



2023 Annual Report
The First Presbyterian Church of Northport, NY
Founded 1785

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The First Presbyterian Church of Northport

Annual Congregational Meeting

March 17, 2024, 11:00 AM

Docket

1. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum – Rev. Rachel Vione, Moderator
2. Opening Prayer
3. Approval of the Docket
4. Review of the 2023 Finances – Dennis Crowley, Finance Ministry Chair

Overview of 2024 Budget

5. Report of the All-Church Nominating Committee – Elder, Susanne Haffner
 - Election of Ruling Elders
 - Election of Deacons
 - All Church Nominating Committee
6. Review of the 2023 Annual Reports
7. Report from Weekday Nursery School – Elder, Cindy Mies
8. Voting on Pastor's Terms of Call – Elder, Kim Gilbert, Personnel Chair
9. Pastors Remarks
10. Delegate Reading and Approval of Minutes to the Session
11. Prayer and adjournment

March 17, 2024

My Dear Friends at the First Presbyterian Church of Northport,

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you for the privilege of serving as your Pastor at the First Presbyterian Church of Northport. I am honored to serve a church who loves God and loves one another the way you do.

As we continue in ministry in the post-pandemic church, we are called to do ministry in different ways. We continue to livestream our worship services, allowing those who cannot be with us in person to be able to do so online. Our online attendance has remained strong as has our in-person worship attendance.

We are slowly and steadily rebuilding our Sunday school program. One of my favorite parts of the worship service is the children's sermon. I love having the children join me in the front of the sanctuary as we listen for God's word for them. You never know what they are going to say!

God calls us not to dwell on the past, or how we have always done things before, but to be open to the new things that God is doing in our midst. With God, all things are possible!

I am always amazed at how well we take care of each other. I love all of the ways the congregation at FPC are invested in one another; how we support and encourage one another; how through good times and bad we have bound ourselves to one another.

I have been honored to participate in several events in our community throughout 2023. On Easter Sunday, I participated in the Easter Dawn service sponsored by the Ecumenical Lay Council. In June, I was honored to "Bless the Fleet" in Northport Harbor and serve as a judge for the annual "Best Clam Chowder in Northport" and the best "Craft Beer" in Northport. (Salted and Sand City, respectively). In September, I participated once again at the "Overdose Awareness" event sponsored by the Drug and Alcohol Task Force, of which I am a member. All these events were well-attended by the community and an important outreach for FPC.

This community of faith...this *family* that we call FPC Northport is a gift from God. As we continue on our journey of faith together, we do so knowing that we serve a God who is always with us and guiding us every step of the way!

With much JOY in serving as your Pastor,

Rachel

Clerk's Report

2023. I would like to start by thanking the following Elders who have faithfully served this past year:

Class of 2023

Patricia Bell
Cathy Coleman
Cindy Mies
David Ofsharick
Anita Stambouly

Class of 2024

Diana Montusi
Melissa Beyer
Susanne Haffner
Vicki Field
William Heuer

Class of 2025

Dennis Crowley
Frank Dentrone
Kim Gilbert
Marilyn Fox
Melissa Barasch

As always, our Elders continue to be faithful and active participants in the life of our Church, serving on the various ministries such as Finance, Membership, Mission, Weekday Nursery School Board, Ecumenical Lay Council, Peacemaking, Worship, Personnel, Adult Education, Sunday School, Youth Group, Presbyterian Women, Property and Maintenance, Memorial Garden, Sunday ushering teams and hosting fellowship hour, Liturgists and Communion servers, to name a few! We also have members who attend as Commissioners to the Long Island Presbytery meetings.

Session has been meeting in person monthly (except for our usual break in the summer months). Our meetings open with prayer and devotions by Elders each month which this year included readings from Word in Season based on the Beatitudes, Walking with God, meditations on peace, These Days, Come to me and Listen from Jesus Calling, devotion based on Matthew 22:40 and a devotion inspired by the recent stewardship campaign about our responsibility individually and as a congregation – “We are all part of the body of Christ.”

The corporate officers for 2023 were Marcia Mercer, President; Dennis Crowley, Secretary; Bob Spiller, Treasurer; and Marcia remained on as Clerk for an additional one-year term.

