ministry and the Hunger Action Team.

All of this energy and commitment to FPCY was confirmed in the results of the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT) in which many of you participated. We learned that we are a *Transformational Magi Congregation*. More importantly, the CAT Scan tells us that we are positioned for growth, expansion, replication, and community impact. We believe the CAT isn't simply telling us to go and do things (although it is!), but deeper than doing more things, it is showing us who we already are and inviting us to celebrate God's many blessings and to tap into that good as we consider next steps in our ministry, especially as we continue to explore in-person and online connections. As Chip likes to say, we are not planning for the ministry we will do in 10 years. *We are planning for the next 10 years of ministry* by listening to what God is doing in our midst and what is changing around us, and then designing ministry and mission that continues to share who we are as Neighbors Together and neighbors in our community, nation and world.

This Annual Report bears witness in so many impressive ways to God's faithfulness, the Spirit at work among us, and to the faithfulness and generosity of this congregation. We certainly wouldn't wish a pandemic on anyone, but we believe in and want to celebrate the ministry we have shared in this most unusual year. Our commitment to being Neighbors Together has enabled us to live through the ups and downs, the joys and sorrows and even the pandemics of life and continue to thrive in faith and ministry. *Thank you* to our staff, our leadership and our church for your commitment to be the church God intends us to be and to share God's love and build God's neighborhood wherever we are.

Chip and Tami

FPC Yorktown Co-Pastor Responsibilities 2020

Commission/Task	Chip	Tami	Both
Budget & Finance	X		
Communications	X		
Congregational Life	X		
Deacons			X
Faith Formation		X	
Faith 4 Life			X
Sunday School		X	
Confirmation			X
Vacation Bible School			X
Youth	X		
Mission	X		
Nominating			X
Operations		X	
Personnel			X
Session			X
Stewardship			X
Worship			X
Presbytery			X
Public Ministries - 50/50			X
Worship Leadership			X
Preaching			X
Weddings & Funerals			X
Pastoral Care			X

REPORT OF THE SESSION

2020 Statistics

MEETINGS:

Session: 12 Regular, 4 Special, 1 Session/Deacons Combined (retreat), 3 E-mail Advisory
Congregational: 1 Annual, 1 Special

Active Members as of December 31, 2019: 407

<u>Gains (18)</u>		<u>Losses (4)</u>	
Profession of Faith	14	Deaths	4
Reaffirmation of Faith	3	Roll Removal	0
Letter of Transfer	1		

Active Members as of December 31, 2020: 421

MEMBERS RECEIVED BY:

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Dawna Dennis
Kurt H. Edelman
Sandra A. Fryrear
Mark Edward Hilpl
Christina B. McGuire
Miranda Clare McGill
Janice (Caponera) Vuoso

Spencer Brown*

Frank Hayden Joseph Fontana*
Laura Elizabeth MacDonald*
Celine Victoria Mack*
Christopher Joseph Romano*
John James Waluk, IV*
Meghan Nicole Wax*

**confirmand*

REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Frances (Sporin) Woodard
Elaine Deely-Heyde
Caroline (Ruff) Reide

LETTER OF TRANSFER

Tamsin Levine

BAPTISMS

February 23 Sasha Ellie McGill-Dial
October 19 Drew Robert Reide

DEATHS (*= active members)

*Carol Myers (01/17/20) George Roy (09/17/20)
*John Chessa (04/10/20) Tommy Kennedy (07/27/20)
*Pauline Depew (05/07/20) *Samantha Shores (07/05/20)

Respectfully submitted,
Christie Herman, Clerk of Session

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Submitted by: Nance Thompson and Bill Herman, co-chairs
Members at Large: Andy Cross, Deanna Collins, Wanda Diaz, Bill Herman, co-chair; Chip Low, Tim Rishel, Marianna Sherman, Nance Thompson, co-chair; Tami Seidel, Amy Wallace

Officers of the Corporation:

President: Jane Amato
Vice-President: Ian Spence
Treasurer: Beth Gruber
Secretary: Christie Herman

Staff of the Session of FPCY

Clerk of Session: Christie Herman
Treasurers: Gordon Braudaway
Sue Caruso
Beth Gruber
Tom Travis
Financial Secretary: Lisa Flanagan
Bookkeeper: Stephanie Hare
Auditors/Reviewers: Gregg Nelson (2021)
Michele Mosca (2022)

Counters: Pam Darreff
Debbie Hager
Donna Gresh
Kathy Hodgkinson
Nancy Paskin
Norean Radke
Linda Swift

Ruling Elders—Class of 2023

Alice Chin
Bryan Ekelund
Donna Gresh
Jessica Mayes
Fred Mintzer
Nathan Perry

Youth Ruling Elders

Benjamin Low (09/01/21—08/31/22)
Spencer Brown (09/01/21—08/31/22)

Deacons – Class of 2023

Jennifer Burns
Heidi Haring
Brian Kelly
Tim Rishel

Youth Deacons

Marina Wheeler (09/01/21 thru 08/31/22)
Emma Placido (09/01/21 thru 08/31/22)

Food Pantry Co-Leadership

Liam McAuliffe
Debbie Bernardini

Thank you to all the hardworking members of the Nominating Committee and to the people who stepped up to serve. We are very grateful for so many positive responses.

Respectfully submitted,
Nance Thompson and Bill Herman, co-chairs

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Capital Campaign Project Management Team (CCPMT): *Katharine Frase, Chair; Matt Hager, Elder; Chip Low, Tami Seidel, Co-Pastors; Ellen Miles, Vinny Wallace, Randy Pratt, Jim Gerth, Kevin McAuliffe.*

Our Capital Campaign's goals of enabling us to improve our efficiency, upgrade our facilities, design & implement new space options and enrich our capabilities to worship, serve, and grow in faith continued to be realized in 2020. The CCPMT continues to oversee and coordinate projects associated with the Capital Campaign but directly managed by the appropriate commissions.

The original campaign financial goal was \$750,000. Pledges over the 3 year period total \$832,556. The total income received to date is \$709,633 including some over-pledge donations in support of particular projects. \$485,840 has been spent so far. We continue to reap the benefits of projects in 2019 (i.e., the music room, the new roof, gutters, dry sanctuary basement and solar panels). In 2020 we took advantage of the lower building usage to do construction projects that would have inconvenienced people in a normal year. The Operations Commission, Kitchen Design Team, Worship Design Commission and Sanctuary Strategy Teams have been great leaders of these and other projects. It is amazing to reflect on how much has already been accomplished through your generosity, sacrifice and faith.

Campaign goal: a dedicated Sunday School wing and enlarged Youth Room:

- ⇒ A new beautiful youth room in Room 1.
- ⇒ A renovated classroom in Room 2 (in progress).

Adult education room larger than the library, consistent meeting space for community groups, and consolidated pantry operations:

- ⇒ An expanded meeting room (16) for community groups, and a board room for committee meetings (17), created by removing the intervening closets.
- ⇒ Renovating the preschool rooms to create a large sunny meeting room and consolidated pantry storage; this consolidation enables the future kitchen improvements, the room 2 renovation, and has been vital to our ability to help the client volumes caused by the pandemic.

Accessibility and Radical Hospitality

- ⇒ The completion of the accessible and attractive office entrance.

Engaging innovative worship

- ⇒ Our Tech Team has done marvels with old and borrowed equipment to create wonderful engaging on-line worship for us each and every Sunday. The Campaign has supported some initial upgrades, with much more to come.

There are many more exciting projects ahead in 2021, including exterior lighting and paving, upgraded heat and air conditioning systems, renovating the kitchen for efficiency and to achieve board of health approval for our external food-based ministries, and continued improvement to the lighting, sound systems and camera systems for worship. We continue to need your prayers, your suggestions and feedback, your support and your faithful completion of your pledges.

If you were not part of the original campaign pledges in 2018, we welcome your participation, not only to be able to complete more of our goals, but to have these new facilities represent all of us.

Respectfully submitted,

Katharine Frase

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMISSION

Members: *Nancy Caswell, Emily Monk, Bill Winsted co-chairs; Alyssa Bauer, Debbie Bernadini, Caroline Awuor, Sue Mintzer, Pat Prauda*

Purpose: We extend hospitality to our church members, visitors and strangers. We plan, participate in, and help organize events and activities for our extended church families to socialize, meet new people and unite services.

