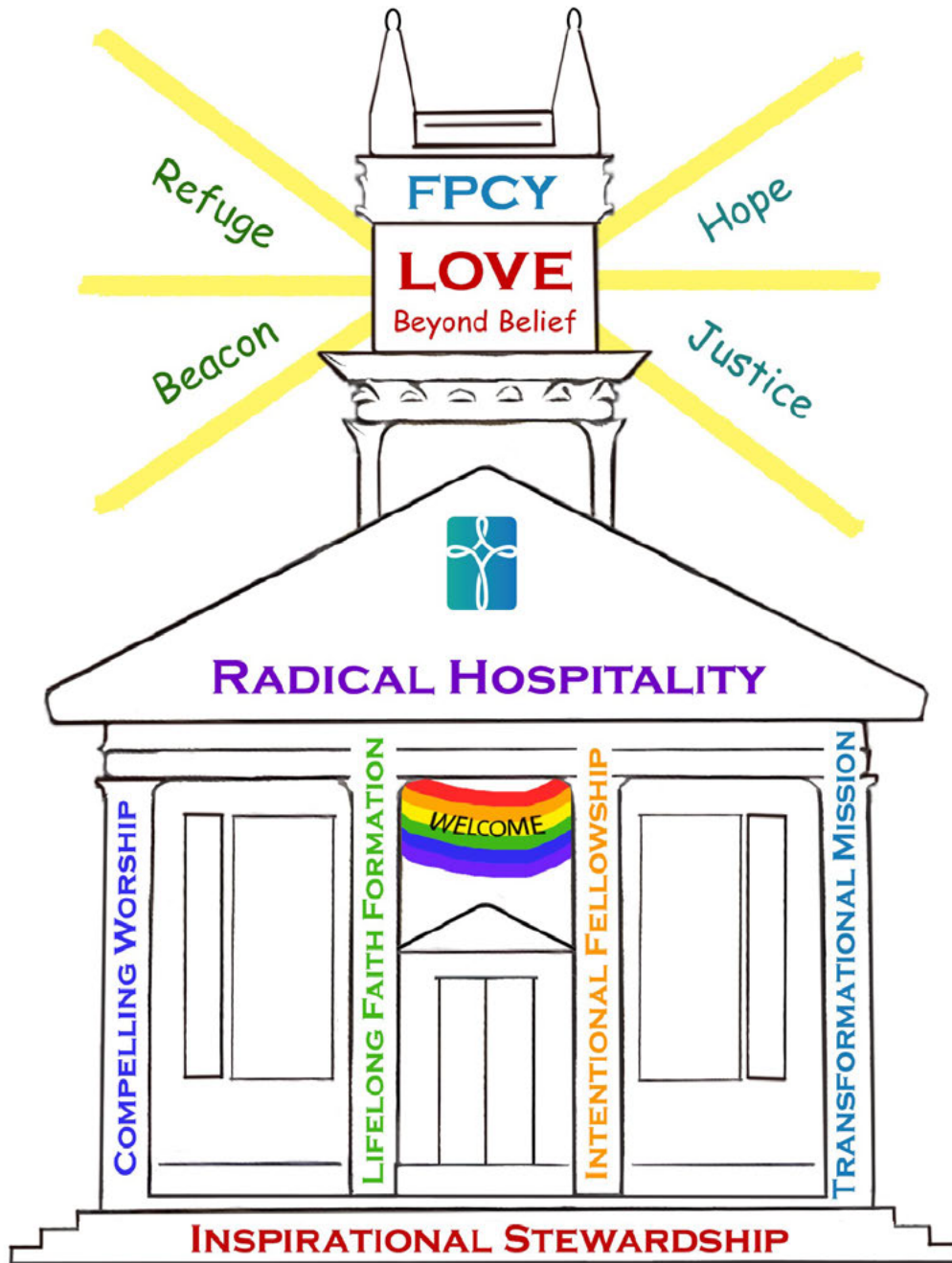




FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF YORKTOWN



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

March 1, 2026

LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH

2025

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 2025

Jane Amato (Congregational Connection)
Andy Cross (Faith Formation)
Margaret Harrison (Congregational Connection)
Bill Herman (Worship & Music)
Jean Post-Winget (Faith Formation)
Vinny Wallace (Operations)

Class of 2026

Beth Gruber (Budget, Finance, & Stewardship)
Jeff Kephart (Mission)
Dana Mordue (Communications, Personnel)
Ian Spence (Operations)

Class of 2027

Lynn Edling (Faith Formation)
Karen Gerth (Worship & Music)
Nathan Perry (Personnel)
Linda Swift (Communications)

Youth Elders: Kithara Buccarelli (January 2024—August 2025), Griffin Brown (January 2025—August 2025)

Anna Hagen (September 2025—August 2026)

Board of Deacons

Co-Moderators: Allen Arnwine, 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 2025

Tim Chin
Nancy Paskin
Marilyn Rivera-Alvarado
Ann Timmons

Class of 2026

Allen Arnwine
Debra Farrell
Diane Yarris
John Winget

Class of 2027

Sonia Braham
Matt Hager
Lynda Spring
Nance Thompson

Youth Deacon: Kacey Chin (September 2025—August 2026)

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REPORT OF THE CO-PASTORS

*For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God
that is within you through the laying on of my hands;
for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice,
but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.
-2 Timothy 1:6-7*

This past year, we have witnessed again the faithfulness, generosity, and energy of FPCY. So many of you have lived your commitment to our shared ministry through the covenant we ask people to make: pray, engage, and give. We have shared our joys and concerns and prayed together and for one another. We have engaged with ministries that feed, teach, welcome, and accompany. And we have given—our presence, our money, our creativity, and our imagination—to support God’s work through this community of faith. For all the ways you have lived out this calling to be FPCY together, we say an enthusiastic and heartfelt, **“Thank you!”**

There is a saying that has been tossed around a lot lately, a saying that could be considered a blessing or a curse, depending on how you hear it: **“May you live in interesting times.”** Senator Robert F. Kennedy is often credited with inspiring its more recent usage when he said it in his 1966 “Ripple of Hope” speech, “There is a Chinese curse which says, ‘May he live in interesting times.’ Like it or not, we live in interesting times. They are times of danger and uncertainty; but they are also the most creative of any time in the history of mankind. And everyone here will ultimately be judged - will ultimately judge himself - on the effort he has contributed to building a new world society and the extent to which his ideals and goals have shaped that effort.” Although there is no evidence linking this saying to any ancient or modern Chinese curse, I think many of us would agree that we are, indeed, living in “interesting times.”

Our call and our challenge as a church continues to be to further clarify our purpose and vision, and then to live them out in the world around us. ***After almost 300 years, what does it mean to be the Christian community of faith known as the First Presbyterian Church of Yorktown, in 2026 and beyond, into what we certainly hope will be our next century of ministry?***

Out of many possible answers, our current working definition is that the church is a group of people who sense God’s call to create a space for shared ministry and to imagine together how we can share the good news of our faith in as many ways as possible with the world God loves. As people who are passionate about the love and grace of Jesus Christ, people who want to embody his prophetic witness to justice, people who nurture the Spirit’s presence in them and hear the call of the Spirit in all people and creation, ***we imagine church together and imagine it in ever new ways in an ever changing world.***

To read this Annual Report is to see the ways we imagined into being God’s call and work through us in 2025. From the hospitality we create for others, through the care of our building, to nurturing faith in all ages, to growing food and organizing to feed the hungry, to creative worship that allows us to experience God together, to the care we offer our staff so that they can help us expand our capacity for ministry, to the congregational care we extend to each member, to the many fellowship opportunities that build relationships, we have imagined church into being in so many ways. To read this report is to see the breadth of our imagination and the Spirit’s work through us.

This report, however, is only a snapshot of one moment, a year, in time. ***To hear it well, we must also allow it to spark our imagination for what is next in our ministry.*** Because we know all too well that church doesn’t just

(Continued on page 5)

happen. No matter how long and storied our history, our church doesn't automatically have the right to exist. When we began our ministry in the Presbytery of Hudson River in 2001, there were 108 churches. Today, 25 years later, there are 72 churches and at least a third of them are struggling to survive. Hudson River Presbytery is a microcosm of the changes that are happening all across the country. We should not be scared or threatened by the changes so much as invited to imagine how we will continue to connect to our faith, to our relationships with one another, and to imagine all the ways we can to embody the presence of God for others and creation.

Over the past year and a half, our leadership and teams of people have been imagining, discerning, and focusing our understanding of our vision and mission for the future. We have reaffirmed our vision of ***“Connecting with God, One Another and the World,”*** and we have further refined our purpose as ***“Feeding Bodies and Spirits.”*** ***Everything we do as church fits into this vision and purpose.***

As we live into our next century and imagine a sustainable future for our church, how can we build on our strengths and better connect with our community? Our next answer to that question is the emerging vision of the ***Agape Music Center***, a new expression of our music ministry designed as a “third place”—***a welcoming hub where community and belonging flourish***. The Agape Music Center responds to a real need. As technological advances, social turmoil and political divisions fray our social fabric, one in three American adults feels lonely every week, especially as traditional third places are disappearing. People are searching for places to belong, for connection and community around shared values, and the opportunity to participate in something bigger than themselves.

A church-sponsored music center is uniquely positioned to embody the principles of a third place – ***hospitality, accessibility, creativity, connection and community***. It is a way for FPCY to live our mission outward — creating a space where people of all ages can connect, learn, play, rehearse, heal, and gather around the power of music. This could happen through various possibilities like music classes for infants and seniors, rehearsal space for local groups, sound healing, music history and theory courses, children's and adult music lessons, day camps, concerts, open mic nights, community events, and partnerships with local organizations.



Love Unbound,
How Sweet the Sound!
A NEW SONG FOR THE NEXT CENTURY

The Agape Music Center is not just another program—it is a ***ministry of presence***, in much the same way our ***35-year old Austin organ*** has served our church and community to share the presence of God through music in our worship services. After so many years of faithful service, our organ is showing its age in ways that small repairs can no longer fix, and it now needs repair, refurbishment, and expansion of its capabilities. In many ways, what worship does for our faith and community with the help of the organ sets the vision for what we

want to share with the community through the Agape Music Center. All of this has led us to ***Love Unbound, How Sweet the Sound: A New Song for the Next Century***, a vision and a capital campaign to fund this new initiative for 2026 and beyond.

We are now being invited to imagine a ministry into being again, to imagine more people sharing the gift of community and music together, more people learning notes on a page and making music, more people feeling less isolated and alone, more people knowing the love of God through our ministry, whether or not they ever join our membership. We are being invited to imagine the impact of God's love in people's lives and to give to that vision.

(Continued on page 6)

Thank you for the part you, the reader of this report, have played in the imagination and implementation of our ministry in 2025. Your prayers, engagement, and giving have made it all possible. And thank you for your *continued commitment, for imagining the future of our ministry in next ways together*, so that God's boundless love may be let loose in people's lives and our community and we can be the church God is calling us to be in 2026 and into the next century of our ministry together.