Our on-line streaming service has continued throughout the year, which has been quite successful and continues to be a welcomed ministry for those of our members who are unable to be physically present during our worship services.

We were deeply saddened to lose several dear and faithful members of our church family this past year: Louis Schmidt, Todd Pierce, Muriel Best, Aaron Thomas, Paul Roberts and Linda Siegmann.

As we continue on with our ministry here at First Presbyterian Church of Northport in this new year, I pray that you all remain safe and healthy, and look forward to worshiping with you in word, song, prayer and deed.

Marcia Mercer, Clerk

Finance Ministry

The Finance Ministry continued to meet the challenges of inflation and mandatory increases in essential budget items in a backdrop of decreasing annual pledge totals and contributions. The focus was not only in keeping expenses in line but also in finding new sources of funding.

We partnered with Stewardship in the fall campaign with an informative brochure, Minutes for Mission, and a novel campaign to ask for one-time gifts to help close the deficit, resulting in over 36,000 raised.

A successful lease for 1,000/month was negotiated for the first time with YDA, effective January 2024, resulting in 12,000 income from that source. This does not reduce YDA's funds for charitable work, as their grant money includes provisions for rental payments.

Increased contributions will also come from the Weekday Nursery School.

The Endowment Fund was increased substantially from the bequest of Muriel Best, which will also result in a notable increase in interest income.

An audited financial review took place in September 2023.

Please keep in mind that the members of the Finance Ministry carefully monitor the income and expenses all year, and not just at Stewardship season in the fall. Our goal is not only to make sure that funds are spent wisely but also that our liquid assets are effectively working for us.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis J. Crowley
Finance Chair

Board of Deacons

Pastor Rachel Vione

Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
Sue Ebert Secretary	Jack Fink	Tim Gladding
Carolyn Louis Co-Moderator	Marjorie Sundquist	Jim Beyer
Jeannie O'Brien Co-Moderator/ Treasurer	Tiffany Thomas	Helene Dunat
Jeannie Reed	Pegge Strella	Bob Spiller
Janeen Crowley	Krista Mellinger- DeRoma	Robin O'Neill Gonzalez

~We gratefully recognize the contributions of Deacons Sue Ebert, Carolyn Louis, Jeannie O'Brien, and Jeannie Reed who concluded their term of service in 2023. Jack Fink will also be leaving the Deacons, as he will be moving.

~The Board of Deacons is a ministry of caring and service to church members, to the community, and to the world at large. Funds for our ministry primarily come from donations to the Deacons' Fund made from church members and loose plate offerings.

~We began 2023, gratefully with in-person worship and have been able to continue throughout the entire year. Coffee Hour continues to serve packaged snacks with coffee and water bottles. In the fall, we moved forward, and what is served is left to the discretion of the hosts of coffee hour. The Deacons, Session, and Membership continue to rotate each Sunday.

~In February, Pioneers were sent Valentine's Day cards from the Deacons. Five hundred dollars was donated to the Pioneers for supplies. A donation of \$1,000 was made to the PDA.

~In April, Easter plants were delivered to the "Pioneers of our church," for Easter (40 of them).

~On September 17th, the installation and ordination of officers was held.

~On September 28th, First Pres. partnered with St. Philips Church and held a successful Blood Drive.

~A donation of \$500 was made to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

~In November, Care packages containing gift cards were sent to all the college students.

~In November, a donation to offset the postage cost of Samaritan's Purse was made.

~In December, Poinsettias were delivered to the "Pioneers of our church" (40 of them).

~In December, a donation to cover the Pioneer's Christmas lunch was made.

~In December, a donation for the cost of new pillows was made to Dawn Hill for the holidays.

