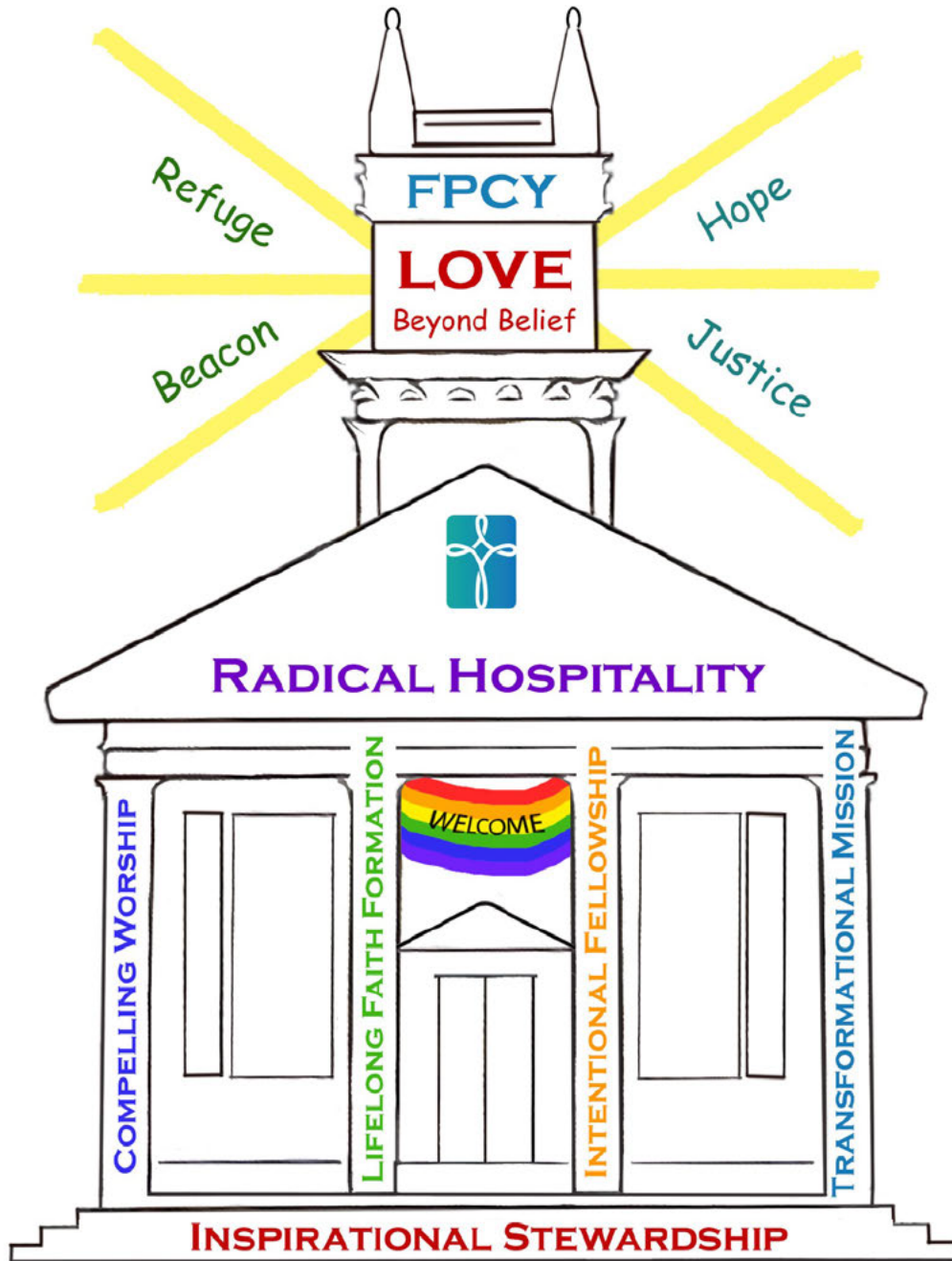




FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF YORKTOWN



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

March 3, 2024

LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH

2023

Session of Ruling Elders

Clerk of Session: Christie Herman 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 up to six Elders is elected each year, serving for three years in a rotating membership arrangement. In addition, two Youth Elders may be elected each year for one year terms.

Class of 2023

Alice Chin (Personnel)
Bryan Ekelund
(Communications, Nominating)
Donna Gresh (Communications)
Jessica Mayes (Stewardship)
Fred Mintzer
(Budget & Finance, Personnel)
Nathan Perry (Worship & Personnel)

Class of 2024

Katharine Frase (Operations)
Elaine Heyde (Congregational Life)
Connie Knapp (Mission, Nominating)
Jennifer Rowe-Behun
(Congregational Life)
Jack Shaughnessy (Budget & Finance)
Marisa Swift (Mission)

Class of 2025

Jane Amato (Stewardship)
Andy Cross (Faith Formation)
Margaret Harrison
(Congregational Life)
Bill Herman (Worship Design)
Jean Post-Winget (Faith Formation)
Vinny Wallace (Operations)

Board of Deacons

Co-Moderators: Heidi Haring and John Winget Secretary: Nancy Paskin

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 may be elected each year for one year terms.

Class of 2023

Jennifer Burns
Heidi Haring
Lynda Spring
Allen Arnwine

Class of 2024

Judy Chessa
Sue Nelson
John Winget
Mary Vezzuto

Class of 2025

Tim Chin
Nancy Paskin
Marilyn Rivera-Alvarado
Ann Timmons

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REPORT OF THE CO-PASTORS

Acts 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

“Everyone wants to be connected,
but we hesitate to be the connector.
Everyone wants to be trusted, but we hesitate to trust.
And everyone wants to be respected,
but we often fail to offer our respect.
What an opportunity!”
- Seth Godin

At the Session Retreat in January of 2023, we decided that 2023 would be a **Year of Discernment** for our leadership and our congregation. This was in response to many of the changes brought about by the pandemic and the shifts in our congregational membership. The question we sought to answer was, *“In order to be faithful stewards of the blessings we have now (in terms of people and resources), how can we ‘right-size’ our ministry and mission in such a way that it is fruitful and sustainable?”*

In all honesty, some of us have developed a “love/hate” relationship with this process of discernment. Discernment requires careful thought and attentiveness to the leading of the Holy Spirit, which often takes longer and leads in different directions than we anticipated. Those of us who are anxious about the future or who “like to get things done” quickly get impatient because discernment takes time and an openness to new information and new ways of thinking about who we are as a faith community.

In order to help us in the process, the Session created the Shake-Up Team which was tasked in 2023 with helping the Session discern our way forward in light of our new reality (smaller and shifting membership, financial constraints, emerging needs in community, etc.). Many thanks to **Alice Chin, Katharine Frase, Bill Herman, Connie Knapp, Jennifer Rowe-Behun, and Marisa Swift** for their leadership and participation on the Shake-Up Team, which tackled some challenging issues and questions about our structure and focus as a church. Along the way, our commissions were asked to evaluate the health and sustainability of everything we do in order to further focus our energy and resources.

One outcome of all this analysis, reflection and prayer is *FPCY's Focus for 2024 – The Year of Intentional Fellowship*. This grew out of the simple realization that the health of our church depends on the health of the relationships that make up our church community. *If we want to build our capacity, we first need to build and strengthen our community.* Ever since 2018, Intentional Fellowship has been one of our six ministry priorities (along with Compelling Worship, Lifelong Faith Formation, Inspirational Stewardship and Transformational Mission, all under the umbrella of Radical Hospitality), but it has emerged as the priority that needs our attention as Session and Deacons, commissions and committees, and as a church. In the coming year, we will be lifting up this priority and working together to strengthen our ministries through the lens of Intentional Fellowship. This focus is especially important considering the environment in which we find ourselves as a church at this

(Continued on page 5)

moment in time. All around us, our families and communities, our nation and world seem to be moving in the direction of further disconnection and division. Our mental health as individuals and a nation is suffering under the strain, as is the ability of many of our institutions to address societal needs and problems. In response to this culture and climate, many people are searching for a place to belong where they will be encouraged to live into the goodness of their human potential and to invest themselves in a larger, life-giving purpose that works for the wellbeing of the world around us.

As a faith community, we are especially well qualified and situated to respond. Our Christian story is ultimately rooted in the good news of God’s love for us and for all of creation, and our inclusive ministry and mission seeks to be a refuge and beacon of God’s hope, grace, justice, and peace in our community and world. As businessman and author Seth Godin says above, *“What an opportunity!”* We hope you will join us in the coming year as we seek to be faithful to God’s call for our lives and our church, living and sharing the good news of God’s liberating love and abundant life for the wellbeing of our community and our world.

As we look forward to the journey ahead, we offer our **profound thanks** to everyone at FPCY who works so hard to help us follow God’s call – our staff and leadership, all of the commissions and ministry teams, the members and friends of our church family who do the day-to-day decision-making and attend to the details of our community and our facility. *We are so privileged to serve with so many dedicated, creative, and generous people, and we are very grateful!*

A final note on Chip’s sabbatical: I want to thank the church for your commitment and support to my sabbatical. My sabbatical has been a time of rest and reflection in ways that the normal pace of ministry and vacation time never would have allowed. It has opened up new ways of thinking about and practicing my faith, as well as new and deeper expressions of Christian faith and witness that have energized my ministry among you. I am particularly grateful for:

- Beth Gruber, Eric Kreuter, and Tami Seidel for their work with me to write the grant in 2020,
- the many people who have supported my time away, even as that time had to be broken up over three years, and
- the many opportunities I have had during and since the sabbatical to share what I learned and experienced.

Thank you for your commitment to this unique opportunity for me that has and will continue to enrich my ministry with you.



