

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

200 YEARS
1824-2024
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH COLUMBUS



First Presbyterian Church
www.fpccolumbus.org

512 Seventh Street, Columbus, IN 47201
812-372-3783

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MISSION STATEMENT

To be an active, growing, inclusive and caring church family that witnesses to God's love and shares the good news of Jesus Christ. Our mission leads us to invite all people to participate fully in our community and worship life as safe, loved, and accepted children of God, including:

- Conventional Christians and questioning skeptics
 - Children and adults of all ages
- People of all sexual orientations, gender identities
 - People of all races, & cultures
 - People of all socioeconomic situations
 - People of all mental and physical abilities
- Those who bring hope to the world and those who seek hope

STAFF

Pastor	The Rev. Dr. Felipe Martinez
Director of Children and Youth Ministries.....	Jen Riddle
Organist.....	Dianne Sprunger
Choir Director.....	Jenny Heichelbech
Preschool Director.....	April Hemmerlein
Church Administrative Assistant	Brook Brown
Financial Administrative Assistant.....	Missy Burton
Sunday Custodian.....	Wayne Huff

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A Presbyterian Church (USA) congregation; member of the Synod of Lincoln Trails; the Presbytery of the Ohio Valley; the Ecumenical Assembly of Columbus, IN; MoreLight Presbyterians.

GENERAL STATISTICS

Membership

Information provided in this Annual Report covers
January – December 2023

Active Members as of 12/31/22 437

New Members 7

Mary Hamlin (1/18/23); Jen and Eric Riddle (7/27/23);
Stevi Huguenard-Davis and Richard Davis,
Doug and Marsh Sunkel (11/15/23)

Deceased Members 7

Kathy Breeden (1/31/23); Mark Harper (2/4/23); Nancy Spurgeon (2/23/23);
John Holdread (3/11/23); Stephen Hara (5/5/23);
Jan Bobbs (9/21/23); Virginia Kinnaman (12/29/23)

Baptisms

Children 1

Finn Morgan Staley (10/8/23)

Active members as of 12/31/23 437

Location :

More Information :

+123-456-7890

Our Staff

PASTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023 REV. DR. FELIPE N. MARTINEZ

Be still and know that I am God. Psalm 46:10

Thank you to all who helped make my sabbatical possible! My deep appreciation goes out especially to Richard Safford and Brook Brown, who led our administrative ministry; Cal Brand and the Deacons, who organized and offered pastoral care; Dianne Sprunger, Lisa Porter, Jenny Heichelbech and the Worship Committee, who guided the church in wonderful worship and service experiences; Colleen Herrick, Leigh Ann Figg and the Sabbatical and Personnel Committees for their work and encouragement; to the session for maneuvering some complex issues during my absence; to every church committee and their leaders who worked so hard to step up in ministry tasks; to all who so generously contributed financially to make the sabbatical possible. Thank you for investing in me and in this our common ministry. My full report is below.

Happy Birthday Church! Bicentennial plans ramped up in 2023 to help the church celebrate throughout 2024. My thanks to Sherry Stark and Rachel McCarver and the whole Bicentennial Committee for their creativity and hard work!

The church's Matthew 25 efforts continue to focus on housing. In 2023 the vision for our work came into sharper focus, as the committee decided to catalyze a process which would eventually lead to the creation of Permanent Supportive Housing in Columbus. That effort will require years of collaboration with social service agencies, city government, and public and private partners. I am grateful for the leadership and passion of Glyn Price, Alan Kilbarger and Sarah Kilbarger-Stumpff and the Housing Committee. Also as part of our Matthew 25 work, we offered the Interrupting Racism for Children two-day workshop with funds from the Myrtle Collaboration, Cohort 2.

The Afghan families supported by the community continue to make strides in becoming acclimated to the United States. Some of the original seven families have moved from Columbus, being able to resettle nearer to relatives already living in the States. The Karimi family, whom the church has sponsored, is feeling more settled. Both parents are working, and the children are doing well in school. At the end of the year, they were scheduled for their Green Card appointment in early 2024, so we look forward to that process being completed successfully. My thanks go out to the dedicated members of the committee who have so lovingly helped this family!

We welcomed Jen Riddle to our ministry team as our Director of Children, Youth and Young Adult Ministries (DCYYAM). We are so grateful for Jen's passion and experience, which are a great addition to our ministry. That means we bid farewell to Rev. Tonja Gerardy, who had stepped in as interim Director for the first half of 2023. Tonja is a dear colleague, so it was a treat for me to work with her.

PASTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023

REV. DR. FELIPE N. MARTINEZ

We also welcomed Missy Burton as our Financial Administrative Assistant, as Christy Jerman ended her role with us after seven years. Missy is well known to the church, as she is also the Financial & Human Resources Assistant for our Preschool.

I taught a Journeys of Faith class in the Fall. I helped with AFE classes after worship (led by Sandy Thomas). I co-led a zoom Lenten study in partnership with Fairlawn and First Presbyterian Bloomington.

I had the honor of preaching at the ordination service for the Rev. Marietta Macy as Associate Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Charleston, West Virginia. Marietta was the DCYYAM here at FPC for 7 years. A small FPC contingent was there to celebrate with her! I continue my work as co-moderator of the PCUSA's Commission to Unify the Office of the General Assembly and the Presbyterian Mission Agency, a task which will go through June 2026. I served as moderator of Ohio Valley Presbytery in 2023. I continue as a board member of Heritage Fund, Su Casa Columbus, and as a Trustee at Hanover College. I teach a module once a quarter in the Bartholomew County Works program of the Lincoln Central Neighborhood Family Center.

Shalom and Salaam,
Pastor Felipe

PASTOR'S SABBATICAL REPORT 2023

REV. DR. FELIPE N. MARTINEZ

Summer 2023

I am so grateful that the church allowed me to take a three-month sabbatical. Here are the highlights of my experience.

The sabbatical was divided into three parts: Rest, Renewal and Return.

The period of Rest included really slowing down, going on walks, exercising, and reading. It also included visiting dear friends in Pennsylvania (including Scott and Candace Hills), Alabama and Wisconsin. Tracy ended her job in Indianapolis, which wasn't something we had planned on. However, the blessing was that she and I got to spend a lot of time in the early part of the sabbatical reconnecting with each other and with friends.

The period of Renewal took place in Europe, where I was about six weeks. The activities which renew me are learning, travel, discovery, photography. I took a one-week French course in Tours, France. I stayed with a host family. It was a great experience not just as I improved my ability in the language, but as I got to meet new people and put to use what I was learning in class. I got to spend a day in the religious community of Taizé, which was a really powerful experience (I wished I had had more time there). Then a week's spiritual retreat in Iona, Scotland was another highlight of the summer. I spent the week in the Iona Abbey with about forty people from Europe, Canada and the States who were there for the weeklong workshop on Reshaping Worship by the Wild Goose Resource Group from Glasgow. The week in Iona was a stretch for me in a good way, and I come back from it with a new openness to how worship can be reshaped. In between the week in Tours and Iona, I was able to do some traveling in Paris, London and Edinburgh. Throughout I was able to take a lot of pictures (I think the final tally is around 5,000 for the entire sabbatical!)

Tracy joined me for the last two of my six weeks in Europe. We spent time in the highlands of Scotland and in the East coast of Ireland. We enjoyed our time, although unfortunately Tracy caught some sort of bug which had her sick a large part of our time. We had some travel difficulties as well (won't fly Aer Lingus again), and the train/bus travel was at times challenging. We rented a car in Ireland, which gave us more flexibility (we rented a car as well in Scotland when we visited in 2022). So, next time we'll rely more on car rentals and less on train/bus travel, or seek a better balance.

PASTOR'S SABBATICAL REPORT 2023

REV. DR. FELIPE N. MARTINEZ

I unexpectedly had to go to Mexico following our European trip. With mom's house on the market, the realtor made a recommendation for me to update an identification document to make the eventual sale smoother (and less costly) for me (for my part of the proceeds). The challenge with this particular ID is that the turnaround time is about 10 days and it must be picked up in person, which is not a problem if you're in country, but it's a challenge for someone living abroad. So, using some frequent flyer miles I made the trip to Monterrey and stayed with my sister. That was a nice bonus at the end of the sabbatical to visit with her, her family, and to reconnect with dear friends from Jr. High and Elementary school. It was a bit sad that it was the first time I've ever been to my hometown without going to visit mom, who passed away May 22, 2021.