2020 On-going Ministry

Sunday Coffee Hour - after Sunday worship services we share fellowship with our congregation and visitors. Coffee, tea and refreshments are provided by volunteers that set up and clean up. After the building closed in March, we continued to meet for Coffee Hour via Zoom each Sunday after the live streamed church service.

2020 Highlight Events

We are grateful to everyone who supported our commission by hosting coffee hours and participating in the congregational meeting pot luck in January and February. Typically we also host sermons for lunch, coordinate refreshments for speakers, support the progressive dinner, offer TED talk discussions, coordinate the annual picnic, arrange an autumn hike and offer advent gatherings. In 2020 these typical events were cancelled. Instead, we found creative ways to find fellowship and fun and remained connected through Zoom. Below are some events we've had the pleasure of supporting this year.

Congregational Meeting pot luck lunch for all occurred in February.

Weekly Coffee Hours met in person, then virtually via Zoom.

Event Nights were arranged to continue safe fellowship during the "shut down" and beyond. All events took place via Zoom where members and friends had fun being together. Some of the events were: games of Bingo and Outburst; Dessert night; Halloween pumpkin carving; Advent craft ideas; and Christmas cookie recipes.

Virtual trip to Africa - D. Seymour narrated a slide show from his safari

Christianity and Pandemics - Power point presentation with Q&A led by Tim Lupfer

Hunger Action - Discussion with our Food Pantry team

Mental Health Awareness – Tim Lupfer presented a slide show with Q&A regarding veterans and mental health. Mission Commission also shared information about the Stephen Ministry initiative.

Kitchen Renovation

We continue working with the Capital Campaign Project Management Team to research and design a new, efficient kitchen which will enable FPCY to broaden our hospitality to our church community now and in future endeavors. It is our goal to have the kitchen completed while the building remains unoccupied due to Covid restrictions.

Thanks to our entire congregation for your support of these events! We look forward to greeting each other with a handshake or a hug in 2022 when we hope we can, once again, enjoy some face to face fellowship.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Caswell, Emily Monk, Bill Winsted

COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Members: Linda Swift (co-chair), John Bentley (co-chair), Donna Gresh, JoAnne Marsh, Barbara Santagata, Ben Low, Rev. Chip Low, and Lisa Flanagan

Purpose: The Communications Commission manages the internal and external communications of our church. This includes the website, Facebook, Instagram, digital newspapers, banners at the corner of Routes 202 and 132, online event calendars, press releases, advertising, brochures, the TV monitor in the Gathering Space, and community fairs. We tell the story of the church's activities -- from both in-person and online worship, to Sunday School, to mission projects, to the annual Stewardship Campaign, to congregational get-togethers, and to many other church events and church mission work.

Highlights of 2020 include:

Facebook

When the pandemic hit in mid-March and it was apparent that meeting in person for worship service would be unsafe, we were able to seamlessly move from live-streaming just the sermon portion of the worship service to live-streaming the entire worship service on Facebook. We were able to do this with the expertise and dedication of Ben Low, John Bentley, and Bill Herman. Many thanks to these three as they spent many hours figuring out how to do this with the existing camera and technology that we already had. Ben is now FPCY's Streaming Media Manager, as we quickly realized that live-streaming the entire service requires a lot of dedicated time each week. It has been a blessing that we have been able to stay connected, even though we are physically separated. Many thanks also go to our "virtual greeters" who make sure comments left on each Sunday's livestream are met with a welcome, hello, or thumbs up.

Each week's entire worship service is always available on Facebook and also available from the first graphic on the home page of our website. Catch up if you missed the service, or want to re-hear it, by going to our Facebook page and clicking the video of the service or go to our website and click on the first graphic you see (with the snowman!). You can also subscribe to a podcast of just the sermon portion of the service; you can find instructions on how to subscribe to the podcast on each service posting on our website.

If you regularly use Facebook, please "Like" our Facebook page, and then, under "Follow Settings" (...), choose to "Follow" the page to have it appear regularly in your Facebook feed.

Facebook Metrics (written by Ben Low)

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the church's following on Facebook and other social media platforms has grown. The church Facebook page has grown by 35%, amounting to over 165 new "page likes" and over 215 new followers. With the transition to our weekly Facebook livestreams, the services are now available to people all over the world. Since last March, we have had viewers from at least 21 states, including Alaska, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin and more. The services have also been viewed in at least 7 different countries, including the United States, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, Hong Kong, and Puerto Rico. While Facebook doesn't give us an exact number, we believe our livestreams are viewed by around 135 people every week.

While you do not need a Facebook account to watch our livestreams, you do need an account to comment in the chat. We encourage viewers to share the livestreams with anyone who might be interested in watching, even if they don't live near the church! If you or someone you know has any tech questions, feel free to reach out to Ben Low at techteam@fpcyorktown.org.

Website

The best way to stay up to date on what is happening in our church is to visit our website. In 2020, there were almost 350 blog posts put on our website on topics ranging from Sunday worship services, to upcoming Adult Ed

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discussions, to congregational Zoom gatherings, to youth meetings, to fellowship opportunities, to news about our mission and outreach activities.

There are several ways that Congregation members and the surrounding community can use our website to learn about what's going on in our church:

1. For current info, the sliding graphics on the home page of our website display the most current events. You can click on a graphic and it will take you to the details of that event.
2. For details on current AND past events, the Connections Blog on the right-hand side of our website's home page contain posts detailing all the information for that particular event. These posts are also shared to Facebook and Twitter. (There's a search box at the bottom of every page on the website if you're looking for something from the past.)

If you want to receive blog stories (about 5 per week) directly in your email, go to our website (FPCYorktown.org), then click on the "Get Involved" link located in the middle of the home page and sign up for the "FPCY Connections Email."

A BIG thank you to Donna Gresh, who constantly keeps our website up-to-date with all the current events.

Website Redesign

In late 2020, we had several brainstorming meetings to redesign our website which is almost 10 years old. After narrowing down the "look and feel" we wish to adapt to modernize our website, we hope to have a new and updated website in early 2021.

Graphics

Many thanks to Barbara Santagata and JoAnne Marsh for creating so many beautiful, professional looking graphics! Together, they created over 100 graphics in 2020. These graphics are used on our website, on social media, on banners, and in the events we publish in the digital newspapers.

Additional thanks go to Donna Gresh and Ben Low for managing our Facebook and Instagram pages; to John Bentley, Linda Swift, and Donna for posting the sermons to our website each week; and to Linda and Donna for promoting church events in community outlets. We would also like to thank Chip Low for keeping us informed on upcoming events; Lisa Flanagan for designing and compiling the Disciple and Bulletin with so much creativity; Tim Chin for documenting church activities with his photos; the Camera Crew (Ben, Karen Gerth and John) and Tech Team for recording and uploading the sermons; and Walter Oudheusden for making and putting up banners and signs.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Swift and John Bentley

REPORT OF THE DEACONS

Being a Deacon is a call to service. It is a ministry of caring. As the servants or caregivers of our congregation and community, the Board of Deacons offers assistance and care to those who are in need, lonely, grieving, ill and or facing significant life challenges. Being a Deacon means responding to and acting on God's call: "What good is it, my brothers (and sisters), if someone says he/she has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." James 2:14-17

Faced with the challenges of 2020, and with a heightened awareness of the needs and threats imposed by isolation and our very basic need for community, the Deacons have worked hard to adapt our caring ministries to the realities of the pandemic. Throughout 2020, we have continued our outreach to the congregation through our contacts with the homebound, our card ministry, our ministry of providing bereavement support, offering of transportation support when needed, and providing a ministry for bringing prepared meals to families during times of need. The knitting ministries have also continued their prayer shawl, hat and mitten and blanket knitting throughout this difficult year.