~The Deacons have a year-end balance of \$2450.75 in our account.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Ebert (secretary)

Jeannie O'Brien (co-moderator/ treasurer)

Carolyn Louis (co-moderator)

TREASURER'S REPORT. DEACON FUND 2023

OPENING BALANCE: January 1, 2023 \$2,309.23

INCOME:

Donations \$4,542.00

TOTAL INCOME: \$6,851.23

DISBURSEMENTS:

Pioneer's Fund /	
Christmas Lunch	673.00
Disasters Relief	2,000.00
Flowers / Plants	
Cards / token Envelopes	529.55
Communion Supplies	120.04
Coffee Hour Supplies	390.55
Dawn Hill Supplies	287.37
Reimburse CPR Training	400.00

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS: \$4,400.48

CLOSING BALANCE: December 31, 2023 \$2,450.75

Respectfully submitted,

Jeannie O'Brien
Deacon Treasurer



Annual Financial Report				
Fiscal Year 2023				
Budgeted Accounts				
Summary				
Income	2023 Budget		2023 Actual	
Pledged Giving	\$293,771		\$302,827	
Other Income	\$87,200		\$139,960	
Gifts and Bequests	\$12,500		\$13,022	
Total Unrestricted Income	\$393,471		\$455,809	
Operating Expense Disbursements	2023 Budget		2023 Actual	
Payroll and Insurance	\$314,547		\$311,409	
Property and Maintenance Expense	\$118,338		\$114,260	
Benevolence	\$29,536		\$29,583	
Administrative Expenses	\$14,150		\$16,829	
Ministries	\$11,800		\$9,034	
Total Operating Expense	\$488,371		\$481,115	
Restricted Accounts				
Account	Balance 12/31/2022	2023 Income	2023 Disbursements	Balance 12/31/2023
P/M Capital Fund	\$15,067	\$0	\$0	\$15,067
Endowment Fund Donations	\$612	\$260,934	\$261,747	(\$201)
Memorial Fund	\$11,135	\$1,206	\$1,318	\$11,022
Music & Ministry	\$3,928	\$2,055	\$1,475	\$4,508
Memorial Garden	\$11,808	\$4,700	\$1,913	\$14,594
Rambo Endowment	\$49,997	\$3,330	\$8,511	\$44,816
Joy Offering	\$1,700	\$1,275	\$1,975	\$1,000
Peacemaking	\$1,317	\$1,620	\$1,915	\$1,022
Pentecost	\$823	\$1,300	\$1,603	\$520
Sanctuary Guild	\$2,581	\$1,127	\$1,509	\$2,200
One Great Hour	\$100	\$1,855	\$1,955	\$0
Other Restricted	\$3,999	\$21,220	\$20,382	\$4,837
Account Balances				
Account	Value 12/31/2022		Value 12/31/2023	
TD Bank Checking	\$42,180		\$76,355	
Charles Schwab	\$71,100		\$24,889	
Presbyterian Foundation Endowment [#]	\$697,861		\$977,137	
New Covenant Funds	\$172,678		\$145,922	
Total Unrestricted	\$182,891		\$147,780	
Total Restricted	\$800,929		\$1,076,523	
*Please note that the year-end balance does not include deposits or outstanding disbursements in transit.				
[#] Funds in the Presbyterian Foundation Endowment are considered "Restricted" as they require 2/3 majority votes from the Finance Ministry and the Session for withdrawals.				
Respectfully Submitted, Kevin McKerr, Financial Manager				

Comparative Budget 2023/2024

	2023 Budget	2024 Budget
Income		
Pledged Giving	293,771	315,536
Bequests/gifts	12,500	25,000
Unpledged	10,000	10,000
General Use of Building	10,000	10,000
Weekday/Food Pantry/YDA Expenses Share	26,500	44,500
Shared Denominational Support	4,000	4,000
Loose Plate Giving	3,500	3,000
Investment Income	33,200	37,500
Total Income	393,471	449,536

Expense

Total Payroll & Insurance		
Salaries & Benefits - Pastor	177,882	176,859
Salaries & Benefits - Admin/Music Staff	127,775	136,129
Employer FICA/Medicare	6,089	6,346
Payroll Processing Expenses	1,300	1,400
Worker's Comp & Disab. Ins.	1,500	1,500
Total Payroll & Insurance	314,546	322,234

Property & Maintenance

Church Building

Utilities

Electric	16,000	16,000
Gas	7,500	7,500
Telecommunications	5,200	5,200
Water	1,400	1,400