Chip

Tami

FPC Yorktown Co-Pastor Responsibilities 2024

Commission/Task	Chip	Tami	Both
Budget, Finance & Stewardship	X		
Communications	X		
Congregational Connection	X		
Deacons			X
Faith Formation		X	
Mission	X		
Nominating			X
Operations		X	
Personnel			X
Session			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

2023 Statistics

MEETINGS:

11 Regular Session Meetings, 4 Special Session Meetings, 1 Leadership Retreat,
2 Meetings of the Congregation, 2 Electronic Advisements, 1 Combined Session/Deacon meeting

Active Members as of December 31, 2022: 331

<u>Gains (18)</u>		<u>Losses (6)</u>	
Profession of Faith	7	Deaths	4
Reaffirmation of Faith	6	Transfer	2
Letter of Transfer	5	Roll Removal	0

Active Members as of December 31, 2023: 343

NEW MEMBERS

PROFESSION OF FAITH	REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH	LETTER OF TRANSFER
Elliot Bentley*	Sean Bugara	Nancy Coveney
Kayce Chin*	David Padovani	Kathy Dean
Megan Donnelly*	Danise Talbot	Megan Padovani
Anna Hagen*	Dana Treacy	Rick Vesperman
Brianna Heyde*	William Treacy	Julia Whalen
John Mosca*	Ryan Haver	
Emily Whelan*		

**Confirmand*

BAPTISMS

01/15/2023	Luca James Jeffries-Berlin
04/16/2023	Brendan Patrick Bates
07/30/2023	Zander Lafayette Yarris
08/27/2023	Wyatt Branciforte
11/26/2023	Jenna Rose Leslie

DEATHS

02/06/2023	Alice Ruth Hickey	2283
02/18/2023	Gordon W. Braudaway	1995
03/12/2023	Sally Martin	430
12/06/2023	Maxine Travis	2089

Respectfully submitted,
Christie Herman, Clerk of Session

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Members at Large: *Connie Knapp and Bryan Ekelund, co-chairs; Deanna Collins, Abby Cross, Debbie Hager, Nancy Paskin, Chip Low, Tami Seidel*

Officers of the Corporation:

President: Jack Shaughnessy
Vice-President: Jane Amato
Treasurer: Beth Gruber
Secretary: Christie Herman

Staff of the Session of FPCY

Clerk of Session: Christie Herman
Treasurers: Beth Gruber
Frank Hodgkinson
Gregg Nelson
Financial Secretary: Lisa Flanagan
Auditors/Reviewers: Megan Whelan
Dawna Dennis
Ian Spence

Counters: Donna Gresh
Debbie Hager
Randy Pratt
Linda Swift

**pending election at Annual Meeting*

Ruling Elders—Class of 2026

Sheri Gausepohl
Beth Gruber
Jeff Kephart
Eric Kreuter
Dana Mordue

Ruling Elders—Class of 2024

Alice Chin

Youth Ruling Elders

Kithara Buccarelli

Deacons – Class of 2026

Allen Arnwine*
Debra Farrell
Diane Yarris

Youth Deacons

TBD in June

Food Pantry Co-Leadership

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,
Connie Knapp and Bryan Ekelund, co-chairs

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMISSION

Fellowship Events (weekly, monthly, annually)

- * Annual Meeting Luncheon
- * Annual Church Picnic
- * Coffee Hour in person and online
- * Easter Sunrise Breakfast
- * Lunch Bunch/Dinner – potluck and themed meals on a monthly basis
- * Men’s Breakfast
- * Women at the Well

In the second half of the year, the Session through its commissions hosted Sunday coffee hour. This had the effect of introducing the congregation to the different commissions and inviting more people to participate in and learn how to host coffee hour. At the December meeting, Session voted to adopt a new commission structure and disband the Congregational Life Commission. Many of the responsibilities of Congregational Life will be included in a new Congregational Connection Commission, as well as integrated into the work of other commissions.

We are grateful to Elders Elaine Heyde, Margaret Harrison, and Jennifer Rowe-Behun and to all who have helped with the fellowship events above with food, hosting, clean-up, and welcoming more people into our church’s community through them. We are also grateful to the Capital Campaign Project Management team for the purchase of new, lighter-weight tables and for their help in learning how to use our beautiful new kitchen.

Respectfully submitted, *Chip & Tami*

COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Members: *Bryan Ekelund (co-chair), Donna Gresh (co-chair), Kithara Buccarelli, JoAnne Marsh, Barbara Santagata, Linda Swift, and Rev. Chip Low*

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 events. 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 2023 include:

Website

Our website is likely the number one place that new people head to find out information about FPCY. We strive to make information easy to find both for visitors and the current congregation.

In addition to the weekly church bulletin, and the Disciple newsletter, one of the best ways to stay up to date on what is happening in our church is to visit our website www.fpcyorktown.org.

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

- 1) At the top of the website home page, under the "News & Events" heading, click "Latest News." Any events, announcements, worship services, etc., will be listed here, newest to oldest. In 2023, we posted 270 articles on our news feed, each of which was also distributed to our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/fpcyorktown). Each of our posts is illustrated with colorful graphics created by our dedicated artists **Kithara Buccarelli, JoAnne Marsh, and Barbara Santagata**. *If you want to receive events and announcements as they are posted (about 5 per week) directly in your email, go to our website (FPCYorktown.org), under "News & Events", click on "What's New", then click on any entry. To the right of that entry, there is a message that says "Subscribe to FPCY Connections Email"; simply enter your email.*



- 2) Alternatively, for current activities, scroll down past the video of our church activities and there are moving sliding graphics that display current events. You can click on a graphic and it will take you to the details of that event. You can learn about upcoming special worship services, social events, the food pantry item of the month, and other relevant information.

Thanks to **Donna Gresh**, who keeps our website up-to-date with all the current events, blogs, and graphics, as well as managing the Gathering Space monitor!

Church Directory



In the beginning of October, we were invited to take pictures for our new church directory, which had not been updated for years. We eagerly await the final delivery, as the staff finalizes the layouts and content. Many thanks to **Linda Swift** for being the point person on this, and to **Lisa Flanagan** for her efforts in getting the roster up to date.

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Commission Cards

We collected information about each Commission and the Deacons and created cards describing our work to offer visitors in the Welcome Center. Joanne Marsh designed the cards, and they are available in the Gathering Space near the Welcome Desk. You can also find this information on the website under “I’m New->Meet Our People” and then finding the link to “Commissions.” *This “people” page is also where you can find links to Session members, Deacons, and Commission chairs.*

Facebook and YouTube Worship Services


Internet streaming continues to be an invaluable tool, as our late (or summer) service,   as well as our special services, are shared on facebook.com/fpcyorktown/live_videos, as well as on our YouTube channel www.youtube.com/@FPCYorktown/streams. With the addition of a new camera system, we show video from different angles within the Sanctuary allowing us to show the bell choir, the organ, the choir, and the piano, which enhances the online worship service even more. Each week we have between 15 and 25 “screens” watching us live, with an unknown number viewing the services at later times. Each week's entire worship service is available soon thereafter on our website under the menu “I’m New->Worship Services.”


Many continued thanks go to our “virtual greeters” who make sure comments left on each Sunday’s livestream are met with a welcome, hello, or thumbs up.

A big thanks to the Tech Team for running the livestream each Sunday morning. The Tech Team consists of **Andy Cross, James Cross, Bryan Ekelund, Karen Gerth, Bill Herman, Nathan Perry, and Linda Swift**. And a special thanks to Karen Gerth, who has been organizing the Tech Team and being our cheerleader on Sunday mornings. Each Sunday, three people are needed to livestream the worship service. The Tech Team needs more members, so if you are interested, please contact someone from the Communications Commission or Worship.

Social Media

Another way we relay our church’s story, events, and activities is with Facebook and Instagram.

 Our Facebook page www.facebook.com/fpcyorktown shares our blog posts, as well as “candid” photos of events and activities. Be on the lookout for an invitation to a FPCY Facebook group, to connect us in more ways and get the word out about events and activities. *If you use Facebook, please “Like” our Facebook page, and then, under “Follow Settings” (...), choose to “Follow” the page to have our activities appear regularly in your Facebook feed.*

 We are trying to be more active on Instagram, so please follow us there. <https://www.instagram.com/fpcyorktown/>

Final Thanks

Many thanks to **JoAnne Marsh** and **Barbara Santagata**, and **Kithara Buccarelli** for designing and creating so many amazing graphics! These graphics are used on our website, the gathering space monitor, on social media, on banners, and in the events we publish in digital newspapers.

Additional thanks go to **Donna Gresh** and **Barbara Santagata** for managing our Facebook and Instagram pages; to **Bryan Ekelund, Donna Gresh, and Linda Swift** for posting the services 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 about upcoming events; **Lisa Flanagan** for designing the Disciple and Bulletin with great artistic creativity; **Tim Chin** for documenting so many church activities with his photos; and **Walter Oudheusden** for making and putting up banners and signs.

Respectfully submitted,
Bryan Ekelund and Donna Gresh

REPORT OF THE DEACONS

The Deacons are charged with developing and overseeing ministries which care for our congregation. Our goal is to lead the congregation to be involved in caring for one another, rather than do the ministries on our own. To that end, we have enlisted congregation members for several of our ministries: Loaves and Fishes, the Prayer Team, the Mental Health Team, the Transportation Team, and the Visitation team. We welcome the participation of the congregation in our ministries. We encourage each member to experience the joy of caring for one of our own, as well as the joy of working with some truly caring people. Deacons continue with the traditional ministries listed below as well as developing and implementing new ministries.

BEREAVEMENT: Deacons help with receptions after a funeral or memorial service. We work with the family by setting out any food and cold drinks that they provide from a caterer, make coffee and tea, and serve food and drinks when needed. There were 5 memorial services this year. As part of the Bereavement Ministry, Deacons send out a set of four books to grieving families at crucial times during the first year after a loss. It is our hope that they provide comfort and peace to the families during this difficult time. This year eight families have received these books. This team is headed by **Judy Chessa** and **Sue Nelson**.



FPCY Bereavement Support

Bereavement Support Group: This year we are very pleased to announce that our Bereavement support group is over one year old and continuing to offer a service to those in our Congregation who have suffered a loss. **Judy Chessa** and **Dolores Vidal-Roy** continue to co-lead the group every 2nd and 4th Monday of each month. We wish to heartily thank Judy for continuing to run this group and we also thank Dolores for her involvement as a co-Leader.

CARDS: This year a total of 420 cards were sent out in all categories. The congregation continues to donate new cards to the ministry. Members over 80 years old were sent cards on average every other month, in addition to birthday, anniversary and get well cards. The congregation was sent Birthday and Anniversary cards in five year intervals as appropriate. Other categories included Congratulations, Thinking of You, Baptism, Sympathy, Graduation, Confirmation, Thank You, etc. Based on the yearly totals for the past two or three years and the fact that the price of stamps will be increasing in January 2024, four rolls of stamps were purchased in 2023 for use in 2024. This ministry thrives because of the dedication of **Nancy Paskin**.