Chip

Tami

Now to God who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

~ Ephesians 3:20

FPC Yorktown Co-Pastor Responsibilities 2026

Responsibilities		Chip	Tami	Both	
Book of Order Pastoral Relationships	Preach, Administer Sacraments (Baptism, Lord's Supper) + Weddings, Funerals			X	
	Presbytery and Service to the Larger Church			X	
	Extend Pastoral Care for acute crisis when needed			X	
	Advocate and model power of prayer			X	
	Moderate Session Meetings to ensure the work and deep dive discussions are in alignment with the strategic goals, as well as promoting cross-commission collaboration			X	
	Identify New Initiatives			X	
	Administrative Innovation / Process Improvements			X	
	Coach Session and/or Other Leadership to Advance Strategic Mindset	X			
	Commissions				
	Co-Pastors -- Advisory / Consultative / Contributor (not needing to attend meetings regularly)				
	Operations		X		
	Congregational Connection		X		
	Mission	X			
	Communications	X			
	Deacons			X	
Co-Pastors -- Engagement (more regular involvement/leadership necessary)					
	Faith Formation		X		
	Support / Nurture Men's Fellowship/Service Opportunities	X			
	Support Faith4Life Team in Offering Adult Faith Formation Opportunities; esp. with Women			X	
	Support leadership of children and youth programming for Faith Formation		X		
	Lead Faith4Life Studies, scripture-based explorations of faith in action			X	
	Budget, Finance & Stewardship	X			
	Worship & Music			X	
	Personnel			X	
	Nominating			X	

REPORT OF THE SESSION

2025 Statistics

MEETINGS:

10 Regular Session Meetings, 4 Special Session Meetings, 1 Elder & Deacon Leadership Retreat,
2 Meetings of the Congregation, 4 Electronic AdviseMENTS

Active Members as of December 31, 2024: 318



Gains (19)

Losses (18)

Profession of Faith 11
Reaffirmation of Faith 6
Letter of Transfer 2

Deaths 3
Roll Removal 15

Active Members as of December 31, 2025: 317

NEW MEMBERS

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Christopher Allen Berry (2958)
Connor Thomas Behun* (2944)
Ava May Burch* (2945)
Ciara Kate Burch* (2946)
Jackson Tyler Burch*(2947)
Amy Cross* (2948)
Makaila LeeAnn Eagleton*(2949)
Ansley Claire Dennis Edelmann* (2950)
Jhaneel Marie Lockhart (2959)
Scott Samoyedny* (2951)
Benjamin Thomas Whalen* (2952)

REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Brittany Rose (Knapp) Frieder (2954)
Lauren Karla Hare (2955)
Christine M. Sabia (2956)
Mary I. Westbrook (2957)
Michelle Gerard Ramahlo (2961)
Marta Brooks (2962)

LETTER OF TRANSFER

Trudy J. Swan (2953)
Barbara Ann Brill (2960)

In Memoriam...



Judy Chessa

BAPTISMS

03/16/2025	Logan Brian Sullivan	06/08/2025	Hailey Allaiyah Cammock
03/23/2025	Ava May Burch	06/08/2025	Jhaneel Marie Lockhart
03/23/2025	Ciara Kate Burch	08/10/2025	Ellis Rose Mason
03/23/2025	Jackson Tyler Burch	11/30/2025	Kenten Joseph Burch
03/30/2025	Melanie M. Burch		



Ruth Deemer

DEATHS (*Active Members)

07/07/2025	Rolf Baumgartner (2819)	11/27/2025	Fran Schiel* (400)
08/04/2025	Judy Chessa*(1853)	12/28/2025	Kevin Lodewick (1856)
11/05/2025	Ruth Deemer* (1631)		

REMOVAL FROM ROLLS:

John Buckhout (2540)	Ryan Chin (2820)	Mike Delaney (2655)
Tiffany Foxworth (2822)	Jack Pagel (2852)	Andrew Torres (2789)
Stephanie Buckhout (2552)	TJ Chin (2793)	Luke Torres (2828)
Stacie Gelhaus (2941)	Barbara Sterbenz (2896)	
Kristen Caroprese (2839)	Indiana Davis (2790)	
Yoham Ortiz (2825)	Richard Sterbenz (2897)	



Fran Schiel

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Members: *Linda Swift & Vinny Wallace, co-chairs; Carol Cornish, Andy Cross, Debbie Hager, Tamsin Levine, Kaycee Perry, Ann Timmons, Chip Low, Tami Seidel*

Officers of the Corporation:

President: Jeff Kephart
Vice-President: Linda Swift
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: Mike Kocz
Emily Monk
Megan Whalen

Counters: Donna Gresh
Debbie Hager
Randy Pratt
Trudy Swan
Linda Swift
Bill Winsted

Food Pantry Co-Leadership

Debbie Bernardini
Katharine Frase

Ruling Elders—Class of 2026

Jean Post-Winget

Ruling Elders—Class of 2027

Vinny Wallace

Ruling Elders—Class of 2028

Debbie Bernardini
Jeff Brown
Carol Cornish
Jenna Shaughnessy
Elmer Weaver

Deacons – Class of 2028

Tamsin Levine
Eileen Migueles

Many thanks to all of the hard working members of the Nominating Committee as well as to the people who have stepped up to serve and to lead. We are grateful!

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Swift and Vinny Wallace, co-chairs

CONGREGATIONAL CONNECTION COMMISSION

The Congregational Connection Commission (CCC) has been led this year by elders: *Jane Amato, Margaret Harrison*, and co-pastor *Tami Seidel*. *Nancy Paskin* was CCC recorder of minutes. Other active members were *Gloria Coccodrilli, Pam Darreff, Lynn Edling, Louise Fang, Karen Gerth, Christie Herman*, and *Connie Knapp*. The CCC is made up of many committees. Leaders of these committees include: *Abby Cross, Debbie Hager*, and *Vinny Wallace*. The CCC has organized these committees by Membership, Sustaining Relationships & Small Group, Whole Church & Special Events, as detailed below. Our mission is intentional fellowship as it relates to inviting and sustaining connections within our congregation and beyond.

Membership:

The Shepherd's Ministry *submitted by Christie Herman*

In its third year, the Shepherd Ministry provides “Shepherds” to all members of each new member class who get to know the new members in greater depth, providing assistance in integrating them into the life of the church. Shepherds introduce new members to the resources, events, activities, and small groups of the church, and provide long term-support and care.

New Member Class *submitted by Jane Amato*

The new member team consists of **Jane Amato, Gloria Coccodrilli, Pam Darreff,** and **Nancy Paskin**. There are typically two new member classes a year, one in the fall and again in the spring which are hosted by the co-pastors. This year there were ten participants received as new members and welcomed to grow in faith together with us. Potential new members and interested members of the congregation are always welcome to attend these classes which are usually held over four or five Sundays during the time between the two church services. There is engaging introductory conversation and review of the historical relevance of our church; a perfect time to reflect on our individual faith journeys and initiate new friendships within our growing church family.



Annual Membership Review *submitted by Christie Herman*

The Membership Review Committee of the CCC this year included **Connie Knapp, Gloria Coccodrilli** and **Jane Amato**. The Review Committee meets yearly to review the membership rolls. In conjunction with the co-pastors, the committee develops a list of members who are no longer actively participating in the life of the church. Those who have been inactive are contacted by phone, text, email, and letters to inquire after them, and to determine their wishes. The Session votes on membership removals. Letters are sent to those who are being removed assuring them that they may re-activate their membership.

Sustaining Relationships

Gratitude/Recognition *submitted by Jane Amato*

The Congregational Connection Gratitude Note Writers include **Jane Amato, Gloria Coccodrilli,** and **Nancy Paskin**. Special thanks to all the CCC members who have assisted in writing notes. Gratitude notes are written to thank people within the congregation and the community for such things as: shared musical talents, special coffee hours /kitchen volunteers, organizers for special events, banners, liturgists, service of elders and deacons, outside landscaping donations, etc. We try to acknowledge the many who help support our mission with their time, energy and resources. A record is kept of the recipients, and suggestions are discussed at the CCC monthly meetings. There were over one hundred and twenty-five gratitude notes of appreciation sent out this year by CCC members.

Veterans Recognition: *submitted by Louise Fang*

CCC recognizes our service members twice a year, Veterans Day and Memorial Day. **Louise Fang** oversaw this committee this year. She and **Lisa Flanagan** organized the inserts in the church bulletin in acknowledgement and appreciation of those who served in the past and those who are presently serving. Louise also provided sanctuary flowers and helped arrange for coffee hours on these significant occasions.



Fellowship

Small Groups:

Women's Birthday Breakfast Club *submitted by Debbie Hager*

The creators and contacts for this group are **Christie Herman, Margaret Harrison, Alice Chin,** and **Debbie Hager**. The goal of the breakfast club is to gather the women of FPCY once a month in fellowship hall to celebrate togetherness, grow friendships, share breakfast, and celebrate birthdays. The tables are beautifully set with tablecloths, centerpieces, silverware, plates etc.

It is potluck, so our food tables are creatively and abundantly full every time! The room hums with lively storytelling, laughter, and joy. This year we added two co-ed breakfast events. We invited the men to cook breakfast for the women in honor of Mother's Day, and likewise, the women cooked breakfast for the men in honor of Father's Day. It was a huge success! Additionally, we held an equally successful Holiday Breakfast Mixer with the women and men. We look forward to continued success in the coming year.



Men's Breakfast *submitted by Vinny Wallace*

We continue to meet most months on the third Saturday for food and fellowship. At times we discuss the week's lessons that are coming up on Sunday, but often we find plenty to discuss and debate on our own. Much of the fellowship takes place around the kitchen island, cooking and breaking bread (or pancakes) together. Our regular leaders are **Matt Hager** and **Ian Spence**. **Chip Low, Fred Mintzer, Chuck Radke, Damien Heyde, Tim Chin, Elmer Weaver, Bill Treacy, Bill Winstead** and **Allen Arnwine** are frequent participants. We invite all of the men of FPCY to join us.



Women at the Well *submitted by Abby Cross*

Women at the Well is a FPCY group that recognizes the challenge many face today in finding time for self-care and restoration in a supportive environment of their peers, especially in the midst of the busy lives they and their families lead. The organizing team, **Alice Chin, Dawna Dennis, Elaine Heyde,** and **Abby Cross** have invited participants to set aside time to build community in conversation and fellowship, to laugh together, and to lean on one another in all the joys and tribulations of our lives. Women at the Well did a pottery workshop event, led by **Heather Artman**, in June 2025. It was well-attended, and it even had a worship tie-in when the resulting finished pottery was displayed in the sanctuary for the "No mud no lotus" sermon in July. Going forward, we look to find a balance in our offerings between social activities/workshops, and "down-time" gatherings that give participants a chance to talk about issues they need help with (or just want to be listened to). Our target is three events in 2026.