What about Return, you might ask? Well, one learning from this sabbatical is that I didn't give myself enough time/space to consider return. I basically just plunged back in. I did not want "Return" to be time to catch up on emails and such, but I wanted it to be a time of reflecting on the sabbatical and what it might mean for me as I return to the church. It was not the end of the world, but I do realize that next time (!) I'll need to give the return a bit more time and space in my head.

The congregation showed very healthy boundaries with me throughout the sabbatical, for which I am eternally grateful. I didn't get emails or phone calls asking about this or that. The people who were left in charge of things really took charge and let me have the time away truly uninterrupted. When I would run into church members around town, they'd ask me "is it OK to talk to you?" which of course it was, and I'd just say "Just don't talk about church!" We'd have lovely conversations, and I was delighted to stay connected in that way. One of the greatest learnings for me was how I felt a great weight lifted from my shoulders from the very first week of sabbatical. Upon reflection, I realized it was that I had been able to lay down responsibility for the people and ministry. I had left it all in good hands and I could take a step back to recharge my batteries.

I am so grateful for the opportunity to take this sabbatical and for the amazing work everyone did in my absence to keep thriving as a congregation.

Shalom and Salaam,
Pastor Felipe

Our Staff

JEN RIDDLE

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND
YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

I arrived at FPC in mid-July and was welcomed into the congregation with open arms. From the excellent support from those in Personnel, Children's Nurture, and Youth Nurture committees, to the staff welcome, I was able to land here and run with the work that was before me. That was by necessity as the new school year was just a couple weeks away! The preparation work done by interim director Tonja Gerardy was an excellent introduction to the congregation and the work still to be done in the immediate and long-term. I am thankful for the soft landing and the wonderful folks that welcomed me with open arms.

A lot has happened since I started at FPC in the summer! I was able to choose curriculum for our Kid's Church launch in August, as well as guide reorganization of materials after the summer's big cleanout of children's ministry spaces. I curated a conversation during AFE hour that involved folks from multiple generations sharing their perspectives and experience with gun violence. I also attended a boundaries training, as requested by Felipe, which brought ideas for possible changes to some of our Safe Church policies. I have continued to attend the monthly Columbus Interfaith meetings, welcoming our families to participate in several events with our Interfaith Partners. I led our confirmation classes with 8 students and mentors participating, modifying the "Changing the World" Matthew 25 curriculum to best suit our students and their needs.

I helped the Children's Nurture committee commit to a First Sunday intergenerational worship service that we began implementing in September. Though the shape of this service and other intergenerational programming is a work in progress since we always have more to learn, I am committed to educating myself about the resources available to support making people of all ages a priority in worship at least once a month. In this pursuit, I've read two books and participated in a webinar that may lead to more intensive training for key leaders in our congregation. We are also seeking to participate in a grant that Lilly Endowment gave to the Presbyterian Mission Agency's Office of Christian Formation for training and supporting parents as the primary agents of faith formation. These ideas are exciting and I'm looking forward to seeing how our implementation looks in the rest of 2024.

An area that has been less attended to in the past is supporting the relationship between the preschool and the congregation. Though Colleen Herrick is the Policy Board president and April meets with Felipe and other staff on a regular basis, having someone in my role as an additional liaison between our two organizations is helpful. Thus far, I've attended the Fall 2023 Policy Board meetings and served as the substitute for the Christmas storytelling for the preschool classes when Felipe was ill. April and I have discussed me reading a story to the kids once a month as well. I'm excited to find more ways to make connections with this important ministry of our congregation!

Our Staff

JEN RIDDLE

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND
YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

Reflecting on my time at FPC, one thing that has impressed me is the continuous support I receive from committees and volunteers that support my ministry areas. This was especially apparent when I lost my voice and was sick with a respiratory virus on Christmas Eve. Because of the contributions of Felipe, Lisa Porter, Sunny Currier, and many others who offered help in the moment, I felt supported, and that special day went smoothly. I was able to contribute to the best of my ability and not over-extend myself by necessity. Christmas Eve was truly an example of the body of Christ coming together to do beautiful work in the world. I am grateful for the support!

I am so thankful for all the beautiful reflections of Christ's love apparent in the ways this congregation cares for children, youth, and young adults in our congregation and beyond, and I'm looking forward to an even more impactful 2024!

Respectfully Submitted,
Jen

Our Staff

DIANNE SPRUNGER, ORGANIST &
JENNY HEICHELBECH, CHOIR DIRECTOR

The music life of First Presbyterian Church continued to enrich our worship and faith during 2023.

During 2023, Jenny and Dianne split evenly the hours available to the music area. Jenny and Dianne continue their collaboration with each other.

Dianne has been playing the organ and piano, conducting bells, facilitating guest musicians, duets, and collaborative music-making. During Felipe's sabbatical she was instrumental in behind-the-scenes work. In addition to those visible (and audible) tasks, she continued to register our music selections with CCLI and OneLicense to comply with copyright obligations for the church. She edited PowerPoint slides for the music inputs for on-line worshippers. She attended the Montreat Worship and Arts conference and the Augsburg Summer Music workshop.

Jenny has planned, rehearsed, and conducted the Sanctuary Choir in worship services. Throughout the summer, she scheduled the guest musicians. She organized the choral music library files. She attended the Indiana University Sacred Music Intensive week, Montreat Worship and Arts conference, and the Augsburg Fortress Publishing Workshop. In the fall, she began choosing handbell pieces and conducting the bell choir. She started registering the choral and bell selections with our licensing agencies. A huge undertaking was developing and implementing the Lessons and Carols format for the December cantata Sunday. Jenny has been the leader for Worship Arts.

Starting in October, as we realized that we were not staying within the hours allotted for our jobs, we split the meeting attendance as follows: both (Worship Planning, Worship Committee, and staff meetings); Dianne (hymn planning with Felipe).

Thank you to all the groups (Sanctuary Choir, Livin' by Faith, Worship Arts, Bell Choirs, special music players and singers) that continue to make music with us and for us all.

Joyfully,
Dianne & Jenny

Our Staff

APRIL HEMMERLEIN, DIRECTOR OF
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL

The 2023 calendar year began with an award for the “Best Preschool in Town” through the Republic newspaper, awarding \$18,750 in scholarships for the 2023-24 school year and moving our registration process to 100% online with the addition of a digital paperwork feature.

Over summer, we were again able to offer a three-week summer program to all current students. We shifted the focus from a camp-like atmosphere to an “extension of the school year”. The program was full and attended by over 50 students and taught by 7 staff members.

In 2021, Preschool applied for and was awarded the Build, Learn, Grow Stabilization grant. The funding from this grant is aimed at helping strengthen and support Early Childhood programming in the state of Indiana. In 2023, we continued to make improvements to the building, classroom spaces and programming. Upgrades to the Education wing classrooms included new drywall, paint and screens for the sliding doors. Carpets were rebound and mulch was added to the playground. In partnership with the church foundation, security film was added to the building entrances, classroom windows and doors to enhance safety for everyone who uses our building.

The 2023-2024 school year saw an increase in tuition for our age-based classes. All revenue brought in from this increase went directly to increase the hour pay rates for staff. We are diligently working toward competitive pay rates for the field of early childhood education to be able to draw the professionals needed to help our program continue to thrive.

In September, preschool was honored with the 10-year Paths to Quality award. This was a huge milestone for us as it reflects our having met rigorous standards and requirements in our field for over 10 years!

Throughout the year we sponsored numerous family engagement opportunities. We were able to host our Spring Musical and Ice Cream Social as well as our Fall Family Fun Day. Classrooms had moms’ parties and dads’ parties and graduations, which had been on hold in recent years due to COVID. It is great to find our family events well attended and see families connect and build relationships with one another.

In December, applications for our scholarship program were made available to all students and community members. We anticipate being able to fund over \$18,000 in preschool scholarships with the help from the Policy Board, church and its members, and community

Our Staff

APRIL HEMMERLEIN, DIRECTOR OF
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN PRESCHOOL

and preschool donors. We are grateful for the generosity of others and the church to make this possible once again. Scholarships will be awarded again in early February 2024. Preschool has also assisted 5 families in receiving funding from the state to attend preschool.

