



Rooted in Christ:
Growing as Disciples
in Community



Annual Report

A Letter From The Pastor

Beloved FPCA Friend,

Whew! I'm winded. Not only have I read through this report of "A Year in the Life of the First Presbyterian Church of Allentown." I also edited every page. In fact, I read all of the individual reports submitted by elders, deacons and staff members, ruthlessly trimming as dictated by our predetermined page count. Niceness tossed to the wind, more words were cut to the editing floor than survived their way into the printing press. I'm overwhelmed - with joy - by the sheer volume and pace of service to our Lord.

There's just so much to be said about the worship and work, the tender touches and generous giving, the connecting among and the reaching beyond, the hires of team members, and the fires of the Spirit that have been bursting around us. God is doing a great work here at FPCA.

A few highlights: In 2018, we lived into thematic preaching and faith formation. We capped off the 2017-18 theme, "Rooted in Christ: Growing as Disciples in Community" by growing as cedars of Lebanon and hearing personal testimonies of such growth. Then we jumped into "God is Calling You: Partnering in Christ's Mission" by Cultivating a Culture of Calling in order to become truly Missional.

We retooled our ministry leadership.

- Moved from a staff-driven model to the more collegial-postmodern-yet-historically-Presbyterian-elder/deacon/member-driven-model of leadership;
- Resourced by my January mission trip to Lebanon-Syria, developed and adopted a new Ministry Design for the Arabic Fellowship under the leadership of Moufid Khoury, Moravian Seminary's 2018 "Alum of the Year;"
- With the addition of Transitional Associate Pastor Dallas Bradel, began a process of retooling our installed pastors' job descriptions - to be unveiled in our Annual Meeting of February 10.

We helped launch a new warming station for the homeless; welcomed another influx of Chin members to FPCA; upped our efforts in Honduras by going on a medical mission and planning for well-digging mission coming this March.

We revamped our Financial Discipleship campaign. We redecorated several restrooms. We found an economical way to improve the Sanctuary sound system.

We also faced some challenges. After suffering a 4-year attendance shrinkage of 44% over 2013-16, a much slower 2-year shrinkage of 8% in 2017-18 isn't nearly as alarming, but it doesn't mark a turnaround either. And some slippage of giving, brought on especially by beloved members who moved to other parts of the country - or God called heavenward - has tested our budgeting.

Those challenges notwithstanding, this truly has been a great year in the life of FPCA. Read all about it in the pages that follow. And, join us all in giving thanks to God.