Whole Church Events:

Coffee Hour: *submitted by Karen Gerth*

Coffee Hour is always appreciated by the congregation, however, securing volunteers to host and clean up remains a challenge. In 2025 the online Realm Coffee Hour signup sheet was published, new table tents advertising the need for helpers were placed in Fellowship Hall and a volunteer sign up board was placed in The Gathering Space. We are grateful to the Women's Birthday Breakfast Club, the Men's Breakfast, and the Pantry team who have continued to set up the coffee pots for the Sunday services. Commissions and individual volunteer teams have been sharing the coffee hour duties this year. We are grateful to the many volunteers for their generosity and efforts. We welcome fresh ideas to make this ministry of hospitality a blessing to all.

Lunch Bunch: *submitted by Connie Knapp*

Congregational Connections has been organizing the monthly Lunch Bunch gatherings. We had pot luck lunches in January, April, May and October. In May, **Connie** gave a talk on "How to be a Citizen Lobbyist." She focused on why it's important for us to be in contact with those who represent us in Congress, and showed us how to be in touch with the PC(USA)'s Office of Public Witness. We celebrated St. Patrick's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas with catered lunches and sang Christmas carols in December, led by **Garrett Artman**.

Special Events: *submitted by Connie Knapp*

Congregational Connections organized three Special Events this year:

- Annual Meeting potluck lunch was held on February 23rd
- Easter Breakfast following the sunrise service on April 20th was organized by **Cheryl and Alyssa Bauer**
- Annual Church Picnic was held on September 7 (see below)

Annual Church Picnic: *submitted by Karen Gerth*

Our Annual Church Picnic was held on September 7th. Due to poor weather our picnic was held in Fellowship Hall, but with great success. Hot dogs and hamburgers supplemented by delicious potluck sides and desserts were served. Seventeen volunteers signed up to make this well attended event fun for everyone. This year was also the first year we collaborated with Mission using compostable plates, cups and utensils. We are grateful to everyone who attended and supported these events.



Special Thanks:

Thank You to all who helped to organize, or participated in any of the many CCC activities. A special thank you to **Lisa Flanagan, John Harrigan, Beth Gruber, Chip and Tami.**

Looking forward:

We welcome anyone interested in joining our commission. Our goal continues to be welcoming and fostering intentional fellowship, inviting a sustaining connection within our congregation and community, and sharing a life filled with Christ's grace, faith and love.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Members: *Bryan Ekelund, Donna Gresh, JoAnne Marsh, Dana Mordue (co-chair), Barbara Santagata, Linda Swift (co-chair), 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 monitors in the Gathering Space and Office Hallway, 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.

Our Year in Review

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. There is a pulldown menu at the top that lets people select specific areas of interest. Those items posted to the newsfeed are also distributed on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/fpcyorktown). and Instagram. Each of our posts is illustrated with colorful graphics created by our dedicated artists 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) and 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!

If you have any upcoming events, please send an email at least a month in advance, if possible, to: **news@fpcyorktown.org** (the email goes to both Donna Gresh and Lisa). Please include any upcoming event information and details to be included in the bulletin, disciple, social media, as well as graphic requests.

Survey of How FPCY Members Get Information about News and Events

This past fall, a Communications Survey was sent out to church members asking how they receive information about news and events. There are many different ways FPCY sends out information and we were curious on which methods were most commonly used and which methods were rarely used, as we are always trying to be effective communicators. With a great response to the survey, the results showed that the top ways church members get their information is from the bulletin and emails. The TV monitor was the least used. This made us realize that the TV monitor could be used more to visually show the life of the church, not so much as a way to communicate important information. The survey also showed that half of the respondents have signed up to receive our blog posts, but that means half have not. Again, to sign up to receive new posts as they are posted (also known as blog posts) go to our website (FPCYorktown.org) and 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.

New TV Screen and Software at FPCY

A new TV monitor was installed outside the church office facing the outside entrance. We wanted another way to let church members and visitors see what goes on in the life of FPCY. New software was installed that runs both this new TV and the one in the Gathering Space that makes displaying the graphics and information much easier to create and manage. A huge thank you to **Lisa** for managing the information displayed and for being willing to experiment with the new software to learn its capabilities! The images and videos have been a wonderful addition.



Information about Commissions and Deacons

We help promote and obtain information about each Commission and the Deacons. You can 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. Worship and special services are shared on www.facebook.com/fpcyorktown/live_videos, as well as on our YouTube channel www.youtube.com/@FPCYorktown/streams. The audio of the sermon is also recorded and available on the FPCY website. 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 35 “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.”



A big thanks to the Tech Team for running the livestream each Sunday morning. The Tech Team consists of *Andy Cross, Bryan Ekelund, Karen Gerth, Bill Herman, Nathan Perry, and Linda Swift.* 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.

FPCY is on social media – Our blog posts get automatically posted to Facebook, X, and now Bluesky (<https://bsky.app/profile/fpcyorktown.bsky.social>). We encourage people to follow us on their social media of choice - please follow, like and share.

- Instagram – <https://www.instagram.com/fpcyorktown/>
- Instagram – youth We also have a FPCY Youth Instagram account that is led by FCPY youth: https://www.instagram.com/fpcy_youth/reels/
- X - @fpcyorktown
- Website: www.fpcyorktown.org
- BlueSky: <https://bsky.app/profile/fpcyorktown.bsky.social>
- Facebook: Our Facebook page www.facebook.com/fpcyorktown shares our blog posts, as well as “candid” photos of 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.
- Facebook FPCY Friends Group: Thanks to *Bryan Ekelund* for creating and managing a 'Friends of FPCY' Facebook group. Please consider joining the group. We are trying to get more people to join as it will encourage greater social interaction, and the more the merrier.



Street Corner Banners

A number of visitors and new members have remarked that their first introduction to FPCY were the FPCY banners that we display at the corner of Routes 202 and 132. We have completed an inventory of our current banners and designed a few new ones that will enable us to ensure that we have not only banners displayed for special events but banners that can be displayed on a near continuous basis in between special events.

With Gratitude

We take this opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation to our Commission members, members of Session, and all those individuals who make sure the Communications Commission is made aware of events in a timely fashion so they can be publicized. All that has been accomplished this year would not have been possible without their dedication, commitment, and support. Many thanks to *JoAnne Marsh* and *Barbara Santagata*, 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. Special thanks to *Donna Gresh* who works with *Lisa* as the point person for communications and also keeps track of all the different upcoming graphics that are needed.

Additional thanks go to *Donna Gresh, Barbara Santagata* and *Dana Mordue* for managing our Facebook and Instagram pages; to *Bryan Ekelund, Donna Gresh, Linda Swift* and *Dana Mordue* 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, Bulletin, and our new FPCY wall television screen with great artistic creativity; and *Walter Oudheusden* for making and putting up banners and signs. Special thanks to *Tim Chin* who does an excellent job of taking photographs of FPCY people and events that he contributes to the Communications Commission to use in blogs and postings.

For the Future

The primary mission of the Communications Commission is to enhance communications within our congregation, to potential visitors and our immediate community as well as our online extended community. In the future year we will continue to explore new avenues and improvements to further build our communications with each group of stakeholders in order to enhance relationships and service to one another and our extended community.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Mordue and Linda Swift

REPORT OF THE DEACONS



The Deacons are charged with developing and overseeing ministries which care for members of our congregation. Our goal is to engage the congregation at large to work with the Deacon's ministries. Thereby, we provide support and care for our members. 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 members of our congregation and 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.

The Ongoing Ministries of the Board of Deacons are as follows.

BEREAVEMENT: The Bereavement Team helped coordinate meals and/or desserts for 4 families and friends following Memorial Services. There were 14 different families that received books in our 4 part bereavement series. In Realm there is now a bereavement pathway to help coordinate when the different books are mailed.



Bereavement Support Group: We have been actively involved in providing Bereavement Counseling/Groups during the early part of 2025. This group has been paused for lack of a counselor as leader. A search has been initiated to find a professional to fill this service. The Deacons, with the help of our Mental Health team, will be coordinating this effort. We are very thankful for the professionalism of **Judy Chessa** who led this group before her passing.

CARD MINISTRY: This year 402 cards were sent. Categories included Birthday, Anniversary, Get Well, Sympathy, Baptism, Confirmation, Wedding, New Baby, Thinking of You, Congratulations, Graduation and Holiday cards sent out to members who are 80 years and older approximately every two months. Members under 80 are sent birthday and anniversary cards every five years and other types of cards as appropriate, e.g. get well, graduation, etc. Cards for the most part are donated by members of the congregation, though a few special cards are also purchased each year, as are the stamps.



COLLEGE CONNECTIONS: This year, the College Connections ministry continued its tradition of encouraging and supporting our students. In March, Sonia and I prepared and mailed approximately 50 care packages to FPCY students attending colleges across the United States, each including a handwritten note of encouragement ahead of final exams. In September, we sent an additional 10 packages to our freshman students, wishing them well as they began their first year of college. These small gestures remain a meaningful reminder to our young adults that their church family is cheering them on from home.

COMMUNICATIONS: The Deacons continued to keep the congregation informed through articles for The Disciple, bulletin announcements, and collaboration with the Communications Commission for website updates and publicity needs. With The Disciple shifting from monthly to quarterly distribution, the number of articles naturally decreased. Two articles this year focused on recruiting volunteers for the Transportation Ministry, responding to an increased need for rides and a decline in available drivers. Additional articles sought new knitters for the Knit Together and Prayer Shawl groups due to a significant drop in volunteers. In May 2025, an article was also shared requesting volunteers to assist with College Connections as we prepared care packages for FPCY college students.

CONGREGATIONAL OUTREACH: The Deacons engaged in discussing how we might reach out to all of our members and engage them in inclusive communication. This discussion was initiated in mid 2024. Beginning in 2025, a system was developed by which each member/family would be contacted by phone, email, or text. We initiated this ministry in June of 2025. The primary purpose was to ensure that each member is remembered. A list of names and contact information was given to each Deacon. Often there was no reply from contacts. Sometimes there were replies and conversations. We were prepared to respond to expressed needs and suggestions through open ended discussion. Pastoral referrals would be made as needed. Our primary goal has been achieved! EVERY MEMBER HAS BEEN REMEMBERED! We will continue this ministry into 2026.

KNITTING MINISTRIES:

- ⇒ In 2025, the Knit Together lovingly created and donated 51 handmade items, including lap blankets, baby blankets, children’s hats, and scarves. These gifts were shared with several local groups and with Pantry Plus at FPCY, offering warmth and comfort to neighbors of all ages. The group was blessed with eight dedicated members: **Norean Radke** (Chair), **Terri Froehlich**, **Gail Frost**, **Diane Hawlk**, **Priscilla Lucas**, **Sue Nelson**, **Regina Poltrak**, and **Janis**, along with one offsite contributor, Nancy Betz. Their steady commitment continues to make a meaningful difference in our community.
- ⇒ Prayer Shawl—The Prayer Shawl Ministry continued its heartfelt mission of providing handmade shawls, blankets, and scarves to members of our congregation and beyond. Shawls were shared with individuals experiencing illness, grief, or personal hardship, offering a tangible reminder of God’s presence and the care of their church family. The ministry also prepared baptism blankets for each child baptized at FPCY and gifted red scarves to new communicants as they joined the church. Support for Project Linus remained strong, with many blankets picked up and distributed throughout the year by their representative, **MaryLou Santoro**. At the December Food Pantry, the group distributed 125 hats, scarves, and gloves to clients, extending warmth during the winter season. As the group looks ahead, members are beginning conversations about a possible transition in the near future. Our knitters include **Marianna Sherman** (Leader), **Cheryl Bauer**, **Gail Frost**, **Terri Froehlich**, **Joyce Hotai**, **Sue Nelson**, and **Regina Poltrak**, with offsite contributions from **Aloha Hicks** and **Odette Matthews**.