New Deacon Ministries

Prayer Ministry — Prior to 2020, our in-person worship had always provided us with a time and a place for the sharing and the naming of our joys and our concerns and our requests for prayer. Without being able to worship together in person, and with the privacy concerns that come with a streamed worship service, we could no longer speak of our joy or our worry and grief or name persons for whom we wished to pray. In response, the Deacons formed a Prayer Team whose ministry is to receive and to respond to the congregation's prayer requests. The strings of prayer ribbons that grace the front of the church are a visual reminder and sign of the named and unnamed prayers lifted up by our community. **Prayer Team:** *Jean Post-Winget, chair; Debbie Amorese, Christie Herman, Terri Froehlich, Sue Nelson, Marianna Sherman, Heidi Haring, Karen Gerth.*

Mental Health Initiative Team—The Mental Health Initiative Team was initiated in 2020 as a joint initiative by the Mission commission and Deacons to explore the mental health needs of the church and community and develop approaches to strengthen the mental health outreach to both our church and neighboring communities. Highlights of 2020 included lengthy study of needs, grant writing and grant submission and receipt of an \$8,000 grant as well as survey development which will soon be shared with the larger Presbytery community, other denominations within our Yorktown community and the FPCY congregation. (For the complete details of the extensive work and achievements and goals of this mental health initiative, please refer to the Mission Commission Report.)

Members: *Sue Caruso*, Jen Burns, Judy Chessa, Sandy Fryrear, Heidi Haring, Theresa Kennedy, Jeff Kephart, Eric Kreuter, Chip Low, Dana Mordue*, Cecilia Ortez, Marilyn Rivera-Alvarado, Tami Seidel. (* 2020 Deacon)*

Contact to the Homebound—The visitation team had to adapt to the new Covid reality. The church members we visit are often elderly or recuperating from an illness, therefore particularly susceptible to infection. We quickly became unable to do in-person visits, with the few exceptions of outdoor visits at assisted living facilities. Our team has switched to phone visits, and for our hearing-impaired members, to writing cards and letters. It has not been ideal, but we feel we have been able to provide some comfort to church members during this time of heightened loneliness and uncertainty. Many thanks to past and current deacons *Sue Caruso, Pam Darreff, Debbie Farrell, Terri Froehlich, Heidi Haring, Sue Nelson, Jean Post-Winget, Chuck Radke and Marianna Sherman* for their support of this ministry.

Bereavement—The Bereavement Ministry helps set up and plan luncheons and receptions (if needed) after the death of a loved one. It also follows up with the bereaved with a note and Journey Through Grief four book series at specific points over an approximately 11 month period.

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2020 Report:

1. **Receptions:** No receptions were organized by the Bereavement Ministry in 2020 due to the COVID19 pandemic.
2. **Journey Through Grief Series:** The full series of the four booklets for the *Journey Through Grief* Series was completed for eight individuals in 2020. Nine individuals have received the first and second booklet in the series and are currently in the 11 month period during which the series of booklets are sent. A number of individuals have received the first book in the series from Tami Seidel and the Bereavement Ministry needs to update the Bereavement Ministry Tracking page with the names of these individuals to ensure they receive notes with the additional books in the series.

Members: Dana Mordue (co-chair), Andy Torres (co-chair), Sue Caruso, Terri Froehlich, Heidi Haring, Diane Hawlk, Christine Lazarus, Chip Low, Sue Nelson, Jean Post-Winget, Pat Prauda, Tami Seidel

Blood Drive—A blood drive took place at the church in August just as it has in prior years. However, because of the Covid pandemic and out of concern for the safety of all, the Deacons were not able to be physically present for the purpose of greeting and assisting the blood donors.

Wanda Diaz, chair

Card Ministry—This ministry has taken on special importance as we have struggled with the challenges of 2020. 301 Cards were sent out by the Card Ministry in all of 2020. Cards were sent for Get Well, Birthdays, Sympathy, Thinking of You, Congratulations, Graduation, Anniversary, Welcome and Thanks, as well as Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Nancy Paskin and Diane Hawlk

Transportation—During this past year, our deacons arranged for round trip transportation for 5 church members in need of rides for medical appointments and related needs.

Marty Scatola, chair

Loaves and Fishes—Deacons *Jean Post-Winget, Pam Darreff, Wanda Diaz and Christine Lazarus* shared the management of this ministry on a quarterly basis in 2020. The congregation provided meals to those recovering from surgery or experiencing times of illness or personal difficulties. Thanks belong to the congregation for your “hands-on” support of this caring ministry.

Knit Together—We have 9 members plus one at-home knitter. In 2020 we gave 130 hand-knitted items to Birthright in Peekskill, the Deacon’s Mitten/Gift Tree for the December coat drive, and Paramount Care at Somers.

Submitted by Debbie Farrell on behalf of Norean Radke (co-chair)

Prayer Shawl Ministry—We began our year in the usual way -- meeting twice a month with prayers and knitting together. That changed along with the rest of our lives. Thankfully, our knitting can be done at home, so we continued knitting from home for the remainder of the year. In September, three of us knitted in the back by the labyrinth and in October, we had an outside, distanced knitting session to provide blankets to the Linus Project. Throughout the year, we continued to give out shawls as needed with masks. In November, we were given gloves from JoAnn Fabrics and Terri Froelich organized a group to knit hats to go along with the gloves. The hat and glove sets were given to our coat drive team to be given out on the December 12th distribution date. These were enthusiastically received by our clientele. Also in November, we knitted 17 scarves which were given to a fourth grade class in an under-privileged neighborhood in the Bronx. The children are very appreciative and send us lovely thank you notes expressing their appreciation and filled with their art work. We welcome any and all knitters, crocheters and even non-knitters are welcome to join the group. It is a good time to be together while serving our community. We are all happy to be a part of this work especially when a shawl is given and we see the reaction it has on the recipient.

The members of this special group are: *Aloha Hicks, Sue Nelson, Terri Froelich, Fran Schiel, Lynda Spring, and Marianna Sherman. The offsite helpers are Odette Williams, Pat Prauda, Nancy Paskin and Gail Roell.*

Submitted by Debbie Farrell on behalf of Marianna Sherman (chair)

(Continued on page 14)

Pantry Related Ministries

Annual Holiday Children's Coat Drive: (Co-chair Debra Farrell, Pam Darreff & Wanda Diaz) Due to Covid-19, the Deacons felt Toys For Tots distribution could not be safely managed this year. Realizing the tremendous need in the community, we decided to continue with our children's coat drive using a similar model as the food pantry thus reaching our desired result while keeping everyone safe. Thanks to the generous support of the congregation, the Knights of Columbus, local schools and communities, on Saturday, December 12th, we served 125 families by providing 260 coats and a large number of waterproof gloves. We also want to recognize the tireless work of the Knit Togethers, who provided all of the knitted hats, gloves and scarves given out at the event. Due to the tremendous support we received, every family who came through was provided with coats and we did not have to turn anyone away. Due to the 2 coat per family limitation invoked the day of distribution, we had coats left in the smaller sizes and some hats and gloves. All excess donated items were shared with the clientele at the food pantry the following week. The coat drive ran well thanks to the many volunteers from the congregation who helped out on distribution day. This event could not have taken place without the congregational support from adult members as well as the youth group volunteers who enthusiastically gave their time to provide warm coats to those in need delivered to thrilled recipients just in time for the holidays and cold winter weather. This program continues to be widely supported by our congregation.

Submitted by Debra Farrell (co-chair)

School Supplies

During the August pantry 300 children received a bag filled to the top with supplies they would need for school. Items in the bag were generic for all students this year because of the drive through distribution of all pantry items. Because of the increased number of food pantry clients, we needed to double the amount of school supplies bags prepared in advance of the distribution day. I want to thank the wonderful team that spent many hours working outside in my driveway assembling each bag with folders, pens, pencils, notebooks etc. The clients were very appreciative! This ministry is successful because of the generosity of many! Thank you all! *Pam Darreff, chair*

Thank You and Farewell

It has been quite a year! I want to extend a most enthusiastic word of thanks to all of the members of the Board of Deacons for your flexibility, energy, compassion and faithful service in the face of what has been a very challenging 2020!

I also want to say a special thank you and farewell to our outgoing class of Deacons: Pam Darreff and Andy Torres. I, too, will be ending my term of service this month. We want to extend a warm word of welcome to the new class of Deacons: Heidi Haring, Jen Burns, Tim Rishel and Brian Kelly!

