

Our  
**LIGHT**  
continues to  
**SHINE**



**2020 Annual Report**

Our  
**LIGHT**  
continues to  
**SHINE**

THE **CHURCH**  
has left the  
**BUILDING**

**WORSHIP ONLINE!**

Join us weekly!  
[www.fpcallentown.org](http://www.fpcallentown.org)



First  
Presbyterian  
ALLENTOWN

10:00 a.m. English Language  
11:30 a.m. Arabic Language  
12:30 p.m. Chin Burmese Language

## The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it. -John 1:5

The sign on the corner of Cedar Crest and Tilghman says, “The Church has left the building.” During the second week of March 2020, our church pivoted to online worship and ministry from our living rooms, kitchen tables and driveways as the coronavirus pandemic forced us to wear masks, socially distance and quarantine. First Presbyterian Church has risen to the challenge, shining the light of Christ to one another, to our community, region and world.

After the death of Jesus, the disciples didn’t know what would come next. They thought the light had gone out of the world. Their hopes and dreams were shattered by Jesus’ death. It felt like the darkness of Good Friday would overcome them. On the third day, Jesus appeared among them and said, “Peace be with you.” The light shined in the darkness and shines still. Jesus’ resurrection changed everything. Death did not get the last word, life did—new life. We follow Jesus Christ offering testimony to light and life in the world. Even in the midst of a global pandemic, even in the midst of change in the church, we share Christ’s light with a weary world.

For FPCA, 2020 brought staff changes with the leaving of Donna Barnwell, Wilson Velazquez and Dana Yashou. We grieve the death of Scott MacKenzie and celebrate his life among us. The dissolution of the pastoral relationship with Jack Haberer brought questions, hurt and challenge to the community. This change of leadership, understood and accepted by some and questioned by others, highlighted fissures in the congregation already there. The Session chose to invite me to serve as Transitional Pastor to guide the congregation through this transition and to identify and work through the system’s issues which have contributed to the difficult leavings of pastors and staff who have served this church. Together we will wrestle with the issues and move towards understanding what God is calling First Presbyterian Church to do and be in its next chapters of mission and ministry.

This Annual Report is a celebration of how *Our Light Continues to Shine* through Praising God, Forming Faith, Serving Others and Caring for Others.

Grace, peace and joy be with you as you shine your light!

Jan Nolt Carter  
Transitional Pastor

# Praising GOD



Every week, we celebrate God's light shining among us and through us by praising God through worship. The year started with the offering of five worship services in person each Sunday, but has pivoted to the offering of three: English Language Worship, Arabic Language Worship and Chin-Burmese Language Worship, now all online. Several worship services were offered outside while the weather was nicer and as it seemed safer, but with the surge of COVID-19 cases, we have returned to online worship.

Challenge has brought blessings and opportunities as we have tried to explore the possibilities of online media. For our stewardship emphasis, it was possible to bring worshippers to the places where we walk with and serve alongside our mission partners. We have learned that worship does not happen only in the sanctuary, but we can create sacred places in our homes. When we celebrate communion, our table is wider than we could ever have imagined. We break bread and share the cup in our own homes, connected by an invisible thread, house to house, including all. Lament has been a periodic feature in our liturgy as we cry out to God for help in trouble.

Crafting worship to include many voices has been a priority. Highlights have included the over 30 different musicians of all ages who contributed to preludes and postludes for Advent and Christmas and the telling of the entire Christmas Story by scene by 18 different families for the Sunday after Christmas.

We are grateful for the production and technical support of Tony Ledbetter who makes our live streaming possible and for Mark Simmons who has offered additional production support for the creation of music videos. Our 10:10 Band has continued to share their music ministry, setting up recording sessions to create a library of music for online services as it has been safe to do so. Traditional Music Director Tom Dressler has learned how to produce hymn videos and is learning how to layer choral music.