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LOAVES & FISHES: This ministry delivers meals to members who are ill, have had a new baby, hospitalization of a family member or a death in the family. There are four Deacons who share the coordination of these meals on a quarterly basis in 2025. Information is sent through Realm to the coordinator, from the member needing a meal or through the visitation team. We have a list of 30 volunteers who are informed of the need. The volunteer would let the coordinator know they will provide the meal. The meal includes a main dish and a dessert. In turn the volunteer contacts the member to coordinate delivery day, time and dietary restrictions. This years coordinators were: **Judy Chessa, Nance Thompson, Diane Yarris and Matt Hager.**



MENTAL HEALTH: In 2025, the Mental Health Ministry continued its focus on partnering with other ministries in the church by teaming up with the Music Ministry in January for a Sunday afternoon concert, featuring addiction recovery musician, John Dillon (and his wife, Vivian). MH members contributed individual prayer during the Ash Wednesday service, as well as liturgy and prayer for the Longest Night service on December 21st. We hosted coffee hour twice in the first half of the year, additionally providing 1:1 engagement with parishioners and resources from our MH book cart. Our Mental Health Sunday service in May was themed “It’s Ok to not be Ok,” with both **Eric Kreuter** and **Tamsin** sharing sermon time to address practical support options for addiction and spiritual reflection related to anxiety and grief. We also

continued to focus on Companionship ministry in the second half of the year, individually meeting with at least 3 different people, which continues into the new year.

PRAYER MINISTRY: We continue to get many requests from the church prayer e-mail, through the pastors, through our various groups and sometimes from non-members, who are thankful that we have prayer support available. We had 57 new requests and 15 long-term requests. 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. We have switched from plastic ribbons to more earth-friendly cloth ribbons. This past year ribbons were hung, thanks to **Allen Arnwine**. At this point, prayer is done individually by each of our 19 team members; too long a list to add here: I will only ask them to stand to be thanked rather than list them all here. **Heidi K Haring**, co-leader with Deacon Allen Arnwine started discussions for an extended prayer ministry, hopefully with a dedicated team to pray directly with members who ask for extra prayer after church, at possible healing services, special vigils, and Longest Night, etc. We are looking to coordinate with our Mental Health Team for special prayers in this area, as well. Stay tuned.



TRANSPORTATION: The Deacons provide transportation to those needing rides to medical appointments and to and from Church to attend worship. We have provided approximately 30 rides for worship and medical appointments during 2025. An added blessing is that often rides are arranged without the need for Deacon intervention. The number is not known but speaks to the depth of our hospitality in this community. In addition, we have set up a sign-up tool for transporting one of our members to and from church. We have a roster of volunteers to help with this ministry. This was initiated late in the Summer of 2025 and involves the participation of 11 of our members. Transportation for appointments during the week are arranged on an as needed basis for medical appointments primarily. This tool will continue on an as needed basis into 2026.



VISITATION TEAM: The Visitation Team consists of several Deacons, members at large, and our pastors. We maintain contact with those who are often not able to attend worship services or church activities due to illness, recovery from surgery, residence in a health care facility, or mobility issues. During 2025, our team made a total of

at least 214 contacts, which were made in the following ways: 113 in-person visits, 74 contacts by phone, and 27 written communications (e.g. emails, texts, cards). Some of the home visits included the pastors bringing Communion to our members. The conversations often provided insight into possible needs for meals, transportation, prayers, cards, and mental health support which we then communicated to the other ministry teams of the Deacons. All of these acts of outreach are examples of “radical hospitality” that are at the core of who and what we are as a church community.

THANKS: 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 in the face of what has been a challenging 2025. Yet vital ministries kept going and new ones were initiated! Thanks to all!

Thank you and farewell to our outgoing class of 2025. We needed your hearts and hands. We welcome our new Deacons for the class of 2028.

*Respectfully submitted,
Allen Arnwine and John Winget. Co-Moderators 2025
Report Compiled by:
Allen Arnwine and Eileen Migueles: Co—Moderators 2026*

MISSION COMMISSION

Members: *Jeff Kephart and Lynn Edling, co-chairs; Debbie Bernardini, Dawna Dennis, Katharine Frase, Anna Hagen, Heidi Haring, Kaycee Perry, Marisa Swift.*

Rooted in a commitment to active partnership and advocacy, the Mission Commission fosters opportunities to address hunger and broaden our understanding of people and the world. Our commission includes several teams that operate autonomously but synergistically. Here are the reports on the 2025 activities of the One Pantry, Hunger Action, Garden of Hope, and Green teams.

Activities for 2025

One Pantry

The client volume at the Pantry in 2025, 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 to, or friends of, existing clients; we also saw the return of former clients we’d not seen in several years. We have seen an increase in the number of elderly clients, disabled clients and clients in need of diabetic-appropriate foods. We deliver bagged groceries to the Beaver Ridge senior facility in Yorktown. In addition to our customized drive-up experience for clients with mobility issues, we now also deliver food to a handful of house-bound clients in Peekskill, Cortlandt Manor and Yorktown. We have continued to operate in a “choice” model, which 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.



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As our client volumes rise, we see an increased demand for our monthly distribution of diapers and eldercare supplies. We continued our annual distribution of school supplies and hand-knit items (supported by the Knit Togethers and donations from the community). Our clients enjoyed selecting books for their children, thanks to the work of Anna Hagen.



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. We are grateful for our “specialty” volunteers who provide social work insights and Spanish language skills to our operations. We are also immensely grateful for the drivers who deliver to Beaver Ridge and our house-bound clients.

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 fresh produce. In September, a collaboration between Feeding Westchester and Telemundo at a local Stop and Shop produced 1,000 pounds of donations for us; we are so grateful to our volunteers to have been able to staff that effort.



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 Wilkens' Farm, Meadows Farm, Stewart's Farm, the Garden of Hope, Hilltop Hanover Farm, the Stacey Farley Farm, the Yorktown Federation of Teachers, the Elks Club, the Lions Club, AARP, local politicians, many schools, sporting groups and local businesses, and local families who created their own food drives or charity sales initiatives on our behalf. The monthly food drives of the Knights of Columbus at St Patrick's and the "Milk Angels" program at St. Andrews Lutheran Church have

become lifelines for us. 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. We have non-church-members who spearhead the eldercare initiative and oversee our inventory management, for which we are grateful.

The annual totals for 2025 were 21,800 individuals from 5,584 families (an increase of 2,800 individuals and 600 families from 2024). We distributed over 175,000 pounds of food, including 25,000 pounds from donations. Thanks to the generosity of the community and congregation, as well as the support of Feeding Westchester, we continued to operate very efficiently (about 10 cents per pound for the year). While this is an increase over recent years, in the face of the escalation of retail food prices, we believe this is a good result. The increased need to buy food through retail outlets to augment our supplies, and the increased demand for diapers and eldercare offerings, strained our financial model. We are so grateful for the generous response of the congregation, and we believe that we are in a healthy financial standing for 2026.

The Pantry works hard to be a warm and welcoming environment for our clients, tending to their emotional health as well as their physical needs. 2026 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.

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Debbie Bernardini and Katharine Frase, FPCY Pantry Co-Leaders
Hunger Action

The Hunger Action team oversees the Jan Peek House and Noontime Meal programs and provides opportunities for Food Justice advocacy.

Jan Peek House is a shelter that provides food and support for a few dozen homeless men and women in Peekskill, NY. It is one of the non-profit programs run by CCHOP (Caring for the Hungry and Homeless of Peekskill (<https://www.chhop.org/>)). On the fourth Saturday of each month, 3 or more families from our church work together to prepare a dinner for the residents of Jan Peek. This year, we will have provided nearly 500 dinners. When you prepare dinners for Jan Peek, you are providing more than just physical nourishment – you are providing spiritual nourishment, too. As Director Cynthia Knox says, “When groups come to serve meals, it means more than anything you could give to our clients. Nothing builds self-esteem more than when they finally realize people care. And when we care about them, they learn to care about themselves — that’s the beginning of being healthy”.

The Noontime Meal program is run by the Salvation Army in Peekskill. Every afternoon of the work week, lunch is provided to about 120 people in Peekskill, most of whom work in the area. Our church sponsors the lunch on the second Wednesday of each month. Through this program, we will have provided approximately 1400 lunches this year. The process is very simple and takes just one hour. We place an order for rotisserie chickens and other items at ShopRite in Cortlandt, then pick it up and deliver it to the Salvation Army the day before the lunch. The Salvation Army staff prepares the lunch the next day. Lieutenant Jesse Flanders of the Peekskill Salvation Army describes the Noontime Meal as a ray of hope for its clients – a source of stability that helps them mentally and spiritually by reducing worry and stress. Knowing that people care helps them keep going. We are grateful to the many Jan Peek House and Noontime Meal volunteers who have helped us this year with important efforts that allow us to understand and serve our neighbors. Here is a list of this year’s volunteers (with apologies to any whose names may have been missed inadvertently).



Jan Peek House volunteers (coordinator in bold)

January: **Lynn Edling** & Irene, Nicole DeCintio & Koreen, Joanna Marcos

February: **Liza Placido** & Julia, Liza’s friend Mercedes & her two daughters

March: **Miranda McGill** & Imogen and their girl scout troop

April: **Kaycee Perry** & FPCY Youth Group

May: **Liza Placido**, Nancy Coveney, Tina Sabia

June: **Christine Lazarus**, Monica Duffy, Heidi Haring

July: **Jennifer Rowe-Behun**, Deb Szanto-Phillips, Lauren Hare & Farrah Miller

August: **Jen & Patrick Burns**, Dick Mills, Katharine Frase, Debbie Bernardini

September: **Gloria & Bud Coccodrilli**, Amy Coccodrilli, Beth Coccodrilli

October: **Lynn Edling**, Nance Thompson, Sara Mann, Lauren Hare & Farrah Miller & Elise Miller

November: **Jennifer Rowe-Behun** & Connor; Nancy Coveney, Cris Neglia

December: **Michelle Ramahlo** & John & Cora & Flynn, their friends Erik and Melissa



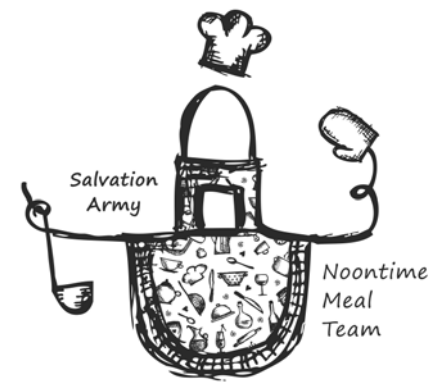
If you would like to volunteer to prepare a meal for Jan Peek, you can either sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050e45aea62fa1fb6-janpeek1> or contact Jeff (jeffkephart@gmail.com).