As the year closes, we are fortunate to be in a place where preschool is thriving. We have 184 of our 186 spaces filled and employ 27 staff members. Having a thriving early childhood program is not the case for many places in our county and region. We are blessed to have wonderful families, students, staff and a supportive church family!

Respectfully,
April Hemmerlein

Session Reports

ADULT FELLOWSHIP AND EDUCATION (AFE)

Members: Dale Nowlin (Patio Parties/Co-Chair), Dianne Farrar (Fellowship Meals), Donna Brand (Prayer Lead), Richard Safford/Felipe Martinez (Pastor/Staff), Jen Riddle (Youth/Staff), Johanna Anderson (Young Adult Lead), Joy Basa-King (Chair), Julie Orben (Fellowship Meals), Leah Jackman-Wheitner (Zoom/Virtual Coffee Fellowship), Sandy Thomas (Adult Education/Sunday School)

The goal of Adult Fellowship and Education (AFE) is to encourage everyday spirituality, fellowship with the church community with a special focus on young adults, and social justice issues through formal and informal sessions. This was accomplished through regular programming including Virtual Coffee Fellowship, Adult Sunday School Education, Patio Parties Plus, and Fellowship Pitch-In Meals. The group was particularly careful to ensure that there were continuous meaningful opportunities to engage during Felipe's very much needed summer Sabbatical. We were blessed with Richard Safford joining us over the summer to keep the group cohesive and on task.

Virtual Coffee Fellowship: Leah moderates the weekly online worship options to provide an additional way for people to connect to the life of the congregation. Between 25 and 35 households attend via Zoom, YouTube, and Facebook each week. The Zoom attendees visit and share fellowship time before and after worship and have become a strong support group, welcoming new people into the conversations while deepening connections with each other. We are grateful that the church has maintained online options for those who are unable to attend in person, choose to attend online for a variety of reasons, are traveling, or have moved away. Open to all to join, the zoom link can be found weekly in the newsletter and Friday e-blast. Also, here is the link: <https://zoom.us/j/214025301>

Adult Education & Sunday School: Sandy facilitated weekly Sunday morning conversations which are an enriching time to discuss the sermon and Bible passages in a deep and personal way. We have a nice collaboration between in-person and Zoom participants. The unsolicited feedback has continued to be positive, and many have shared how meaningful these conversations are personally to them. We plan to continue the format of meeting for conversation, using three questions provided by Felipe as our starting points through 2024. Open to all to join, the zoom link can be found weekly in the newsletter and Friday e-blast. Also, here is the link: <https://zoom.us/j/214025301>

Patio Parties Plus: Dale coordinated and expanded the popular Patio Parties to Patio Parties Plus which was a huge success! Members of the congregation were invited to host a traditional patio party with food, fellowship and conversation or a themed event of their choice. Fourteen families stepped up to host a unique event. Along with several "traditional" patio parties, original events included

Session Reports

ADULT FELLOWSHIP AND EDUCATION (AFE)

Bike and Brunch, Brown County Hike, Trivia Night, Euchre Night, Caribbean Cooking Class, Flute, Piano, and Dessert, and more. The various patio party events represented the diversity of interests within the congregation. Participation increased from previous years and was more successful at bringing in participants from outside of our congregation.

Fellowship Meals: Dianne and Julie led the planning and sponsoring of fellowship meal opportunities in 2023. The pandemic made it impossible to have in-person events in most of 2020, 2021, and 2022, therefore, it was especially pleasurable to enjoy in-person events once again. The events were very well attended and enjoyed by members and friends. Dianne and Julie started the year with a St. Patrick's Day Pitch-in. Felipe and Tracy were honored with a Send Off to Sabbatical in mid-May followed by a Welcome Back from Sabbatical with Live Music and a Food Truck in September. We concluded the season with a Mega Patio Party at Tipton Lakes Marina, including delicious food, fun fellowship, and live music.

Retreat: A retreat was agreed on by the committee to have more time to get to know each other better, participate in team building activities, and share our faith stories. The committee members immersed in spiritual learning by learning how God had worked personally in all our lives. After a delicious lunch, we explored how to best serve the faith needs of our congregation. We explored ways to find out what people wanted and needed in faith/education/connection and plans to meet those needs. A second meeting was held in December to consolidate all the data and organize the plans. The goals of this retreat were realized in full measure.

2023 was a great year with lots of opportunities to interact with one another while having lots of fun! Special appreciation to all committee members for their dedication of time and talent as well as backing each other's roles to ensure the church community needs were continuously met in education, fellowship, and spiritual growth. Finally, if you would like to be a part of the AFE Committee, we welcome your input and participation.

Respectfully submitted,
Joy Basa-King

Session Reports

CHILDREN'S NURTURE (CN) COMMITTEE

Members: Breanne Vogelpohl, Stephanie Cunningham, Izzie Nowlin, Terri Glackin, Lisa Porter, Vernet Safford, Sunny Currier (acting Chair), Roger Brinkman (Elder) Tonja Gerardy Interim Staff, Jen Riddle Staff.

Children's Nurture remained in some transition during 2023. Tonja Gerardy, as Interim Director of Children & Youth, served as the committee Staff for the first half of the year, with Jen Riddle serving as our full time Director of Children, Youth, and Young Adults the second half of the year.

One priority of our committee is to support children's faith formation. To that end, we have continued to recruit and train teachers and helpers for Kid's Church. Jen chose the curriculum for the year, which is flexible enough to accommodate our varying attendance. We supported re-structuring communion Sundays to be a more kid-friendly intergenerational service. This allows the children to worship and take communion as part of the body of our congregation. Jen has been instrumental in creating the more kid-friendly service components and bulletin. Children's Worship Bags were also reorganized and restocked. Tween Time, a monthly youth group for grades 3-6, focused on Matthew 25 in our monthly activities. FPC participated in planning and in the daily activities of the first Interfaith Peace Camp, sponsored by Interfaith Columbus member congregations. Many of our elementary aged kids participated in the week-long camp, alongside kids from the other Interfaith congregations, and they already are asking to participate again.

Supporting families as well as their children is important. We welcomed new baby Finn with a special letter and hand knitted baby blanket. We held a parent social gathering, while the kids had a playdate at church. Parents enjoyed fellowship and opportunity to better know each other, and the committee. We planned the annual Camp Pyoca Family Day for all to experience family fun and fellowship at Pyoca, and for the kids to get to know what camp offers. We held a Trunk or Treat event for our church and preschool families. We held the annual Easter egg hunt event. We held the annual Advent Workshop, and Jen created a devotional booklet to use with the home advent wreaths. We listened to parents, and recommended the child-focused Christmas Eve service begin earlier. The committee has also been updating parent information on the church website.

Children's service projects included the holiday chicken fundraiser. The kids raised \$394.01 for 15 ³/₄ flocks of chickens for families in need of a means of self-sufficiency, to be purchased through Presbyterian Giving. The Tween Time group surprised the Armory Apartment residents with Halloween treats and decorations. They made a tied fleece blanket to donate to Sweet Dreams.

The committee also spent the summer doing a major, months long cleanout of the children's areas. We were so grateful to receive a foundation grant to replace some of the old, falling apart furniture, and additional storage aids and decorating updates. The rejuvenated rooms were given new names and dedicated in August. The former Large Youth Room is now the Rainbow Room, and the Small Youth Room is now the Peace Loft. This huge undertaking is still a work in progress.

Session Reports

CHILDREN'S NURTURE (CN) COMMITTEE

We'd like to give special thanks to Tonja Gerardy, who graciously served as our Interim DCYM. She supported us, advised us, and spent long hours organizing everything we do into lists, calendars, files, and more, to ease the transition for the next staff hire.

We were so very thankful to welcome Jen Riddle as our new Director, and appreciate all of the special gifts, knowledge, education, and heart that she brings to the job. We look forward to starting the new year with this strong team!

Respectfully submitted,
Sunny Currier

Session Reports

YOUTH NURTURE (YN) COMMITTEE

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

Committee Members: Stephanie Cunningham, Sunny Currier, Amanda Magee, Julie Daiker-Chairperson, Jen Riddle-Staff.