Total Utilities	30,100	30,100
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Liability/Property Insurance	37,388	40,379
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Church snow removal	4,000	16,000
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Repairs (Discretionary)	10,000	10,000
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Miscellaneous Expenses	3,500	3,500
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Elevator Inspection/Repair	3,500	3,500
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Supplies / Consumables	3,000	3,000
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Church refuse collection	3,000	3,000
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Landscaping	2,500	2,500
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Required Inspections	1,000	1,000
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Fire Alarm System	1,000	1,000
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Total Church Building	98,988	113,979
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Woodhull Manse Expenses		
Utilities		
Fuel Oil	6,000	6,000
Cable/Phone	3,500	4,200
Electric	2,500	2,500
Water	350	350
Total Utilities	12,350	13,050
Repairs/Supplies	5,000	5,000
Lawn Maintenance/Pest Control	2,000	2,000
Total Woodhull Manse	19,350	20,050
Total Property & Maintenance	118,338	134,029
Mission / Benevolence*		
Mission Committee		
Mission-Local & Global	17,500	17,500
Iglesia Presbiteriana Hispana	0	0
Total Mission Committee	17,500	17,500
Presbytery		
Per Capita Expense	11,843	11,942
Total Presbytery	11,843	11,942
Total Mission Committee-Benevolence	29,343	29,442
Ministries		
Worship		
Substitutes		
Substitute Preacher	2,500	2,500
Substitute Organist	1,100	1,225
Substitute Choir Director	700	700
Total Substitutes	4,300	4,425
Music		
Organ/Piano Repair & Tuning	2,500	2,500
New Music-Chancel choir	200	200
Copyright Insurance	300	350
Total Music	3,000	3,050
Sanctuary Supplies	350	350
Robe Cleaning	100	100
New Music-Youth choirs	0	0
Total Worship	7,750	7,925
Christian Education		
Sunday School Supplies/Resource	1,200	1,200
Youth Ministries	1,200	1,200
Baptism/Confirmation	100	100
Adult Education	300	300

Celebrations	0	0
Family Ministries Events	0	0
Total Christian Education	2,800	2,800
Stewardship	300	300
Church Officers	500	500
Membership	250	250
Peacemaking	100	100
Pioneers	100	100
Total Ministries	11,800	11,975
Admin Expenses		
Office Copiers		
Copier Lease	2,600	2,600
Copier Usage	2,400	4,000
Total Office Copiers	5,000	6,600
IT Expenses		
Hardware	1,200	2,000
Software	600	600
Subscriptions	600	600
Total Office hardware/software	2,400	3,200
Subscriptions & Prof. Svc. Fees	3,500	3,750
Supplies-Office	1,200	1,500
Postage & Handling	750	750
Total Admin Expenses	12,850	15,800
Banking		
Credit Card Trans fee	1,200	1,200
Returned checks and fees	100	100
Total Banking	1,300	1,300
Total Expenses	488,177	514,780
Difference	-94,706	-65,244

* The Mission expenses are exclusive of the "Donated Space" and utilities for the ELC Food Pantry, YDA Program and Weekday Nursery School.

Membership Ministry

The membership ministry committee oversees the nurturing of church members and the welcoming and encouragement of new members.

The following is a list of some of the productive things that have transpired during 2023:

- Membership participates in coffee hours on a regular basis
- Membership sends birthday cards every month to all of the youth in our church under the age of 18
- We oversee the encouraging of hosts for firepit gatherings and hikes to increase socializing.
- A fairly new group called POLO, which stands for parents of little ones, is becoming more active in organizing gatherings after church one Sunday a month for the little children, and an evening called Parents' Night Out. The idea is to gather young parents with their children to various get togethers to encourage them in getting to know each other, which supports their Sunday School experience.
- In February we had our first Souper Bowl Sunday – on Superbowl Sunday. Homemade soups and breads were offered in the Hartt Room after worship, and contributions to the Food Pantry were gathered. The little ones went throughout the congregations excitedly collecting donations.
- (This very successful event happened again this year (2024)).

We look forward to 2024 being a more peaceful, and a healthy, fulfilling year for FPCN!

