



2023 Annual Report



A Overview From Carter Lester

Interim Lead Pastor

As I write this, I am reflecting on the beautiful sky I got to witness this morning driving back from joining the Family Promise overnight team at the church. The time was the brink of sunrise. I did not get to see the sun itself rise above the horizon because of cloud cover, but I saw the effects of those sunrays in the beautiful red-streaked sky. What a fitting metaphor for church life as we look back and see reflections of God's light in the people and ministry of FPCA.

Post-pandemic rebuilding has continued.

All congregations have had to rebuild their ministry following the extended closure of facilities and limitations on gathering during the pandemic. FPCA has had more than its share of pandemic challenges: roof leaks and impact on Fellowship Hall, conflict and changes in pastoral leadership. And yet, progress has continued as you will see in more detail in the team reports that follow. In 2023,

- Repairs and replacements were made to the sound and video systems so that the 8:45 worship service could return to Fellowship Hall. The band is back!
- A hard-working Personnel team filled 9 staff vacancies.
- With a new Director of Children Ministry, Errika Gonzales, on board to work with Taylor Hall, programming for children and families grew, including a mini-Vacation Bible School in August. A full VBS is coming in June.
- We once again have two wonderful childcare workers to welcome and watch over the youngest members of the FPCA church family on Sunday mornings.
- A Worship Team has been re-established and they have done the work to move the 8:45 worship service to Fellowship Hall, reorient the sanctuary screen, recruit Greeter teams, ensure that we have working assisted listening devices, and strengthen worship opportunities.
- The Building and Grounds team continues to whittle down the long list of deferred maintenance, including making major repairs to three air condition units and repairing the narthex door.
- The Deacons and Stephen Ministers, working with Kathryn Foster, have made efforts to expand their care of members of the congregation.

There have also been promising signs of new life - the sky is getting brighter!

- With a new curriculum developed by Taylor Hall, 13 youth completed the confirmation program and joined the church on Pentecost Sunday.
- 21 adults joined the church this year - and another 5 former members asked to be returned to the active roll. The Deacons are now dropping off hospitality bags for first-time visitors and car magnets are available for church members to point the way to FPCA.
- The FaithFULL Waters year-long mission initiative to install a well in Malawi and expand the number of showers available for unhoused guests at the Lehigh Conference of Churches blew past its \$10,000 goal and set a new goal of \$20,000.
- New small groups were formed in Advent, and the number of children and youth participating in faith formation continued to grow.
- Stewardship pledges increased this year for the first time in several years.



Goals for 2023:

In last year's Annual Report, I established 7 focus points for the transitional work ahead:

1. Develop a mission statement for FPCA's ministry and undertake a mission study. That work will get the Pastor Nominating Committee off to a faster start when the Committee is formed.
The Mission Study team completed its work, not only developing the mission study, but also writing a new FPCA mission statement, including core values, that was approved by Session. The PNC has been elected.
2. Strengthen the two English-language worship services in their separate formats while finding opportunities for linking all four worshipping communities together to foster the unity of this congregation as called for in the Lombard report.
The 8:45 service has returned to Fellowship Hall, worship attendance is growing, and we have set a schedule of four Sundays to worship as one united congregation.
3. Develop a prioritized list for repairs, updates, and/or new installations for the sound and video systems in Fellowship Hall and the sanctuary so those changes can be made as money permits.
The Fellowship Hall systems were fixed. Updates and improvements to the sound system in the sanctuary will need to be included in a future capital campaign.
4. Develop a prioritized and comprehensive list of repair and maintenance needs in the buildings that not only includes current needs, but also anticipates facility issues in the next five to ten years, with an eye for determining how to pay for these projects.
The Building and Grounds team has developed a prioritized spreadsheet of repairs, deferred maintenance, and system upgrades that need to be made in the immediate and longer-term future. Some can be accomplished in the near future with money in the general budget and capital reserve. Other projects will need to await a capital campaign.
5. Discern the appropriate staff size and design to lead this congregation's ministry in time for the 2024 budget.
The Personnel Committee recommended, and the Session approved, having two installed pastors and a part-time pastor of visitation, in addition to the other program and administrative staff. This new staffing will begin June 1 upon the completion of Kathryn Foster's interim associate contract.
6. Determine how best to be a good steward of these building and grounds that will foster ministry, build partnerships, and develop additional income for ministry.
A team has been looking at deed and zoning restrictions and other issues, and researching what other churches have done to creatively utilize their facilities and grounds. This spring the team will report to Session about which options merit further research and exploration so that these facilities and grounds can be an asset rather than a liability for ministry moving forward.
7. Build on, and live out, the Lombard recommendations to prepare for a healthy new chapter of ministry.
The Lombard Steering Team has doggedly pursued completing the list of tasks and goals set up in the final report of the Lombard process.