COMMUNICATIONS: This largely involves communication from Deacons to the congregation through write ups for the Disciple and the bulletin, as well as with the Communication Commission for web site info and other items that need publicity. **Judy Chessa** has performed this function for us this year.

ELDER CARE ISSUES PLANNING:

In 2023 The Deacons have developed a series of informational talks about planning for later stages of life. Implementation is underway in this new year of 2024.

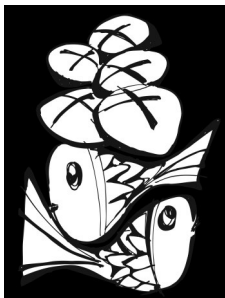
These talks will be given by an Elder Care Lawyer, Maria Correa from Keane and Bean Law firm in White Plains. Our first event took place on January 28, 2024 during Coffee Hour. Maria gave a short overview presentation and then provided pamphlets and time to consult with her. A light lunch was provided. We had to cancel our first planned event on Jan 17, on Assets Protection at Lunch Bunch due to bad weather. This was rescheduled for Lunch Bunch on February 21st, 2024. I

would like to thank our Deacons, **Marilyn Rivera-Alvarez** for helping us to get the legal talks in place and for **Lynda Spring**, for helping us with brain storming, etc. **Heidi Haring** was the coordinator for this ministry. We hope to continue to have Deacons work on any issues that come to our attention and to have congregation members working with us in this area of ministry.



KNITTING MINISTRIES:

- ⇒ The *Knit Togethers* gave 64 hand-made items to several local groups. These included Birthright in Peekskill (baby blankets and hats), The Pantry Plus at FPCY (hats, mittens, scarfs), and Paramount Care in Somers (lap blankets). We had nine members: *Nancy Betz, Teri Froehlich, Gail Frost, Diane Hawlk, Priscilla Lucas, Sue Nelson, Regina P., Janet, and Norean Radke, Chair.*
- ⇒ The *Prayer Shawl Ministry*, led by **Marianna Sherman**. Prayer shawls are given to new Elders and Deacons and to those who are ill or going through a rough time. This year shawls were given. Our knitters: *Marianna Sherman, Terri Froehlich, Sue Nelson, Gail Frost* are our on-site knitters assisted by *Aloha Hicks* and *Odette Watthews* as our offsite contributors.



LOAVES & FISHES: Meals are delivered by a volunteer to a family who has a need either because of a new baby, illness, death in the family or a hospitalization of a spouse or family member. There are four Deacons administering this ministry, each coordinating one three month period. When needed, notification comes from the Pastors or through the office. The assigned Deacon contacts the volunteers and coordinates deliveries of meals through Realm. This year thirteen families received meals. Our four Deacon coordinators were: **Sue Nelson, Mary Vezzuto, Judy Chessa** and **Tim Chin**.

PRAYER MINISTRY: We continue to get many requests from the church prayer request e-mail, through the pastors, through our various groups and sometimes from non-members, who are thankful that we have prayer support available. It is a privilege to watch this ministry continue to be well used. A prayer ribbon is hung for each request. Ribbons are left in the breeze behind the church until the requests are “gone” with the wind, etc. This past year 100+ ribbons were hung. Thank you to Allen Arnwine for doing this. At this point, prayer is done individually by each team member. We have a team of 19 members: I will only ask them to stand to be thanked rather than list them all here. **Heidi K Haring** has coordinated/led this group.



MENTAL HEALTH: 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.

Members: *Susanne Caruso, Jen Burns, Heidi Haring, Eric Kreuter, Tamsin Levine, Chip Low, Dana Mordue, Marilyn Rivera-Alvarado, Tami Seidel, Marina Wheeler, John Winget*

Highlights of 2023 include:

- ⇒ *Mental Health Sunday 5/21/23* – This service sourced scripture from Luke, Isaiah, and 1st and 2nd Corinthians and how these scripture related to the personal statements from **Eric Kreuter, Heidi Haring, Tamsin Levine** and **John Winget**. The “journey to wellness” was the central theme emphasizing the strength of our everlasting God who is always with us and provides comfort during our struggles. Our church displayed a Mental Health Matters Banner and Flag as a reminder that the Month of May is dedicated to the awareness of living with Mental health challenges. We seek to emphasize that seeking support through nurturing mind, body and spirit facilitates mental health.

(Continued on page 12)

- ⇒ *Labyrinth Prayer evening on 9/27/23*: This event centered around the importance of spiritual wellness as a way of supporting our mental and emotional wellbeing. We were lead through meditation, walking the labyrinth, writing our concerns on paper that were burned as our way of lifting these prayers to God, an opportunity to write on ribbons which were lifted up to God through wind, and provided an opportunity to receive group prayer for those wanting to share.
- ⇒ *Companioning work* continues throughout 2023: “Companionship is a relationship responsive to suffering, developed by the Mental Health Chaplaincy in Seattle Washington, it embraces a way of sharing the journey side by side with those struggling or in distress by “creating a safe space, and offering deep respect for each person’s soul, worth and dignity”. Throughout 2023 Companions were identified by Green tags worn during Sunday services to indicate they are available to offer a listening ear and provide help on the healing journey. The Mental Health team has received training (through Pathways to Promise, a Not-For-Profit that was partnered with for support in developing this Mental Health Ministry) and have been available during church services and coffee hours.

TRANSPORTATION: The Deacons provides transportation to those needing rides to medical appointments and to and from Church to attend worship. We have provided approximately 15 rides for medical appointments during 2023. An added blessing is that often rides are arranged without the need for Deacon intervention. In addition, we have set up a sign-up genius for transporting one of our members to and from church. This was initiated late in 2023 and involves the participation of 5 of our members. This will continue into 2024.



VISITATION: The Visitation Team, consisting of the pastors, Deacons and several members at large, continues to carry out a vital aspect of our focus of “radical hospitality” and “intentional fellowship” by helping maintain connections with those who are not able to attend worship regularly (if at all) for reasons of illness, mobility, recovery from surgery, residence in a health care facility, etc. Our 14 team members have made over 60 home visits, 33 contacts by telephone, and 17 contacts by email, text, or other correspondence, for a total of over 110 contacts for the year. Some visits included bringing Communion to members. Our outreach provides opportunities to become aware of other needs such as meals, rides, prayers, or pastoral services which were passed along to the appropriate contacts.

THANKS

It has been a challenging and productive 2023. We want to extend a most enthusiastic word of thanks to all of the members of the Board of Deacons for your flexibility, compassion and faithful service. Our vital ministries have kept going and a new one has started! Thanks to all!

I also want to say a special thank you and farewell to our outgoing class of 2023. We want to heartily thank Allen Arnwine and Lynda Spring for their year of service, filling in for missing Deacons. We needed the extra hands and ideas you provided! I wish you all a nice rest and heartfelt thanks for all your contributions. Heidi Haring will be finishing her 3-year term as well.

I would also like to thank our Co-Moderator, John Winget for his determination and patience with the tech programs. I am thankful for his help and willingness to jump in to help with Deacon activities and Coffee Hours. My job would have been so much harder without you!

Respectfully submitted,
Heidi K. Haring, Co—Moderator

(Continued on page 13)

MISSION COMMISSION

Members: Connie Knapp and Marisa Swift, co-chairs; Debbie Bernardini, Dawna Dennis, Katharine Frase, Heidi Haring, Jeff Kephart, Kaycee Perry, Nance Thompson.

Activities for 2023

Garden of Hope

We got through a very rainy season and late harvest, as a result, with fewer but nonetheless beautiful veggies; except for the late season decimation of the Kale and Chard crops by insects, by-product of the rainy season. Our Garden Manager Janet, had a major health issue during the spring so the garden also got a very late start with no major opening events as usual to galvanize some of the volunteers. There was a shortage of volunteers in general, however, we didn't need to worry about watering so that helped. Our own church provided a small team of regular volunteers who want to work together. We wish to thank **Allen Arnwine** and **Pam Darreff** for their Tuesday mornings work—when it didn't rain. We wish to thank the following: **Jeff Kephart** for a great deal of hard work digging to get our plots ready for planting, to **Dawna Dennis** for filling in for Heidi with many of the early gardening tasks, and to **Sean Bugara**, an expert help when he had time. There was a small but dedicated team of harvesters in August—October. Some were regulars from the Yorktown Methodist church and others were locals, either neighbors, contacts of Janet's or some youth who needed community service hours. Dawna and Heidi were our church's representation for harvest. As a result, the harvests got done and the produce was delivered mostly by Heidi to our pantry where it was also bagged by Dawna and Heidi. Alternating weeks, the produce was delivered to St Mary's when our Pantry wasn't in operation.



There are a few issues that will need to be addressed as the GOH gears up for another season:

- * Will Janet be able to continue to manage this garden? If not her, do we have a replacement—it isn't fair to ask gardening volunteers to oversee the whole garden.
- * Is there still a GOH Board and what is it's role, along with financial records, etc.?
- * There is an interest in installing automatic watering, which would alleviate some of the volunteer shortage for watering. However, this is an expensive acquisition which would require a grant writer and a loan. Do we have enough dedicated leaders and volunteers to continue to produce high quality produce for the Food Pantries as we have been functioning; is it worth the investment?

Submitted by Dawna Dennis and Heidi K. Haring

One Pantry 2023

The client volume at the Pantry in 2023, while prone to oscillations from one week to the next, remained very high. The increase may be attributable to several factors: ongoing high price of groceries and other household expenses, changes to social support programs, and (perhaps) the positive view of our pantry held by our clients. On the third point, a very high percentage of our new clients are related or friends with existing clients; we also saw the return of former clients we'd not seen since 2021. While we started the year in the outdoor, pre-packed, drive-by distribution model, we transitioned to indoor "choice" distribution in August. The "choice" model allows clients to select foods their family likes or needs. The choice model also makes the distribution of specialty items (including gluten free, dairy-free and unusual foods) more straightforward, which enables us to better use the donations we receive. The choice model is a little slower (making a decision does take some time) and involves walking throughout our building. For a handful of clients with severe mobility issues, we devised a modified drive-up model if they preferred a pre-packed bag to the walking.