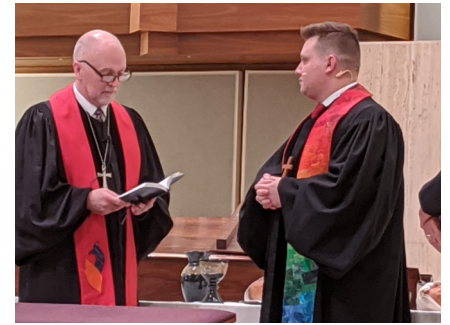
Praising God occurs every day in all ways. One of the most meaningful forms of worship this year has been through Daily Prayer Services offered online. Coordinated by Taylor Hall, 215 Daily Prayer Services offered support, lament and encouragement as well as hearing the voices of many. Prayer services for our country around the election offered solace in the face of uncertainty.

Our Light Continues to Shine as we praise God in more and more ways.



# Forming FAITH

This past year was Pastor Taylor's first full-year as our Pastor for Youth and Faith Formation and the head of our faith formation program. As a team, we've committed to building resource teams for each of our age-specific areas that will also work collaboratively to



ensure a united vision for all of our faith formation opportunities. Our ministry welcomes people of all ages and stages and identities, without reservation, to explore in a safe community what it means for present and future generations to live a Christ-like life. When ministry experienced a forced change due to the global pandemic, faith formation adapted nearly overnight to continue this vision in a whole new and holy way. In less than a week more than 250 children, youth, adults, and leaders moved to virtual faith formation opportunities. Here's what has happened since:

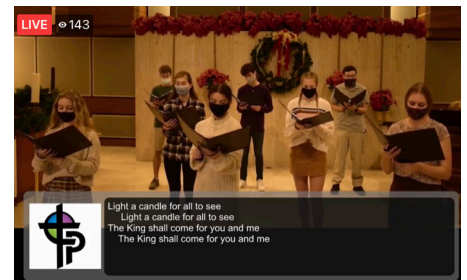
## Children's Ministry:



After a spring of virtual age-specific groups and a summer including a six-week virtual VBS incorporating Bible, Mission, Music/Dance, Crafts, Games, and Snacks opportunities demonstrated by FPCA Youth and Families, we are now pivoting our Children's Ministry model to Families Forming Faith activities based on a "WHY" formulated by the Children's Faith Formation Vision Team after listening to 110 FPCA families with Preschool through Grade 5 children. The faith formation of our children continues at home with activities, lessons, and prayers to do as a family.

## Youth Ministry:

We have adapted safe guidelines to do modified in-person and virtual youth ministry including small groups, retreats, and all-youth gatherings. Our intent is to build relationships, to name our joys and concerns, to share our stories, and to be formed in our faith. Exactly 84 youth have been connected to FPCA through one of these events over the last year. Confirmation also continues this year for our 9th graders with 8 students received as new members in a modified outdoor worship service and 12 students enrolled in this year's program.



## Adult Ministry:



Providing connection virtually has been our focus and that has continued from spring into summer and summer into fall, making sure that adults of all ages and stages have an opportunity to connect. Any given week, there are 17 small group gatherings, with Sunday morning offerings expanding to 4 or 5 options. This has led to the March-December virtual participation of 160 adults with more opportunities to connect than ever before. Throughout 2020 over 250 adults participated in faith formation opportunities.

## Intergenerational Ministry:

This new faith formation ministry has been created to promote and build intergenerational relationships for our members of all ages. This is done through offering events of connection, engagement, and learning periodically; all of which have been offered either in-person or virtually.



The faith formation team is also helping our community of faith see families as more than just parents and kids, but a wide variety of makeups including older empty nesters, young couples, friends & chosen families, and small groups. Multiple at-home devotionals have been offered throughout the year for people of all ages to do individually, as a family, or in a small group.

Faith formation continues to drastically and successfully pivot to do intentional, relational, and spiritual ministry. This continues into the new year with great excitement and possibility.

# Serving OTHERS

The need and opportunities to serve others in the name of Jesus Christ were greater than ever in the face of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020. Like everyone else, the Mission Leadership Team had to learn how to do that in new ways while still extending the love of Christ.