With God's help, much has been accomplished this past year, as you will see when you continue to read through this report, even as significant challenges remain. But, I have to say that I have been so inspired this past year to witness so many folks at FPCA doing their best to bear Christ's light day in, day out, week in, week out. May we continue to look for the light on the horizon, and may we reflect that light through our ministry as individuals and as a congregation.

In good hope,



Carter

A Letter From Taylor Hall

Pastor for Faith Formation

Dear FPCA Friends:

Reflecting on the growth and transformation of our community in 2023, my heart is filled with gratitude and anticipation for the blessings of God's work among us. Can you believe you and I have been in ministry together for four years now?! Our church theme for this year, "I am about to do a new thing", has manifested in so many ways throughout our shared ministry, especially this last year.

Here are some of my own personal blessings: I was fortunate to serve on the hiring teams for both Erika Gonzalez and Corey Dandridge. Both bring a sense of energy, creativity, and collaborative spirits that have been instrumental in bringing new life to our community. Our faith formation ministry has touched the lives of over 100 children & youth and around 200 adults. Our redesigned confirmation program, approved in Spring of 2022, concluded its first year, providing a solid foundation of faith for our young members as 13 of them joined the church. Summer Camp: A Mini VBS was a resounding success, as it was an excellent demonstration of our community's value of faith formation, fun, and fellowship. Our commitment to inclusivity was reflected in our representation at the Lehigh Valley LGBTQ+ Pride and again when nearly 60 of you attended my fall series on "The Bible, Theology, and LGBTQ+ Community". Our Fall Kick-Off, even though we had to move it inside of weather, brought us together in celebration of our shared faith and community! A highlight every week is Wednesday mornings when I lead our weekday preschool in 30-minute chapel services filled with prayer, stories, and songs. And at the end of the year, I was nominated and have agreed to serve Lehigh Presbytery as its Vice Moderator in 2024.

As we step into 2024, continue to embrace the promise of Isaiah 43:19, knowing that God is indeed doing a new thing in our midst. Onto year five for us!

In God's love,



Taylor Hall



A Letter From Kathryn Foster

Interim Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care

I began my ministry here at First Presbyterian Allentown on June 1, 2024. I was charged with 12 months of work and have been blessed by it. Here are some highlights of my work.

God's Usual Things - Always streams in the desert....

1. Providing pastoral care to those who are ill or homebound including some holy communion.
2. Participating in contacting church members working toward a 100% care rate.
3. Leadership with the FPCA Deacons in support of emergency funding for community, gifts for members (meals, blankets, cards, prayers), etc.
4. Memorial/Funeral Services: Organizing, preparing bulletin, performing seven since June 1.
5. Stephen Ministers matching care receivers and sending Journeying Through Grief booklets.
6. Worship responsibilities - sermons, liturgies, prayers, special inclusions, or extra worship services as people can see for themselves on Sunday mornings and share the energy.
7. Faith Formation and Community involvement responsibilities: Advent Bible Study, Daybreak Picnic, Pridefest, Lemonade in Shade, Children's programs and church picnics.
8. Church administration, devotionals, prayer, diligence in accuracy, confidentiality, meetings

God is doing New Things - Paths Forward...

1. Pastoral Care Visitation Team which seeks to match deacons and other interested members with homebound persons in order to create a feeling of church care and belonging. Calling or visiting all these members as preparation for this ministry.
2. Stephen Ministers doubled the amount of care receivers since June 1
3. Stephen Ministers "Prayer Now" ministry begun and hopes to progress; as well as taking part in special services such as the new thing: provided anointing at Quiet Christmas service.
4. Re-start of the 8:45 service in Fellowship Hall - planning and consulting.