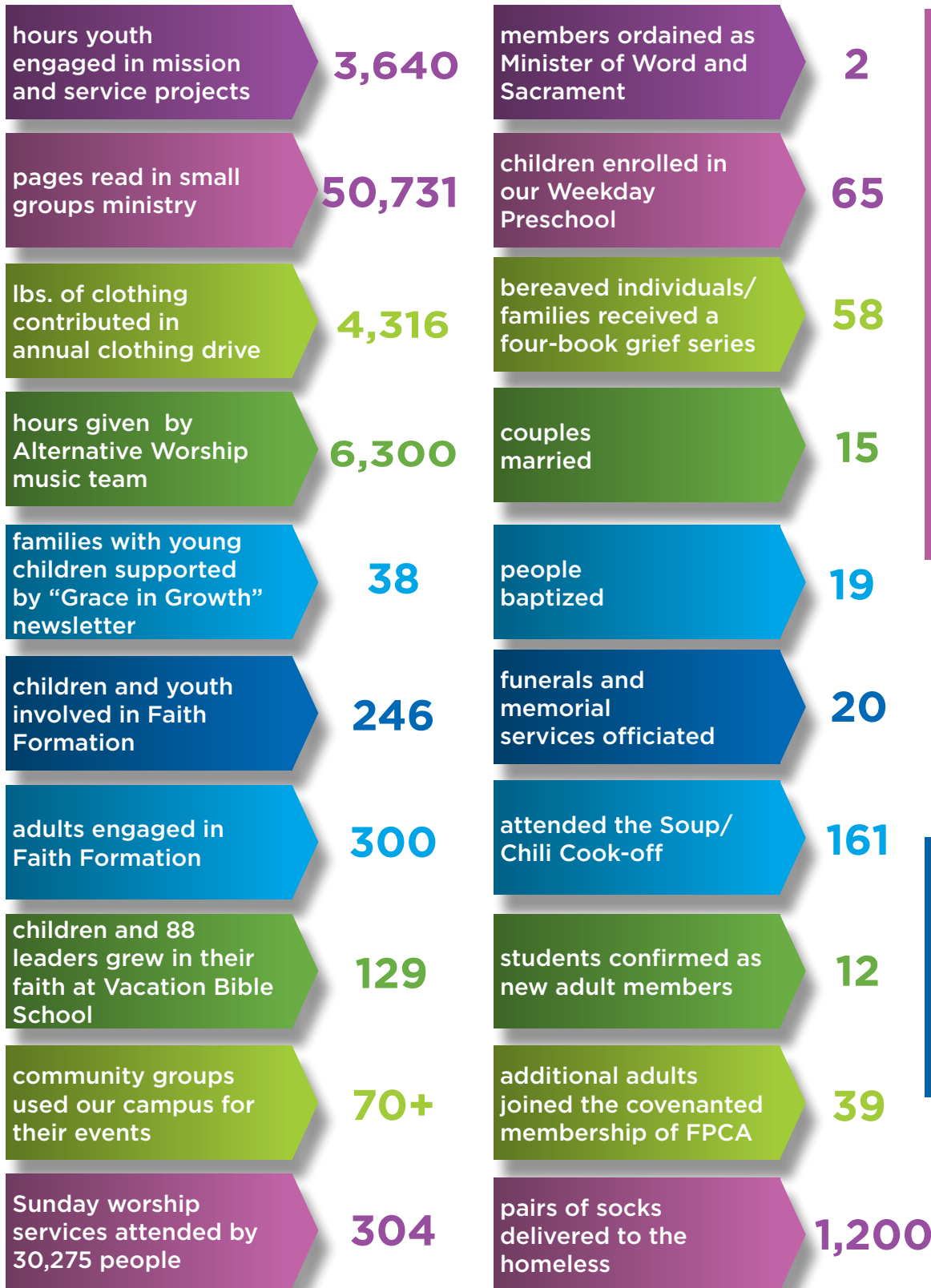
Grace and Peace to You and Yours,



Way to go, Church!

We often affirm our Mission Statement: “First Presbyterian Church of Allentown is a diverse body of faith committed to living God’s love in the way of Jesus Christ. We do this through worship, study, service, and relationships for the common good of our community and the world.”

So how did we do at fulfilling that in 2018? Well, consider the following...



We’ve done so much. God has done so much more!

In SUM: 2018 was a year of learning how we are “Rooted in Christ ... Growing as Disciples in Community” ...

And it was a year of “Cultivating a Culture of Call” – discerning and responding to the great news: “God is Calling You: Partnering in Christ’s Mission.”

“In the broader picture, we have been living God’s love in the way of Jesus Christ through worship, study, service and relationships ... (turn the page...)”

Worship

With a commitment to the leadership of the Session and the input of the congregation, Jack Haberer requested that a Worship and the Creative Arts Team be re-formed. Areas sought for both input and oversight are:

- Use of the arts in worship,
- Identifying and responding to special needs of worshippers,
- Developing worship resources,
- Offering worship education,
- Inviting guest preachers,
- Organizing special worship services, and
- Exploring multiple worship styles and models.



The new team includes elder/chair Debbie Palmer, Ben and Megan Durham, Chuck Hess, Pat Hoffman, Karen Layfield, Jane Long, and Josh Luey. Staff resource people are Jack Haberer, Tom Dressler, Coordinator of Traditional Worship, and Wilson Velazquez, Coordinator of Alternative Worship.