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In addition to our monthly distribution of diapers and eldercare supplies, and our annual distribution of school supplies and hand-knit items (supported by the **Knit Togethers** and donations from the community), we were able to work with a local Eagle Scout to distribute children's books, to the delight of our clients.

We are thrilled with the expanded team of volunteers who have come on Fridays for preparation and on Saturdays for distribution. The on-line signup method has allowed us to do better planning and to ensure that we are both well staffed and can make good use of volunteer time.

Feeding Westchester continues to be our lifeline for food supply, augmented by shopping at Acme, BJ's and Restaurant Depot for missing items. Feeding Westchester has continued to make most bulk foods free of charge throughout the year, including the off-week free pallet of fresh produce. In September, a collaboration between Feeding Westchester and Telemundo at a local Stop and Shop produced 1235 donations for us; we are so grateful to our volunteers to have been able to staff both that effort and a food pantry on the same day.

We continue to have unbelievable support from the congregation, the community at large, and local businesses, houses of worship, schools and civic groups in terms of both financial and food drive contributions. A partial list includes **Wilkins' Farm, Meadows Farm, the Garden of Hope, the Yorktown Federation of Teachers**, the monthly food drives of the **Knights of Columbus at St Patrick's, Yorktown for Justice, Uncle Guiseppa's, the Elks Club, the Lions Club**, local politicians, many school and sporting groups, and local families who created their own food drives or charity sales initiatives on our behalf. The ongoing support of our "Item of the Month" has enabled us to offer canned fruit, pasta, cake mix and breakfast cereal to our clients (not to mention Turkeys!) when our other sources ran dry. We are also grateful to **Sue Nelson** for purchasing diapers all year, and to the **Fang family** (Louise, Marina and Janice) and the **Bentley family** for making the deliveries to our elderly neighbors at Beaver Ridge.



Last year we reported that we were surprised that we had more clients in 2022 than in 2021 (18,485 people, 4589 families and 145,000 pounds of food vs 16,000 / 3900 / 125,000 pounds). As noted above, 2023 was even higher – the annual totals were 19401 people from 4871 families, and over 155,000 pounds of food. Thanksgiving 2023 helped 1200 people – an all-time record. Thanks to all the generosity and Feeding Westchester's support, we continued to operate very efficiently (less than 8 cents per pound for the year), and are in good financial standing for 2024. We continue to co-lead the Yorktown Food Security Task Force sponsored by the Town Board of Yorktown and look forward to further collaboration with FPCY's Hunger Action Congregation effort.

2023 will bring its own challenges, and we will continue to rely on the congregation's support in prayer, financial support, food donations, and volunteer efforts. We are so very grateful to be able to help our hungry neighbors with your support. Thank you all.

Katharine Frase and Debbie Bernardini, FPCY Pantry Co-Leaders

Hunger Action Congregation, Sub-committee – Chair – Jeff Kephart

The Hunger Action Congregation team is responsible for overseeing the Jan Peek House and Noontime Meal programs and identifying opportunities for Food Justice advocacy.

On the fourth Saturday of each month, 3 families work together to prepare dinner for approximately 40 clients at Jan Peek House. On the second Wednesday of each month, we provide lunch to as many as 70 clients at the Salvation Army headquarters in Peekskill via the Noontime Meal program.

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We are grateful to the many Jan Peek House and Noontime Meal volunteers who helped us in 2023 with these important missions that help us understand and serve our neighbors.

Jan Peek House

January: Jennifer Rowe-Behun, Elaine Heyde and Sheri & Mark Gausepohl

February: Barbara Wanamaker & friends

March: Nance Thomson, Carolyn Braverman, Sue Caruso

April: Jeff Kephart & Donna Gresh, Dawna Dennis & Kurt, Bryn, Ansley and Paige Edelmann, and Courtney Donnelly

May: Gloria, Bud, Amy and Beth Coccodrilli

June: Nance Thomson and Sue Caruso & friend

July: Liza Placido and Margaret O'Neill

August: Miranda McGill and her Girl Scout Troop

September: Christine Lazarus & friends

October: Nance Thomson, Barbara Wanamaker and Nicole DeCintio

November: Nance Thomson (coordinating with Acme catering) and Donna Gresh

December: Donna Gresh and Jeff Kephart (coordinating with Acme catering) and an amazing number of Christmas cookie bakers who together baked well over 400 cookies, including Ruth Barton, Alice Chin, Gloria Coccodrilli, Monica Duffy, Sheri & Mark Gausepohl, Donna Gresh, Heidi Haring, Jessica Mayes, Dick Mills, Jeanette Payton, Barbara Wanamaker, Emily & Megan Whalen, and a few other anonymous bakers.



Noontime Meal

January: Charles and Ruth Barton

February: Sheri Gausepohl

March: Donna Gresh and Jeff Kephart

April: Donna Gresh and Jeff Kephart

May: Donna Gresh and Jeff Kephart

June: Donna Gresh and Jeff Kephart

July: Heidi Haring

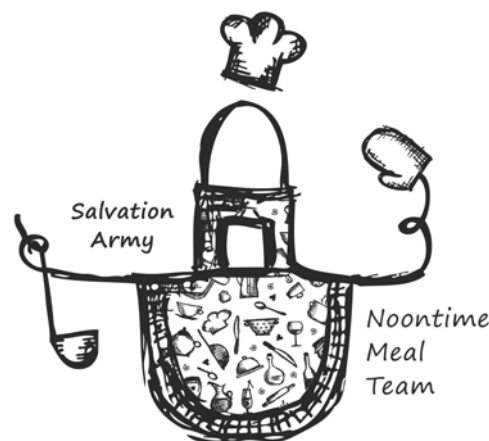
August: Donna Gresh and Jeff Kephart

September: Ruud Haring

October: Charles and Ruth Barton

November: Charles and Ruth Barton

December: Charles and Ruth Barton



We are looking for volunteers for Jan Peek and Noontime Meal for 2024.

If you're interested, please contact Jeff Kephart at jeffkephart@gmail.com or use the signups at

JanPeek <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050e45aea62fa1fb6-janpeek1>

Noontime Meal <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050E45AEA62FA1FB6-46970556-noontime>

Food Justice Advocacy

On March 19th, we ran an Offering of Letters campaign organized by Bread for the World, a faith-based advocacy organization whose mission is “to educate and equip people to advocate for policies and programs that can help end hunger in the US and around the world.” The purpose of the campaign was to encourage US senators and representatives to support a Farm Bill that will help build a healthy, equitable and sustainable US food and agricultural system and provide nutrition assistance to millions of Americans through programs such as SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). The letter writing campaign was a resounding success. 78 different individuals wrote a total of over 165 letters addressed to Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Senator Chuck Schumer, or Representative Mike Lawler.

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FPCY Intergenerational Mission Trip 2023—July 26 - August 5, 2023

Attendees: *Kithara Buccarelli, Celine Mack, Karen Mack, Sam Low, Chip Low, Kaycee Perry, Heidi Haring, Ruud Haring, and Marisa Swift*

This summer, nine members of FPCY went on a Mission Trip to New Bern, North Carolina and worked with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Hurricane Florence and the flooding decimated the central North Carolina Coast in 2018. Areas that had never flooded before were under feet of water. In the New Bern area alone, there were more than 4,200 homes and over 1,500 businesses flooded. Even after 5 years, 400 homes still need help. We worked with the CCDRA, the Craven County Disaster Recovery Alliance, one of only two organizations left in the area doing storm recovery. Mr. Lynch only asked the CCDRA to fix his front porch. Upon further inspection of his home, and after someone fell through the floor, they decided to give Mr. Lynch more than he asked for and make his hurricane-destroyed house into a home. We, along with all the other groups before us and the work of the CCDRA, were able to give him a place where he could safely enjoy life. We painted, added trim and baseboards, finished the kitchen, and re-framed a door. Our collective efforts aimed to significantly improve Mr. Lynch's living environment and contribute to the long-term recovery and resilience of the community, which continues to rebuild after the devastation caused by Hurricane Florence.



Respectfully submitted,
Connie Knapp and Marisa Swift, Co-Chair

WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMISSION

Members in 2023:

Jane Amato, Debbie Amorese, Garrett Artman (Director of Music Ministry), Karen Gerth, Bill Herman (Co-chair), Christie Herman, Rev. Chip Low (Co-Pastor), Sara Mann, Nathan Perry (Co-chair), Barbara Santagata, Rev. Tami Seidel (Co-Pastor), Ann Timmons.

About the Commission:

The Worship and Music Commission oversees the needs of our faith community as it gathers for worship in the Sanctuary, at home, or even out of doors. 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**, and planning for appropriate decoration of the Sanctuary (such as banners, candles, flowers, themed décor, and greens).

Additionally, the Worship and Music Commission oversees the musical life of our congregation, including service music, the **Adult Choir**, the **Adult and Youth Bell Choirs**, Special Choirs (**Him Singers, Treble Choir**, etc.) **Drum Circle, The Bullroarers**, The **FPCY Orchestra** and the **Concert Series**. And anything else the creative and brilliant mind of **Garrett Artman** might conceive.

The **Tech Team** also falls under the purview of Worship and Music and provides for both live-streaming of services as well as the audio-visual aids to in-person worship (such as microphones, lighting, projections, etc.). The Tech team provides live streaming for all Sunday worship and most special services, enabling our members and guests to remain connected to the church regardless of our ability to gather face-to-face.

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2023 highlights:

- We have returned to all Pre-pandemic practices in worship with the exception of communion by intinction
- Nearly every service was live-streamed both on Facebook and Youtube, (pesky technical problems such as a truck severing the internet connection to the building.) and memorial services/funerals have a streaming option now as well.
- The hunt continues for interested prospective tech team members. I'm talking to you.
- Building lay leadership is one of FPCY's four strategic focuses. We strengthened our lay leadership by offering a lay liturgist training session, to prepare for lay liturgist opportunities during Chip's Sabbatical Part Three, plus the pastors' summer travel. We intend to continue to "flex our lay leadership muscles" on a regular basis, even when the pastors are both present. Ann Timmons has graciously agreed to be our Lay Liturgist Coordinator. We also enjoyed preaching from Connie Knapp, Katharine Frase, Liam McAuliffe, Charles Barton, Angela Madalone, Casey Carbone, Susan DeGeorge, Nancy Neal, and Abby Cross.
- Garrett ran a series of intergenerational events and music programs for youth – no experience required!
- The Christmas pageant featured the children performing and leading the Congregation in a spirited re-telling of The Greatest Story ever Told...Part one.
- A final highlight of the year was the Advent candle-lighting by new members and their families (new as of the last few years).