God is continuing to bless us with new things to celebrate!

1. Begin to Extend the Communion Table to homebound persons in March 2024.

I have been particularly blessed by:

1. Meeting so many wonderfully friendly and helpful people!
2. Participating with the Chin Burmese congregation by providing the sacrament of Holy Communion Words of Institution

Thankfully submitted,

Kathryn

Kathryn



2023 Highlights from Teams and Committees

Mission Study Team

Debbie Palmer, Chair

Introduction: This past year, following recommendations from the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center and in preparation for the formation of the Pastor Nominating Committee, the Session called for the creation of a team to write a Mission Statement, formulate Core Values and complete a Mission Study. Rich Ferrera, Kathy Schmied and Debbie Palmer recruited team members and also considered the benefit of a consultant to guide the process. At their recommendation, the Session approved Michelle Snyder and Steve Lindsley from PneuMatrix as the consultants and Matt Clever, Lois Henseler, Rich Laliberte, Mike Loomis, Sean Metzger, Debbie Palmer, Janine Santoro, Rebecca Taylor, and Lynda Wiseman as the Mission Study Team. The warm reception and acceptance given the Mission Study by the Congregation, Session and Presbytery affirmed our work. Copies of the full Mission study are available in the narthex and online.

Our Mission Statement:

We are imperfect people striving to live God's love in the way of Jesus Christ.

Our Core Values:

In response to the overflowing love of God:

- ***We strive to see Christ in each person, practicing expansive welcome and steadfast love.***
- ***We strive to center our life around joyful and grateful worship of God.***
- ***We strive to continually grow in our faith.***
- ***We strive to use our gifts to fulfill God's call.***
- ***We strive to serve God by serving our neighbors near and far.***

Arabic Ministry

Afaf Khoury, Chair

- We continue to worship every Sunday 9:50-11:50. Attendance has picked up after COVID19.
- We encourage school age children and youth to engage in the life of FPCA children and youth programs.
- We help and invite newcomers especially from Syria to join us in church and help them get acclimated while settling in their new world in the USA.
- We continue to pray for and partner with our sister churches: Amar Church in Syria and Tripoli Church in Lebanon.
- We continue to live stream our Arabic language services and we are being heard in Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, Bahrain, Arab Emirates and Egypt.
- We continue to pray for the people suffering in the Middle East and continue to pray for just PEACE.



Board of Deacons

Deborah Giltz, Moderator

The Board of Deacons is pleased to share highlights of our service this past year -

- Assisted numerous Families & Individuals with significant needs through Spirit Cards, Rent and Utilities assistance, and Temporary Lodging utilizing \$8,232.39 from the Deacons Fund.
- Mailed hundreds of cards of support to members of our congregation who have been recently hospitalized.
- Distribution of Prayer Squares and Prayer Shawls delivered to members who have recently suffered a loss.

- Decorated the Sanctuary during Advent and Easter with live flowers and plants which were then delivered to homebound and cherished members of FPCA.
- Donation to FPCA Youth for the purchase of beads and bracelet making materials to support their Suicide Awareness Walk and initiative.
- Gifted personal care items and shelving units to Family Promise.
- Delivered Welcome packages to new members joining the FPCA church family.

Buildings and Grounds

Rick Ensley, Chair

Air Conditioning Replacement and Repairs

- 1970's office wing, Library, Fellowship Hall, Room 115

Miscellaneous Repairs/Maintenance

- First floor vinyl tile floors stripped and waxed throughout (corridors, classrooms, atrium, stairs)
- Room 112 window pane replaced
- Room 120 drywall repair completed (from water damage); radiator repaired; thorough cleaning of window sills and framework; entire room deep cleaned
- Room 218 & 220 deep cleaned and painted
- Four large sofas were removed from second floor hallway (Cedar Crest side)
- Room 213 ceiling light fixture ballast replaced
- Room 112 window shades installed
- Family Promise supplies moved to a cart under stage in Fellowship Hall for convenience of volunteers and safety of participants
- October 28 Clean-out day at church: Room 211, basement (old youth lounge), and unused offices were purged of items no longer needed. Wooden classroom chairs, wooden toys, and theater costumes were donated.