This year in worship, we continued to bring ourselves before God through traditional, alternative and Arabic and Chin Burmese language worship services.

- We welcomed “Presbycostal” Wilson Velazquez who set the Alternative Worship services on fire.
- We celebrated our unity with one multi-lingual, multi-ethnic, and multi-style service on Pentecost Sunday and World Communion Sunday.
- We incorporated more children in worship leadership through the DIG Crew (our elementary Faith Formation choir), and the youth serving as liturgy leaders and in the Youth Choir.
- We sought and found economical solutions to sound system problems in the Sanctuary.
- We celebrated Advent with a splendid presentation of Vivaldi’s “Magnificat” in Sunday traditional worship.
- We continued the wave of ordaining our own FPCA members to become Ministers of Word and Sacrament – beginning with Noha Khoury in 2017, Adam Clever and Becky Ensley Dobitsch in 2018 and looking ahead to ordaining Nicole Vogel in March, 2019.
- We sponsored 14 music concerts featuring musicians within and outside the congregation.
- We celebrated the visual arts by displaying four exhibits of art, one set per quarter.
 - We hosted the majestic consecration and ordination of The Rt. Rev. Kevin Nichols to serve as bishop for the Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem.
 - We joined with Christ Lutheran Church in Allentown to become the co-sponsor of the 37th annual Twelfth Night celebration performances for Epiphany, 2019.



Study

- We accepted the invitation to join with 23 other major churches across denominational lines to Cultivate a Culture of Calling, aka The C3 Project. Sponsored by Vibrant Faith Ministries and funded by a major Lilly Foundation grant, we formed a team of Jane Long (chair), Anne Ferrera, Lois Henseler, Rich Laliberte, Erica Simmons, Bill White, and pastors Stephen Emick and Jack Haberer. We partnered with staff and Session to launch the theme, “God is Calling You: Partnering in Christ’s Mission,” gave leadership to the Coffee and Callings Café Leadership Gathering in October (see p. 9), and, overall, initiated planning for this three-year, intergenerational project which we expect to bring vital energy, vision, and fruitfulness to our ministries and mission service.
- We launched the monthly “Grace in Growth Newsletter” to help parents of children aged 0-2 years to thrive as their children’s primary educators.
- Our DIG program provided a growing number of K-thru-5th-grade children a deeper dive into Jesus, the Bible, and their faith.
 - We increased the number of youth and adult Shepherds in DIG to provide for deeper relationship building.
 - We developed the intentionally-focused Buddy Building in DIG (weekly before DIG officially begins and a deep dive per series).
 - We launched In“B”Tween for grades 4&5 in DIG to provide a deeper dive into the series content and a designated space for the Tweens.
- We shared our Vacation Bible School resources with other churches after ours was completed.
- Our youth and children proposed mission projects to be included in the church-wide mission calendar.
- Our Middle and High School Fall Retreats were held at Camp Johnsonburg in New Jersey.
- Our Middle School youth experienced a transformational workcamp at the Stony Point Conference Center in New York.
- Our High School youth organized a Sock Drive that included educating DIG children about the need throughout the series.
- We engaged in deep mental health discussions initiated in high school Faith Formation.
- Our high school students continued to serve breakfast monthly to the homeless at St. Paul’s.
- We gathered together for an Intergenerational Faith Formation Pot-Luck Brunch on December 23 (Middle School, Confirmation, High School youth and Adult Seminar).
- We formed a Small Group Team that has begun work on expanding small group opportunities.
- Our adults learned from 32 different speakers addressing the World and Faith Seminar; 10 of whom were guests from outside the congregation.