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Montusi and Susanne Haffner



Local/Global Mission Ministries

The 2023 discretionary funds received by Local/Global Mission Ministries were disbursed as follows:

Donations were made to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) to aid victims of the earthquakes in Turkey, Syria, and Morocco, and to support relief efforts following the floods in Libya, and the fires in Hawaii. Additional funds were given to Doctors Without Borders to provide life saving medical care for soldiers and civilians injured in the fighting in Ukraine. A donation was also made to the Presbyterian Agency “Living Waters for the World” and to “Operation Christmas Child”.

Providing food for hungry people was once again a mission priority in 2023. Donations were made to the ELC Food Pantry, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, to the Long Island Cares Mobile Food Pantry, and to the “World Central Kitchen” which provides nourishing meals to communities impacted by the escalation of violence in the Middle East and elsewhere. Mission Ministries also sponsored four HIHI dinners for homeless residents spending the night at a motel on Jericho Turnpike. Members of our congregation generously donated frozen dinners, cookies, and fruit for them.

In addition, the following donations were made: to the YDA to assist this Youth Development Agency's general budget, to the Deacon's fund in the Nueva Vida church and to their college scholarship fund, to Misión Presbiteria Emanuel in Remsenberg to help fund their children's ministries, and to the Nueva Paz Presbyterian Church in Havana, Cuba. A Russian refugee family which had settled in Northport also received a mission donation as did the Long Island Cares Veterans' Project.

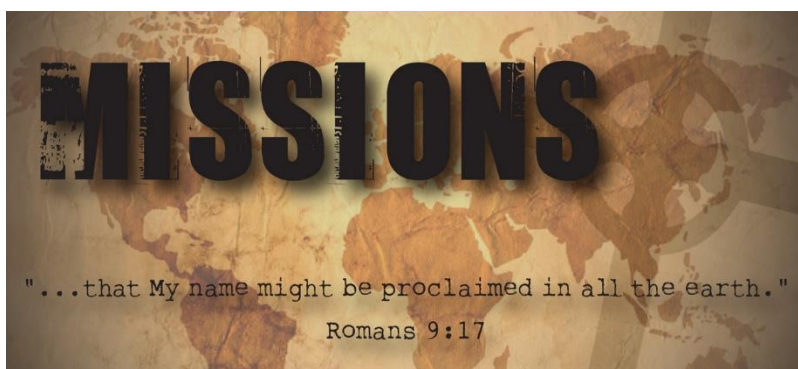
As in the past, Mission Ministries invited the congregation to donate to the three PCUSA special offerings. Here is the total amount of money received in 2023: The One Great Hour of Sharing- \$1,855.00; The Pentecost Offering - \$1,300.00; The Christmas Joy Offering - \$1,230.00. Money was also donated to a PCUSA program that provides financial assistance to art education and music programs at Presbyterian related schools and colleges. This was a listing in the recent Presbyterian Giving Catalog.

We are grateful to God for all the people in our congregation who make these local/global ministries possible – be it through their generous donations to our church on a regular basis and/or through their “hands on” support.

“Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways.” II Thess 3:16

Local/ Global Mission Ministries

Marilyn Fox (chair), Jane Hudson, Florence Ogg, and Pegge Stella



Peacemaking Ministry

Peacemaking has had a busy year. In the fall we donated backpacks and school supplies to the food pantry. We donated to the Clinics in Uganda, Presbyterian Giving Catalog, International Rescue Committee and Church World Service.

Churchwide activities included a hike in Veterans Park in April, displays in Hartt room on hunger, refugees and global warming, and gun violence. We had a speaker on Native Gardening in October from the Northport Native Garden Initiative. We participated in Huntington Interfaith Climate week.

For Adult Education we showed a video series on “Dialogue on Refugees” and another on Earth Keeping, a Climate for Change, by Katherine Hayhoe.

We have been approved for continuing Earth Care Congregation status in February of 2023, and approval for 2024 just came in.

We meet on Sundays once a month after church, and welcome all who are interested in issues of Peacemaking.

Cathy Coleman, Chair
Peacemaking Ministry

Members: Greg Brown, Elizabeth Coleman, Pat Reeves and Audrey Van Deusen



Presbyterian Women Ministry (PW)

This ministry is a good place to gather with other ladies in the church. There is no membership or dues, all women are Presbyterian Women, and we sincerely hope you will join in with us in 2024 for book discussions, charitable outreach, and dining gatherings.