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Post-Winget, Moderator

MISSION COMMISSION

Members: *Jeff Kephart and Eric Kreuter, co-chairs; Jennifer Burns, Katharine Frase, Stephanie Hare, Heidi Haring, Frank Hodgkinson, Chip Low, Liam McAuliffe, Ellen Miles, Lynda Spring, Nance Thompson.*

In 2020, the Mission Commission continued to be driven in new directions inspired by the framework of Hands-On, Empowered Partnership, and Advocacy. This year, in addition to continuing our usual mission activities, we joined forces with the Pantry, co-founded a new Mental Health Initiative with the Deacons, launched an effort aimed at achieving Hunger Action Congregation certification in 2021, and endorsed Eric Kreuter's leadership as Weekend Chemical Dependency Counselor, where he facilitates group therapy sessions as well as workshops on creative writing.

Pantry

We are very grateful to the Pantry's leaders (*Liam McAuliffe and Katharine Frase*) and volunteers, who met the challenges posed by the pandemic with ingenuity, energy, creativity, and passion, and thereby had a tremendous positive impact on our community. Please see the Pantry section of the annual report for their amazing story. As an initial step towards our long-term goal of using the Pantry as a foundation for other forms of community outreach and involvement, and with the expert guidance of Tim Lupfer, we distributed to Pantry clientele helpful information about how veterans can request and secure various forms of assistance from the Veteran's Administration.

Mental Health Initiative

In collaboration with the Deacons, we launched the Mental Health Initiative. Its purpose is to explore the mental health needs of the church and community and develop approaches to strengthen the mental health outreach to our church and neighboring communities. The effort is led by *Sue Caruso and Eric Kreuter, and supported by members Jen Burns, Judy Chessa, Sandy Fryrear, Heidi Haring, Theresa Kennedy, Jeff Kephart, Chip Low, Dana Mordue, Cecilia Ortez, Marilyn Rivera-Alvarado, and Tami Seidel.*

During its first few weeks, the MHI team explored diverse mental health resources and discussed the perceived mental health needs of our church and our community. After surveying PC(USA) Office of Mental Health Ministry initiatives and other mental health resources and consulting with some experts in the field, the MHI team concluded that the best way forward was through Pathways to Promise – an interfaith resource center that promotes a caring ministry for people and individuals affected by mental illness. Pathways to Promise offers a customized survey to assess the mental health needs and opportunities for congregations and works with them to develop a customizable plan to enhance their mental health ministry based on the survey results.

With Session approval, the MHI team applied for and was awarded an \$8,000 grant from the PC(USA) Mental Health Ministry to fund our journey with Pathways to Promise. With careful deliberation and some guidance from Pathways to Promise, the MHI team designed a survey that will assess our congregation's attitudes and needs in the area of mental health. We expect to conduct this survey in early 2021 and receive an assessment soon thereafter.

Additionally, the MHI team and pastors have reached out to other churches in the Presbytery and other faith communities in our area, several of whom are interested in participating in our survey and receiving their own individual assessments. The grant also provides for mental health and mental health leadership training of individual members of our congregation who wish to partake of it, as well as educational materials and improvements to the church website. We are excited about where this may lead us, and hopeful that the survey results may prove beneficial to other members of our local faith community.

The MHI team also participated in a church service in Fall 2020 to introduce the MHI team to the church community and discuss its goals and purpose.

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Hunger Action Congregation

This past July, we launched the Hunger Action Team to pursue certification from PC(USA) as a Hunger Action Congregation. The purpose of the certification process is to acknowledge and celebrate the work we are currently doing to alleviate hunger and its causes and to encourage us to be even more holistic and justice-oriented in these ministries. There are 6 areas: Hunger Alleviation; Development Assistance; Hunger Education, Lifestyle Integrity; Corporate & Public Policy Witness and Worship. We believe this fits well with the Mission framework of *Hands-On, Empowered Partnership*, and *Advocacy* that we are living into. We introduced this initiative to the congregation during the November Peace & Justice Sunday service. We thank Ellen Miles for her leadership of this initiative, which we expect will have a major impact on Mission's priorities in 2021. Look for more opportunities to get involved as we explore ways to expand our current ministries and perhaps start some new ones.

St. Christopher's Inn

We endorsed Eric Kreuter's continued leadership as a Weekend Chemical Dependency Counselor, where he facilitates group therapy sessions as well as workshops on creative writing. These activities, being connected to our church, allow for spiritual discussions and encouragement when the men express an interest in exploring their relationship with God. As an outgrowth of this work, Eric was asked to be a spiritual guide for a former client and has been meeting regularly with the person, guiding him through a series of discussions on faith and bible-reading. One potential outcome is for this person and his family to join our church as members. Eric is completing an academic book on the use of creative writing as an adjunct to traditional cognitive therapy, which includes many examples of creative writing of approximately 20 current and former clients.

A significant quantity of high-quality men's clothing was donated by members of the congregation and delivered to St. Christopher's helping to meet their clothing needs. They are very appreciative of this generous effort.

Jan Peek House and Noontime Meal

In the face of the pandemic, we were able to adapt our processes so as to fully maintain our monthly support for Jan Peek House and Noontime Meal. At Jan Peek House, our volunteers are no longer able to serve meals, but they follow a new and very safe protocol whereby food is delivered without anyone ever leaving the car. Whereas in the past we had prepared Noontime Meals at our church, we arranged for hot chicken sandwiches to be delivered from Nino's, along with juice boxes and often a dessert supplied by Pat Prauda or another church member. Pat reports that the clientele of both of these programs are very appreciative of our church's support, and she is pleased with the level of support from our church's Jan Peek volunteers in 2020. We are very grateful to Pat for her caring and thrifty leadership of both of these programs, and for her adaptability.

Garden of Hope

Working together with several other organizations in our community, and led by Heidi Haring and Nance Thompson, our garden workers raised several thousand pounds of vegetables and distributed them to our Pantry and other pantries in our area. The garden plot is in the process of being sold, but the Town of Yorktown has identified a new location to which the Garden will move. We expect to take a hiatus from gardening activity in 2021 as we make our transition to the new space, but we are excited about the opportunities this new space will ultimately provide for strengthening our ties to faith communities and secular organizations in our area that share our mission of being good stewards of our environment.

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Midnight Run

The pandemic had a significant impact on the Midnight Run. In March, the Breakfast Run, originally designed as a Confirmation Class activity, morphed into a general run with several adults stepping in, for which we and our clientele were extremely grateful. Rather than preparing food at the church, we arranged for local catering. Subsequently, the agency that organizes this program went to a different model in which resources are pooled among churches, with some focusing on collection and others on distribution. We decided not to run a donation campaign, but instead to take partial toiletry kits left over from previous Midnight Runs and augment them with new material to make a total of 50. These were picked up by the Cold Spring Presbyterian group for their January 2021 run. Thanks very much to Heidi Haring and Steph Hare for their leadership.

International Mission

The pandemic thwarted our intended trip to Puerto Rico. In lieu of the trip, we made donations to Bridges to Community to support continued work in La Guama, the site of a previous mission trip, and to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Hurricane Relief fund to support the effort in which we had intended to participate in Puerto Rico. We are very grateful to Stephanie for all of the work she did to envision and organize a trip that ultimately did not materialize, and hopeful that we can revive her plans once the pandemic recedes.

Special Offerings

- **One Great Hour of Sharing** – 100% to PC(USA)
- **Easter Offering** – 100% to PDA Hurricane Relief
- **Pentecost Offering** – 60% to Presbytery and 40% to the Mental Health Associations of Westchester
- **Peace & Global Witness** – 75% to PC(USA); 25% to the Annie Y. Fisher Scholarship Fund of the Antioch Baptist Church
- **Thanksgiving Offering** – 100% to support the Noontime Meal program
- **Christmas Joy Offering** – 100% to PC(USA)

Special Thanks

We are extremely grateful for the guidance that Chip and Tami provide. They continue to challenge us to think about mission in new ways, connect us with church leaders in transformational mission, and prepare us all to be transformed by our experiences. We also thank the congregation for their generous support of our programs.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Kephart and Eric Kreuter, Co-Chairs

FPCY Pantry 2020 Summary:

For the full year, we served over 19,000 individuals from over 4,700 families with over 160,000 pounds of food. As a comparison, in 2019 we served 10,000 individuals from 2,680 families with 80,000 pounds of food. We also distributed more than 1,100 bundles of diapers, 700 eldercare supplies, 300 school supplies, and through the Deacons 230 children's coats, scarves and gloves. Feeding Westchester's policy of having most bulk food be free to us from April through December meant that we spent less on food in 2020 than we did in 2019, while distributing twice as much food. In 2020 we spent \$13,800 on food, or 7.5 cents per pound, even with the Acme, BJ's and Restaurant Depot shopping we did to fill in missing items in the inventory. The community and local businesses were very generous in donations, both in-kind and financially. As an example, for breakfast cereal, donations totaled nearly 1,200 boxes for the year! We also thank the Chessa family for directing gifts in John Chessa's honor to the Food Pantry. John was a treasured member of our pantry team for many years.