Service

We showed Jesus' love to the hungry and homeless of Allentown:

- We served thousands of hot meals at several mission stations in center city.
- We treated the Daybreak community to a country picnic and a shoe party: to pick out brand new shoes - as featured by two TV news teams and *The Morning Call*.
- We raised \$17,000, via our Golf Classic, to help launch a new Winter Warming Shelter at the YMCA.
- We provided tutoring, Christmas gifts, and school supplies to the children of Roosevelt and Sheridan Elementary Schools, plus umbrellas to help them attend school on rainy days.
- We hand-made and delivered knitted ski caps to 1,313 first grade students in 10 Allentown elementary schools; and thousands of new socks to adults and foster children.
- We gave \$1,000 to Estamos Listos (part of Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley) to help welcome refugees from Puerto Rico who were affected by Hurricane Maria.
- We provided thousands of dollars and many hours of "sweat equity" to the Sixth Street Shelter, the Lehigh Conference of Churches, and Ripple Community, Inc., as they help homeless persons transition into their own homes.
- We crafted scarves, gloves, blankets, pot holders, prayer shawls, and quilts for the Sixth Street Shelter and others. We sold additional crafts to provide for underfunded elderly residents of Westminster Village.
- We held 2 service days with 140 individuals serving at 18 different agencies.
- We hosted a table at Lehigh Valley Pride, gave free Mom (and Dad) hugs.
- We hosted a regional meeting for Bread for the World, showering legislators with letters on behalf of the hungry.



We showed Jesus' love to the wider world:

- We gave Alternative Christmas Gifts: sending goats to families in Malawi; contributing to the upcoming well-digging Honduras mission; purchasing books for foster children through DIAKON; and giving funds to Ripple Church, Ripple Community Inc., and Jerusalem House.
- We hosted mission workers
 - Nadia Ayoub - works with Syrian refugees in Greece
 - Burkhard Paetzold - works with the Roma people in Germany
 - Sam Schreiner - works with Forman Christian College in Pakistan
 - Boutros Zaour - works as pastor of a church in Damascus, Syria
- We sent a mission team of medical personnel and support staff to treat patients at the Manow Amigas Clinic and other rural villages in Honduras.
- We sent two representatives to Malawi to encourage the work being done through Villages in Partnership, providing monetary contributions, 182 children's books, 7 beach balls, a Frisbee, and dental supplies for the mission.
- We gathered for the Marlene Merz Memorial Concert by "Summer Harmony" and raised \$2,306 for our church's Malawi mission.
- We sold soups for the Women's Bean Project, a Colorado-based non-profit, enabling women to move out of the cycle of poverty.
- We collected 4,316 lbs. of clothing, generating \$431.60 for the Honduras Medical Mission.
- We "Share[d] the Harvest," selling gardeners' donated produce to support the Malawi mission.
- We sent our 30-student Youth Choir to Richmond, VA to sing and serve inner-city missions there.
- We launched our newest mission partnership, hosting six training events for foster parents of teens, with DIAKON Lutheran Adoption and Foster Care.
- We ended the year holding onto visions of God's children near and far, dressed shabbily, faces frozen in pain and distress, but being melted by the Godly love extended to them by such servant leaders as all of us.



Relationships

- Our 13-member, Deacons Pastoral Care Team made frequent visits to 17 care receivers (members who are in the hospital, in rehab, or homebound).
- Our Deacons delivered Sanctuary flowers to approximately 240 church members. 32 Easter flowers were delivered and 50 Christmas poinsettias were delivered.
- We extended the communion table through the efforts of deacons and elders; they served about 40 members of our congregation who are homebound, in nursing homes or hospitals.
- Our Deacons coordinated the delivery of Thanksgiving meals to 9 families (45 individuals) in our congregation.
- Our Caring Shelf provided home-made meals to many families facing challenging times throughout the year.
- Our Deacons' Care of Leaders Team continued to extend care to the current church officers and those who have completed their term of service.
- We recruited 8 new Stephen Ministry candidates to begin training in January, 2019.
- We welcomed 12 Confirmands into membership in the congregation,
- We also welcomed 39 other new members into the church.
- Thanks to your generous donations totaling \$14,390, the Deacons Fund was able to provide support to many people in need, both within the congregation and from around the region.