Christian Education/Faith Formation: Preparing for Youth Sunday '23 took place over four months. We explored the meaning of justice in the context of Matthew 25:35-40 and Micah 6:8, and what that can look like in our world today. We learned to look at different biblical versions of our theme verses, to see which brought more clarity to youth and to children. In planning the different parts of the service, we also learned the purpose of each component in the order of worship. On Youth Sunday, we dedicated our new youth banner, Growing In The Spirit, designed and created by Marietta Macy. In the fall, we began a new confirmation class, continuing through spring 2024. We have 8 students in the class, each with an adult mentor. We are using the new PC (USA) Matthew 25 Confirmation Curriculum. Our Whole Lives comprehensive, inclusive sexuality education for Grades 7-9 was conducted during the 2022-23 school year. The next class begins in August 2024.

Service Projects: The youth continue to serve Hot Meals monthly. They led the Souper Bowl of Caring in our church, and raised \$435.00 for Love Chapel. They chose Book Buddies to be the local recipient of the Pentecost Offering, and collected a total of \$1348, 40% of which (\$539.20) went to Book Buddies. The committee supported a \$15,000 Foundation Grant for Camp Pyoca, which was approved. Along with our Mega Youth Group partners, we made a big batch of cookies for Hot Meals guests. The Youth led the Heart Tree giving project. Inspired by Matthew 25, they collected warm hats and gloves, and children's toys for our Hot Meals guests. We also held a fundraiser for the alternate giving fair, by collecting money for latrines to be built in communities without such amenities, which will greatly reduce assault on women and community illness. We raised \$1250, which will purchase 3 ½ latrines. We all enjoyed our annual Christmas party, which included caroling and dessert with our neighbors at the Armory Apartments. We thank the congregation for their support of our fundraising projects!

Leadership Opportunities: Teens serve as lay leaders in worship. Some have sung with the adult choir for special occasions. Several teens participated in the Trunk or Treat event for our church and FPC Preschool children. We stuffed eggs for the children's Easter egg hunt.

Support and Encouragement: We continued to support and encourage our college/career aged young adults during their transitional years. We sent care packages before Spring and Fall finals, birthday cards & gifts, and held a pizza party at the end of the school year for those who were in town. We celebrated our three High School grads in the worship service with a video for each grad (thanks to Rachel McCarver), a handmade prayer shawl (thanks to Dianne Sprunger for organizing), and other gifts.

Session Reports

YOUTH NURTURE (YN) COMMITTEE

Fellowship: Our youth group enjoyed our weekly gathering, including a bonfire at the Daiker's, a horseback riding event, and our annual Spook Night and Christmas party events. We continued our monthly Mega Youth Group with other area youth groups, including a Friendsgiving dinner and a big Road Rally digital scavenger hunt.

Committee Leadership: Two committee members attended the Pyoca Fall Retreat, centered on Matthew 25. We're thankful for Tonja Gerardy for her leadership as our Interim DCYM. She supported us, advised us, and smoothed the path for our next Director. We were excited to welcome Jen Riddle as our new Director, and appreciate all of the special gifts, knowledge, education, and heart that she brings to the job. We love and feel blessed with our amazing teens, and look forward to 2024!

Respectfully,
Julie Daiker

Session Reports

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Committee: Leigh Ann Figg (Chair), Lynne Hyatt, Janet Sharpe and Pastor Felipe Martinez(staff)

Mission: To oversee and administer personnel-related activities of the church in accordance with the Book of Order and the First Presbyterian Personnel Policy Manual in a manner that supports and furthers the mission of First Presbyterian Church, Columbus Indiana.

2023 was a busy year for the Personnel Committee as we hired two new staff positions as well as an interim position during our search for our new Director of Children, Youth and Young Adult Ministries (DCYYAM). We also hired an interim position to handle some of the administrative duties for the Pastor during his Sabbatical during the summer of 2023. The Committee also worked with the Sabbatical Committee where needed to help with other personnel issues and worked with the Facilities Committee in the hiring of a new janitorial service.

Summary of 2023 Accomplishments:

1. Hiring of Jen Riddle as new full time Director of Children, Youth and Young Adult Ministries: The Committee launched a search committee for a new DCYYAM in the Spring of 2022 after the resignation announcement of Marietta Macy. The role was heavily promoted; however, it took a year for the search committee to find the correct hire in Jen Riddle. The hiring of Jen was approved by Session in May and she started with FPC in July of 2023. Prior to hiring Jen, while we continued our search, an interim Director, Tonja Gerardy, was approved by Session on an interim basis starting in January 2023.
2. Hiring of Missy Burton as the new part time Financial Assistant: In early May of 2023, Christy Jerman submitted her resignation due to some changing circumstances in her life. We advertised for the position, but were very fortunate to have interest in the position from Missy Burton, who also works as Financial and HR Assistant for the FPC Pre-School. We interviewed Missy and the Session approved that hire in May. Missy started her position at the end of May.
3. Coordinated where needed with the Sabbatical Committee on personnel matters: A number of months before Felipe's sabbatical period, Felipe and Richard Safford discussed the possibility of bringing Richard into the office on a part-time basis to help with a number of the administrative duties of the Pastor position during Felipe's sabbatical. Leigh Ann participated with Felipe in discussing the position with Richard and Richard accepted the interim administrative position for the summer of 2023.
4. Coordinated with the Facilities Committee and Pre-School Director on the hiring of a new janitorial company: Due to some ongoing issues with FPC's previous janitorial service, the Facilities Committee asked for input from the Personnel Committee on the hiring of a new

Session Reports

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

janitorial service. Leigh Ann prepared the new janitorial contract and worked with the new janitorial company on completion of the contract. The new company started in the summer of 2023.

5. Annual Staff Reviews and Review of Felipe Martinez: In December of 2024, the Committee supported Felipe's staff performance reviews and Leigh Ann conducted Felipe's annual review. Due to budgeting concerns for the 2024 budget, annual COLA increases for the staff and Felipe were approved by the Session at 2% effective January 1, 2023. Christmas Bonuses were given at the end of the year to the professional and support staff to show appreciation for their good work and dedication.

6. Retirement of Dianne Sprunger: Dianne submitted her Letter of Retirement at the end of December with an effective retirement date of May 31, 2024. Effective January 1, 2024, Dianne is transitioning to the organist only position at 10 hours per week and Jenny will have 15 hours per week.

A look ahead to 2024:

In the first quarter of 2024, the Committee will focus on the search and hiring of an organist, the role Dianne Sprunger has had for several years.

The Committee consisted of only 3 members during 2023 and the Committee will discuss the need to add another member.

In 2024, the Committee will strive to complete compensation reviews for the staff roles and will document the process.

Timely reviews of Felipe and the staff will be coordinated and supported by the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Leigh Ann Figg
Chair of the Personnel Committee

Session Reports

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Committee: Ben Bush, Terry Molewyk, Danny Sanders, Jim Farrar, Bob Smitherman, Doug Sprunger, David Tiede, and Zack Ellison (moderator). Thanks to these members for the work they did.

Mission: The purpose of the Property Committee is to ensure the church building and grounds are maintained and updated as needed. 2023 was a good year with the Property Committee overseeing the projects listed below, plus many others.

Projects for 2023:

- The largest projects for 2023 were to keep the heating and cooling systems working. There were multiple air conditioning compressor failures and a boiler pump failure that were the bulk of the mechanical expenses. The good news is that we continue to have heat in the winter, and cooling in the summer.
- FPC undertook multiple projects to improve the safety of the pre-school and our congregation. These projects included new doors and locks to isolate the church areas from the pre-school areas, in the case there was an invasion from one side of the church or the other. The windows in the preschool were coated with a 3M plastic film to prevent the safety glass from crumbling if a person wanted fast entry. Panic buttons were installed that connect FPC to CPD, and a fire alarm system inside the sanctuary. Sunny Courier managed the emergency escape routes and being sure the Safe Church procedure books are up to date.
- The small upstairs kitchenette was removed and replaced with a kitchenette in the Crump meeting room.
- There was a small water heater installed in the loggia bathroom so there would be hot water to wash your hands without having to wait 4 minutes for it to get there from the basement boiler room water heater.
- There were many roof repairs completed to our slate roof and the shed roof was replaced and gutters added to reduce water deterioration to the shed. New wood doors were constructed and installed.
- The church and pre-school changed our janitorial provider to improve the cleaning quality and meet improved Health Dept requirements.
- There were several water leaks that occurred with our sprinkler system that required replacing pipes and the air compressor in the sprinkler command room in the downstairs Donner building classroom. The leaks were beside the main FPC kitchen and inside a pre-school classroom. These repairs required ceiling drywall repairs, and the purchase of a new air compressor that maintains air pressure in the sprinkler system.
- We made several upgrades to our Wi-Fi system and changed our internet provider. The system works much better with these upgrades. We are still waiting for fiber optics to become available.