Worship themes:

- ⇒ **Lent:** Incarnation on the Cross: God is still with us
- ⇒ **Stewardship:** G.I.F.T. Growing In Faith Together
- ⇒ **Advent:** Holy Darkness

Special Services:

- Ash Wednesday (2/22)
- Confirmation Sunday (03/26)
- Holy Week (04/02-04/09)
- Earth Day Worship (04/23)
- Legacy Sunday (05/07)
- Celebrate the Gifts of Women (05/14)
- Mental Health Awareness (05/21)
- Capital Campaign Celebration (06/04)
- Graduate Recognition Sunday (06/04)
- Faith Formation Sunday (06/11)
- Celebrate the Gifts of Men (06/18)
- Pride Sunday (06/25)
- Mid-Year Stewardship Celebration (07/09)
- Church Picnic Sunday (09/10)
- Blessing of the Backpacks (09/17)
- World Communion Sunday (10/01)
- Blessing of the Animals (10/01)
- Commissioning of Connie Knapp as CRE (10/22)
- Peace and Justice Sunday (11/12)
- Longest Night Service (12/21)
- Christmas Eve Services (12/24)
- Commissionings, Ordinations, Baptisms

In Gratitude:

- ♪ **Karen Gerth** continues to be a steadfast leader and contributor to all aspects of our work, in particular the usher team coordination, organizing communion, wrangling banners, and serving on the tech team. She is also a joy to work with!
- ♪ Speaking of the **Tech Team**, we are grateful for the whole crew and their tireless commitment to working out the seemingly never-ending unexpected curveballs the technology throws our way! Much, much gratitude goes to the
- ♪ **Usher Team** for being the first smiling faces our guests see upon arrival, and managing the offering and sanctuary tidy-up after the services, among other often invisible tasks!
- ♪ We also very much appreciate those who helped at the annual Sanctuary Greening and De-greening. A huge thanks to **Matt Hager** for coordinating the greening, as well as to the **Wilkins/Pratt** families for their generous gifts of trees, wreaths, garlands, and other sanctuary decor. Thank you so much to our lay liturgists and lay preachers for truly stepping up in 2023,
- ♪ and to **Ann Timmons** for serving as our lay liturgist coordinator.
- ♪ Thanks also goes to **Jane Amato** who graciously did "the hard thing" and delivered a wonderful "Time with Children".

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To all who contribute musically to our church life: we are so grateful for you and the time you give in rehearsal and service. **Garrett Artman**'s creativity, spirit, and wisdom seem to know no bounds. A well-deserved shout-out goes to **Erik and Carol Jensen** for their tremendous help with the handbell rehearsals – and to our choir music librarian, **Christie Herman**, for her tireless work behind the scenes.

Christmas Pageant Thanks:

With Christmas Eve falling on Sunday this year, the Christmas Pageant became the sermon of our 10:30 am worship service. And it was a thoroughly joyful and interactive worship experience for all! “*The Greatest Story Ever Told, Part I*” was written and directed by **Bill Herman**, to whom we owe many thanks for his hours of work and love that he pours in to every one of our Christmas pageants. This one was no exception! The cast at the front of the house included: **Clara and James Cross, Julia and Caroline Angione, Henry and Ruth Weaver**; and **Addison Reide**. We are so thankful these eager and talented young cast members! The remainder of the cast was everyone else in the sanctuary, who played the parts of Mary and Joseph, shepherds and kings, prophets and angels and sheep. Who knew that much congregational participation was even possible? We owe many thanks to **Bill, Abby Cross, and Garrett Artman** for their time, support and creative contributions to this wonderful worship experience. Huge thanks also to the parents who supported the Christmas Pageant by bringing their children to rehearsals during an especially busy December season, and by bringing snacks, helping with costumes, and striking the set after rehearsals and the service.

Special thanks as always goes to **Lisa Flanagan** for her administrative support, and to **John Harrigan and Kevin Barnes**, for all their work to keep the Sanctuary in order! Oh, and **Chip and Tami**. They know what they did.

Respectfully submitted,
Nathan Perry and Bill Herman (Co-chairs)

MUSIC MINISTRIES

Year four has closed and year five begins as your director of music ministry. I am filled with gratitude and joy as I reflect on the musical journey we have shared throughout the past year. It is with great pleasure that I present the annual report for the Music Ministry at FPCY for the year 2023.

Celebrating Unity through Harmony: A Year in Review

Worship Services: Our musical offerings have continued to enhance our worship experiences, creating an atmosphere of reverence, joy, and connection. From traditional hymns to contemporary anthems, our diverse repertoire has resonated with the hearts of our congregation. You may have noticed a few new groups and a few new chords up at the organ, with some (mostly successful) hymn interludes and reharmonizations. The goal being to enhance the words of each hymn. One such example is a favorite hymn of mine “God You Spin the Whirling Planets” I will start off with a *twinkling* effect painting stars and whirling soundscapes.

Special Events: This year, we welcomed the Old Saybrook High School Chamber Singers and Bangor Area Youth Chorus to collaborate with our own FPCY Choir and give a “Making Music for a Lifetime” choral concert. This concert was a particular highlight for me as a former educator of both groups and another humble beginning to offering concerts here at the church. More concerts coming in 2024!

Ensemble Growth: I am delighted to share that our after-worship ensembles have seen an increase in participation and commitment. The dedication of our members has been inspiring, and I am excited about the continued growth of these vital ministries. Thank you to our FPCY Orchestra, Drum Circle, Good Samaritones, and Treble Choir. Many more offerings are on their way.

Music Education and Outreach: Our commitment to musical education and outreach programs have been a priority this year. In addition to the Taghkanic Chorale who has used our space for the past three years, the Westchester Children's

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Chorus now rehearses and performs in our space; Providing opportunities for musical experiences and education to students grade 4-12. This would not be possible without the organization of our new music wing in the church. Thank you to all who helped move and organize this shift in building usage.

Acknowledgments and Gratitude: I extend my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated musicians, singers, volunteers, and everyone who has contributed to the success of our music ministry. Your passion and commitment have been the driving force behind our achievements. To name a few- **Ann Timmons**, our de facto choir manager and part-time librarian keeps everyone up to date and on the same page with rehearsal markings, what we rehearsed, what's coming up, and general accountability. Thank you, Ann, for keeping us all a little bit more organized with our music!

Christie Virtue-Herman, our music librarian, makes sure we have what we need to have and deals with my (many) pivots in musical taste and anthem selection. Christie, thank you for your support in all my visions over the past few years and helping me through thick and thin of our musical life here. Our bell program does not exist without the help of **Erik Jensen**. His organization, investment of time, wisdom, and tenacity makes it possible for me to do my job. Erik, you have my thanks as a colleague, friend, and Beethoven appreciator.

I also express my gratitude to the pastoral team, church leadership, our flagship choir and bell choir ensembles, and the entire congregation for your unwavering support. Together, we have created a musical tapestry that reflects the beauty of our faith and the strength of our community.

Looking Ahead: A Vision for the Future: As we embark on a new year, I am excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. Our Music Ministry will continue to evolve, embracing new musical expressions while remaining rooted in the traditions that make our worship unique. I invite each of you to join us on this musical journey, as we seek to deepen our connection with the divine through the universal language of music.

Please mark your calendars for our upcoming concerts featuring Dr. Alexandra Beliakovich on piano! Time TBD

Saturday, April 27, 2024:

Solo Piano Recital

Music by D. Scarlatti, L. van Beethoven, J. Field, S. Barber and F. Chopin

Saturday, June 1, 2024:

Chamber Music Concert

With Carl Gutowski and Zachary Pulse, oboe

Music by J.S. Bach, M. Dring and others

Respectfully Submitted,

Garrett Artman, Director of Music Ministry



Dr. Alexandra Beliakovich on piano

FAITH FORMATION COMMISSION

Overview:

The Faith Formation Commission is responsible for the development and implementation of educational programs that address the needs and interests of our entire church family. From the youngest child to the oldest senior, our mission is to guide all on their spiritual journey and have some fun in the process! The following sub-committees fall under this commission: Sunday School, Faith4Life (adult education), Youth Ministry, Confirmation, Church Library, CrossGen/Intergenerational Ministry, and the Christmas Pageant.

2023 Commission Members: *Jean Post-Winget and Andrew Cross, co-chairs; Connie Knapp, Nance Thompson, Nicole DeCintio, Susy Rishel, Miranda McGill, Pam Angione, Carol Jensen, Kaycee Perry.*

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Sunday School:

Classes are currently available for Children and youth from kindergarten through 12th grade. We hope to expand that to add a preschool aged class. Classes meet Sundays at 9:15am for an hour during the regular school year. Starting with this current program year, all of our children's classes have returned to being fully in-person. A hybrid option is available under special circumstances, but has not been needed this year. It has been wonderful being back to "normal" and connecting and relating in a meaningful way again, in person, with our children and youth. We currently have 33 students registered for Sunday School, from kindergarten through 12th grade.

The "Shine" curriculum is used for our 5 year olds through 4th graders, who also enjoy music time in their class with our Music Director, **Garrett Artman**, and **Abby Cross**. Our 5th and 6th graders use the "Connect" curriculum and our 7th and 8th graders (FaithX) are currently using the "Echo The Story" curriculum, which is a study of the Bible from Creation to Revelation. A major change in our Confirmation Class was implemented during the 2022-2023 school year. Our youth no longer go directly into a Confirmation class after finishing 8th grade. After much discussion and discernment, it was determined that we need to give our young members the opportunity to demonstrate and also to discern readiness and a desire to take the step to Confirmation and also to decide for themselves if they would like to continue on in the High School "Fathom" Class. All are welcome to join our Fathom Class irrespective of whether or not they choose to be, or have been, confirmed. We are delighted to report that there is a strong group of 10 high school youth registered for Fathom!