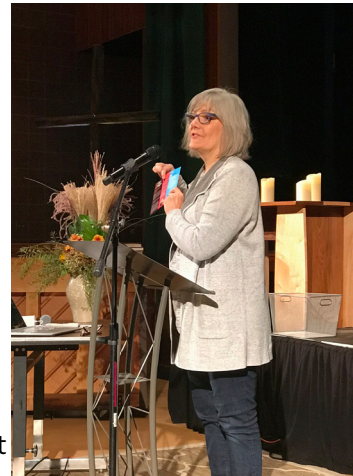
-- We have been supporting these endeavors by the exercise of leadership in a host of ways...

Relationships

Leadership Development

We poured much effort into leadership training:

- We trained new leaders of the congregation via *The Next Level: Reaching Higher, Leading Better Seminar* incorporating lots of updated and revised elements to the course. 28 people participated and expanded their knowledge of theology, leadership, team development, church organization, and operations. Approximately 135 individuals involved in FPCA ministries have completed this seminar since it began in 2014.
- We introduced an all-new four-hour Officer Training Course which was held in April. 35 new and present FPCA elders and deacons attended this course that discussed Presbyterian theology, polity, and operational rules. All officers were presented with the Book of Order, Book of Confessions, and History of the Presbyterian Church.
- We also launched an Officer Partnering Program. Each new elder or deacon was paired up with a current officer. The officers participated in a relationship-building exercise and an appreciation dinner. They will support each other during the new officer's first year.
- We gathered together to think big. Fifty-one of us spent an October Saturday morning at the Coffee and Callings Café: Fall Leadership Gathering. Stephen Emick presented "What we have done." The Creating a Culture of Callings Team (C3 Team) addressed "What we are doing now"; they led small groups through a *calling discernment activity*, "Five Cups of Coffee." Jack Haberer and Bill Coles from the Strategic Planning Team shared with us "Where we are headed."



We launched a new Strategic Planning effort:

- Throughout the year, the team gathered data to develop a needs assessment and set priorities.
- We linked priorities by commonalities. The result was the creation of three pillars (i.e., focus areas): 1) program, 2) facilities, and 3) growth. Each pillar contains the critical action steps identified in the data-gathering phase which were applied to a timeline to demonstrate the interaction of actions and dependencies for planning purposes.
- Moving into 2019, our next step is to create a document to spell out plans for implementing the critical action items to accomplish each pillar. The document will serve multiple purposes:
 - Reinforce the mission and vision of the church,
 - Define guiding principles to keep actions on target and aligned,
 - Provide a template for action teams to accomplish their tasks with consistency of results, progress, and next steps.
- The planning team is committed to finalizing a plan to address both short-term and long-term needs to assure the strength and growth of First Presbyterian Church.