Looking forward to 2021, we are planning for 2020 volumes and hoping that the pandemic and its consequences fade more quickly than that. We know that hunger is a trailing indicator; in the Great Recession, unemployment rates lagged the financial indicators by two years, and our pantry volumes lagged by another two beyond that. We are taking a close look at our elder care, diaper and school supply ministries as all had 2020 expenses significantly higher than 2019, and we have expended the original elder care grant. We want to be prudent but compassionate, and the generosity in 2020 has put us in very strong financial health for 2021.

December 2020 pantries were a challenge with weather, particularly on December 5th. We have adopted a new operational model, where only registration and diapers/eldercare stations are outdoors, and all other staff remain indoors and bring out the food to load into each car's trunk. This is likely the model we will use for the winter and early spring. It requires even lower staffing levels to maintain distancing, and we are looking at a rotational model to enable some staff to have a day off, and to allow other volunteers a chance to work the pantry.

In December we served 231 families, 892 individuals.

We are grateful for the generosity of the congregation and the dedication of our volunteers, to be able to serve the community in this way. The town task force met on December 21, and is beginning to assign pieces of work to the members to understand the extent of need in Yorktown, whether we can identify people who are not receiving services that should, and how to address that gap.

Respectfully submitted,
Katharine Frase and Liam McAuliffe

WORSHIP DESIGN COMMISSION

Members: *Jane Amato, Garrett Artman, Debbie Amorese, Cheryl Burns, Abby Cross (co-chair), Lynn Edling, Karen Gerth, Marsha Henderson, Bill Herman (co-chair), Christie Herman, Ben Low, Rev. Chip Low (co-pastor), Sara Mann, Barbara Santagata, Rev. Tami Seidel (co-pastor), Ann Timmons.*

The Worship Design Commission oversees the needs of our faith community as it gathers for worship in the Sanctuary or at home. The Commission serves as a resource and support to the pastors in developing themes for worship and to design and implement meaningful, thoughtful and experiential worship. This includes, but is not limited to, reviewing the content and structure of worship, planning and implementing worship themes, designing special services, overseeing the Usher Ministry and lay leaders, making arrangements for the serving of the Lord's Supper, providing for the technical, audio-visual aids to worship, and planning for appropriate decoration of the Sanctuary (such as banners, candles, flowers, themed decor, and greens). This year the importance of the Tech Team has expanded and risen to unprecedented challenges in a magnificent and remarkable fashion. Our worship services have continued uninterrupted and reached many in this time when it is most crucial to have our faith restored and expanded. Additionally, the Worship Design Commission oversees the musical life of our congregation, including service music, the Adult Choir, the Adult and Youth Bell Choirs and the Concert Series. **Garrett** has supervised and directed our "pit singers" for the live streamed services as well as designing, directing and editing a glorious selection of "Special Music."

The following special worship themes, events, and services highlighted our year:

We began the year with the theme of **Life in the Neighborhood**, followed by **Lenten worship** focused on **Heartbeat of Christian Life**. After Ash Wednesday and the beginning Lenten services, we shifted to a livestream service without missing a beat of the Giant Heart graphic (if you'll pardon the pun). Even though apart, we maintained our regular Sunday Lenten services, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services. We had a special palm and communion drive-thru handout reported on by **Lester Holt** (Thanks, **John Bentley**). Easter services were reduced to Sunrise and a single live-stream to a sanctuary filled with the pictures of the congregants.

Other Special Services throughout the year included worship focused on:

Highlights of our Year: (an oxymoron if there ever was one)

Individualized "Star Words" to focus on through the year	Stewardship Sunday
Earth Day Worship led by the Green Faith Team	Peace and Justice Sunday
Women of the Church Sunday	Mental Health Awareness Sunday
Confirmation Sunday	Longest Night Service on the Winter Solstice (In-person and livestreamed)
Pentecost and Children's Sunday	Christmas Eve Services (Virtual Family Service and two in-person Candlelight Services and a livestreamed service)
Men of the Church Sunday	
Stewardship Celebration	
Blessing of the Backpacks (Virtually)	
World Communion Sunday	
Blessing of the Animals	

- ◆ **The Tech Team** is responsible for running the sound board during worship services, operating the worship laptop computer, recording the services and sharing them on our website (audio and video) and livestreaming to Facebook. Special thanks to our camera men and women **John Bentley, Karen Gerth, Ben Low, and Linda Swift**. Tech team also supports audio requirements for concerts and large meetings. Tech Team members include **Karen Gerth, Ben Low, and Bill Herman**. Hopefully, in 2021 our numbers will swell again as we return to in person services.

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- ◆ Thanks to our small band of masked workers for our annual Greening of the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas. With special thanks and gratitude to our Greening coordinator, now in his third year, **Matt Hager**. Many thanks to the **Wilkens/Pratt** families for the gift of Christmas Trees, wreathes and garlands. The Christmas Eve Family Worship and Pageant moved to a new pre-recorded format which would not have been possible without the wonderful work of **Ben Low, Garrett Artman, Abby Cross, and Alice Chin**.
- ◆ Special thanks to **James Gerth** and **John Harrigan** for all their efforts to keep the Sanctuary in order. Special thanks to **Jim** for his creative and useful ideas and adaptability in meeting the evolving needs of Worship.
- ◆ The Worship Design Commission oversees **The First Presbyterian Church Concert Series**, which is currently in hiatus but will soon appear in a reconstituted form led by **Garrett Artman** and a new Concert Series Task Force. We were so close to having a concert, and then Covid snatched it from us.
- ◆ Thanks to the **Sanctuary Strategy Team**, who are planning new ways to spend Capital Campaign and hopefully Legacy Grant money. Which brings us to the **Legacy Grant Team (Tami, Lynn, Abby, Christie**—with helpful consultation from **Debbie Bernardini** and **Ellen Miles**, members of the kitchen remodeling team) who have worked tirelessly to separate the Presbytery from its cash so we can better serve the congregation, the community, and the world.
- ◆ We want to acknowledge the **Re-opening Committee** who developed protocols for the safe return to face-to-face worship. Thus far, we have only had a few limited opportunities to do so, but we hope to be fully opened by the end of the year. Know we will always maintain our live stream as an alternative if you are not comfortable to come in or, you are actually traveling. Imagine that...

The Worship Design Commission is deeply grateful to the talents of those on the Commission as well as the spiritual leadership, support, and talents of **Chip Low** and **Tami Seidel**. We are thankful for the office support of **Lisa Flanagan**. We are tremendously grateful for **Carol** and **Erik Jensen** and their behind the scenes work for the adult and youth bell choirs prior to Garrett's arrival and beyond.

Special thanks to **Barbara Wilkens** for selecting and hanging Banners and the creation of a new Easter banner, **Pat Prauda** for her care of the Paraments, **Barbara Santagata's** insightful and beautiful graphic designs, and **Bill Herman's** disturbing graffiti for Lent as well as the re-leafing tree for stewardship. We are blessed by the gifts of **Connie Knapp** for providing coverage and leadership in our worship. This year we re-invigorated our Lay Liturgist program which is a great boon through the summer or when we are down a pastor. The Worship Design Commission also recognizes with thanks all those who have ushered, set and served the Lord's Supper, created and provided signs, banners, and webpages to communicate our message to the community, donated the materials and decorated our worship space, provided lay leadership, and those who have stepped in to assist in countless ways -- all of which contribute to the powerful worship experiences with which we are so blessed. We are thankful to have the energy, enthusiasm, and commitment of our vibrant faith community.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Herman and Abby Cross, Co-Chairs

MUSIC MINISTRY

Elvis has left the building! - Ok, maybe not THAT king, but bad jokes aside - the building has been physically empty, and that can paint a derelict picture. For example, I'm writing this from home as the staff (mostly) continues to work remotely, but as I work with wonderful colleagues from a distance in preparing various worship connections, I feel blessed that we are able to do so with collegiality, creativity, trust, and good humor. so, a huge thank you to Chip, Tami, Ben, Steph, Lisa, Jim, and John for their gifts and comradery.