Included in our Church School faculty are the following: **Kaycee Perry & Jessica Mayes** (Fathom Class); **Nicole DeCintio & Susy Rishel** (Faith X Class); **Bill Herman, Alice Chin & Megan Whelan** (Connect Class); **Joanna Marcos, Jean Post-Winget & Diane Yarris** (Shine Class). We are incredibly thankful to and for all of the teachers for their love and commitment to our children and youth, as they share each week in this ongoing faith formation experience! This programmatic year, our Sunday School Coordinators are **Miranda McGill** and **Pam Angione**. We are so grateful for their commitment and constancy in coordinating for us every week!! We also offer a special thank you to **Garrett** and **Abby** for sharing their love of music with the Shine Class and to our Co-Pastor, **Tami Seidel** for her guidance throughout the year!!! Most of all, thank you to our children and our youth who are inquisitive and insightful, and keep us laughing and learning along with them!

Faith4Life:

We offered many learning opportunities through our Faith4Life program in 2023.

Studies this year have included:

- *Signs & Wonders*, by Amy-Jill Levine, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays in January and February
- *Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts and Outlaws*, by Adam Hamilton, a study of the Gospel of Luke for Lent on Thursdays and Sundays
- *Short Stories by Jesus*, by Amy-Jill Levine, exploring the parables of Jesus, on Thursdays and Sundays from Easter until June
- *Belonging*, by Karoline M. Lewis, a book centered around the Samaritan woman, on Sundays in September and October
- *Bible Stories for Grown Ups*, by Josh Scott, on Thursdays in September and October



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- *Life Worth Living: A Guide to What Matters Most*, by Miroslav Volf, Matthew Croasmun and Ryan McAnnally-Linz, on Sunday evenings from October through until Christmas
- *Reading John for Dear Life: A Spiritual Walk with the Fourth Gospel*, by Jamie Clark-Soles, on Wednesday evenings in October into February 2024
- *Do I Stay Christian?* by Brian McLaren, on Tuesday mornings from October into January, 2024

Classes were led by **Connie Knapp, Chip** and **Tami**.

The Women’s Circle follows the Horizon curriculum published by Presbyterian Women. The 2022-2023 curriculum was *Celebrating Sabbath: Accepting God’s Gift of Rest and Delight*, which we read from January to June of 2023. Starting in September, we began the 2023-2024 curriculum, *Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts*.

We are grateful for those who participate as well as those who lead, with extra special gratitude to our inspired and inspiring F4L leader, **Connie Knapp!**

Centering Prayer:

Through the Worship Team, there is also a weekly offering of silent prayer: focusing on breath and it’s power to connect us to our God. This occurs each Wednesday night at 7:00 led by **Abby Cross**. This has been a steady group for at least a year now. It complements the Deacons’ focus on prayer for our congregation and offers alternative ways to pray together. Thanks to Abby! PS: There is also a Labyrinth in the back of our church for walking prayer.

Church Library:

Enhance your spiritual journey through reading! The church library has continued to be maintained by **Carol Jensen**. If you missed a Bible study or a Faith4Life class, stop by to sign out a copy of the book used during the sessions. Many thanks to Carol for keeping our library up-to-date and answering questions as needed!

CrossGen/Intergenerational Ministry: The CrossGen planning team: *Debbie Hager, Abby Cross, Connie Knapp, Tami Seidel, Nance Thompson* and the Holy Spirit, planned 4 different CrossGen programs in 2023. CrossGen Wednesday is an evening program of fellowship, music, games, scripture and dinner for all ages. This past year we have had attendees from 6 months old to 90 years young come together to make new friends and share in a meal. Stay tuned for future events which we hope will start on March 13th of 2024 – *Nance Thompson*



CrossGen Wednesday

Vacation Bible School:

VBS had been on hold since 2020. This is a summer program that traditionally brought together the children and youth of our church, the United Methodist Church, and St. Andrew’s Lutheran Church. Sadly, neither of those congregations were prepared to host or to provide any leadership for a VBS event. After discernment as well as discussion about the realities of our post-pandemic world and the volunteer intensive nature of planning and running a VBS program, the Commission found it necessary and prudent to remove VBS from our planning for the foreseeable future.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Post-Winget and Andy Cross, Co-Chairs

YOUTH MINISTRIES

2023 was a transitional year for youth ministry at FPCY. In March, we said a fond farewell to Stephanie Hare as our Director of Youth & Intergenerational Ministries for the last 7 ½ years. In May, Kaycee Perry signed on as Interim Youth Ministry support person for up to 10 hours/week. A Youth Ministry Transition Team (Jean Post-Winget, Andy Cross, Bridget Bentley, Debbie Hager and Megan Whalen) was formed to evaluate our needs moving forward and search for a replacement. Due to shifting needs and financial constraints, the position was down-sized and advertised, but has been unsuccessful in attracting a qualified candidate.



Since then, Tami, Chip and Kaycee have been trying to keep the rhythm going and to recruit a core group of adults that can help with the planning and staffing of youth events. We still need a larger support system that doesn't rely on parents as much since we want the kids to have their own space.

Over the summer, the Youth Room moved from Room 1 to Room 14 (the former music room). With a new floor and fresh coat of paint, the new Youth Room is nicely organized and inviting. Many thanks to Kaycee for cleaning out the closets in Room 1, sorting and donating the contents and organizing the new space! We were able to start Fathom class in there this fall, and in the near future, the Youth Group will be painting one of the walls to complete the renovation.



Kaycee Perry

Youth Group

Youth Group meets once or twice a month with both our Middle School and High School youth. Most of our meetings start off with making a meal together and then sharing an activity. We've made tacos, pizza, pasta, chili, hot dogs, mac n cheese, brownies, and even baked S'mores when our back-to-school campfire got rained out. This year we've celebrated Earth Day, proudly walked in Yorktown Pride Walk, had campfires (one successful, one rained out and brought indoors,) gardened together, had a pool party, blessed animals, and then ended 2023 with Christmas Caroling.



We started 2024 with a bang! On January 27th we had 20+ Youth and adults, gather together in the church kitchen to make Chili, Rice, Salad, Corn bread, and Brownies.

A group then traveled to Jan Peek and helped serve to the 40 homeless that come to Jan peek for meals each night. Between Jan Peek and our cooking together during our regular youth group nights, the youth are getting to be pretty familiar with the new kitchen setup and washing system.



High School Fathom Class

We finished the 1st year of the High School Fathom class in June 2023. Youth in grades 9-12 meet during the education hour at 9:15 on Sunday mornings, and it is a very successful and well attended class. Jessica Mayes and Kaycee Perry are the current teacher, but they are looking for a 3rd person to help teach and round out the team.



So far this year we have discussed the Bible (who wrote it and when), women in the Bible, and Jewish holidays starting with Shabbat, into Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and then Sukkot. Unfortunately, the Israel/Gaza war began right during this time, so Chip and Tami came in to discuss the history between Israel and Palestine and answer any questions they had. We have also talked about the symbols of Nativity, Heaven & Hell, and touched slightly on the Book of Revelation. We tend to go with the flow of the group and choose our curriculum based on what the kids want to talk about in the moment. We hope to have the class join the Faith 4 Life adult class across the hall in the Library for a few Sundays this Spring, so that they can see what it's like in the adult classes and feel comfortable joining when they get older.

Confirmation

With Stephanie Hare's help, confirmation also transitioned from a year-long class for all 9th-graders to a more intentional, invitation only class for high school youth who are committed to membership in the church. Youth need to demonstrate ongoing participation in some combination of education, worship, mission and fellowship activities at FPCY and then to complete the 5-week intensive class with the Co-Pastors that focuses on what it means to be part of a faith community, a Presbyterian, and a member of FPCY. In 2023, we welcomed 8 youth (7 by affirmation of faith and 1 by transfer of membership) as active members of FPCY.



2023 Confirmation Class

Respectfully submitted,
Kaycee Perry, Interim Youth Ministry Support and Tami

STEWARDSHIP COMMISSION

Members: *Jane Amato, Gloria Coccodrilli, Pam Darreff, Connie Knapp, Rev. Chip Low, Jessica Mayes, Nancy Paskin, Rev. Tami Seidel, Lynda Spring.*

Stewardship Campaign:

Our focus is on inspirational stewardship that grows generosity and gratitude as spiritual practices to manage well the gifts God has given us including time, talents, treasure and terra.

In the fall of 2023, the Annual Stewardship Campaign's theme was "G.I.F.T: Giving In Faith Together." Our gifts of prayer, engagement and giving has enabled our mission and ministry to continue and expand. Our abundant and generous gifts are God's blessings to us. May we be grateful, showing our generosity as our way of living, sharing in the responsibility as stewards to maintain and live in a world of God's love. We are so grateful for the generosity of our members and their commitment of financial resources! Compared to many years, 2023 was a challenging year with inflationary pressures and uncertainty in the financial markets. Nevertheless, our church remained generous in giving!

In 2023, \$ [REDACTED] was pledged by 104 pledgers. [REDACTED] was received through pledges; non-pledged gifts of \$ [REDACTED] (including loose plate offerings of \$ [REDACTED] and pledge overpayments of \$ [REDACTED] totaling \$ [REDACTED] received in 2023.

Gratitude Practice: One important way that the Stewardship Commission expresses our gratitude is by writing thank-you notes to contributors who have participated in our ministry and mission together. This year, we sent over 160 notes! Even with all those notes, we realize that we have not been able to recognize everyone's contributions, for which we are very thankful!

Membership and New Members: In 2023, we resumed hybrid New Members classes in the spring and fall, and welcomed 11 new members to the congregation (and 7 confirmands)! **Jane Amato** led coordination of these classes with the Co-Pastors. We have implemented a new program of Buddies & Shepherds, thanks to **Christie Herman**. Members of our congregation will intentionally welcome and assist new members as they acclimate into the life of our church. We have also continued to have a Faith 4 Life class included in our New Member process. Thanks to **Connie Knapp** for her leadership with this.

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. This year, we remembered our college Freshman in October by sending a package of goodies along with well wishes as they adjust to college life. All our college students received gift cards before Christmas break. To help invigorate our college students for finals, a package of goodies was mailed to them in May. Throughout the year, we communicated with them that their FPCY family was thinking of them. We also have invited the congregation to assist us by donating and packaging goodies, and contributing monetarily to defer the increasing mailing costs. This outreach keeps the connection with our young adults and service members who are away from home.

Green Faith/Earth Care: **Connie Knapp** reports the Green Team's activities to Stewardship. Earth Care congregations are recertified annually. We were successfully recertified in 2023. During this past year, we coordinated the Earth Day worship service. Our theme was "God is Still With Us in Creation."