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Noontime Meal

January-July; September-October: *Ruud Haring*
August: *David Cruikshank*
November and December: *Charles and Ruth Barton*

If you are interested in helping with Noontime Meal and have an hour to spare on a Tuesday, please contact Jeff Kephart (jeffkephart@gmail.com).



Food Justice Advocacy

In May, we co-sponsored a letter writing campaign with the People of the Nard group. The topic, inspired by the Bread for the World organization, was to reinstate Foreign Aid and support and to protect and strengthen child nutrition programs. The idea to run the campaign was hatched by the People of the Nard group on Sunday May 4th, and we held the event the next Sunday. While hastily arranged due to the impending budget vote in Congress, the campaign (led by Connie Knapp, Debbie Bernardini, Lynn Edling and Jeff Kephart) was quite successful. Approximately 170 letters were sent to Senators Schumer and Gillibrand and Representative Lawler.

On Sunday June 15th, we assisted the Faith for Life Commission with a letter-writing campaign to help defend public education in the United States. 87 letters were signed and sent to Representative Lawler and Senators Schumer and Gillibrand, urging them to oppose the Education Choice for Children Act and similar voucher schemes that divert public funds to private and religious institutions.



We also sponsored two speakers. Karina Feliz from the New York Rural Migrant Ministry was our Peace and Justice Sunday speaker on September 28th. At both services and during a session with the Faith Formation class between services, Pastor Feliz gave us insights into the experiences of immigrants in our state and some of the activities in which RMM is engaged to improve the welfare of immigrants. We also sponsored a well-received talk by Jen Butler on Christian Nationalism on November 17th. The talk was given in the sanctuary to an audience that included several people from the local community. There were about 32 attendees in person plus another 41 online. She believes that what she is doing and encouraging in others is faithful action, and that churches can and should engage in biblically inspired activism.

Jeff Kephart, Hunger Action Chair

Garden of Hope

The GOH had an excellent year in 2025. *Janet Morra*, our master gardener, estimates that we had 125 volunteers from the community with a wide range in time input and activity level. She estimates that we had 4000 total volunteer hours in 2025. Our church has a group of about 15 people who helped in 2025 – some very regularly and some for just certain activities or seasons. All so appreciated!



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We also completed several maintenance and garden building projects. Compost was actively processed and put into beds throughout the year by Janet and a small team. Perennials were planted in the herb garden and native flower garden. Wood chips were moved into the garden walkways, on top of cardboard, to prevent weeds from overgrowing the rows. Rows were winterized making the spring readying process easier. The outer fence was reinforced along the lower edge so animals cannot chew through, and the inner fence was trenched to prevent pests from going under. We are looking to secure compost from the town, as it needs to be delivered while the ground is still frozen. We are in good shape for 2026.



Looking forward, we are now starting our 6th year at the Willow park garden space. Janet has been coordinating with Graymoor for seeds and starts again for 2026. Paul Silverman has been busy behind the scenes working with the town. Recently, he signed another 5-year lease of the garden area. He has also ordered seeds to be used in the GOH this spring.



One significant issue for 2026 is that Janet Morra has made it clear that her 5-year commitment to serve as master gardener is now up. She would like to decrease her personal volunteer hours next year to only Saturday from 10-2. There is not anyone positioned at this time to take her place. FPCY might need to step in at least to a midweek harvest time on the weeks we are running our food pantry. We are planning a GoH meeting in March to celebrate 2025 and outline plans for 2026. We will develop a blueprint of the garden plan so volunteers can take some of the burden of organization and work from Janet's shoulders and the garden can run more independently. I will be inviting our FPCY volunteers.

Thanks again to all FPCY volunteers and the many regular community volunteers.

Dawna Dennis, GoH coordinator



Green Team

While the Green Team has not held any official meetings independently from the Mission Commission this year, there are nonetheless some significant activities to report. First, we continue to be a member of the Presbytery's HRP Green team, and thanks to *Connie Knapp*, we have maintained our Earth Care Congregation status for 2025.

Below, we provide updates on annual solar energy production and a new composting initiative, and solicit volunteers interested in revitalizing the Green Team.

Report on Solar Energy Production:

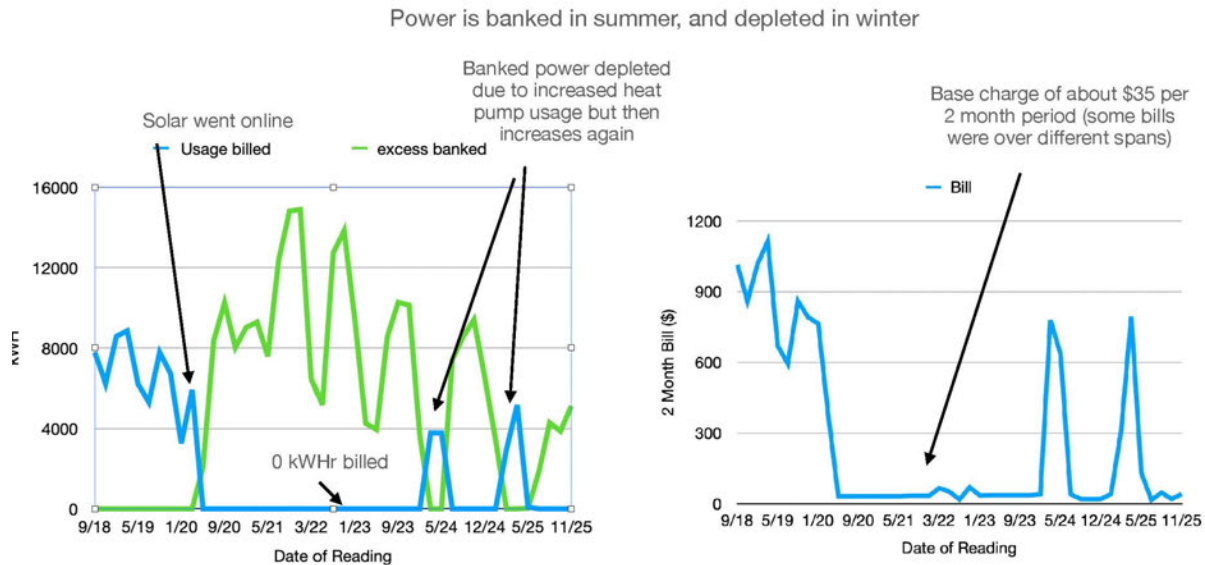
Beginning in 2020 we started "banking" the excess electricity that we generate from our solar panels. In 2023 we made the decision to have our heat pumps be the primary heat source in those rooms that had them, and to have our oil burners be secondary in those rooms and primary in the rest of the building. Our banked credits have continued to be applied



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to our increased electricity usage, being fully depleted in the last two years only for one or two months in early winter. Beginning in late winter the credits begin to build up again. The graph shows the impact of our solar panels for our main electricity circuit (the CE building). ~Donna Gresh

Solar Panel Effect on Electricity Usage Sept 2018 through Nov 2025 (Solar went online in late 2019)



Composting initiative

We have explored expanding composting practices at the church. For the Church Picnic, we purchased compostable dishes, cups, and utensils, with costs shared by the Congregational Connections Commission. At Downing Park, we identified compost bins maintained by the Yorktown Parks Department for compostable materials. We contacted the department to confirm that the church could use these bins, and permission was granted. For the picnic, we prepared table cards indicating which materials were compostable and which were not. We plan to make this a regular practice for future picnics.

Revitalization – please help!

This year, the Green Team didn't meet as a separate entity; all relevant discussions were held within the context of the Mission Commission meetings. At present, we understand our role primarily as one of advocacy and education. We feel that there are opportunities to do more and are eager for volunteers who are interested in leading or participating in earth care activities. If you would like to become more active in Green Team initiatives, please see *Lynn Edling* or *Jeff Kephart*.

Lynn Edling, acting Green Team coordinator

WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMISSION

Members in 2025:

Jane Amato, Debbie Amorese, Garrett Artman (Director of Music Ministry), Judy Chessa (deceased), Karen Gerth (Co-chair), Bill Herman (Co-chair), Christie Herman, Rev. Chip Low (Co-pastor), Sara Mann, 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 on Zoom, or even outdoors. 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**, coordinating the preparation and service 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 **Concerts on the Corner** Series. And anything else the creative and brilliant mind of **Garrett Artman** might conceive. 2025 saw the creation of a Music Ministry Initiative Team comprised of **Amy Wallace, Ann Timmons, Abby Cross, Christie Herman, Kendra Eklund, Karen Gerth**, and **Garrett**. They later refocused as the Music Ministry Team and added **John Winget** to the team.

The Tech Team also falls under the purview of Worship and Music and provides for both live-streaming 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.

This past year's overarching strategic thinking has been how to bring Intentional Fellowship and Youth Involvement to Worship and Music. A key component has been the institution and roll out of the Community Music Initiative and a deliberate plan to expand lay-leadership and congregational involvement in Worship.



2025 highlights:

- ♫ Nearly every service was live-streamed both on Facebook and YouTube, (including some clever work to avoid copyrighted material that would have shut down the streaming of the service). Streaming is now an option for memorial services and funerals.
- ♫ The hunt continues for interested prospective tech team members. **I'm talking to you.**
- ♫ We continue to “flex our lay leadership muscles” on a regular basis, even when the pastors are both present. **Ann Timmons** continues as our Lay Liturgist Coordinator/Wrangler. We also enjoyed preaching from **Lynn Edling, Casey Carbone, Abby Cross, Connie Knapp, Scotland Team (twice), Susan DeGeorge, the Mental Health Team, the Faith Formation Team, The Pride Team, the Triennium Youth squad, Stewardship Team, Liam McAuliffe, Karina Feliz, and Garrett Artman.**
- ♫ Garrett ran a series of intergenerational events and music programs for youth – no experience required!

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♫ The Christmas pageant featured the Delightful Dozen performing and leading the Congregation in a spirited re-telling of The Greatest Story Ever Told...Part one. Great appreciation to all: **Dee Miller, Aryela Everingham, Elise Miller, Henry Weaver, Juia Angione, Oliver Perry, Flynn Ramhalo, Jordan de Bruyn, Caroline Angione, Ellis Mason, Julianna Leslie and Jay Leslie**. Thanks to **Julia Placido** and **Kaitlyn Kretzchmar** for their assistance. And nothing could happen without the support and help of the parents and families of the cast. Thank you!



♫ A final highlight of the year was the Advent candle-lighting by new members and their families, thanks to **Jane Amato** for putting that together.