Exterior

- Bulbs replaced for parking lot lights at office entrance and memorial garden
- Removal of 12 trees and pruning of dead branches on trees around entire church campus
- Memorial Garden cross, wall, and marble were pressure washed
- Two wrought iron gates were installed at top & bottom of steps in courtyard for safety of children
- West Narthex entrance step repaired

Preschool

- Lights in first floor Preschool hallway replaced
- Preschool recreation equipment moved to a cart under stage in Fellowship Hall for convenience of teachers and safety of children
- Air conditioning in Preschool office repaired
- Second floor Preschool girls' bathroom plumbing repaired; water damage on ceiling repaired

Kitchen

- One stove replaced; One stove repaired (both under warranty); extra newer stove donated to Daybreak

Compassion, Peace, and Justice Team

Lois Henseler, Chair

The Compassion, Peace, and Justice team (CPJ) felt God's hand at work in 2023 as we expanded our focus to include LGBTQ justice, environmental justice, peacemaking/anti-violence, and family justice.

We began the year by leading an Adult Faith Formation series on the book *Wait - Is This Racist?: A Guide to Becoming an Anti-racist Church* and discovered a group of more than 25 individuals who participated in thoughtful conversations in support of our congregation's continued growth in this area. By listening

to those who participated in this series as well as those who joined the series that Pastor Taylor led, The Bible and LGBTQ, we learned more about our member's perspectives on justice issues which helped all of us grow and also planted seeds for further growth. We were pleased to see the large number of members who are interested in justice issues.

Hosting fellowship time one Sunday in June gave us the opportunity to offer End Gun Violence T-shirts to the congregation. In addition, we were able to have conversations with members regarding their concerns and interests within the area of Compassion, Peace and Justice.

We additionally saw God's work in the process that occurred with our carefully crafted welcome statement. The Session referred this work to the Mission Study Team. We could see in the Core Values that were adopted with the final Mission Study that it had been thoughtfully considered and included.

We seek to be faithful to God's call as we consider plans for 2024.

- We hope to follow up on the recent Adult Faith Formation series on Affordable Housing, collaborating with the Mission Action Team to work toward housing justice.
- We plan to include the Building and Grounds Team in the formation of a group to evaluate how our building welcomes people from diverse groups.
- We will be considering ways in which we can continue congregational discussions regarding gun violence.
- We are planning to begin a film series, in collaboration with the Fellowship Team, in which the congregation would be invited to watch films created by Black producers.
- We will be advocating for the Mission Statement and Core Values to be prominently displayed throughout the building and grounds.
- We will be encouraging the Session to consider becoming a PCUSA Matthew 25 church.

Faith Formation

Trish Brown, Chair

Looking back over 2023, we are thankful for the blessings of:

- Our Director of Children and Families, Errika Gonzalez, started on staff in April 2023 and has been moving forward with new ideas ever since.
- Our Children's Sunday Morning Formation is easy to lead and fun to participate in, thanks to lesson plans provided by Pastor Taylor and Errika. We currently have five children's classes: Nursery, Preschool, Pre-K, Kindergarten to 2nd, and 3rd to 5th grade.
- Since we started the year understaffed, we decided not to have a Vacation Bible School this summer. However, at Errika's encouragement and with her leadership, we carried out a Mini-VBS in 4-6 weeks. Pastor Taylor wrote the theme and curriculum: Exploring God's World. Several of our Weekday Preschool students were among the 25 children who attended.
- The Children's Christmas Pageant, also planned and presented in only 4-6 weeks, was a great experience for the kids, and fun to watch as they took more and more ownership with each practice. Two of our youth served as co-directors.