HRP Green has been awarded a Legacy Grant to support work on racial justice and environmental issues. Connie is on the Racial Justice Team developing materials for educating members of the Presbytery and has completed a course to be a Certified Trainer by Brownicity, the organization that conducted the anti-racism training. Working with members of the Racial Justice Team, the Presbytery Committee on Representation and members of HRP Green, Connie was part of the team that led a pilot of the Presbytery's anti-racism training last May.

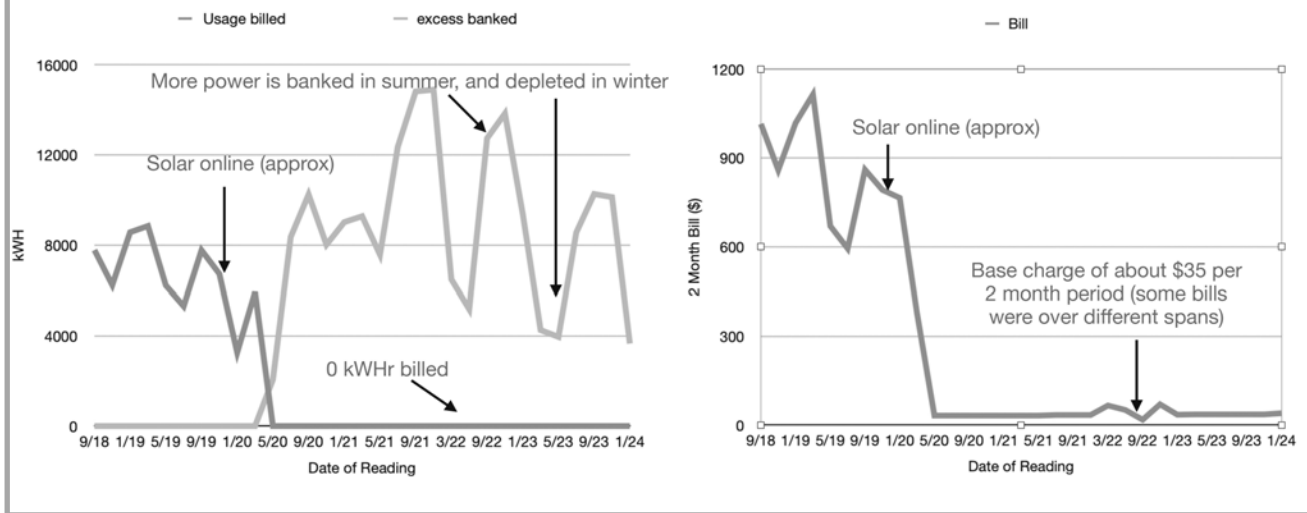
The Green Team will continue to look for opportunities to work with the congregation on environmental issues.

Report on Solar Energy Production: Report on Solar Energy Production: Beginning in 2020 we started "banking" the excess electricity that we generate from our solar panels. As of January 2024, we had excess (banked) generation of about 3,700 kWh. In 2023 we made the decision to have our heat pumps be the primary heat source in those rooms that had them, and to have our oil burners be secondary in those rooms and primary in the rest of the building (s). We paid 20% less on oil than had been in the budget for 2023, and 23% less than in 2022, despite the increased price for a gallon of heating oil. We attribute those savings to the change in strategy as well as favorable weather and the implementation of better programmable thermostats. Our banked credits have continued to be applied to our increased electricity usage. The graph (next page) shows the impact of our solar panels for our main electricity circuit (the CE building).
~Donna Gresh, Katharine Frase, and Dick Seymour

Planned Giving: The church welcomes gifts under wills and trusts, as well as contributions of cash or stock to the endowment fund, which provides a perpetual source of income for our ministries and mission. The Stewardship Commission has information on how members may consider long-term giving, or please visit the Planned Giving page on the website at <https://fpcyorktown.org/giving/planned-estate-giving/>.

(Continued on page 25)

Solar Panel Effect on Electricity Usage Sept 2018 through Jan 2024 (Solar went online in late 2019)



Special Offerings:

One Great Hour of Sharing:

100% PCUSA

Easter Offering:

100% FPCY – Mission Trips

Pentecost:

60% to Presbytery + 40% FPCY – Alliance for Safe Kids

Peace & Global Witness:

75% PC(USA) + 25% FPCY - Bread for the World

Thanksgiving Offering:

100% FPCY – Christmas Extras for Pantry Clients

Christmas Joy Offering:

100% PCUSA

Other Benevolence This Year:

PDA (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance) - Turkey/Syria Earthquake Relief

Veterans Recognition: Another area historically led by the Stewardship Commission is veterans' recognition. Previously headed by Tim Lupfer, the Stewardship Commission this year continued to honor our veterans on Memorial Day and Veterans' Day with Disciple articles to emphasize the importance of these holidays and recognize the many veterans in the church bulletin as well as power-points in our services.

This past year, we were asked to discern in a covenant with God through prayers, engagement and giving. The Stewardship Commission is amazed by the generosity and commitment of this congregation! Thank you for all your gifts of time, talent and treasure. Through God, we all have received His gifts and blessings. Through our gifts, we can continue to serve Him with love and gratitude.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Amato and Jessica Mayes, Co-Chairs

OPERATIONS COMMISSION

Members: *Bud Coccodrilli, Deanna Collins, Matt Hager, Walter Oudhuesden, Tami Seidel, Dick Seymour, Ian Spence. Co-chairs Katharine Frase and Vinny Wallace*

Purpose: The Operations Commission is responsible for maintaining and improving our premises and by doing so to support FPCY's ministries.

2023 Highlights:

2023 was a challenge financially for Operations, as inflation continued to affect our contracted service prices and particularly the cost of heating oil. Careful monitoring of our oil consumption, increased reliance on the heat pumps installed through the Capital Campaign, and a mild winter resulted in a lower financial impact than we had feared. This enabled us to complete some deferred grounds maintenance tasks within our budget envelope.

Thanks to Dick Seymour, Jerry Amato and Bud Coccodrilli, the appearance of our graveyard has been dramatically improved. The team repaired broken tombstones, re-righted leaning tombstones, and with help from John Decker, began the process of power washing tombstones as well. The overall effect is truly wonderful, and we are grateful for the time and significant effort this required.

With support from memorial funds, a new garden was installed near the office walkway, and the butterfly garden opposite it was refurbished. A new prayer pole, painted by Jane Amato, was installed. New signage (created by Dick Seymour) was installed in several locations, including a registry at the labyrinth.

For many years we have had concerns with drainage / flooding of the east sidewalk that runs between the graveyard and the CE building. A new drainage solution, including the refurbishment of the sidewalk itself, has greatly reduced the flooding risk, even as we experience more frequent heavy rain events. Operations was also engaged for several drainage related issues at the Manse.

Another long term project for the year was the detailed tracing of circuitry throughout our building. In addition to updated and accurate signage within our breaker boxes, this work will enable us to know how to navigate from a troublesome outlet (for example) back to the controlling breaker.

It was a delight to be able to hold real Spring and Fall Workdays again, and we are so grateful for everyone who came to help us on those days (especially in the rain!) as well as for small jobs throughout the year. While the list of these small jobs is too long for this report, it is important to document that in every category (heating, cooling, electrical, plumbing, flooring, grounds maintenance, etc.) there are issues to be solved continually throughout the year. Operations also supported the Capital Campaign in the music room / youth room reconfiguration and supported the Pantry in improving the cooling of the pantry storage room.



Cemetery Monument Improvements



New & Refurbished Office Entrance Gardens



East Walkway Drainage Repair

As is clear from these highlights, we are so very grateful for the dedication of our Commission members, particularly **Dick Seymour** and **Bud Coccodrilli**, and a special thank you to **Jerry Amato**, who while not a member of the commission has been dedicated and essential to so many of the projects this year. We welcome new members to the Commission – we have a good time!

Respectfully submitted,
Vinny Wallace and Katharine Frase, Co-Chairs

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

2018 - 2021 Capital Campaign -- Grounded in Gratitude Forward in Faith

The Capital Campaign Project Management Team (CPMT): *Katharine Frase, Chair; Donna Gresh, Chip Low, Tami Seidel, Vinny Wallace, Randy Pratt, Matt Hager, Kevin McAuliffe.*



Most of the Capital Campaign's projects to deliver the goals enable FPCY to improve our efficiency, upgrade our facilities, design & implement new space options, and to enrich our capabilities to worship, serve, and grow in faith were completed in 2023. Accomplishments for the final year included installation of a new screen and projector in the Sanctuary, refurbishment of the west corridor bathroom, finishing the installation and equipping of the new kitchen, and creating new spaces for our Youth and for our Music program.

Thanks to your steadfast generosity, we were able to complete all of the campaign projects without incurring significant debt. We accomplished much more than was originally envisioned and have a small balance remaining for additional campaign-related projects that may arise in 2024. We are grateful for your patience and enthusiasm as we worked through all the campaign projects since 2018, and were delighted with the celebration of Campaign completion in June. We are indebted to the contributions of **Kevin Barnes**, and the stalwart volunteer crew (including **Dick Seymour, Jerry Amato, Bud Coccodrilli, Vinny Wallace, and Matt Hager**). We are so grateful for their talents and devotion!



New vanity/sink in Room 7



New Youth Room (room 14)



Bathroom near room 7

PERSONNEL COMMISSION

“We call people to varied forms of service and covenant to support them so they may devote their best gifts and energies to the work of God’s kingdom.”

—“A Theology of Benefits”, from *Living by the Gospel* by
The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Nov. 2022

Members in 2023: Alice Chin (Co-chair), Beth Gruber, Rev. Chip Low (Co-Pastor), Fred Mintzer, Nathan Perry (Co-chair), Jean Post-Winget, Rev. Tami Seidel (Co-Pastor), Nance Thompson

About the Commission:

The Personnel Commission can be thought of as the church’s Human Resources department. As such, our duty is to oversee—and care for—the extraordinary staff who serve with us in our mission before God. This requires a balance of wisdom and empathy, to guide us toward prudent recommendations and compassionate actions that support the needs of our staff, the wholeness of our Congregation, and the requirements of law that govern us as a place of employment. If we are the Human Resources department of FPCY, then our mission is twofold: resourcefulness and humanity.