Over the past year we had many book talks, usually one every six weeks or so. The locations of the morning discussions are in our homes. All books are carefully decided upon, and everyone is welcome to enjoy the varying and interesting thoughts and opinions from others attending. The books are picked because of meaningful content, often historical fiction concerning unsung female heroines we may not have been aware of.

We are not able to have the multitude of fundraisers we once had, mainly because of Covid, but we distribute what funds we do have to some of the Presbyterian missions that help others around the world: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Giving Catalog, the Thank Offering, our Food Pantry, and the adoption of children in need at Christmas by way of the YDA.

In the upcoming year, we hope to see you at the PW Spring Tea Party Luncheon on May 4 th in the Hartt Room! A tea expert will be preparing for us and educating us on the history of High Tea.

Wishing for peace and a healthy 2024.

Sincerely,

Diana Montusi, Peggy Denniston, Leah Fink, Andrea Gladding

Presbyterian Women Income Statement - 2023

Balance	General Fund as of January 1, 2023	1,559.26
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Receipts

	Donations	600.00
	PW Thank Offering Collection	461.00
	PW Christmas Lunch	520.00
	New Covenant Acct Closure	3,137.56
Total Receipts		4,718.56

Disbursements

Mission		
	Presbyterian Disaster Assistance	300.00
	Presbyterian Giving Catalogue	80.00
	PW USA Thank Offering	500.00
	ELC Russian immigrant family	500.00
	YDA Christmas families	200.00 1,580.00
Home Church		
	Horizons Magazine	24.95
	Thanksgiving Table	81.42
	PW Christmas Lunch	229.00 335.37
Total Disbursements		1,915.37

Balance	General Fund as of December 31, 2023	4,362.45
	First National Bank of Long Island	

New Covenant Balanced Growth Fund

Acct # 1059080 Closed Nov 13, 2023	
Balance as of Dec 31, 2023	\$0.00

Respectfully submitted,
Peggy Denniston, PW Treasurer

Sanctuary Guild

The Sanctuary Guild provides the flowers to beautify the sanctuary at worship on Sunday mornings. Dedications from individuals in the congregation for loved ones, births, in celebration of someone or in memory of someone are always welcomed. We also take orders at the appropriate time for Easter flower dedications and Christmas poinsettias and wreath dedications which decorate the sanctuary. If you would like to join us, please contact Sharon Noonan or Sue Ebert. Our phone numbers are in the church directory. Thank you for your continued support.

Sharon Noonan, Chair



Stewardship Ministry

“Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these” JOHN 14:12. We have moved into the 2023 church year facing our normal operating costs and have mostly moved past the pandemic. Current pledge information shows that we have received pledges for \$300,536 for 2024. This compares to \$296,671 pledged by this time last year. Our goal is to reach \$378,000 in pledges to plan for 2024. We are 80% of the way to our goal. You can still make your pledge. The Finance Ministry faces great difficulty in preparing an annual budget when adequate pledges are not made and they have to deal with estimated income sources.

The per capita assessment this year is \$38.90 per member. We encourage everyone to add these expenses to their pledge giving to help defray the costs.

The Stewardship Ministry has been meeting to develop the pledge campaign and encourage Stewardship in the church. We recognize that continuing information regarding how the church is both receiving its revenues and how it is spending its money is not only meaningful but necessary.

Even though the church is open for worship, we continue to live stream the service for those that cannot attend in person. We need funds to keep the church building functional, keep the live-streaming equipment running, and to pay salaries. In addition, the missions of our congregation are ongoing, such as keeping the food pantry open and contributing towards disaster assistance. We urge each member of the congregation to accept his or her personal responsibility in providing the income necessary to permit our church to continue its work in our community as well as the world. Our ministry and mission calls for us to do this both joyfully and spiritually. We must all accept this responsibility seriously. All that we have is from God. This is a way for us to say "Thank You". We need to commit to the fact that giving to our church must be a part of our spiritual growth in response to the gift of Grace we receive from our God. Giving of our time, talent, gifts and service is a way to serve our Lord.