Session Reports

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

- Our Columbarium slate floor needed major work and Taylor Brothers was able to locate matching slate and completed the replacement and refurbishing/sealing of the floor.
- The Franklin St. doors were completely refinished and the wrought iron hinges were reconstructed and painted.
- Multiple smaller jobs were completed: many fluorescent light fixtures were upgraded to LED lights, Elevator inspection and repairs, Painting of gutters and wood along the north parking lot, and at last the soft drink machine, in the basement, was removed.

Projects planned for 2024:

- Refinish the gym floor.
- Kitchen window replacement with one that opens for better ventilation.
- Air conditioner removal and relocating it to ground level from the roof of the gym.
- Other work as needed.

Respectfully submitted,
Zack Ellison
Property Committee Chair

Session Reports

SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE

Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Mark 10:14

Mission: The mission of the Safe Church Committee is to support and enable First Presbyterian Church in providing a safe environment for all. Effective ministry for children and teens requires a safe environment to learn, grow and experience God's love, in relationships with caring and mature adults. By setting and supporting appropriate guidelines and boundaries, we can create an environment that is safe for children, teens, and the adults who interact with them.

Committee Members; Mary Ann McCray, Brook Brown, Vernett Safford, Sunny Currier (chairperson), Tonja Gerardy-Interim Staff, Jen Riddle, Staff

The required annual training of officers was completed at the Officer Retreat.

Training of child care workers and all teachers and leaders of both children & youth took place at the start of the school year.

Our Automated External Defibrillators (AED) were inspected, and expiration dates for pads were noted and scheduled for replacement as needed. Narcan was added to all First Aid kit locations except for the Nursery.

It was discovered that there was no fire alarm in the Rainbow Room- the children's area upstairs. An alarm was added.

The Nursery closet was cleaned out and some shelving removed (thanks to the Property Committee). The closet space now has room for children and childcare staff to shelter inside in case of emergency such as a tornado or active shooter.

At the request of staff, panic buttons were placed in the pulpit, AV booth, pastor's office, and finance secretary's desk. They are in addition to those already in place.

The Safe Church Policy and the Sexual Misconduct Policy were included in the contract for the new custodial service, and will be included in agreements with any other service providers that have a regular presence in the building.

Changes and updates were made to the Safe Church Policy, and forms were updated and simplified.

Respectfully submitted,
Sunny Currier

Session Reports

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE (SJC)

Our 2023 Members

Cara Bywater, Payton Emberton, Amy Hale, Paul Hoffman, Ann Jones, Vern Jorck, Carol Price, Heather Reeves, Richard Safford (incoming 2024 Moderator) Sarah Sanders, Tess Weathers (outgoing 2023 Moderator) with staff support from Felipe Martinez.

Our Service

The membership of this committee contributes to God's mission of justice and love and serves the church in two main ways: 1) by raising awareness and encouraging advocacy among congregants and the community about a broad range of social justice concerns; and 2) by helping to be stewards of the funds FPC designates for community missions, locally and globally. An emphasis is placed on sharing with organizations that serve people who have been marginalized by systemic poverty (such as those experiencing homelessness) and/or discrimination in its many forms and along many axes (e.g. race, gender identity, sexual orientation, immigrant status).

We welcome anyone interested to sit in on a committee meeting any time! See what we do, and then decide if this is a place you are drawn to serve. 2024 meetings will be on the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm at church.

Highlights of Our 2023 Work

Social Justice Awareness & Advocacy

- After a pandemic-related hiatus, the SJC hosted the annual William R. Laws Peacemaking Lecture on May 7th 2023. Our guest speaker was Adam Russell Taylor, president of Sojourners, an ecumenical Christian organization that works to advance justice and peace. Rev. Taylor spoke on themes from his recent book with the title "Where do we go from here? Toxic Polarization or the Beloved Community?" We hosted a luncheon, reception, and book-signing that afternoon as well to give many people the opportunity to interact with Rev. Taylor. In the three weeks after the lecture, we partnered with the AFE Committee to host a small group book study of Rev. Taylor's book, *A More Perfect Union*.
- As part of the Matthew 25 initiative, a 2-day workshop for adults was held at the church in March on Interrupting Racism for Children.
- Also, as part of the Matthew 25 initiative, a separate Housing Committee was formed in 2023, with representation from SJC but led by other church members. This group is working with other churches and organizations to advocate for low-income residents

Session Reports

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE (SJC)

of the community who have faced a variety of obstacles to finding safe and affordable housing. They have gathered the voices of people impacted by many different aspects of the housing crisis locally and have met with various stakeholders throughout the city to develop an action plan. Results of the interviews were presented during an AFE earlier this year.

- SJC members advocated against the anti-LGBTQ+ bills introduced in the Indiana House in 2023 through social media, contacting legislators, as well as some who spoke directly with legislators at the Statehouse.
- The Open & Affirming Subcommittee of SJC coordinates activities that support the LGBTQ+ community locally. FPC supports Pride and hosts a tent at the Columbus Pride Festival, to share a fun and welcoming experience and convey that “God’s doors are open to all.”
- A letter-writing campaign for Bread for the World was led by SJC with opportunities made available on 3 different dates (June, July Faith in Action Day, and October).
- The SJC sponsored two Adult Fellowship and Education (AFE) sessions this year. One was a viewing of the film “The Working Hungry,” highlighting the prevalence of hunger among people of the state of Indiana. This was paired with a final opportunity to submit a letter for the Bread for the World campaign. The second session was on the topic of White Christian Nationalism, an ideology of sufficient concern to committee members that it prompted us to organize an AFE session on the topic. Jake Brooks, a fellow congregant who has a master’s degree in social justice and community organizing, responded to our call-out for a facilitator and led a session on this in November that was well-attended and spurred interest in future sessions on this topic.
- Also, returning after a pandemic hiatus, was the alternative Christmas market. This year it was combined with the Children’s Advent Celebration and expanded to include new opportunities for giving or purchases benefiting our Hot Meals program, Love Chapel’s Food Pantry, as well as latrines and flocks of chickens from the Presbyterian Giving Catalog. It was a great success.

Stewardship of FPC Mission Funds

Special Offerings

- We donated our 25% share of the Peace and Global Witness Offering to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Fund specifically for Palestine, given the humanitarian crisis that has unfolded in Gaza since 10/7/2023.

Session Reports

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE (SJC)

Budgeted Global Missions

- We continue to support two global organizations through recurring line items in the church budget. Bright Stars of Bethlehem provides higher education opportunities to Muslims and Christians in Palestine, and the Power of Love Foundation is working to eradicate pediatric AIDS & HIV and provide micro-loans to women working toward self-sufficiency in Zambia.
- We have also continued in our support of two mission co-workers – Cheryl Barnes serving Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe; and Doug Dicks serving Israel and Palestine.

Community and Grant-Based Mission Support

We identified 17 community-serving organizations to receive supporting funds from the regular giving of the congregation for missions (referred to as the Community Mission budget). The 2023 funds distributed totaled \$34,500. Recipient organizations are local and include: ASAP, BSCS Book Buddies, Children, Inc., the Ecumenical Assembly of Bartholomew County (Love Chapel & Brighter Days), Family Service of Bartholomew County, VOA Fresh Start Recovery, Horizon House, FPC Hot Meals Program, Just Friends Adult Day Care, Lincoln Central Neighborhood Family Center (LCNFC), Mill Race Center, NAACP Columbus Chapter, FPC Preschool Scholarships, Su Casa, Turning Point Domestic Violence Services, VIM Care Clinic, and Columbus Pride Festival.