The work of our Commission is largely collaborative. We work closely with the Budget and Finance Commission to oversee staffing expenditures; we follow guidance from the Presbytery on matters of policy, training resources, etc.; and we communicate with other Commissions of the church whose work is supported by the staff members under our care.

Our Year in Review:

Our year began, as it always does, by evaluating the annual **cost-of-living adjustment (COLA)** for pastors and staff. For 2023, we recommended an increase of 4%, a conservative amount relative to similar metrics that we compared. The recommended increase was approved by the Session (for staff) and by the Congregation (for the Co-Pastors). Other start-of-year tasks included year-end evaluations of staff members for 2022, and the review of employment agreements.

In February, we received and accepted the resignation of Stephanie Hare from her role of **Director of Youth and Intergenerational Ministries**. This launched a three-pronged effort to, first, arrange for Steph’s transition out of her position on April 2nd while ensuring the continuity of youth activities for the remainder of that term; second, set up a team to be planning for a replacement; and third, guide the Session in a broader period of discernment over our youth and family ministries as a whole—assessing and re-evaluating our wants, wishes and wherewithal for what this ministry should look like in the future.

Throughout the year, the Personnel Commission reviewed various aspects of the **Childcare Provider** position, and, as a result, we assumed a more direct supervisory role over these employees. And interspersed among these topics were the usual ongoing administrative tasks, such as setting the staff **vacation calendar**, conducting quarterly **staff check-ins**, continuing work on our **Employee Reference Handbook**, and the yearly certification of **NYS Sexual Harassment Prevention Training**.

With Gratitude:

We take this opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation to our Commission members, members of Session, and our close partners on the Budget and Finance Commission. All that has been accomplished this year would not have been possible without their dedication, commitment, and support.

Insofar as it has been our major focus this year, we would particularly like to thank members of the Youth Director Transition Team—**Bridget Bentley, Andy Cross, Debbie Hager, Megan Whalen, and Jean Post-Winget**—who have shouldered the monumental task of assessing the past, present and future of the Youth Ministry at FPCY. We would also like to share our gratitude to **Kaycee Perry** for taking on the Interim Youth Ministry Support role, so that these programs could continue uninterrupted into the next programmatic year.

We offer special recognition to the gifts and generosity of time devoted by **Connie Knapp** to the educational life of FPCY. In support of this, upon recommendation of the Personnel Commission, the Hudson River Presbytery has made Connie a **Commissioned Ruling Elder for Educational Ministries**.

We are endlessly indebted to FPCY Treasurer **Beth Gruber**, who provides figures, analysis and invaluable insight into the many factors that affect our staff expenditures; and to our Office Manager **Lisa Flanagan** for the innumerable ways her administrative support provides for the smooth operation of our Church and the well-being of its staff.

We cannot express in mere words our appreciation for our Co-Pastors, **Tami Seidel** and **Chip Low**, who also serve in the role of Head of Staff, overseeing the daily operations of the Church and its employees, conducting staff meetings, resolving workplace issues, and generally offering more guidance, compassion, wisdom and knowledge than one would expect possible in a single person—or even two.

Finally, we give gracious thanks for the very reason for our Commission’s existence, our paid staff—the true human resources of FPCY. We are blessed by the presence of each person on this list and the support they provide to our Church and its Congregation.

FPCY Staff of 2023

Director of Music Ministry:	Garrett Artman
Facilities Caretaker:	Kevin Barnes
Childcare Providers:	Marissa DiSisto and Kaitlyn Kretzschmar
Office Manager:	Lisa Flanagan
Director of Youth & Intergenerational Ministries:	Stephanie Hare (through April 2)
Custodian:	John Harrigan
Interim Youth Ministry Support:	Kaycee Perry
Co-Pastors:	Chip Low and Tami Seidel

For the Future:

The primary responsibility of the Personnel Commission is to care for those who work for us, so that they may bring to bear their treasured talents through the work of the Church of Jesus Christ. As we are called by God and commissioned by the Church to fulfill this purpose, we will continue to exercise due diligence in support of our staff as they devote their gifts and energies to the work of our church.

Respectfully submitted,
Alice Chin and Nathan Perry, Co-Chairs

Financial Data has been removed for the web-copy of the annual report.
Church Members can obtain a full printed copy of the Annual Report upon request.

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMISSION

Members: In 2023, Budget and Finance was co-chaired by *Fred Mintzer* (member of Session) and *Jack Shaughnessy* (member of Session). *Gordon Braudaway*, a member of Budget and Finance of long and distinguished service, passed early in the year and was greatly missed. Other members of Budget and Finance included *Beth Gruber* (Treasurer), *Frank Hodgkinson* (Treasurer), *Gregg Nelson* (Treasurer) and Co-Pastor *Chip Low*. Gregg Nelson began service as our Secretary. Budget and Finance is blessed by, and thankful for, their willingness to serve and their generous contributions of time and financial expertise.

The Role of the Budget and Finance Commission

Budget and Finance 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 goals. In 2024, Stewardship will merge with Budget and Finance, and we will be living into this new structure with perhaps a new name for our commission. Our journey, now to fulfill an expanded mission, continues.

The FPCY Treasurers, Financial Secretary, and Annual Financial Review

While Budget and Finance recommends financial policies, goals and budgets, the work of implementing those policies largely falls to our Treasurers and our Financial Secretary, **Lisa Flanagan**. At the beginning of 2023, **Gordon Braudaway** also served as one of two Treasurers. His death created a void that necessitated additional contributions by others. We thank **Beth**, especially, for the many extra tasks she undertook to keep our financial operations running. We are grateful to **Gregg** and **Frank** for assuming new Treasurer duties. We thank Lisa for her steadfast dedication as our Financial Secretary.



In Memoriam
Gordon Braudaway

Budget and Finance assists our Treasurers in organizing our annual financial review - which is analogous to, but less rigorous than, an audit. Budget and Finance is very grateful to **Dawna Dennis**, **Ian Spence**, and **Megan Whalen** for their service as "auditors" of our 2023 financials.

The 2023 Budget & Reports

2023 was a challenging year for us financially as we transitioned to a post-pandemic world with an economy that featured significantly higher inflation. Fortunately, giving continued at a high level, other revenue increased, and our Commissions exhibited considerable spending restraint. Overall, our operating budget showed a deficit of \$ [REDACTED] - which was much less than the budgeted deficit of \$ [REDACTED].

Budget and Finance continued its diligent management of the Church's investments - focusing on long term gains primarily through investment in equities. In 2023, our investments gained a robust 17.2%. Furthermore, in 2023 FPCY received funds through the federal Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) program. Combined, these revenue sources more than offset our 2023 operating deficit. While we should celebrate the positive impact of the market and the ERTC refund on our church's financial position, we must acknowledge that we cannot count on them in future years.

Our Capital Campaign continued to make important improvements to our facilities in 2023. Our members continued to give to the Capital Campaign in 2023, and expenditures are expected to wind down in 2024.

The 2024 Budget

As we prepared our 2024 budget,

- We decreased budgeted pledged and non-pledged giving by a total of \$ [REDACTED] (vs. the 2023 budget) to better reflect our current reality,
- We incorporated salary increases of 3.2%, which is the Presbytery recommendation, and
- We challenged Commissions to hold budgeted spending to 2023 levels as much as possible.
- However, many budget expenses needed to be increased due to inflation.

With these constraints, the 2024 budget recommended by Budget and Finance and adopted by the Session is *very much a challenge budget* - as it projects a deficit of \$ [REDACTED].

Budget and Finance has expressed the opinion to the Session that “the current budget deficits are unsustainable and should be reduced by at least 50% by 2027 (3 years).” Session has acknowledged this.

In summary

We are truly blessed to have been given the privilege of managing the Church’s resources to best support its mission - and we are eternally grateful for the congregation’s faithful generosity. Nonetheless, it will take even greater generosity in giving, strict spending oversight, and God’s blessing to produce a positive financial outcome in 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Mintzer and Jack Shaughnessy

2023 Co-Chairs, Budget and Finance

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Church Members can obtain a full printed copy of the Annual Report upon request.

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Financial Reports

REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

The annual review of the financial records of the First Presbyterian Church of Yorktown for the year ended December 31, 2023 was conducted on February 3 and 4, 2024.

The focus of the review was on Payables, Receipts, Investments, and Payroll.

A review is substantially less in scope than an audit, the objective of which is the expression of an opinion regarding the financial statements as a whole. Accordingly, the Financial Review Committee does not express such an opinion.

Based on our review, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements.

Respectfully submitted,
The Financial Review Committee
Dawna Dennis, Ian Spence, and Megan Whalen

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF YORKTOWN

2880 Crompond Road

Yorktown Heights, New York 10598

Phone: 914-245-2186

Worship Service: Sundays at 8:00am and 10:30am

Sunday School and Adult Education: Sundays beginning at 9:15am

Office Hours: Mondays 9:00am—3:00pm, Tuesday—Friday, 9:00am-4:00pm

www.FPCYorktown.org

Chip Low and Tami Seidel, Co-Pastors

Garrett Artman, Director of Music Ministry

Connie Knapp, CRE for Educational Ministries

Lisa Flanagan, Office Manager

John Harrigan, Custodian

Kaycee Perry, Interim Youth Ministry Support

Miranda McGill and Pamela Angione, Sunday School Superintendents

Beth Gruber, Frank Hodgkinson, and Gregg Nelson, Treasurers

THE SESSION

Class of 2024

Katharine Frase

Elaine Heyde

Connie Knapp

Jennifer Rowe-Behun

Jack Shaughnessy

Marisa Swift

Class of 2025

Jane Amato

Andy Cross

Margaret Harrison

Bill Herman

Jean Post-Winget

Vinny Wallace

Class of 2026

Sheri Gausepohl

Beth Gruber

Jeff Kephart

Dana Mordue

Clerk of Session: Christie Herman

Moderators: Chip Low, Tami Seidel

THE BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2024

Judy Chessa

Sue Nelson

John Winget

Mary Vezzuto

Class of 2025

Tim Chin

Nancy Paskin

Marilyn Rivera-Alvarado

Ann Timmons

Class of 2026

Allen Arnwine*

Debra Farrell

Diane Yarris

Moderators: TBE

Secretary: Nancy Paskin

**pending election at Annual Meeting*