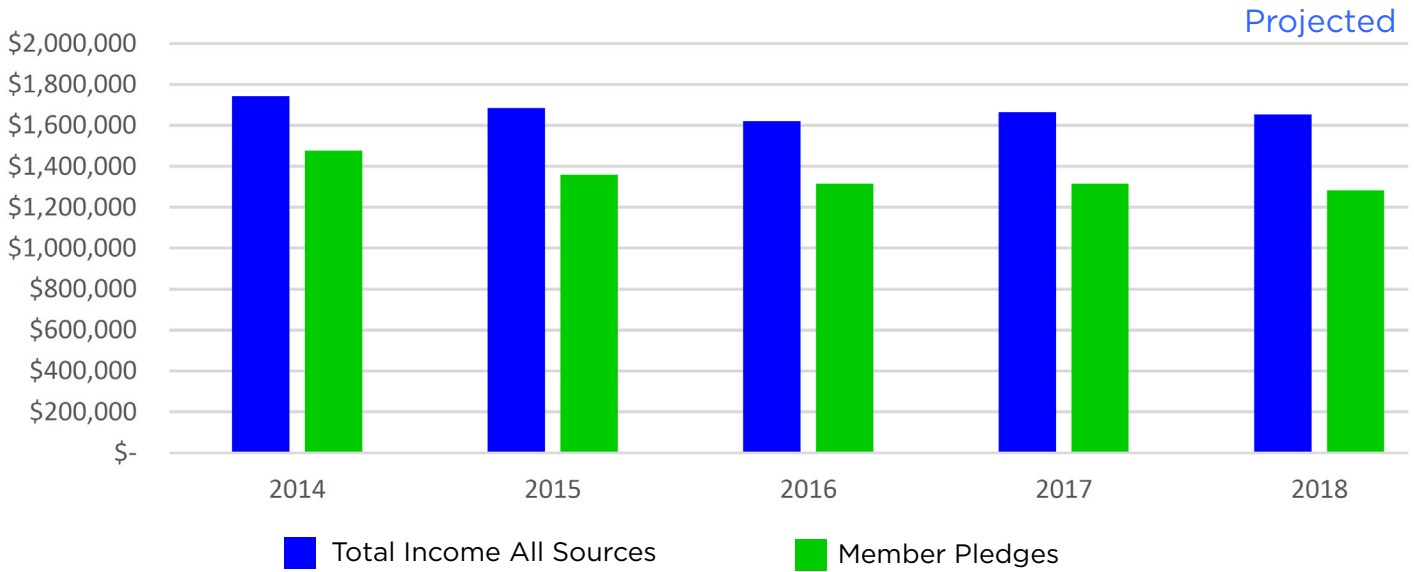
We have carried out all of these efforts thanks to your generous giving and our leadership team's careful stewardship.



Our Financial Discipleship

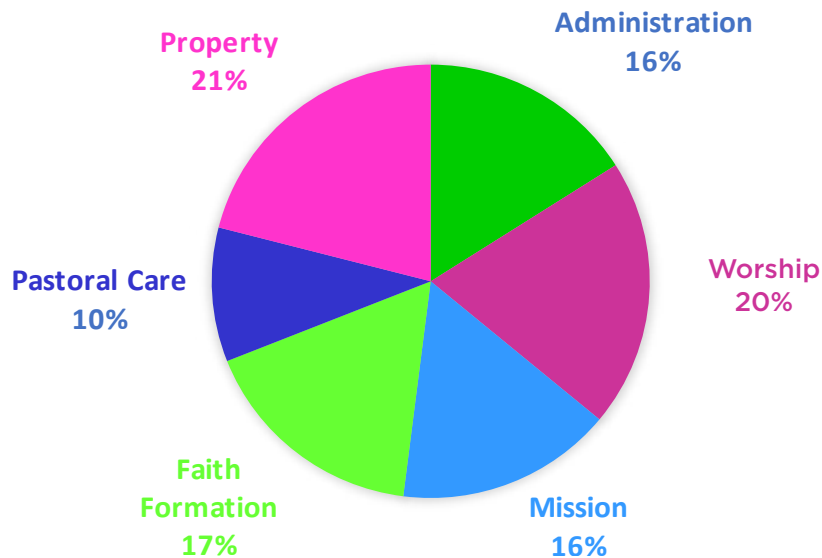
In spite of downward trends nationwide in pledged giving, made worse by changes in tax law, we gave generously to God's ministry among us and mission beyond us...

TOTAL INCOME/ANNUAL PLEDGE COMPARISON 2014-2019



This graph shows a breakout of 2018 expenses per ministry area, and includes the corresponding staff members' and pastors' salary in each ministry area.

2018 EXPENSES BY MINISTRY AREA AND STAFF INVESTMENT



Missional Giving

We shared the love of Jesus in mission to our community and the world, as funded through the General Ministry Budget, special offerings, and fundraisers.