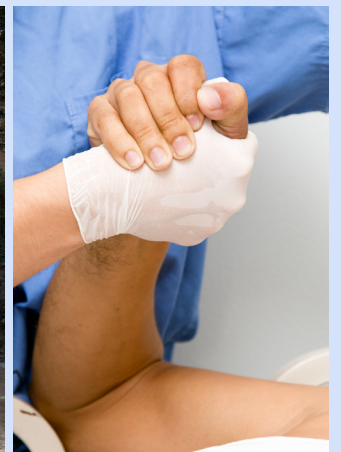
Our commitment to the needs in our local community continued despite the necessity to be socially distanced. Through drive-in collections, meals-to-go, and increased financial support, we partnered with Allentown Area Ecumenical Foodbank, Caring Hearts Ministry, Daybreak, Diakon Adoption and Foster Care, Jerusalem House, Jubilee Breakfast, Refugee Children Clothing Center, Ripple Church and Ripple Community, Sheridan Elementary School, YMCA Winter Warming Station and others. The annual Allentown CROP Walk to fight hunger looked very different, but, knowing that hunger does not stop for anything, our church continued to have one of the largest number of participants.

On the national and international level, we continued to strengthen our partnerships with Villages in Partnership in Malawi, Serving at the Crossroads in Honduras, and Refugee Center in Tripoli. We also met a variety of needs through our financial support of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.



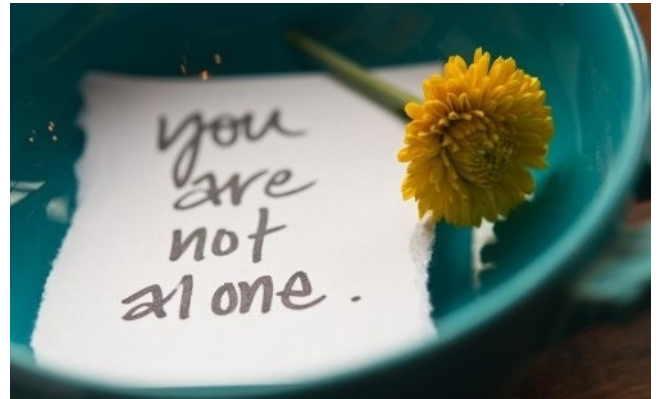
*House: In 2020, Hondurans endured COVID-19 plus massive flooding and mudslides caused by two hurricanes in the same month. The Manos Amigas clinic, where FPCA medical missions have served, began humanitarian aid efforts by collecting and distributing clothes, diapers and food.*

*Hands: FPCA partners with Serving at the Crossroads to help meet medical needs in Honduras, a country with limited healthcare.*



# Caring for **OTHERS**

Led by the Board of Deacons and our Stephen Ministers, the light of Christ's love and compassion continued to shine throughout 2020 despite the many restrictions imposed on all of us by the coronavirus pandemic. We began the year with a plan in place to achieve a 100% care rate for members and friends of our community of faith. Like most plans, it had to be shifted in new directions as we learned how to care for others when social distancing is the norm.



The church building closed, but our Christian care did not stop! A few of the ways we kept caring for others included:

- pastors continued weekly "visiting" hospitalized and sick via phone and email
- pastoral care visitors maintained their ongoing relationships with many of our homebound members
- Stephen Ministers not only provided one-on-one care, they also continued to meet monthly, virtually, for supervision and continuing education
- many knitters made it possible for us to continue sharing prayer shawls, left on doorsteps, for individuals facing particular challenges and joys
- complete strangers were still able to receive assistance from our Deacon's envelope fund to help with needs for food, gas, lodging, and rent
- we might not have had Easter lilies and Christmas poinsettia plants to deliver to homebound members and friends, but the Board of Deacons, with the help of former deacons, made sure they were remembered by our church family through delivering a homemade Christmas decoration, phone calls, and cards



And our light will continue to shine into 2021 in new ways through a complete restructure of the ministries of the Board of Deacons that is being adapted for life as we know it here and now in the midst of the ongoing pandemic. This plan includes many opportunities for all members of our church family to be an active part of caring ministries. In fact, the Board of Deacons alone cannot fulfill the plan without the help of many of you. Be on the lookout for more information and ways to answer Christ's call to love one another.