- Additionally, we reviewed and recommended the funding of 14 grant requests submitted in 2023 for specific purposes, totaling \$ 51,438. These grants are funded through the Mission Support funds of the FPC Foundation. We have highlighted just a few of these below, however, details for each grant are available upon request.
- A grant of \$5000 to Keep Hope Alive for the planting of olive trees in Palestine on lands that are under threat of possession by Israel;
- A grant of \$5000 to Su Casa to secure legal representation for the Neighbors of Woodlawn, a mobile home community needing an advocate for their tenant rights with an out-of-state landlord;
- A grant of \$10,000 to Family Service of Bartholomew County, to help provide mental health services for Spanish-speaking clients;
- A grant of \$5000 to San Souci for an emergency employee-assistance fund that helps employees bridge the gap in a crisis, such as to cover the deposit on a place to live or an unexpected healthcare bill;
- A grant of \$6983 to Just Friends Adult Day Care to replace some essential equipment such as refrigerator and accessible recliners.
- We are humbled to be following in the footsteps of so many who served in this role throughout FPC's 200-year history, and we pray the love of God comes through in all we do.

Respectfully submitted,
Tess Weathers

Session Reports

OPEN AND AFFIRMING SUB-COMMITTEE OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Mission: The mission of the Open and Affirming Committee is to nurture a welcoming ministry for all of God's children, both in our congregation and in our community, including persons of any sexual orientation or gender identity and their families. FPC desires to be an open church, and an affirming Church, in an open and affirming community.

In 2023, First Presbyterian and the Open and Affirming Committee participated in the community's Columbus Pride Festival at Mill Race Park. The Pride Festival was held safely on a sunny, warm afternoon at the end of September, with more than 100 vendors and exhibitors, and thousands of people attending – individuals and entire families. FPC was a sponsor and exhibitor and volunteers from our church shared flags and pins and information about our church during the expanded six-hour event. This year's festival, the biggest yet held in Columbus, was a welcoming and affirming event, celebrating the inclusion of all into the life of our community.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God." Matthew 5:9.

"Never forget that both John the Baptist and Jesus sided with the poor, the marginalized and the disenfranchised." Father James Martin, S.J.

Wishing God's peace for each and every one of us, from your Open and Affirming Subcommittee.

Rich Stenner

Session Reports

MISSION SUPPORT

Mission Support allocates First Presbyterian Church Foundation funds by reviewing grants forwarded from committees. Approved grants are moved forward to Session for final approval. In 2023, the Mission Support members were Sarah Sanders (chair), Mary Ann McCray, Pam Robertson, Dale Nowlin, Julie Daiker, Vern Jorck, Bill Jones, and Richard Safford.

2023 Grants Approved:

Palestine Olive Trees \$5,000.00

Su Casa Legal Assistance \$5,000.00

FPC Day of Service \$1,500.00

Imagination Library of Barth Co. \$1,000.00

FPC Homeless Support Grant \$750.00

Family Service, Inc Support for Spanish Speakers \$10,000.00

Community Engagement Center -- Washer/Dryer \$1,500.00

Power of Love Foundation \$7,580.00

FPC Housing Committee \$2,500.00

San Souci - Employee Assistance Grant \$5,000.00

RFIT -- Recovery Fitness in Training \$1,000.00

Just Friends -- Capital Equipment \$6,983.00

Love Chapel - Christmas Baskets Peanut Butter \$1,821.75

FPC Christmas Bazaar \$1,000.00

Total Grants Approved 2023 \$50,634.75

Session Reports

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Our Team

- Members who served on Stewardship and Finance Committee for some or all of 2023 included: Treasurer Jayne Farber, Cindy Frey, Lynne Hyatt, Mary Ann McCray, Chip Orben, Luther Pierson, and Rich Stenner. Reverend Felipe Martinez provided staff support to the Committee.

Our Purpose:

- Our Stewardship and Finance Committee is a committee of the Session and exists to:
- Monitor church finances and accounts throughout the year (with the Treasurer)
- Provide monthly and annual financial reports of the Church's finances with year-end audits/reviews/compilations (using staff and volunteers)
- Conduct the annual stewardship campaign securing pledges of support for the next calendar year.
- Conduct the Christmas Joy offering.

Our Work

- The Committee is thankful for the resiliency and generosity of our church members. With increasing inflation and the continued presence of COVID in our community combined with fewer in-person worshipers than pre-COVID, FPC fell just short of the 2023 targeted income goal. We are truly a blessed and giving congregation given all the obstacles presented to us throughout the year.
- FPC ended 2023 at 99% of total income goal. We collected \$647,825 in total income against a budgeted goal of \$652,530, netting an income shortfall of \$4,706. On the expense side, FPC experienced several challenges. Unexpected and expensive facility boiler repairs, a critical mainline water break in the preschool fire sprinkler system, a new janitorial service contract and additional SAFE CHURCH upgrades in 2023 pushed Facility Maintenance and Materials expense categories over-budget. Total Expenses for 2023 were \$666,992 against a budgeted \$654,471 leaving FPC with expense overages of \$12,521. Total Net budget shortfall for 2023 was \$19,168. With Session's approval, funds will be drawn from several FPC reserve accounts to balance the 2023 Operating Budget.
- Our Treasurer drafted the 2024 Operating Church budget based on input received from all committees and working groups within the Church. In December, Session approved a \$674,802 Operating Budget for 2024.
- We received gifts totaling \$2,313 for the December Christmas Joy Offering. This was the fifth of five "Special Offerings" collected annually. Total special offerings in 2023 grossed \$11,917.
- In 2023 a new, secure and confidential email was introduced (PROMISE@fpccolumbus.org) so that church members could correspond privately with the church Treasurer and/or electronically submit their 2024 pledges. More than 15 members took advantage of this new electronic tool.

Session Reports

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE COMMITTEE

- Church members increased their usage of the VANCO QR scan code in 2023 to make secure, online mobile contributions and deposits directly to FPC.

Our Treasurer monitored the 2023 Sabbatical Budget put together by a special church committee and approved by Session. Net Total Income needed to support Sabbatical was \$33,700. A funding appeal in early 2023 raised \$14,960 from 34 church donors, while additional funding came from Felipe's Accrued Continuing Education savings, a POV grant and an FPC Foundation grant in an amount not to exceed \$9,387. Because of the generosity of church donors, only \$3,437 was needed from the Foundation to balance the Sabbatical Budget.

Sabbatical Expenses were divided into two categories: Pastor Expenses (\$21,554) and Church Expenses (\$12,216) for an Expense Total of \$33,700. This was a successful campaign and a successful Sabbatical experience for all.

Sabbatical 2023 Recap

	Actual	Budget
Total Raised for Sabbatical:	\$33,770	\$36,212
Total Spent for Sabbatical:	\$33,700	\$36,212
Sources of Income:		
	Actual	Budget
-Donations from Congregation (34 Donors)	\$14,960	\$11,400
-Presbytery/Synod Grants	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
-Accrued Continuing Ed-Felipe	\$10,372	\$12,925
-Grant from FPC Foundation	\$ 3,437	\$ 9,387
• Total Income	\$33,770	\$36,212
Expenses:		
	Actual	Budget
-Pastor Expenses (Programs, lodging, transportation, equipment, per diem/miscellaneous)	\$21,554	\$20,925
-Church Expenses (Guest preachers, admin/session support, church activities, pastoral care, mileage)	<u>\$12,216</u>	<u>\$15,287</u>
• Total Expenses	\$33,770	\$36,212

Session Reports

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE COMMITTEE

2024 Stewardship Campaign Recap

- The Fall 2024 annual stewardship campaign theme was “Abundant Blessings – Grateful Hearts” There were traditional mailings to the congregation, 4 moments for missions from a diverse group of members, consecration breakfast hosted by Deacons, numerous reminders in newsletter and weekly updates regarding the campaign. We encouraged members to prayerfully consider a 3% increase for 2024 to help offset the impact of inflationary pressures at FPC.
- As of mid-January 2024, FPC has received 75 pledge PROMISES (vs a goal of 89) totaling \$493,000. This is 73% of our budgeted 2024 goal of \$671,500 in pledges and gifts. We are prayerful that we will continue to receive additional pledges from traditional givers, new members and regular attendees throughout 2024.
- The Stewardship Committee also recognizes there are members who traditionally give to FPC but do not fill out a pledge card. We look at prior years’ history to estimate this anticipated income. We are grateful for ALL gifts, no matter the size; no matter the amount and recognize that gifts of time and talent, as well as monetary treasures contribute to the financial health and security of our church.