As a faith community, it is easy this year to think about all of the things we couldn't do, but I'd rather show what our music ministry can do in the face of adversity. I am reminded on a daily basis how true it is that the church is not a building, it is the people, and while our season was different than planned, we strive to create music that speaks to

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the soul, uplifts the spirit, and deepens worship. Additionally, our ministry seeks to provide diverse expressions of time, place, style and genre, so that all who attend worship and all who participate in the music program find meaningful ways to experience and to participate in the music of the church.

Rehearsals temporarily stopped as a safety precaution in March, but that didn't stop us from making music. Our very first virtual collaboration was on Palm Sunday, April 5th, 2020. Since then, we've created over 133 virtual offerings, including a full virtual orchestra and chorus on Christmas Eve. Within each of these offerings are practice tracks to be downloaded, cameras to be set up, microphones to be tested, sheet music to be printed, and (dare I say it?) practice to be done. On average, one project takes four hours from start to finish, some can take up to 40 hours to complete depending on the number of videos submitted to be edited. Boil this down and without taking into consideration practice or rehearsal, you have at least 532 hours of project time. The support needed is astronomical and with the help of Ben Low, John Bentley, and all the members of the ensembles, we kept music alive. No longer bound by the limits of physicality, we are now able to take our music internationally, where our constantly accumulating digital library can be accessed world-wide to anyone; for those alone at home, for those isolated in nursing homes, for those who want to see their family, friends, or acquaintances make music in a time of silence. Across the board, our members have stepped up and really shown what it means to be a music-maker here. The devotion of our choir, adult bells, youth bells, small chamber ensembles, youth ministries, and soloists is nothing short of inspiring.

In addition to making music virtually, with the help and safety of special singer's masks, we mitigate our risks and can make music safely in person as well. Following strict guidelines set forth from professional singing and education organizations, based on studies from the University of Colorado, Boulder, we can still gather for 30-minute rehearsals in order to provide live hymn singing on Sunday mornings.

Our musical asset maintenance, such as the pianos and organ, is being prioritized while the building is not in use. We have a new Steinway grand piano thanks to the generous donation of Eric Kreuter. Both grand pianos have a climate control system installed which protects the wood from drastic temperature and humidity changes, extending the life of each tuning and protecting the wood body from warping. Looking ahead, our Austin Pipe Organ is in need of a new swell motor, which controls the arm that moves the large shutters behind the screen and should receive a climate control system for the swell box in order to protect and maintain the instrument's integrity.

While I cannot wait for the day that we can gather together and collaborate, we are constantly working to provide for our church and our community. There are many things that had to be put on hold this year, such as our April concert featuring local and professional choirs, but because of our virtual presence as a church, community members are reaching out to learn how we do what we do, looking for guidance, a place to participate, and a community to share their gifts. As we move forward into our pilgrimage for Lent, let us remember that there are pilgrims we haven't met yet. It is my goal to find them through more community outreach, and to foster the musical education we can provide. Our vitality is dependent on all members, not just musicians. To our pastors, the congregation, the choir, the adult bells, the good samaritones, the worship design commission, my students, and all my listeners: Thank you from the bottom of my heart and maybe someday during my tenure here we can have an in-person Easter service together.

Respectfully submitted,

Garrett Artman, Director of Music Ministry



FAITH FORMATION COMMISSION

Members:

Liza Placido, Nicole DeCintio and Lynn Edling, Co-chairs; Bridget Bentley, Kristy Berlin, Stephanie Hare, Heidi Haring, Carol Jensen, Connie Knapp, Rev. Tami Seidel, Michele Mosca.

Overview:

The Faith Formation Commission is responsible for the development, implementation and administration of educational programs that address the needs and interests of our entire church family. The subcommittees endeavor to provide new and innovative programs that will capture the interest of the congregation from the youngest child to the oldest senior to help advance each in their spiritual journey. The Covid-19 pandemic brought its challenges to FPCY in March of 2020 as with the rest of the world. The church pastors, leadership, commissions, members and volunteers all worked to implement remote services, meetings and events. The dedication and perseverance of the people of FPCY was key in keeping the church running. The following subcommittees within the Faith Formation Commission have continued to thrive through the pandemic as they did prior: Sunday School; Faith4Life (adult ed.) and Youth. The following subcommittees have been paused due to the pandemic (unable to be in person): Childcare Room, Vacation Bible School and the Church Library.

Sunday School — Our Sunday School program offers a unique educational experience from preschool through middle school. A cornerstone for the

children’s faith formation, our Sunday School consists of three sections serving the spiritual and educational needs of the different age groups. This past year, it was decided that the Sunday School program needed to be reviewed and possibly changed. The outcome was a change in curriculum for the youngest members and the middle school/9th graders, and at this time to have one class for 7th - 9th graders. Pre-school through 4th grade uses the *Shine* curriculum; 5th and 6th Grade uses the *Connect* curriculum; and 7th, 8th and 9th Grade (called *FaithX*) is using a new curriculum called *Echo The Story* which is a journey through the Bible to prepare them for Confirmation. Sunday School



classes have continued remotely each week since the spring of 2020 and the group was able to have a virtual “Children’s

Sunday” in June of 2020. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the faithful volunteers and staff, along with co-pastor Tami Seidel, have been committed to the spiritual growth of our young people in the congregation and we are happy to report that each of the 3 sections have had and continue to have positive turnouts each Sunday with the students. A big thank you to Bridget Bentley and Kristy Berlin for their two years of service as Co-Superintendents and also a big thank you to Stephanie Hare and Co-Pastor Tami Seidel for all of their hard work and assistance in also guiding the commission through the changes that needed to be made and adapted to.



Faith4Life—Despite the pandemic, the Faith4Life group has had a very active and rewarding year, meeting mostly by Zoom. We were able to offer groups on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, Wednesday evenings, as well as Sunday mornings before church. Participation in these Zoom sessions has been good, with lively and interesting discussions. During the past year we have had two daily email devotions that were written by many members of the congregation – Checking Our Pulse and the Daily Gifts based on the book *100 Things Every Child Should Know Before Confirmation*. These emails and the Biblical passages on which they were based became the texts for our Sunday morning study/discussions. We are very grateful to all

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those who shared their knowledge, prayers, and faith journey through these emails. You have enriched and blessed us all! As part of the Advent theme, our Sunday morning group enjoyed *Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes*. We invited Christ into our homes as we imagined the homes of each of the gospel writers. Also for Advent and led by Chip Low, we recorded scripture readings from the Jesse tree for a podcast called *Centered in the Season* that was released every day at noon. The podcast included a scripture reading, a short meditation, and a prayer. We were also blessed to have another wonderful and timely presentation by Tim Lupfer – *History of Epidemics and Christianity*. As usual, Tim’s presentation was insightful and edifying. Our Tuesday and Thursday morning groups, as well as our Wednesday night Disciple group, continued throughout the year.

We are very thankful for the leadership of Connie Knapp and Tami Seidel in these groups, as well as the participants. These were some of the books and topics studied during these sessions: *Sermon on the Mount* by Amy-Jill Levine, *How to be an Antiracist* by Ibram Kendi, *Women in the Bible* (course designed by Connie Knapp), *Who Stole my Bible* by Rev. Jennifer Butler, and by Richard Rohr: *The Divine Dance* and *What Do We Do With Evil?: The World, The Flesh, and the Devil*. Thanks to all who lead and all who participated!