Worship themes:

- ⇒ Lent: Everything [in]Between: Meeting God in the Extremes
- ⇒ Season of Peace with Creation
- ⇒ Stewardship: Imagine Together
- ⇒ Advent: Wake up to God's Dream

Special Services:

- Ash Wednesday (3/5)
- Holy Week (4/13-4/20)
- Gifts of Women (5/11)
- Mental Health (5/18)
- Graduate Recognition Sunday (6/01)
- Faith Formation Sunday (6/08)
- Gifts of Men (6/15)
- Pride Sunday (6/22)
- Mid-Year Stewardship Celebration (7/20)
- Church Picnic (9/07)
- Peace and Justice Sunday (9/28)
- Blessing of the Backpacks (9/14)
- Blessing of the Animals (10/12)
- Stewardship (11/16)
- 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, organizing communion, wrangling banners, and serving on the tech team. Appreciation for her years as the usher team coordinator, a role she passed to Judy Chessa. The arrangement was sadly for a short duration. Karen is always a joy to work with!
- ♫ Speaking of the **Tech Team**, we are grateful for the whole crew (**Bryan Ekelund, Andy Cross, Linda Swift, Nathan Perry, Oliver Perry, Eric Kreuter, Karen Gerth & Bill Herman**) and their tireless commitment to working out the seemingly never-ending unexpected curveballs technology throws our way!
- ♫ Much gratitude goes to the **Usher Team** for being the first smiling faces our guests see upon arrival, 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 a huge thanks to **Cross-Gen** for co-hosting the Greening of the Sanctuary and all the hands that made it light work. Special thanks to the **Wilkens/Pratt families** for their generous gifts of trees, wreaths, garlands, and other sanctuary décor as well as the setup of the poinsettias for Christmas.
- ♫ Thank you so much to our **lay liturgists, readers and candlelighters** for truly stepping up in 2025.
- ♫ 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.

(Continued on page 25)

- ♪ Another huge thanks 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. “Thanks”, is not enough.
- ♪ Special thanks as always to **Lisa Flanagan** for her administrative support, and to **John Harrigan** for his work to keep the Sanctuary in order! Oh, and **Chip** and **Tami**. They know what they did.

Respectfully submitted, *Bill Herman and Karen Gerth (Co-chairs)*



MUSIC MINISTRIES

Music at FPCY continues to be vibrant from our many ensembles to our **Concerts on the Corner**, we have connected with God and with each other through our ministry. This past year, I truly focused on our themes and scriptures in church and carefully curated musical offerings. It was about learning to hear Scripture differently. It was about us waking up. While I won't pour over every detail of what we did; I would like to highlight a few points to explain.

During Advent 2025, our congregation embraced the theme “**Waking Up to God's Dream.**” That phrase was more than a sermon title; it became a musical posture. Advent is not sentimental waiting. It is alert waiting. Expectant waiting. It asks us to pay attention. Music helped us do that. Through carefully chosen preludes, improvised toccatas from words chosen by the congregation, unique arrangements of familiar favorites that resisted easy resolution, and moments of stillness before sound, we allowed the congregation to feel the longing of Advent- not rush past it.

Moving further back, we had our Jazz Good Friday finishing up our “**Everything [in] Between**” Lenten theme. Good Friday is heavy. It is honest. It does not resolve too quickly. Jazz, as a musical language, understands that kind of truth. It holds tension. It bends notes. It lingers in unresolved spaces; and sometimes, it teaches Scripture in ways words alone cannot. When we read about the twelve disciples, the band played a twelve-bar blues. Not as a novelty—but as a reflection. Twelve disciples. Twelve bars. Structure and sorrow intertwined. The music mirrored the text. It invited us not just to hear the story, but to feel its rhythm.

Finally, our stewardship theme, “**Imagine Together**” is, in my opinion, the heart of our music ministry. We are not simply providing background sound for worship. We are exploring Scripture artistically. We are asking:



- ♪ What does this text sound like?
- ♪ Where does it ache?
- ♪ Where does it breathe?
- ♪ What musical language helps us inhabit it more fully?

Throughout the year, whether through organ-led hymnody, piano meditation, choral offerings, or creative liturgical collaborations, our goal has remained the same: to help the congregation not just understand Scripture intellectually but encounter it imaginatively. Because when we sing our theology, we remember it. When we hear it embodied in sound, it moves from information to formation. Music in this church is not performance.

It is participation. It is proclamation. It is prayer. As we look ahead, my hope is that we continue to be a congregation willing to listen deeply—to Scripture, to one another, and to the Spirit who is always inviting us to wake up to God's dream.



Respectfully submitted,
Garrett Artman
Director of Music Ministry

(Continued on page 26)

FAITH FORMATION COMMISSION

Overview:

The Faith Formation Commission is responsible for the development and implementation of educational programs and faith development opportunities that address the needs and interests of our entire church family. From the youngest child to the oldest adult, our mission is to guide us all on our spiritual journeys and to have 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), Centering Prayer, and the Christmas Pageant (in concert with the Worship and Music Commission). This year has also brought us two opportunities for enhancing our ministry through the resourcing and support of the PCUSA, PAM (Presbyterian Association of Musicians) and the Lily Foundation as we participate in both: the **Child of Blessing** program and the **Around the Table** cohort and grant.

Recognizing that the formation of our faith begins and is fostered at home within our families, this year parents with young children aged birth to age six were gifted a little book, “*Small Steps Big Faith*” by Dr. Dawn Rundman. The author matches the ages and stages of child development with ideas for fostering the development of faith in day-to-day life at home. It is our hope that this first step, coupled with our **Around the Table** initiative forms the beginnings of a Family Ministry. More to come later!

2025 Commission Members: *Jean Post-Winget and Lynn Edling, co-chairs; Connie Knapp, Nance Thompson, Pam Angione, Kaycee Perry, Carol Jenson, Miranda McGill.*

Sunday School:

Classes are available for children and youth from preschool age through the 12th grade! Our groups meet Sunday mornings during the school year from 9:15 to 10:15. We have about 40 children and youth registered for Sunday School, and we are especially delighted to be able to report a significant growth over this past year in the registration within our youngest age classes!



Sunday School class groups & teachers:

Sparkle (age 3- Kindergarten)

Jean Post-Winget, Pam Angione, Liza Placido

Shine (grades 1-4)

Joanna Marcos, Nancy Coveney, Megan Padovani

FaithConnect (6-8th grades)

**Bill Herman, Megan Whelan, Miranda McGill,
Trudy Swan**

Fathom (grades 9-12)

Kaycee Perry, Sara Weaver, Mike Kocz



We continue to be so very grateful to all of the teachers for their love and commitment to our children and youth as together they share relationships with one another as they share in this lifelong process of faith formation. It is exciting to have our Director of Music Ministries **Garrett Artman** offering time for musical fun each week to the children in our two youngest classes, Sparkle and Shine. The children love it!

(Continued on page 27)

Starting in September 2025, in response to some grade specific differences in enrollment, we made some adjustments to our upper elementary and Middle School clusters. By combining our previous Connect class with our Faith X class, we created a new FaithConnect Class for 6 - 8th graders. The change in our class clusters also encouraged us to try something new with our curriculum. Starting in September, all classes have been piloting the PCUSA "Follow Me" curriculum. We are in a transitional year, evaluating and making decisions about our curriculum choices.

Confirmation: Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, we adopted a new model for the process of Confirmation. Our youth no longer go directly into a full year Confirmation Class after finishing 8th grade. After much discussion and discernment, it was determined that we needed to give our young members the opportunity to demonstrate and to discern readiness and a personal desire to take the step to Confirmation as well as deciding for themselves if they would like to continue on with the High School "Fathom" Class. All are welcome in Fathom regardless of a choice to be confirmed. We are delighted to continue to report strong attendance and registration of high school youth in our Fathom Class! Our series of Confirmation Classes take place in the late winter to early spring.



Church Library: We can enhance our spiritual journey through reading! Our church library has continued to be maintained by **Carol Jensen**. If you missed a Bible or a book study, you will find the resource in our library ready to be signed out! Come and check it out. Many thanks to Carol and her spouse, Erik for their attention to keeping our library in order and up to date!



Christmas Pageant: Our annual Christmas Pageant, which takes place during our Family Worship Service on Christmas Eve, truly represents collaboration at its best as a joint effort between Worship and Music and Faith Formation. We owe this success to its masterful and dedicated creative writer, director, casting executive, technology expert and general clerk of the works, **Bill Herman**! Aided by **Abby Cross**, **Garrett Artman**, **Julia Placido** and **Kaitlyn Kretschmar**, this year's pageant involved an impressive cast of players, all young and enthusiastic members of our Sunday School classes!

Centering Prayer: In concert with the Worship Team, there is a weekly offering of silent prayer focusing on breath and its power to connect us to the Divine. This occurs on Wednesday nights at 7:00 and is led by **Abby Cross**. This has been a steady group for several years now. It is a complement to the Deacon's focus on prayer for our congregation and offers us alternative ways to pray together. Many thanks to Abby for her leadership!! Our backyard Labyrinth also provides us with yet another prayer alternative as we can practice walking prayer.



(Continued on page 28)

Faith4Life:

We offered many learning opportunities through our 2025 programming. Studies led by **Lynn Edling**, **Connie Knapp**, **Chip Low** and **Tami Seidel** included:



- ⇒ *The Message of Jesus*, by Adam Hamilton, on Thursday and Sunday mornings from January—February
- ⇒ *The Great Search* by John Phillip Newell, on Sunday evenings in January & February, led by Chip and Tami
- ⇒ *Everything [in] Between: Meeting God in the Midst of Extremes* was our Lenten series, connected to the Scriptures we heard in worship
- ⇒ *Parables*, by Josh Scott, on Sunday mornings in September and October
- ⇒ *The Tears of Things* by Richard Rohr on Sunday evenings
- ⇒ *Life After Doom* by Brian McLaren on Tuesday mornings and Sunday evenings
- ⇒ *The Voices of Advent* by Matthew L. Skinner for Advent on Thursday and Sunday
- ⇒ *How we Learn to be Brave*, by Bishop Marion Budde
- ⇒ *The Serviceberry* by Robin Wall Kimmerer
- ⇒ The Lectionary and the church calendar
- ⇒ *Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again*, by Rachel Held Evans, and *Life After Doom* by Brian McLaren were our summer discussion groups.

Two Disciple groups met for 90 minutes once a week: Wednesday at 2 PM and Wednesday at 7:30 PM. **Connie**, **Lynn**, and **Tami** rotated leadership of the afternoon group, and **Chip** and **Tami** led the evening group. The **Women's Circle** met on the first Wednesday of every month except July and August. This group, led by **Tami**, follows the Horizon curriculum published by Presbyterian Women. The 2024-2025 curriculum, *Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbor and All Creation*, which we read from January to June of 2024. Starting in September, we began the 2025-2026 curriculum, which is *Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ*. The **Men's Breakfast** met every month throughout the year.

We are grateful for those who participate as well as those who lead.

~Submitted by Connie Knapp



CrossGen/Intergenerational Ministry: Team Members: *Abby Cross, Debbie Hager, Connie Knapp, Tami Seidel and Nance Thompson*

CrossGen is an intergenerational program designed to help old, young, and middle-aged people talk together, eat together, play games together, and sing songs of praise and worship. In 2025, the CrossGen team held three Wednesday evening events and one Sunday evening event, which was hosted jointly with the Worship & Music Commission. We have been using the intergenerational sessions from PC(USA)'s *Follow Me Curriculum*.