LOCAL MINISTRIES

Daybreak	\$5,384
Greening Creation	500
Refugee	1,000
Refugee education	1,000
Lehigh Conference of Churches	6,300
Local Peace and Justice work	1,170
Ripple Church	1,996
Ripple Community, Inc.	5,310
Jerusalem House	1,060
Maundy Thursday for Daybreak Picnic	1,040
Sheridan/Roosevelt Elementary	1,217
Connection Collection (Presbytery)	226
Warming Station	19,940
Daybreak shoes	2,673
Westminster Village	8,211
Diakon Foster-Adoption	1,047
Ecumenical Food Bank	2,419
Habitat for Humanity	144
CROP Walk	110
MLK Dinner	150

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

National PC(USA) Missions	\$2,500
International PC(USA) Missions	6,000
Refugee Ministry	6,000
Bread for the World	1,500
National Peace and Justice	1,830
Missionaries (4 @ \$5,000)	20,000
Women's Bean Project	100
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (Ash Wednesday offering)	2,359
One Great Hour of Sharing	14,616
Pentecost Offering [75% to PC(USA)]	2,621
Presbyterian World Mission (May loose plate)	746
Honduras medical	4,786
Honduras well	2,767
Malawi	4,618
Peace & Global Witness offering	1,527
Christmas Joy Offering	9,580
Syria/Amar support	5,067
Churchwide support of congregations	23,365
Per Capita Presbytery, Synod, GA ministries/missions	50,580

TOTAL MISSION GIVING - 2018 - \$221,459



Mission

By The Numbers

We carefully stewarded the funds entrusted to the care of the Session, staff, Deacons and other ministry teams - keeping spending on budget.

2018/2017 RESULTS OF OPERATIONS

	INCOME	
	2018 (Unaudited)	2017 (Reviewed)
General Fund Income	\$ 1,597,459.00	\$ 1,593,588.00
Restricted Mission Income	55,779.00	71,795.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 1,653,238.00	\$ 1,665,383.00

	EXPENDITURES	
	2018 (Unaudited)	2017 (Reviewed)
Worship	\$ 26,347.00	\$ 29,421.00
Restricted Mission	55,779.00	71,795.00
Mission	141,880.00	125,685.00
Discipleship & Pastoral Care	56,331.00	65,211.00
Ministry Support-Office	90,368.00	93,056.00
Facilities/Plant	193,870.00	187,485.00
Staffing	1,115,381.00	1,115,216.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 1,679,956.00	\$ 1,687,869.00
DEFICIT	\$ (26,718.00)	\$ (22,486.00)

We ended up the year in a strong financial position, poised to charge into 2019 to further Cultivate a Culture of Call toward becoming a truly Missional Church.

2018 FINANCIAL POSITION (UNAUDITED)

ASSETS

General Fund	\$ 1,023,381.00
Property Value	1,375,607.00
Endowment Funds	3,115,923.00

TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 5,514,911.00
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LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES

General Fund	\$ 246,337.00
Session Designated Funds	258,950.00
Deacons' Funds	13,527.00
Restricted Funds	531,285.00
Property Fund	1,375,607.00
Endowment Funds	3,115,923.00
	\$ 5,541,629.00

Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (26,718.00)
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TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE	\$ 5,514,911.00
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The above represents our unaudited 2018 Balance Sheet showing our assets, liabilities, and fund balance at the end of fiscal year 2018.

Fund balance is a rolling number that includes our beginning balance, our operating deficit, and our gains/losses on investments.



ur elected and ordained member-leaders

Session

Jack Haberer - Moderator of Session
Stephen Emick - Pastoral Staff
Dallas Bradel - Pastoral Staff
Alicen Bailey-Silfies - Deacons
William Coles - Long Range Planning
Jane Davenport - Mission
Devon Frey - Communications
Larry Erickson - Treasurer
Anne Ferrera - Faith Formation
Nida Hadeed - Arabic Ministries
David Haight - Personnel Team Lead
Ann Lalik - Personnel
Peter Lehr - Assurance
Nang Hua Lian (Jonathan) - Chin Ministries
Bob Livingston - Whole Life Stewardship
Bob Martin - Finance Team Lead
Bob Miller - Personnel
Debbie Palmer - Worship and Creative Arts
Ken Sabotta - Building and Grounds
Becky Short - Nominating and Equipping Ministry
Becky Tacca - Leadership and Team Development
Carl Venio - Connections
Roger Yott - Financial Discipleship
Janet Ney - Clerk of Session