Youth—Our wonderful Youth Coordinator, Stephanie Hare, has continued to have youth groups with our young people. A very big thank you to Steph for all that she does for our church and our youth. From Steph:

It goes without saying that 2020 was a year of interruptions for everything in the lives of our young people, from school to sports, and our FPCY Youth activities were no



exception. We had to put our plans for our trip to the much beloved Montreat Youth Conference on hold, and Youth Group meetings had to move online using Zoom. Despite the change in meeting format, during the spring, we actually increased our meeting frequency for both our Middle School and High School Youth Groups from twice a month to weekly. Since the beginning of the new school year, we have returned to two online meetings a month for the Middle Schoolers. In October, our older

Youth gathered in person once (using all necessary precautions) to prepare a meal for the Jan Peek House shelter in Peekskill. The High School Youth Group took a bit of a hiatus but has a full schedule of discussion topics relating our faith to issues of the world on the calendar for rest of this school year.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie L. Hare, Director of Youth Ministries

Confirmation—Confirmation is a young person’s initiation into the life and ministry of our church. Pre-pandemic, students were led on this important journey by Gordon Braudaway, Pam Darreff, Suzy Rishel and Stephanie Hare and students would attend services of different traditions including a Synagogue, and an Interfaith Service. Additionally, students would participate in an in-house retreat at FPCY, outreach ministries of our church including a Midnight Run, serving at the Food Pantry, and cooking/serving at the Pancake Supper. The Confirmation Class met with Session on 5/31/2020 for “Official Examination.” The students completed their Statements of Faith. The goal going forward is to hold an in-person Confirmation Sunday in 2022 which will combine the 2021 and 2022 students.

Childcare—Pre-pandemic when in-person services were conducted, our church offered consistent and dependable child care on Sundays, and during special services, an important consideration for parents of young children. Under normal circumstances, childcare is available to children from birth through kindergarten age in our childcare room by Michele Mosca, Child Care Coordinator, and her staff. We appreciate their hard work and enthusiasm in providing a safe and nurturing environment for our youngest church members. We look forward to seeing the childcare staff and children when we resume in-person services!

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Vacation Bible School—As with most events in 2020, the traditional VBS was cancelled this past summer. FPCY is currently in conversation with our partners of the Lutheran and Methodist churches about VBS for 2021. At this time, nothing concrete has been decided.

Library—The Church library is a valuable resource open to members of our church family. Many thanks to Carol Jensen as she continues her service as our Church Librarian. Visits to the library are by appointment only at this time. Please contact Lisa Flanagan for information and appointments to visit.

Christmas Pageant—Because it was 2020, our pageant was virtual! The FPCY children from Sunday School brought to life on video, the Christmas Story on Christmas Eve where they told the story of Jesus' birth so long ago. Many thanks to our director, Bill Herman, and the committee (Abby Cross, Tami Seidel and Garrett Artman). A huge thank you to Ben Low for his time and amazing technical skills bringing the 2020 pageant to us virtually. Special thanks to all of the children, the wonderful helpers, the parents and the grandparents!

Respectfully submitted,
Nicole DeCintio

STEWARDSHIP COMMISSION

Members: Jane Amato, Gloria Coccodrilli, Pam Darreff, Barbara Humphrey, Connie Knapp, Rev. Chip Low, Tim Lupfer, Nancy Paskin, Rev. Tami Seidel, Lynda Spring.

Stewardship Campaign:

In the fall of 2020, the Annual Stewardship Campaign's theme was "Neighbors Together, Forward in Faith." In 2020, \$474,103 was pledged by 119 pledgers. \$461,467 was received through pledges; non-pledged gifts of \$30,025 (including loose plate offerings of \$ 788) and pledge overpayments of \$23,970; totaling \$515,462 received in 2020. We are grateful for the generosity of our members and their commitment of financial resources.

Due to this year's COVID restrictions, Stewardship offered a Drive By, Drop Off event in December. This was an opportunity for an in-person greeting at the church and a time for the collection of loose plate offerings, completed 2020 pledges and 2021 pledge cards. Stewardship prepared and distributed gift packages of cocoa, M&M's and candy canes. Even though the day was cold and dreary, welcoming the smiling faces of our church family and friends was a heart-warming success.

Planned Giving: In 2013, the Session approved the establishment of an endowment fund for FPCY to support planned giving. Tim Lupfer has information on how members may consider long term giving.

Veterans Recognition: Stewardship celebrates Veterans Day and Memorial Day by recognizing members of our church family who serve/served in our country's military. Lisa Flanagan and Tim Lupfer organized the names, videos and information for their recognition at our recent church service with the able assistance of Ben Low.

Outreach: College students and active military personnel receive care packages during the year. Pam Darreff coordinates this project, working hard to update accurate addresses and timely mailings. Due to the COVID pandemic, the process needed to "Welcome Our Visitors" headed by Barbara Humphrey, has been by virtual invitation. Our Bakers' Team has been on-hold awaiting the reopening of our church and resuming our traditional welcoming procedure.

Green Faith: Connie Knapp reports the Green Team's activities to Stewardship. Nancy Caswell chairs the Green Team. In November 2017, we completed the requirements to become a Green Faith certified congregation; that process also certified us as an **Earth Care congregation in PC(USA)**. Earth Care congregations are recertified annually. During this past year, we coordinated Earth Day worship service and, along with HRP Green, the Presbytery's Green Team, sponsored a talk by Gillian Rosh on the Power of Plastics, a way to upcycle plastic items to remove them from the waste stream. Our newest endeavors include: installation of solar panels as part of our Capital Campaign Project, supporting the Youth Group by partially funding their Terra Cycle project, continuing our

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“From the Green Team” Blog posts including occasional “Fiercely Green-Tips from a Green Teen”, and working in the new Garden of Hope helping to care for and harvesting fresh produce that was donated to local food pantries.

Report on Solar Energy Production (Donna Gresh): Our solar panels were installed in late 2019. Since then, they have been offsetting our electric consumption. Because the billing from NYSEG is significantly delayed from the actual meter readings, as of January 12, we only have data for generation and consumption up through September 3. Our main circuit is billed on an every two month schedule. In January and February 2020, we generated 44% of our consumption. In March and April 2020, we generated 159% of our consumption, banking 2060 kWh. In May and June 2020, we generated 340% of our consumption, banking an additional 6300 kWh. In July and August 2020, we generated 127% of our consumption, banking an additional 1883 kWh. Thus, since March we have been billed for zero consumption, paying only the base fee for service. The total banked energy was (as of early September) 10243 kWh. This banked energy will be offsetting our energy use during the winter (when there is significantly less sunlight). (As an example, our monitoring software indicates that in December we generated approximately 25% of our consumption, and we would use approximately 3800 kWh of our “bank”). Of course, our usage during 2020 was significantly reduced because the building was mostly unoccupied, and air conditioning usage was minimized. However, you can see that we can expect significant offsets of our energy usage even once we return to the building.

Membership and New Members: Two new member classes were held in 2020 for a total of 18 new members, seven of which were confirmands. No members were removed from the rolls in 2020.

Stewardship Seminar: Rev. Tami Seidel, Rev. Chip Low, Nancy Paskin, Connie Knapp, Jane Amato, and Gloria Coccodrilli attended the Kaleidoscope Conference in October 2020 via Zoom.

If this year’s pandemic has done anything, it’s forced us to reflect on our traditional ideas, to creatively adjust to the changes in our lives, and most importantly, to reimagine the future. Our community, our congregation is no longer bound by the walls of our sanctuary. As a ‘Transformational Magi’ church on the journey of a lifetime, let us be courageous, and adventuresome. Let us be hopeful and joyful. Let us be thankful that our new and virtually expanded neighborhood is moving forward in faith together.

Stewardship is ... Faith in Action, Spirited Generosity, Managing Our Blessings, Walking Together, Growing in Faith, Thanks-Giving. Stewardship is “Heart” Work.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Amato, Stewardship Chair

OPERATIONS COMMISSION

Members: Tami Seidel, Kendra Ekelund, Rob Baddeley, Bud Coccodrilli, Deanna Collins, Jim Gerth, Matt Hager, Walter Oudheusden, Ian Spence, Tom Travis, Vinny Wallace.

Purpose: The Operations Commission is responsible for maintaining and improving our facilities and properties; and in doing so, support FPCY's work in our community and beyond.