- * We started our year in April. Our theme was *Crossing Borders to Build Relationships*.
- * We had a picnic in July, with a theme of *Care for the Earth*.
- * Our CrossGen dinner in October followed the theme *Drawing Near to God*.
- * Finally, we joined with the Worship Planning Team on November 30th to Green the Sanctuary.

YOUTH MINISTRIES

For 2025 we had many fun Youth Group nights. Bonfires, Super Bowl party, Apple picking, Christmas Caroling, a Bible escape room and every one's favorite, a Lock-in. We even managed to do an overnight camping trip at Holmes. Which we hope to do more of in the future.

The Youth had some volunteering opportunities like helping with Pantry by making birthday bags and cooking and serving for Jan Peek. They also painted rocks for the Garden of Hope, which helps people at the garden know what the rows are planted with. We hope to find more volunteering for them in the future since they seemed to really enjoy it.

This summer was very busy with 2 Youth Trips. One was the Massanetta Middle School Conference. We had 3 youth and 2 adults attend Massanetta in Massanetta Springs Virginia. They spent 3.5 days having fun, meeting other youth and learning about how they are *Wholly Loved*. This was a first trip for all of them and the youth all came back excited to do more conferences in the future.

The High School youth had an opportunity to attend Triennium in Louisville Kentucky. We had 4 High School Youth and 2 Adults attend. They travelled with 1 other church from our Presbytery and 2 other Presbyteries in the tri-state area, down to the Conference. There they spent 4 days in worship, recreation, bible study and faith formation all around the theme *As If We Were Dreaming*.

Unfortunately, part of that dream was the nightmare bus ride to get to the conference, but once there, they had an amazing time. They also bonded with several of the youth from the other churches that travelled with them. We are super excited to learn that several of them will also be travelling with us this coming summer to Montreat.

In November, Kaycee went to Austin, TX to attend the *Progressive Youth Ministry Conference*. There she was able to connect with many others that are involved in Youth ministry and attend several classes. She learned about ways that we can be more progressive and teach the youth in a diverse and inclusive way. She had an amazing time and has already utilized some of the teaching tools and tips she learned while there.

We have lots of exciting stuff coming in 2026 including Montreat Youth Conference in August as well as several fundraising ideas for the trip. Can't wait to share those with you all in the future.

Respectfully submitted, *Kaycee Perry, and Tami*



Kaycee Perry



Around the Table:

Around the Table is an initiative of the PC(USA)'s Office of Christian Formation, underwritten by the Lilly Endowment. The Endowment has earmarked \$1.25 million to support families in nurturing their spiritual lives together by strengthening intergenerational spiritual practices. Since August, **Alice Chin, Lynn Edling, Kaycee Perry, Jean Post-Winget, and Tami Seidel** have participated in monthly meetings with representatives from First Presbyterian Church of Cartersville and Northminster Presbyterian Church, where we share ideas and practices for growing faith formation in our congregations. Both churches are located in the Atlanta area and are similar in size to ours.

These discussions are led by the Rev. Becky D'Angelo-Veitch of the Office of Christian Formation and are grounded in an understanding of Sabbath as a time to intentionally slow down, step out of the hectic survival mode that often defines our lives, and focus our hearts and minds on God. Thus far, our groups have explored practices related to prayer and storytelling, and our Advent prayer tree emerged from these conversations. In the coming months, we will continue by exploring practices of hospitality, service, and retreat.

We look forward to sharing more ideas from these discussions that you can practice with your loved ones. In addition, the Lilly Endowment is offering grants to participating congregations, providing funds to help implement some of these new practices.

Child of Blessing:

We are participating in a multiyear cohort of churches who will receive, pilot, and review worship resources four times per year, with a focus on enabling the worship experience to become more accessible to a broader age and cognitive range. This multiyear process is a collaboration between Faith Formation and Worship and Music. This grant seemed a particularly good match for us because, as a church, we have expressed interest in making worship more multisensory and accessible to children and young people. Task group members: **Tami, Chip, Garrett, Jean Post-Winget, Bill Herman, Alice Chin.**

For the Faith Formation Commission, Jean Post-Winget and Lynn Edling

OPERATIONS COMMISSION



***Members:** Pastor Chip Low, Dick Seymour, Bud Coccodrilli, Mike MacDonald, Walter Oudheusden, Deanna Collins, Katharine Frase, Matt Hager, Ian Spence, Vinny Wallace*

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

Operations ended the year within the budgetary goals set in January with higher maintenance costs being offset in large part by slightly lower fuel costs.

In addition to routine maintenance, the Commission embarked on and completed the following upgrades to our interior and exterior facilities. Responding to requests from many of our members we were able to create new Handicapped Parking spaces in front of Fellowship Hall. Additional requests for safety of access through the front doors resulted in the installation of wrought iron railings on both sides of the concrete entrance ramp.

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On the campus itself, we continued to engage Sav-A-Tree to treat and prune our crabapples and dogwoods on a regular basis. We scheduled and successfully conducted Spring and Fall Cleanup days as well as tent raising and dismantling sessions. All were well attended with all scheduled work being completed. The east/west fence separating our property from our neighbors succumbed to old age and rather than trying to repair it once again, we had the property line surveyed and contracted to have a new fence constructed.

Our biggest projects of the year related to the Sanctuary itself both on the exterior and interior. Inside, **Dick, Bud,** and **Jerry** spent a considerable amount of time scraping, caulking, priming, and painting the window frames and muntins of the interior window sashes top to bottom. This much needed work will go a long way to preserving the integrity of the sashes.

Large temperature swings inside the Sanctuary took their toll on the organ creating the need for more frequent tuning and repair work. **Dick** installed temperature and humidity sensors in several strategic areas and using the information gathered he was able to construct a heating/cooling cycle which puts less stress on the organ and its components.

On the outside, we contracted to have the portico, walkway, and ramp fieldstones and granite blocks leveled, repaired, and re-pointed. This not only improves the look but far more importantly creates a much safer walking environment.

Matt has agreed to and is in the process of refurbishing and modernizing the hallway connecting the office to the rest of the building.

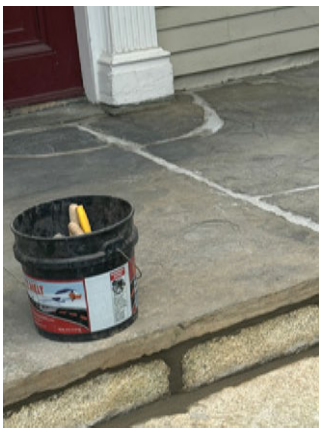
Our biggest project by far involved engaging Clemco Construction, whom we have used many times in the past to work on the East and West walls of the Sanctuary. Work included replacing and repairing wood and putty around the windowpanes and repriming and adding two coats of paint to the walls. Additionally, they permanently attached the shutters in an open configuration as they had a history of being blown open and damaged during various storms. Clemco also completed gutter work on the west side. As in the past, we were well pleased with their work.



The above highlights the major projects we undertook this past year. Not included are the almost daily tasks related but not limited to leaks, heating and cooling issues, alarm malfunctions, and other routine maintenance. In addition to those named above, we also thank our Custodian, **John Harrigan** for being the man on the spot not only for his regular tasks but also for his help in any number of other projects.

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,



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 2025: *Beth Gruber, Rev. Chip Low (Co-pastor), Fred Mintzer, Dana Mordue (Co-chair), 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, Finance and Stewardship 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. 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 2025, and the review of employment agreements.

Reflecting the importance of our **Childcare Providers** to the growth of our faith community, we are pleased to report that in 2025 we added a third provider to the roster to ensure adequate coverage. No additional changes were proposed to any additional FPCY staffing for 2025.

As always, we continued to handle various administrative tasks, such as setting the **staff vacation calendar**, conducting quarterly **staff check-ins and annual reviews**, 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, Finance and Stewardship Commission. All that has been accomplished this year would not have been possible without their dedication, commitment, and support. We also want to express our gratitude to **Garrett Artman**, Director of Music Ministry who met with the Personnel Commission to share his vision for expanding our view of the potential components of music ministry at FPCY and his work toward making it a reality. 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 also want to thank **Jean Post-Winget** and **Rev. Chip Low** for their overall efforts to ensure that FPCY has adequate child care for our worship services and other special events. Special thanks also to **John Harrigan** who increased his hours to ensure sufficient coverage as needed for custodian activities and his flexibility. We express thanks to our Youth Ministry leader **Kaycee Perry**, **Rev. Tami Seidel** and the many invaluable volunteers within Faith Formation, for coordinating youth events, supporting Sunday School activities, and participating in trips and conferences such as Massanetta Springs and the Triennium in Louisville, KY. We continue to invite volunteers—parents and non-parents alike—to assist with both planning for the FPCY Youth Group and their activities.

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 2025

Director of Music Ministry:
Childcare Providers:
Office Manager:
Custodian:
Youth Ministry Support:
Co-pastors:

Garrett Artman
Marissa DiSisto, Kaitlyn Kretzschmar, and Julia Placido
Lisa Flanagan
John Harrigan
Kaycee Perry
Chip Low and Tami Seidel