Session Reports

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE COMMITTEE

FPC FINANCIAL SUMMARY - DECEMBER 31, 2023
FUND 01 - OPERATIONS - EOY
PRELIMINARY

	2023	2023	2023 Actual to Budget	2024	Percent Change
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Budget	
INCOME					
Pledge and Gift Income	\$ 592,421 ^{1/}	\$ 614,550		\$ 627,100 ^{2/}	2.04%
Other Income	\$ 55,404	\$ 37,980		\$ 47,218	
Total Income	\$ 647,825	\$ 652,530	\$ (4,705)	\$ 674,318	3.34%
EXPENSES					
Church Program	Actual	Budget	Variance		
Nurture					
-Children's Nurture	\$ 3,856	\$ 10,932		\$ 10,910	
-Youth Nurture	\$ 4,513	\$ 5,650		\$ 7,400	
-Adult Fellowship & Ed	\$ 840	\$ 1,950		\$ 2,100	
Total Nurture	\$ 9,209	\$ 18,532		\$ 20,410	
General Program Expenses	\$ 250	\$ 750		\$ 400	
Music	\$ 5,124	\$ 7,285		\$ 7,755	
Social Justice	\$ 2,195	\$ 2,200		\$ 2,200	
Worship	\$ 3,041	\$ 5,550		\$ 6,300	
Stewardship	\$ 350	\$ 200		\$ 400	
Consecration Sunday	\$ 249	\$ 750		\$ 550	
Financial Review	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500		\$ 430	
Sabbatical Reserve	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000		\$ 2,000	
Deacon Expense	\$ 1,221	\$ 1,240		\$ 1,300	
Celebration of Life	-	\$ 500		\$ 500	
Subtotal Church Program	\$ 30,139	\$ 45,507	\$ 15,368	\$ 42,245	-7.17%
Mission Giving	\$ 83,771	\$ 83,768	\$ (3)	\$ 84,195 ^{3/}	0.51%
Professional Staff					
Pastor	\$ 130,595	\$ 130,483		\$ 132,963	
Director CYYAM	\$ 53,729	\$ 63,793		\$ 64,815	
Choir Director	\$ 28,528	\$ 32,365		\$ 34,352	
Organist	\$ 29,484	\$ 26,662		\$ 25,817	
Subtotal Professional Staf	\$ 242,336	\$ 253,303	\$ 10,967	\$ 257,947	1.83%
Office Expenses	\$ 98,785	\$ 93,760	\$ (5,025)	\$ 101,716	8.49%
Facility Expenses	\$ 190,248	\$ 156,266	\$ (33,982)	\$ 164,345	5.17%
Per Capita Assessment	\$ 21,715	\$ 21,865	\$ 150	\$ 23,870	9.17%
Total Expenses	\$ 666,994	\$ 654,469	\$ (12,525)	\$ 674,318	3.03%
NET INCOME/(EXPENSE)	\$ (19,169)	\$ (1,939)	\$ (17,230)	\$ 0.00	

^{1/} Includes \$110,382 in prepaid pledges paid in '22 - credited in 2023.

^{2/} Includes any prepaid pledges collected in 2023 to be credited in 2024.

Session Reports

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Reverend Felipe Martinez, Full-time Senior Pastor/Head of Staff					
2024 vs 2023 COMPENSATION					
	5% COLA		2% COLA		JMF 12.06.23
	<u>2023</u>		<u>2024</u>		
Cash Salary	\$51,819 <u>1/</u>		2024 Cash Salary	52,855 <u>1/</u>	Adjusted with 2% COLA increase minus 7.65%
Housing Allowance	\$34,290		Housing Allowance	34,976	Represents 2% COLA increase
Effective Salary	\$86,109 <u>2/</u>		Effective Salary	87,831 <u>2/</u>	Represents Cash Salary (as adjusted above) plus Housing Allowance
Pension/Health	\$33,582 <u>3/</u>		Pension/Health Dues	34,254 <u>3/</u>	Calculated at 39% of EFFECTIVE SALARY
SECA	\$4,292 <u>4/</u>		SECA	4,378 <u>4/</u>	SECA based on adjusted 2024 salary of \$57,233
	\$2,500		Professional Expenses	2,500	
Continuing Ed	\$3,000		Continuing Education	3,000	
Vouchered Mileage	\$1,000		Vouchered Mileage	1,000	
TOTAL PACKAGE	\$130,483		Total Package	132,963	
			other Compensation		
Vacation	5 weeks		Vacation	5 weeks	
Study Leave	2 weeks		Study Leave	2 weeks	
Sick Days	10 days		Sick Days	10 days	
Sabbatical	13 weeks				

11.7.2023 jmf

11.8.23 FM reviewed

2024 HIGHLIGHTS:

- 1/ 2024 Cash Salary reflects 2% COLA increase over 2023 Adjusted Salary (\$56,111), minus 7.65%
- 2/ Effective Salary is Cash Salary (as adjusted for SECA) plus Housing Allowance.
- 3/ Pension dues for 2024 are based on 39% of Effective Salary.
- 4/ SECA tax rate is 7.65% of 2024 Adjusted base salary of \$57,233.

2023 Annual Reports

WoodWeShare Ministries

The 2023-24 heating season started early with splitting, delivering and stacking a literal ton of wood during Faith In Action Sunday. So far there are three families heating with WoodWeShare and another receiving occasional assistance. While no new clients were found with Human Services after the 2022-23 season, the current processing of energy assistance applications for 2023-24 may yield some new clients before spring. Until then we are thankful for the families that we can help.

Submitted by Doug Sprunger
woodweshare@gmail.com
260-589-6757

2023 Annual Reports

SWEET DREAMS MINISTRIES

Sweet Dreams Ministry helped several children this past year by providing new twin beds complete with all of the bedding. This is our sixth year providing beds for children who live in Bartholomew County. Most of our referrals came from the Department of Child Services but we had a few others from Advocates for Children (CASA).

DCS requests beds for their unlicensed relative placements who do not get any form of reimbursement for caring for children whereas foster parents are generally reimbursed for these expenses, but not always. The caseworker who is requesting a bed will let us know the child's favorite colors and what they enjoy. The favorite again this year is Spiderman for the younger boys and fairies and unicorns for the younger girls. We also provided stuffed toys and books.

While we set up mostly twin beds, we did set up some bunkbeds, cribs, and one toddler bed. We are so grateful to you, our church, for this opportunity to help provide some stability and love to these children who so desperately need it. Each bed that we provide costs approximately \$250. Thank you for your support and please hold these children in your hearts and prayers.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Sharpe and Leigh Ann Figg

Session Reports

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Members: Judy Summerville, Clare Moore, Kimberly Hoffman, Hanna Salas, Janet Lowery, Terri Glackin, Warren Ward (Elder), Anthony Merida (Elder), Lisa Porter (Elder) Dianne Sprunger (Staff Liaison) Jenny Heichelbech (Staff Liaison), Felipe Martinez (Staff Liaison)

Worship is a community effort, one where we are welcomed and encouraged to bring all that we are and share that with God and one another. With that in mind, a goal of the Worship Committee in 2023 was to invite and include many voices, perspectives, and forms of expression, representing the diversity of our faith community. We are so grateful for all those who said “Yes!” when asked to participate, who contributed with singing, reading, art, slides, tech expertise, dance, stories, rhythm, and more. Beyond the weekly and monthly roles of liturgist, flowers, sanctuary art and projected worship slides that members of our committee coordinate, some special committee projects were the Lenten and Advent liturgies that several of us contributed, and the collaborative art projects from the intergenerational art workshop Anthony Merida and Tom McNight led creatively and faithfully as they felt led to do so, through parts of ‘22 and ‘23.