- Special thanks to Dick Seymour for sponsoring and spearheading several essential projects, always accompanied by Jerry Amato and commission members
- Special thanks to Jim Gerth for lending his expertise to and taking on projects both inside and outside
- Special thanks to Androsko Landscaping for going far beyond what he was contracted to do, often giving of his time and equipment particularly during outdoor cleanup and after Isaias
- Special thanks to the members of this Commission who were always there for storm cleanup, leaks and equipment failures, weeding and grounds keeping, and whatever else might arise. Nothing was ever left untended

2020 Highlights:

- Renewed and expanded contracts with Sav-A-Tree and Androsko Landscaping
- Organized a work party to clean out years of debris from the Room 1 basement
- Contracted Connecticut Basement Systems to moisture-proof the basement under Room 1
- With Covid rendering the building virtually empty proceeded with expansion of the office entryway
- Renovated former pre-school bathrooms
- Renovated Rooms 1,2,5,7, as well as 16&17, allowing the Pantry to expand its storage capability and allowing for dedicated space for our AA Fellowship.
- Scraped, sanded, and painted all exterior window trim. Replaced shiplap and other rotting wood in various locations. Painted the exterior of the Sanctuary up to 10' including the columns and front door.
- Reset bluestone in front of Sanctuary and repaired flagstone stairs to the east of the Fellowship Hall main entrance.
- Weeded the Memorial Garden as well as many of the planted patches on the grounds
- Engaged Clemco to complete painting the Sanctuary as well as the steeple
- Organized modest spring and fall cleanup events
- Directed traffic & parking at various large events at FPCY.
- Installed tamper proof mailboxes and replaced Sanctuary windows which had been vandalized in separate incidents
- Installed and relocated exit signs as per instructions from The Yorktown F.D.
- Addressed several issues with the Manse related to plumbing in the interior and grounds keeping
- Worked with an external group to replace some headstones of Civil War casualties and veterans

Looking ahead, in conjunction with the CPMT, Operations is examining options for replacing our existing boilers and ac units, circulating systems associated with them, and related infrastructure such as remotely controlled thermostats. Other large projects will include lighting for our parking lots, and the repaving of the main lot.

Our sanctuary is over 175 years old and other parts of the facility range in age from 20 to nearly 70 years. Thanks to diligence of many ensuring its upkeep over the years, we do not face any known crises at this point. However, going forward, that could change at a moment's notice. We do have a maintenance reserve fund for expensive improvements but are not currently replenishing this fund due to the Capital Campaign. Operations will continue the regular upkeep items and work to transform our spaces as Operations is well represented on the Campaign Project Management Team.

Respectfully submitted,
Ian Spence, Co-Chair, Operations (and Matt)

PERSONNEL COMMISSION

Members: Beth Gruber, Chip Low, Jean Post-Winget, Tami Seidel, Ian Spence, Nance Thompson

The Personnel Commission acts as the human resource department of a corporation does, dealing with all aspects of the management of our employees and their needs. As a new year begins, we are excited to welcome Alice Chin to this commission.

We are blessed with an extraordinary staff whose work for our church is amazing and a true gift to all of us. Much of what we do is of a confidential nature and therefore cannot be included in the annual report. When the need arises to hire someone to fill a vacancy, or someone is being hired to fill a new position one of our functions is to take the lead in the hiring process or assist another commission with this task. We evaluate job descriptions annually for each position and update as needed. Actions we have taken this year include the creation of a job description and hiring of a part-time Streaming Media Manager, Benjamin Low. Personnel has met with most of our staff this fall and discussed their goals and their performance. We work to support staff professionally, spiritually and personally. Most importantly we celebrated with our church family the 10-year anniversary of Chip Low and the 5-year anniversaries of Tami Seidel, Stephanie Hare and Lisa Flanagan.

Respectfully submitted,
Nance Thompson, Co-Chair

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMISSION

Members: In 2020, Budget and Finance was co-chaired by Elders Beth Gruber and Matt Sheridan. Its membership also included Gordon Braudaway (Treasurer), Fred Mintzer, Co-pastor Chip Low, Jack Shaughnessy, and Tom Travis (Treasurer). Budget and Finance is blessed by, and thankful for, their generous contributions of time and financial expertise.

The Budget and Finance Commission is responsible for recommending and implementing financial policies, goals, and budgets to the Session that support the mission, values, and strategic goals of the Church. The Commission reviews the Church's financial performance against its goals and manages the Church's investments, with monthly reporting to Session. Budget and Finance was formed in 2015 and is still "on a journey" to truly fulfill those responsibilities.

Budget & Reports:

2020 was a year to rejoice for faithful and consistent giving during a global pandemic. We are excited to report that when combining received pledges and offerings with a loan from the SBA Paycheck Protection Program, anticipated to be forgiven in 2021, we ended 2020 with a surplus of \$11,634 as compared to a budgeted deficit of (\$33,869). We prepared a 2021 budget for consideration by Session which was subsequently adopted and is included in the accompanying financial section. New developments reflected in the 2021 Operating Budget include the following:

- ⇒ A "stretch goal" in Pledges and Offerings of \$578,000 (compare to 2020 actual of \$526,467).
- ⇒ Other expenses anticipates the expenditure of grant funds for various initiatives.
- ⇒ The new position of Streaming Media Manager, not budgeted in 2020.
- ⇒ A projected operating deficit of (\$33,165) for 2021.

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As we plan for 2021, the budgeted operating deficit (without additional PPP loan proceeds) becomes an opportunity for our Congregation to continue to meet increased pledging needs, especially as the successful Capital Campaign comes to completion. And as always, we are mindful of the continued need to keep careful watch on our expenses while still being good stewards of our people, our facilities, and our community.

We would like to share a special note of appreciation to Lisa Flanagan and Stephanie Hare for their above-and-beyond efforts during a very challenging year. Both were incredibly diligent in their financial roles – making sure the bills continued to be paid, keeping track of extraordinary giving in response to the pandemic, and preparing financial reports for the church’s commissions so that they could continue to function well.

We are truly blessed to have been given the privilege of managing the Church’s resources and we are grateful for the congregation’s faithful generosity.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Gruber and Matt Sheridan
2020 Co-Chairs, Budget and Finance

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF YORKTOWN

2880 Crompond Road
Yorktown Heights, New York 10598
Phone: 914-245-2186
Worship Service: Sundays at 10:00am
Sunday School and Adult Education: Sundays beginning at 9:00am
Pandemic Office Hours: Tuesday and Friday, 9:00am-4:00pm

www.FPCYorktown.org

Chip Low and Tami Seidel, Co-Pastors
Garrett Artman, Director of Music Ministry
Stephanie Hare, Director of Youth Ministries
Lisa Flanagan, Office Manager
Jim Gerth, Caretaker
John Harrigan, Custodian
Bridget Bentley, Kristy Berlin, Sunday School Superintendents
Gordon Braudaway, Sue Caruso, Beth Gruber & Tom Travis, Treasurers

THE SESSION

Class of 2021

Jane Amato
Beth Gruber
Matt Hager
Bill Herman
Emily Monk
Linda Swift

Kate MacDonald
(09/01/20 thru 08/31/21)
Benjamin Low
(09/01/20 thru 08/31/21)

Class of 2022

Abby Cross
Nicole DeCintio
Lynn Edling
Eric Kreuter
Ian Spence
Bill Winsted

Benjamin Low
(09/01/21—08/31/22)
Spencer Brown
(09/01/21—08/31/22)

Class of 2023

Alice Chin
Bryan Ekelund
Donna Gresh
Jessica Mayes
Fred Mintzer
Nathan Perry

Clerk of Session: Christie Herman
Moderators: Chip Low, Tami Seidel

THE BOARD OF DEACONS

Co-Moderator: Heidi Haring and Dana Mordue
Secretary: Christine Lazarus

Class of 2021

Susanne Caruso
Wanda Diaz
Debra Farrell
Martin Scatola

Daniel Hager
(09/01/20 thru 08/31/21)
Marina Wheeler
(09/01/20 thru 08/31/21)

Class of 2022

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Dana Mordue
Christine Lazarus
Nancy Paskin

Marina Wheeler
(09/01/21 thru 08/31/22)
Emma Placido
(09/01/21 thru 08/31/22)

Class of 2023

Jennifer Burns
Heidi Haring
Brian Kelly
Tim Rishel