- The Nursery is back in business from 8:30-12:30 each Sunday morning, with our two new staff members, Marie Daday and Genesis Tejada.
- We have 63 children registered this year.
- Youth Sunday Morning Formation is led by Pastor Taylor, Errika, and a team of 7 adults. Pastor Taylor writes the curriculum for our Middle School (6th-8th) and High School classes (9th-12th).
- We had 13 youth complete the Confirmation program, led by Pastor Taylor. Each student chose an adult mentor from our church. Confirmation now takes place every other year as confirmation is now open to both 8th and 9th graders.
- The Youth Program is finding more ways to connect and has been active volunteering to help with VBS, the Christmas Pageant, food bank collections, and food bags for Sheridan School as well.
- We have many leaders from our Youth program - Elders, Deacons, a youth on our PNC, and even more youth who volunteer to help when needed.
- We have 38 youth registered this year.
- We've had a variety of Adult Faith Formation offerings this year. Consistently, there are 4 offerings each Sunday morning and 3 during the week.
- Nine small groups met during Lent, and we added four new small groups during Advent this year, including a Parents group. Several of our small groups meet throughout the year as well. Over 125 participants joined a small group during Lent, Advent, or both seasons.
- Men's, Women's, and Co-Ed Bible Studies continue to meet, in-person and online. We even have participants from Wyoming and Australia.
- There was a one-day Men's retreat this fall, led by Pastor Carter.
- Our Fall Kickoff began with the Blessing of the Backpacks in the worship service and ended with an intergenerational gathering of food, crafts, and activities in Fellowship Hall and throughout the building.
- We have 43 adults who serve as faith formation leaders to our children, youth, and adults. A full 100% of our leaders returned to lead faith formation again this year!
- We begin every Sunday Morning Faith Formation with a gathering time that includes music and prayer for children, youth, and families at 9:50 a.m. in the sanctuary. Adults are also invited!
- Bibles were distributed during our gathering time and many worshippers stayed to witness and support our children and youth.
- The Christmas Pageant was complemented by an intergenerational gathering in Fellowship Hall for cookies and cocoa.



Looking to 2024, we are excited for more opportunities for the Children and Youth:

- We are planning several summer trips for the Youth.
- We are already planning a full VBS in June 2024, and are excited about the Scuba theme.
- We have several potential options for 2024's Children's Christmas Pageant and plans for better audio as well.

Fellowship

Rebecca Taylor, Chair

- Our church celebrations bring the entire church together for Fellowship, fun, and delicious food; building our relationships and strengthening our Christian community.
- God has blessed FPCA with much to celebrate in 2023 including Easter, Pentecost and Confirmation, the Fall Kick Off, and the Children's Christmas Pageant Reception.
- We give thanks for God always sending us an abundance of people and food for our celebrations of Faith.
- In fact, we have received such an abundance that other communities in need like Daybreak, Ripple, and the Eccumenical Food Bank are also blessed with extra food.

- The Fellowship team is so grateful for the many hands who helped make our Fellowship Events possible. Thank you to everyone who brought food, moved chairs, washed dishes, decorated, or contributed in any other way; we could not do it without you all.
- The Fellowship team successfully collaborated with Faith Formation and Children’s Ministry for the Fall Kick off and Pageant Reception and we look forward to partnering with other groups in 2024.
- Our hope for 2024 is to continue to offer opportunities for our church family and visitors to grow in relationship with each other and God as we strive to live God’s love in the way of Jesus Christ.

Finance Team

Josh Luey, Chair

- The Finance Team has been hard at work tracking the church’s income and expenses to ensure God’s gifts to us are well cared for.
- We are tracking everything against the annual budget and have created a new budget for the coming year.
- The investment team continues to monitor the church’s long term investments in this unusual financial environment.

Lombard Steering Team

Bruce Gunn, Chair

- Updated the Congregation on the status of the Lombard Issue proposals at the Annual Meeting, including the names of the contact persons for each responsible team
- Continued to update the Session on a monthly basis of the status of the Congregational Lombard proposals which were presently being initiated as well as those which were already in progress
- Conducted a Town Hall in April on the status of the Lombard recommendations and provided a detailed update on the planning for the Mission Study and the formation of a Mission Study Team
- Conflict/Change Team presented to Session for approval a Behavioral Covenant of FPCA to serve as a guide for our conduct throughout the year
- Continued to ensure that the Lombard documents were available to the Congregation on the FPCA website

FPCA Mission Ministries - Kathy Matthews, Chair, Mission Coordinating Team and Becky Tacca, Chair, Mission Action Team

Blessings and New Paths

- The abounding generosity of members and friends of the FPCA congregation through the donations of resources from funds to food to footwear and more, and the time, talent, and thoughtfulness of both first-time and long-term dedicated volunteers;
- A Spirit-lifting, eye-opening, fellowship-sharing Mission Ministry mini-retreat;
- A new “Mission Moments” newsletter sharing stories of how the Spirit is moving among our mission partners, their clients, our mission team members, and our congregation;
- A new focus on prayerful support of our mission partners through a continuing cycle of reflection and prayers for a mission partner each week;
- A new Mission Statement adopted by the Mission Ministry teams:

Our mission as the FPCA Mission Ministry is to serve God by serving our neighbors near and far. We especially feel called by God to address the needs of children and families, responding not only to immediate emergency needs, but also to long-term needs. We feel called to not only give charity, but also to work for justice, empowerment, and self-sufficiency. In doing this work, we will seek to be good stewards of the resources given to us by God, while seeking to expand participation in FPCA’s mission outreach.