As a committee we began the year knowing that we would be working alongside our wonderful music staff and sabbatical administrative pastor Richard Safford to create worship for the 12 weeks Felipe was on Sabbatical, from Pentecost to Labor Day. And while some might call us “worship nerds” for admitting it, we did have some fun pulling that off! The overarching themes for Sabbatical were rest and renewal, and beyond that we wanted to explore “what it meant to be church”, which proved to be meaningful and fruitful, as well as fun! We threw streamers on Pentecost as the Spirit blew through the place. We built awkward Lego structures at Donner Park as we shared around tables what we and others bring to church and need from it. We sang our way through a beautiful Hymn Sing service of old and new requested favorites with barely a dry eye in the place. We paraded beautiful banners up the aisle to celebrate the entire liturgical year, and the whole life of Christ in one 60 minute service, singing seasonal favorites and riding the rollercoaster of that annual faith journey in fast forward mode. We had a service co-led by a guest preacher and hand puppets teaching us how to be a blessing. We heard from some of our own about what mission means to them and how we are contributing to so many important, loving, life-sustaining efforts through our prayers, our funds, and our boots on the ground, as God calls us to action. And for action, we helped Joy Basa King and the deacons organize what may be “the first annual” Day of Service,

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in which we worshiped God with work of all kinds, including the work of meditative prayer, gutter cleaning, sorting, electrical wiring, cooking and baking, and sitting with our siblings and neighbors in fellowship and solidarity. We also opened our pulpit to inspiring, thought-provoking, diverse preachers with insight about rest and renewal, and their own perspectives about what it means to be church. And we gave our beloved pastor Felipe -and his wonderful wife Tracy- the time for rest, renewal, and returning to us that they needed and deserved.

While Sabbatical for the Worship Committee folks was more renewal than rest, we did have a tremendous group of 10 adults attend the Montreat Worship and Music Conference in June in the North Carolina mountains, and that was surely a restful and renewing time. We are grateful for the money allotted in our committee's budget to offset some conference costs, and for additional funds from the Myrtle grant that also helped defray costs for registration and housing.

The Worship Committee has made a few changes to the worship experience we hope are positive for everyone. One change we made was to purchase the projectable Glory to God hymnal slides that include the musical notes as well as the words to enable singing of new and unfamiliar songs and harmonies from the slides. A second change has been the inclusion of K-6th grade children on Communion Sundays for the whole service, rather than having them leave for Kids Church. The worship planning team, with Jen Riddle's leadership, has made a conscious effort to make those services engaging intergenerationally. And thirdly, from the experiences of Sabbatical, we have made a plan to open our pulpit more often to guest preachers, giving Felipe a bit more time to focus on other facets of our shared ministry, and to give us all a diversity of perspectives and voices around God's word for us today. So in 2024 we aim to have a guest preacher every 4-6 weeks, while Felipe will often still be our worship leader unless he's on vacation or study leave, and we've planned for these preaching honoraria in the committee's requested budget.

Worship Committee is a small but mighty committee. I want to acknowledge the many years of dedicated service that Judy Summerville and Clare Moore have given as they step away from this committee as 2023 ends. They have done so much behind the scenes to make our worship look and feel like a place where we belong, where we can come to experience God's presence with word and sacrament. So a huge thank you to

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them. And then to Terri Glackin, without whom virtually nothing would be where we need it to be on Sunday morning or any other time! Pay attention the next time Felipe can't get the candle lit or the banner doesn't fit the theme for the day or the flowers have died in the window sills...It will be because Terri wasn't there! So thank you, Terri, for all you have done and continue to do so generously! And if anyone else is thinking this stuff sounds like fun and wants to join our small but mighty group, I'm definitely recruiting!

Submitted with love,
Lisa Porter

Other Reports

DEACONS

Class of 2023: Stephanie Cunningham, Jenny DeJarnette, Izzie Nowlin, Doug Wray

Class of 2024: Victor Friend, Jeff Karr, Sarah Sanders (Moderator), Sandy Thomas

Class of 2025: Julie Orben, Anna Denoyer, Vernet Safford, Scott Weathers

The mission of FPC Deacons is to care for the congregation. We do this by connecting with and praying for the individuals and families on our Deacon Member Lists. Ideally, each member of the church (and many frequent visitors) should know who their assigned Deacon is, so that they can reach out to that person with concerns or special needs. Deacons also coordinate ushering each Sunday and lead several fellowship events each year, including Deacons & Donuts in February, the Easter Brunch, the Church Picnic, and the Consecration Brunch in November.

Deacons strive to create a welcoming environment and to connect with long-time members and first-time visitors. Deacons often coordinate meals for those who are ill or homebound and, when possible, they help with transportation needs. Deacons also help deliver church flowers after church on Sunday, Lillies at Easter and poinsettias at Christmas.

We are thankful for the service of the Deacons whose term ended this year: Izzie Nowlin, Stephanie Cunningham, Jenny DeJarnett. Thank you to Doug Wray for agreeing to serve a second term and to our new Deacons beginning in 2024: Sarah Dismore, Alexa Staley, and Linda Pierson. A special thank you to Sandy Thomas for co-moderating the Deacons with Sarah Sanders in 2024.

Submitted Respectfully,
Sarah Sanders

Other Reports

PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION OF COLUMBUS, INDIANA

Mission: To Serve the Religious, Educational and Charitable Needs of First Presbyterian Church, Columbus, IN

2023 Annual Unrestricted Grant Funds Available	\$176,394.74
2023 Grants Awarded from Unrestricted Funds:	
Mission support (1/3 of available funds)	\$45,118.99
Hispanic Scholarship (Year 2 of 4)	10,000.00
2nd Baptist Church Improvements	20,000.00
1st Christian Church Tower Restoration	15,000.00
Sabbatical Funding	3,437.53
Preschool Safety Glass Coating	7,812.00
Pyoca Staff Housing	15,000.00
Columbarium Slate Replacement	10,716.51
Children/Youth leaders to APCE	9,393.98
2023 Total Grant Disbursements from Unrestricted Funds	\$136,479.01
Remaining Balance at 12/31/23	\$39,915.73
2023 Grants Awarded from Restricted Funds	
Columbarium Slate Replacement	\$10,716.51
Foundation Balances at 12/31/23:	
Vanguard Investment Account	\$3,561,902.84
Columbarium – New Covenant Investments	18,782.12
Columbarium – First Financial Checking	15,634.18
Organ Maintenance – New Covenant Investments	150,726.20
Harrison Youth Fund – New Covenant Investments	12,294.21
Foundation – First Financial Checking	24,795.83
Private Donor Fund	204,419.08
Other	
Reeves Fund	\$1,016,507.92
(Endowed benefit trust held at the Heritage Fund)	(as of 12/31/23)

Other Reports

PRESBYTERIAN FOUNDATION OF COLUMBUS, INDIANA

Highlights during 2023

- Clean audit for 2022 conducted by Agresta, Storms & O'Leary.
- Our accounts followed the market uptick and had modest gains.
- We were able to assist two local churches and Camp Pyoca with projects at their facilities. We were also able to support our church with several facility improvements and assist in funding Felipe's summer sabbatical.
- We look forward to the bicentennial of the church in 2024 and assisting the church in any projects they might undertake.

2023 Foundation Board of Directors and Officers

David Boatwright Investment Committee, Chair
Tim Denoyer Investment Committee
Colleen Herrick President/Treasurer
Bill Jones Mission Support
Leigh Ann Figg Secretary
Clare Moore Vice President/ Legacy Circle / Planned Giving
Janet Putney Webmaster/Public Relations

We give heartfelt thanks to David who is retiring from the board after serving faithfully and competently for a total of 5 years.

Memorial & Honorarium Gifts

During 2023, the Foundation received a total of \$11,525.00 remembering our loved ones and honoring the wonderful contributions others have made:

Memorials:	Honoring:
Jon Holdread	None
Albert Bauman	
Jan Gosling Bobbs	
Nancy Spurgeon	

Grants

Those interested in applying for a grant are encouraged to contact any Foundation Board member or the Rev. Felipe Martinez for guidance. Please remember that grant requests are to be submitted to the Session for review prior to being considered by the Foundation.

To learn more about submitting a grant, please visit our website at <http://www.fpccolumbus.org/foundation/>.

2024 FPC Foundation meeting dates:

February 6, April 2, June 4, August 6, October 1, December 3 (annual meeting).

Respectfully submitted, Colleen Herrick (Board President)



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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