Chip



Tami



Garrett



Lisa



John

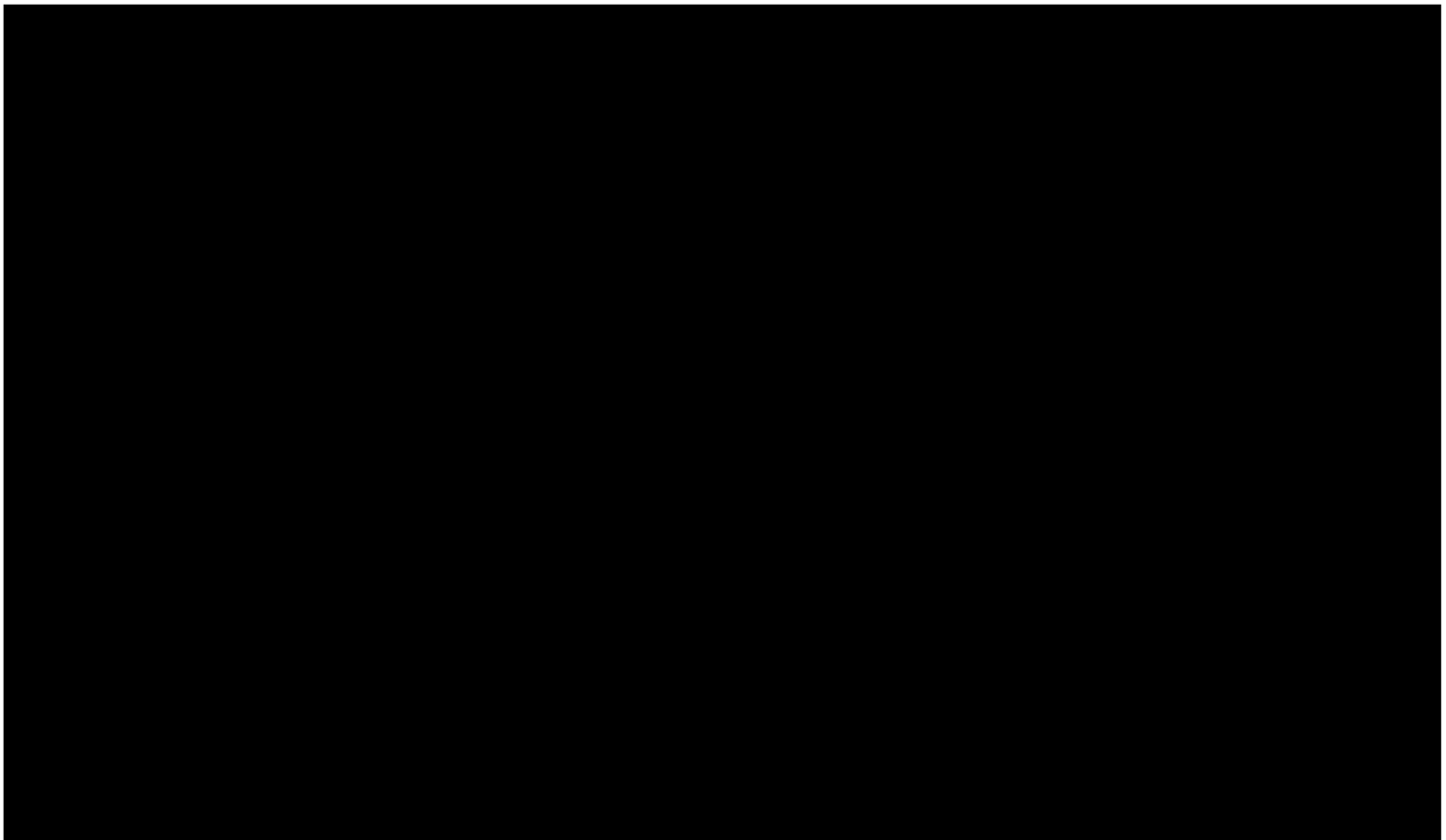
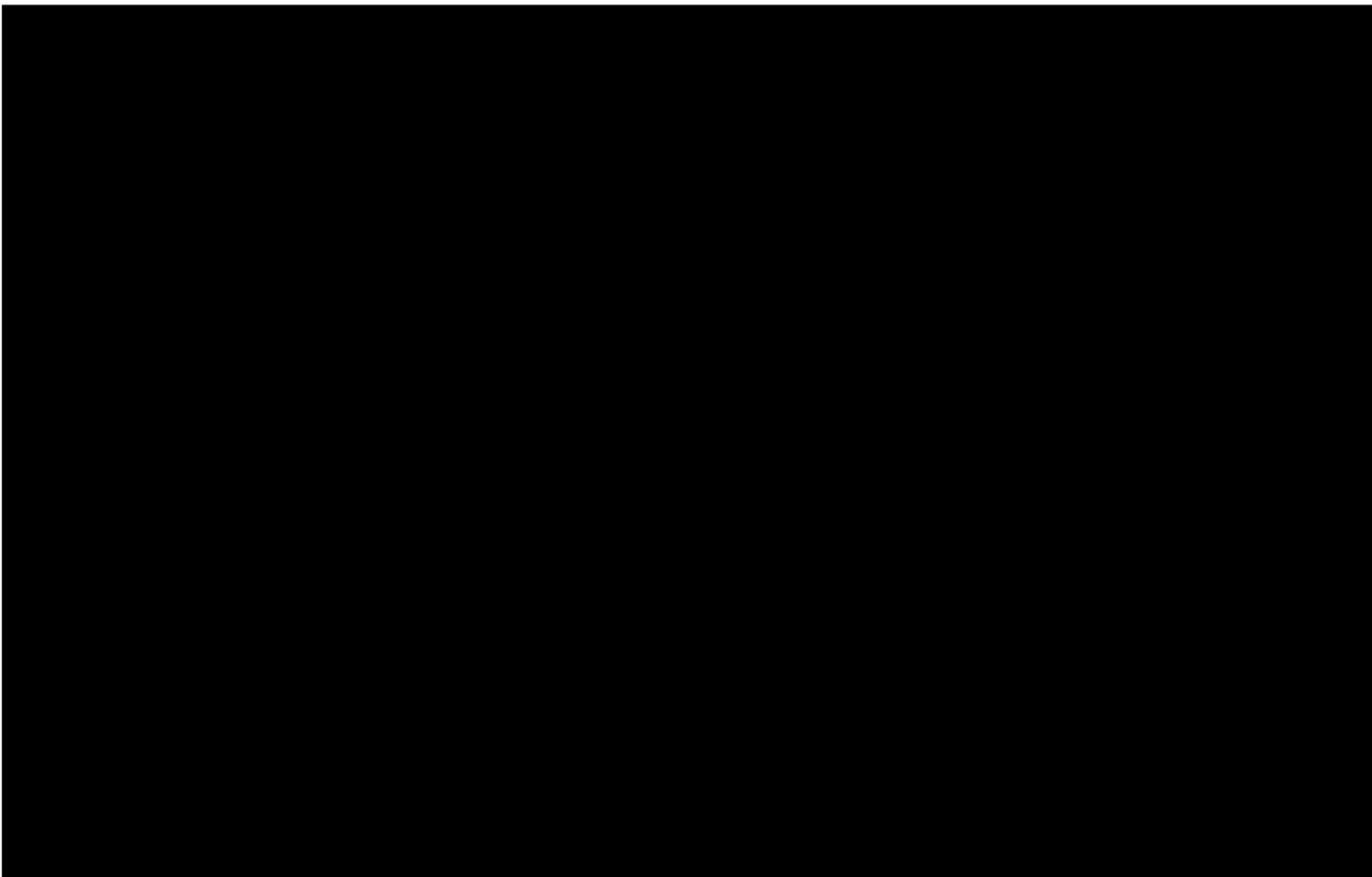


Kaycee

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,
Dana Mordue and Nathan Perry, Co-Chairs



BUDGET, FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP COMMISSION

Members: In 2025, the members of the Budget Finance and Stewardship Commission (BFS) included *Charles Barton, Beth Gruber* (Treasurer and member of Session), *Frank Hodgkinson* (Treasurer), *Connie Knapp* (stewardship lead), *Co-Pastor Chip Low, Fred Mintzer* (Chair), *Jack Shaughnessy* and *Gregg Nelson* (BFS Secretary and Treasurer). Our associated Stewardship team, led by *Connie Knapp*, also included *Charles Barton, Katharine Frase, Beth Gruber, Bill Herman, Co-Pastor Chip Low, Fred Mintzer, Nancy Paskin, Jenna Shaughnessy, Co-Pastor Tami Seidel, and Elmer Weaver*. BFS is blessed by, and thankful for, their willingness to serve and their generous contributions of time and expertise.

Implementing FPCY financial policies – Treasurers and 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. We thank Beth Gruber, Frank Hodgkinson and Gregg Nelson for executing their Treasurer duties. We thank Lisa Flanagan for her steadfast dedication as our Financial Secretary. Budget and Finance also assists our Treasurers in organizing our annual financial review - which is analogous to, but less rigorous than, an audit. BFS is very grateful to Mike Kocz, Emily Monk, and Megan Whalen for their service as “auditors” of our 2025 financials.

BFS responsibilities

BFS was born in 2024 from a merger of the Budget and Finance Commission and the Stewardship Commission. It is responsible for recommending a stewardship program, financial policies, goals, and budgets to the Session that support the mission, values, and strategic goals of the Church – and for implementing that stewardship campaign and those financial policies. BFS reviews the Church’s stewardship and financial performance against its goals and manages the Church’s investments, with monthly reporting to the Session. As BFS was formed only in 2024, it is still evolving to fulfill those goals.

FPCY Stewardship activities

In 2025 we expanded the Stewardship team to include eleven active members, one of whom was Charles Barton. Charles has decided that the time has come for him to step away; his contributions and leadership, especially for the Commitment Day brunch, are much appreciated. He will be missed. The Stewardship Team meets separately from Budget, Finance and Stewardship. Some members of the team are also members of the commission which allows the two groups to be aligned. Stewardship hosted a Presbytery-wide legacy and planned giving workshop in our fellowship hall in March, led by Karl Mattison, Vice President of Planned Giving Resources of the Presbyterian Foundation. A small subgroup of Stewardship has been working to encourage planned giving. We have continued to emphasize the covenantal nature of stewardship, as reflected by covenants of prayer, engagement and financial support. We are grateful for the generosity of our congregation; you have responded strongly to our campaign.



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(Continued on page 36)

Budget, Finance, and Stewardship continued its diligent management of the Church’s investments – which focuses on long term gains through investment in equities and fixed income securities. In 2025, our investments gained a robust 11.08% - which was enough to offset our 2025 operating deficit. While we should celebrate the robustness of our 2025 investment gains, we must acknowledge that **we cannot count on them in future years.**

The 2026 budget

As we prepared our 2026 budget,

- We budgeted Pledges and Offerings at \$ 30,000 above the 2025 level, but less than the 2025 actuals,
- We held salary increases to 2.7%, which is the Presbytery recommendation, where possible,
- We challenged Commissions to hold budgeted spending to 2025 levels as much as possible.
- However, we recognized that some budget expenses needed to be increased due to inflation.

Even with these constraints, the 2026 budget recommended by Budget, Finance, and Stewardship - and adopted by the Session - is ***very much a challenge budget*** –

In summary

We are truly blessed to have been given the privilege of inspiring members’ stewardship and managing the Church’s resources to best support its mission. 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 2026.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred Mintzer, Beth Gruber, and Connie Knapp,
for your Budget, Finance and Stewardship Commission

Special Offerings:

One Great Hour of Sharing:

100% PCUSA

Easter Offering:

100% FPCY – Bread for the World

Pentecost:

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

Peace & Global Witness:

75% PC(USA) + 25% FPCY - Rural & Migrant Ministry

Thanksgiving Offering:

100% FPCY – Christmas Extras for Pantry Clients

Christmas Joy Offering:

100% PCUSA

2025 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, 2025 was conducted on February 8 and 13, 2026.

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

Michael Kocz, Emily Monk, 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: Monday to 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, Youth Ministry Support
Beth Gruber, Frank Hodgkinson, and Gregg Nelson, Treasurers

THE SESSION

Class of 2026

Beth Gruber
Jeff Kephart
Dana Mordue
Jean Post-Winget
Ian Spence

Class of 2027

Lynn Edling
Karen Gerth
Nathan Perry
Linda Swift
Vinny Wallace

Class of 2028

Debbie Bernardini
Jeff Brown
Carol Cornish
Jenna Shaughnessy
Elmer Weaver

Youth Elder: Anna Hagen (September 2025—August 2026)

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

THE BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2026

Allen Arnwine
Debra Farrell
Diane Yarris
John Winget

Class of 2027

Sonia Braham
Matt Hager
Lynda Spring
Nance Thompson

Class of 2028

Tamsin Levine
Eileen Migueles

Youth Deacon: Kacey Chin (September 2025—August 2026)

Moderators: Allen Arnwine, Eileen Migueles
Secretary: Tamsin Levine