Deacons

Alicen Bailey-Silfies -
Elder for Deacons
Judy Venezie-Gagliardi -
Moderator of Deacons
Katie Trevino -
Vice Moderator of Deacons
Susan Keller, Secretary
Ruth Asiedu-Ansah
Jayne David
Kathleen Dent
Stuart Dubbs
Walt Eberts
Lois Henseler
Lal Run Kim
Pat Lisetski
Paul Mack
Akweley Massaquoi
Nabeel Shammas
Todd Siegfried

Staff Leadership

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Pastoral Staff

Rev. Dr. Jack Haberer, Lead Pastor	jack.haberer@fpcallentown.org
Rev. Stephen Emick, Pastor for Discipleship	stephen.emick@fpcallentown.org
Rev. Dallas Bradel, Transitional Associate Pastor	dallas.bradel@fpcallentown.org
Moufid Khoury, Commissioned Lay Pastor for Arabic Ministry	moufid.khoury@fpcallentown.org
Abraham Sang, Chin Language Worship Leader	
Rev. Dr. Jefferson Aiken, Rev. Dr. Michael Drake, Rev. John K. Stoner - Pastors Emeriti	

Worship Staff

Thomas Dressler, Coordinator, Traditional Worship	tom.dressler@fpcallentown.org
Brandon Remp, Assistant, Traditional Worship	brandon.remp@fpcallentown.org
Wilson Velazquez, Coordinator, Alternative Worship	wilson.velazquez@fpcallentown.org

Mission Staff

Donna Barnwell, Mission Director	donna.barnwell@fpcallentown.org
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Weekday Preschool Staff

Trish Brown, Barbara Culp, Lydia Day, Danell Fowler, Lori George, Heidi Hartman, Suzanne Hilton, Jen Kareha, Melissa Luksic, Jen Palaia, Molly Szewczak

Faith Formation Staff

Tina Beck, Child Care Coordinator	tina.beck@fpcallentown.org
Barbara Culp, Weekday Preschool Director	barbara.culp@fpcallentown.org
JoAnn Jones, Director, Children & Tween Ministry	joann.jones@fpcallentown.org
Kathy Schmied, Director, Family & Middle School Ministry	kathy.schmied@fpcallentown.org
Pam Weiss, Director, Adult Faith Formation and Connections	pam.weiss@fpcallentown.org
Dana Yashou, Director, High School Ministry	dana.yashou@fpcallentown.org

Child Care Staff

Logan Beck, Lauren Daniel, Mira-Belle Haddad, Aimee Hutchinson

Ministry Support

Jennifer Auman, Ministry Support	jennifer.auman@fpcallentown.org
Larry Deal, Business Administrator	larry.deal@fpcallentown.org
Roger Drayer, Property Manager	roger.drayer@fpcallentown.org
Tara Drayer, Staff Accountant	tara.drayer@fpcallentown.org
Nancy Hoffman, Assistant to the Lead Pastor	nancy.hoffman@fpcallentown.org
Caley Oels, Communications Coordinator	caley.oels@fpcallentown.org
Joanne Stock, Ministry Support	joanne.stock@fpcallentown.org
Custodians	Cathy Boyle, Peter Boyle, Harry Dennis, Scott MacKenzie, Jose Santiago
Parish Associates	Rev. Dianne Kareha, Rev. Dr. Gregory Palmer

- We granted Pastor Emeritus status to Mike Drake in 2017, and to Jefferson Aiken in 2018.
- We bid farewell with deep appreciation to Lindsay Harren-Lewis, our Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care.
- We welcomed Dallas Bradel as Transitional Associate Pastor.
- We bid farewell to Bobby Siegfried who resigned from leading the Alternative worship to help his family church develop a similar worship service.
- We welcomed Wilson Velazquez to become the new Coordinator of Alternative Worship.



**First
Presbyterian**
ALLENTOWN

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