# By the NUMBERS

While being blessed with the ongoing support of the congregation and being vigilant in spending during this unprecedented chaotic time, we were able to finish the year with a positive operating surplus.

It is our prayerful hope that by continuing to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us that *Our Light Will Continue to Shine* in 2021 and beyond.

## 2020 Financial Position (unaudited)

### Assets

General Fund	1,171,483
Property Fund	1,090,288
Endowment Funds	3,682,610
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>5,944,381</b>

### Liabilities & Fund Balances

General Fund	187,475
Session Designated Funds	217,516
Deacon's Funds	13,446
Restricted Funds	502,771
Property Fund	1,086,360
Endowment Funds	3,676,051
	5,683,619
Surplus (Deficit)	260,762

### **TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE**

**5,944,381**

The above represents our unaudited 2020 Balance Sheet showing our assets, liabilities, and fund balance at the end of fiscal year 2020. Fund balance is a rolling number that includes our beginning balance, our operating deficit, and our gains/losses on investments.

## 2020 Operating Results (Unaudited)

	2020 RECEIPTS (UNAUDITED)	2019 RECEIPTS (REVIEWED)
General Fund Revenue	1,810,986	1,654,624
Restricted Mission Income	39,002	61,173
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>1,849,988</b>	<b>1,715,797</b>

	2020 EXPENDITURES (UNAUDITED)	2019 EXPENDITURES (REVIEWED)
Worship	10,707	19,995
Restricted Mission	39,002	61,173
Mission	145,792	159,227
Discipleship and Pastoral Care	22,563	56,120
Ministry Support- Office	79,472	81,945
Facilities/Plant	173,246	214,148
Staffing	1,118,444	1,154,095
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>1,589,226</b>	<b>1,746,703</b>
<b>Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>260,762</b>	<b>(30,906)</b>

# Ways to **CONNECT** People

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we communicate with each other and our church family. Now, more than ever, communication is critical. The staff is available and always glad to talk with you, share information or serve as a funnel for information.

Reach out to us by calling the church office at **610-395-3781**, you can leave a voicemail and we are happy to return your call. Phone extensions are listed below. We are also available by email.

## Pastoral Staff

Rev. Dr. Jan Nolting Carter Transitional Pastor	jan.noltingcarter@fpcallentown.org Ext. 20
Rev. Stephen Emick Pastor for Pastoral Care	stephen.emick@fpcallentown.org Ext. 19
Rev. Taylor Hall Pastor for Youth and Faith Formation	taylor.hall@fpcallentown.org Ext. 16

## Worship Staff

Tom Dressler Coordinator, Traditional Worship	tom.dressler@fpcallentown.org Ext. 21
Moufid Khoury Commissioned Lay Pastor for Arabic Ministry	moufid.khoury@fpcallentown.org Ext. 14
Brandon Remp Director of Children's and Youth Choirs	brandon.s.remp@gmail.com
Abraham Pa Cawi Chin Burmese Language Worship Leader	pacawi.senga@gmail.com

## Faith Formation Staff

Barbara Culp Weekday Preschool Director	barbara.culp@fpcallentown.org Ext. 35
JoAnn Jones Director of Children's Ministries	joann.jones@fpcallentown.org Ext. 57
Kathy Schmied Director of Intergenerational Faith Formation & Fellowship	kathy.schmied@fpcallentown.org Ext. 40
Pam Weiss Director of Adult Faith Formation & Connections	pam.weiss@fpcallentown.org Ext. 43

## Ministry Support

Larry Deal Church Business Manager	larry.deal@fpcallentown.org Ext. 15
Roger Drayer Property Manager	roger.drayer@fpcallentown.org Ext. 33
Tara Drayer Staff Accountant	tara.drayer@fpcallentown.org Ext. 22
Aixa Gonzalez Ministry Support for Mission	aixa.gonzalez@fpcallentown.org Ext. 11
Caley Oels Communications Coordinator	caley.oels@fpcallentown.org Ext. 23
Joanne Stock Ministry Support for Membership, Pastoral Care & Connections	joanne.stock@fpcallentown.org Ext. 36

## Custodians

Cathy Boyle, Peter Boyle, Kevin Litzinger

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