Highlights of these words in action in 2023 include:

- **FaithFULL Waters:** Beginning in September 2023, FPCA's Mission Ministry launched a one-year, church-wide mission project called FaithFULL Waters to help provide access to clean water to those in need internationally and locally. Funds will be used to build a well in Malawi and to provide showers for homeless individuals in Allentown. To date, over \$15,000 has been raised, and the original goal of \$10,000 was increased to \$20,000.
- **Family Promise:** In 2023, FPCA hosted families in Fellowship Hall for 4 one-week periods. Over the year, more than 34 members (many of whom brought their children) helped 14 families (16 adults and 18 children) by serving meals, playing games, doing crafts, celebrating birthdays with cakes and presents, sleeping overnight for 28 nights, and enjoying fellowship. We made a special donation to help one family reunite in Moldova.
- **International and national mission partners:** We donated \$20,000 in support of missionaries in Honduras, Greece, South Sudan, and the Forman School in Pakistan. We donated additional \$9000 to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PAD), Manos Amigas Clinic in Honduras through Serving at the CrossRoads, and Villages in Partnership in Malawi.
- **Greater Allentown YMCA Warming Station:** We raised \$30,233 from the "Par for the Cause" golf tournament, including \$3195 by our first online silent auction. All proceeds go to support shelter for the homeless during the winter at the Y's Warming Station.
- **FPCA's "40 Days of Giving:"** A new Lenten Collection Drive helped replenish items needed by our mission partners.
- **Daybreak:** Teams from FPCA prepared and served over 28 meals with an average of 80-85 clients at each meal. We hosted a picnic for 40 clients at the church in September and purchased shoes for 40 clients.
- **Allentown Area Ecumenical Foodbank:** In addition to providing financial support for the Foodbank, nearly 3000 pounds of food was donated to the foodbank.
- **Sheridan Elementary School and Allentown School District:** Two food collections and monetary donations provided food bags each week for 50-60 food insecure children. Over the course of the year, 100 volunteers packed and distributed 1650 weekend food bags. At Christmas, 112 boxes of food were distributed. Many church members and friends of our church knitted and donated 1,305 hats to all first graders in schools in the Allentown School District.
- **Ripple:** 24 church members hosted and provided 3 Sunday evening dinners, preparing a total of 200 meals.
- **CROP Walk :** Our church raised approximately \$3000 to fight hunger and homeless through this annual event.
- **Sixth Street Shelter:** Several church members continue to volunteer their time to plant, weed, trim, and clean up the "Believe Garden" at the shelter. The Quilting and Craft Group Ministry donated 5 handmade quilts to residents and gifted \$800 to purchase Beds in a Bag to meet the needs of incoming new residents.
- **Little Free Libraries:** We collected and restocked books at our four Little Free Libraries in the city of Allentown.
- **Bread for the World:** Church members were given an opportunity to participate in the annual offering of letters to end world hunger through our partner BFW.



Nominating Team

Bruce Gunn, Chair

- Presented a slate of elders, deacons, and nominating team members for election by the Congregation at the Feb. 2023 Annual Meeting
- Recommended a slate of corporate officers at the April Session meeting
- Hosted Lemonade in the Shade in Aug. where suggestion forms for 2024 elected positions were distributed
- Recommended a slate of Presbytery Commissioners at the Dec. Session meeting
- Recruited a representative slate of 12 diverse members for a PNC to call the next lead pastor of FPCA



Personnel

Anne Ferrera, Chair

The role of the Personnel Team is to support our dedicated staff members. First Presbyterian Church of Allentown is blessed with pastoral staff, program and office staff, property staff, and Preschool staff who dedicate their work to the ministry of FPCA. As we reflect on 2023, we celebrate all our staff, and highlight those staff members who joined the FPCA family during 2023:

- Rev. Dr. Carter Lester, Interim Lead Pastor
- Sean Metzgar, Worship Technical Director
- Steven Pasquarella, custodian
- Errika Gonzalez, Director of Children and Families
- Rev. Kathryn Foster, Interim Associate Pastor
- Sharon Dorward, Administrative Assistant
- Marie Daday, Nursery Room Attendant
- Genesis Tejada, Nursery Room Attendant
- Corey Dandridge, Director of Contemporary Music
- Each of these new staff members shares a role in our ministry as we seek to allow God to do a new thing through First Presbyterian Church of Allentown.

We also celebrate the contributions of staff who have moved on from their ministry with FPCA:

- Rev. Stephen Emick, Pastor for Pastoral Care
- Hannah Lefurgy, Director of Contemporary Music

The Personnel Team thanks both The Ad Hoc Hiring Team and The Director of Contemporary Music Hiring Team for their dedicated work in bringing many of these new staff members to ministry here at FPCA.



Stewardship

Kevin Heier and Bill White, Co-Chairs

- Our Stewardship/Engagement team set the stage in 2023 for going beyond the annual pledge campaign in helping church members connect more closely with First Presbyterian.
- Our goal is to begin reaching out to everyone in the church to discuss their gifts and passions and how they are being used or can be used to pursue ministries within and outside our walls. We also will be focusing on ways to help our members share their faith stories with our congregation as a way of forging tighter relationships within our church community.
- Anyone who is interested in joining this effort should contact Kevin Heier (heierkr@airproducts.com) or Bill White (whitebil1974@gmail.com).

Weekday Preschool

Trish Brown, Chair

- For the 2023/2024 school year, the preschool has enrolled 59 students (ages 2 years, 7 months through 5-years-old) in five classes.
- The preschool employs nine teachers and the Preschool Director.
- In addition to the morning classes, the preschool offers after-school enrichment opportunities for an additional cost, including Lunch Bunch, Stay & Play and Mindful Movement (children's yoga.)
- The preschool enjoys weekly "Chapel Time" with Pastor Taylor. The students listen to a bible story and a fun lesson and then sing songs together.
- The Weekday Preschool and church staff, members and volunteers have continued to grow their relationship, working closely and together to ensure that we are all one church family blessed with God's love.
- Last summer, the preschool hosted a "Lemonade in the Shade" bringing awareness of our preschool to church members while also raising funds for needed supplies.
- The preschool has also held two successful fundraising events this school year: the Lehigh Valley Home & Garden Winter Greens Sale and Pajama Night with Santa.
- Enrollment for 2024/2025 is looking very good! Two classes were filled within the first two days of registration, and all other classes are well on their way!
- We look forward to growing and continuing to provide a loving, nurturing and safe space for our students and families!

Worship Team

Joel Hurley, Chair

In 2023, a new Worship Team was re-formed after not having an organized Worship Team during the Covid-19 epidemic. Getting a new Worship Team started came with challenges after the two plus years of Covid-19. The Worship Team is: Karen Brion, Jim Henry, Tina Luey, Claudia Norris, Bobbi Rothermel, Marijo Taylor, and its chair Joel Hurley. Some of The Team's significant efforts during 2023:

- Worked with Sean Metzger and others to get a video screen functional in the sanctuary.
- Evaluated and procured audio and video equipment for the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall.
- Worked on making the hearing-impaired system functional again.
- Assisted the Session and staff with returning the 8:45 service to Fellowship Hall.
- Worked on adding additional volunteers to operate the A/V equipment.
- Worked with many others to create and organize ongoing greeter and usher teams for both worship services.
- Worked with Marilyn Leiby regarding safe ways to serve communion and establish a recruitment model for finding servers.
- Worked with the pastors to create the special Ash Wednesday and Quiet Christmas services.



Financial Reports

STEWARDSHIP PLEDGES

2023	945,135
2022	913,974
2021	990,485

FINANCIAL POSITION

	2023
Assets	(unaudited)
General Fund	1,036,452
Property Fund	940,193
Endowment Funds	3,827,330
TOTAL ASSETS	\$5,803,975
Liabilities & Fund Balances	
General Fund	177,900
Session Designated Funds	225,906
Deacons' Fund	15,363
Other Restricted Funds	411,154
Property Fund	940,193
Endowment Funds	3,827,613
	\$5,598,129
General Fund Principal Balance	\$ 205,846
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE	\$5,803,975

OPERATING RESULTS

	2023 RECEIPTS	2022 RECEIPTS
	(unaudited)	(reviewed)
General Fund Revenue	1,384,832	1,478,235
Restricted Mission	57,614	48,509
TOTAL REVENUE	1,442,446	1,526,744
	2023 EXPENDITURES	2022 EXPENDITURES
	(unaudited)	(reviewed)
Worship	16,443	13,182
Mission	122,272	148,053
Restricted Mission	57,614	48,510
Discipleship and Pastoral Care	33,953	28,322
Ministry Support - Office	90,001	95,554
Facilities/Plant	193,251	222,846
Staffing	921,810	942,659
TOTAL EXPENSE	1,435,344	1,499,126
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	7,102	*27,618

*The 2022 operating results show a surplus, rather than the deficit reported in the 2022 Annual Report, because of 2022 stock transfers from members which were not liquidated until after the annual report was completed

Pastors & Staff

Peter Boyle - Custodian	
Trish Brown - Young 3-Year-Old Class Preschool Teacher	
Corey Dandridge - Director of Contemporary Music	corey.dandridge@fpcallentown.org
Lydia Day - Older 3-Year-Old Class Preschool Teacher	
Sharon Dorward - Administrative Assistant	sharon.dorward@fpcallentown.org
Tara Drayer - Staff Accountant	tara.drayer@fpcallentown.org
Kathryn Foster - Interim Associate Pastor	kathryn.foster@fpcallentown.org
Danell Fowler - 4-Year-Old Class Preschool Teacher	
Lori George - Young and Older 3-Year-Old Class Preschool Teacher	
Errika Gonzalez - Director of Children and Families	errika.gonzalez@fpcallentown.org
Taylor Hall - Pastor for Faith Formation	taylor.hall@fpcallentown.org
Suzanne Hilton - 5-Day Pre-K Preschool Teacher	
Jennifer Kareha - 4-Year-Old Class Preschool Teacher	
Moufid Khoury - Commissioned Lay Pastor for Arabic Ministry	moufid.khoury@fpcallentown.org
Michelle Kosalko - 4-Day Pre-K Preschool Teacher	
Dan LaBombard - Property Manager	dan.labombard@fpcallentown.org
Carter Lester - Interim Lead Pastor	carter.lester@fpcallentown.org
Kevin Litzinger - Custodian	
Melissa Luksic - 5-Day Pre-K Preschool Teacher	
Sean Metzgar - Worship Technical Director	sean.metzgar@fpcallentown.org
Linda Neely - Weekday Preschool Director	linda.neely@fpcallentown.org
Caley Oels - Communications Coordinator	caley.oels@fpcallentown.org
Abraham Pa Cawi - Chin Burmese Language Worship Leader	pacawi.senga@gmail.com
Jen Palaia - 4-Day Pre-K Preschool Teacher	
Steven Pasquarella - Custodian	
Joanne Stock - Administrative Assistant	joanne.stock@fpcallentown.org
Matt Wehr - Director of Traditional Music	mattwehr2209@gmail.com

Session:

Afaf Khoury
Anne Ferrera
Betty Jo Richards
Bruce Gunn
Deb Palmer
Dot Ouellette
Jenn Riedy
Joel Hurley
Josh Luey
Kathy Matthews
Kevin Heier
Kim Ceccatti

Nelson Rabenold
Rebecca Taylor
Rick Ensley
Roger Yott
Sophia Sciarrino
Taylor Hall
Tommy Gilchrist
Trish Brown

Deacons:

Alicen Bailey-Silfies
Andy Baranek
Beth Sarmir
Brandon Remp
Deborah Giltz
Don Jacobs
Sylvia Hajewski
Ghada Jano
Ibrahim Moussa
Jenny Lucas
Karen Richards
Kathryn Foster

Kelsey Miller
Linda Boyle
Matt Clever
Sam Brion
Susan Keller
Suzanne Wertz
Victoria Toto



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