You can now make your donations by text (text “fpcnpt” to 73256 click the link and complete the gift) or online (<https://www.fpcnorthport.org/give>).

We urge all our fellow church members to increase their generosity in supporting our church's work by giving of your financial resources, time and talent. Consider participating in a group you haven't worked with before. Not only will you be assisting others, but you will feel in your heart the reward of giving time as well as giving money.

The Stewardship Ministry is not only involved in the yearly “estimate of giving” campaign, we also encourage giving of time, talent and money throughout the year. In addition, we try to have Minutes for Mission.

The Stewardship Ministry wishes to thank Karen Twitchell, Administrative Assistant and Kevin McKerr, Financial Assistant for their assistance in carrying out our work.

Members of the Stewardship Ministry in 2023 are Jane Hudson, Anita D’Amico Stambouly, Jeff Barasch, Jack Coleman and Rev. Rachel Vione (*ex officio*).

Jack Coleman, Chair

Sunday School

Our 2023/2024 Sunday School program resumed in September 2023 for children ages 4 to 10 years old. Ms. Janeen Crowley led our lessons for the first half of the year, teaching children's stories from the Old Testament, singing hymns, and re-creating Noah's Ark. Ms. Crowley has spent many hours preparing us for Jesus' arrival on Christmas Day. We are all very appreciative of everything she has done to support our Sunday School Program.

As we approached Christmas, Children Ministries coordinated the 2nd Annual Pop-Up Christmas Pageant on December 17th. The story *T'was the Evening Before Christmas* by Glenys Nellist was narrated by Melissa Beyer. Children and friends of the congregation were encouraged to arrive the morning before service and pick out a character from the story. Since there are no lines, just the narration, and carefully selected hymns, this is a rehearsal-free approach. We more than doubled the participation from the previous year to 14 children. We had representation of all characters in the story of Jesus' birth, many thanks to the young and older children that participated. A special thank you to the committee that helped choose hymns, set up the nativity scene, and organized the costumes, in particular Janeen Crowley, Rachel Vione, Melissa Beyer, Brenda Clark, Colleen Agovino, and John Kennedy.

In late January Sunday School resumed with lessons led by Melissa Beyer and her daughter Madeline Beyer. The lessons came from the New Testament with stories about Jesus's disciples and John the Baptist. They are using Holy Moly Year 2 Unit 3 to help guide lessons on the New Testament, format is easy to use and can be flexible depending on how many children attend and different age groups. Since attendance is still very light with an average of 2-4 children attending, this format seems to work best.

Our nursery continues to welcome children every Sunday, with an average of 5 children, ages 0 to 4 year old. The decision to move the nursery to the LL next to the Sunday School class has been positive from parents and caretakers. For our new parents, this nursery allows them to return to the sanctuary to listen and embrace God's word. Many thanks to the team that leads the nursery, Mary Simon and Joey Smalling, for their care and support they provide each Sunday morning.

Melissa Beyer (elder) (Sunday School Coordinator)



Weekday Nursery School is having an amazing school year with a total of 114 students enrolled for the 2023/2024 year. Our two 2's classes are filled with a total of 24 students; and because of such high demand when doing registration for the 2024/2025 school year, we were able to open up another 2's classroom to accommodate new families! Our 3's classes have a combined total of 51 students, providing 10 more spots with the opening of the third 3's classroom this year! The 4's have a total of 29; we did lose some to UPK but we gained 2 back because the families realized what they were missing out on! And our Kindersteps is full with 10 students.

We continue to have a different enrichment special each day for our 3s, 4s and Kindersteps, including Spanish, Art, Music and Movement, STEAM and Yoga. Our 2's have a Music and Movement special once a week.

To start off the school year, we held several different special events and traditions at Weekday to help enrich the educational experience as well for all our kiddos! Such events included our annual Back to School Fair for children and parents to meet their teachers and see their classrooms; Pumpkin Picking in our Weekday pumpkin patch on the playground; Halloween Parade & Show by Jester Jim; and Mad Science gave a presentation on Bubbles. We had a special visit from Mrs. Claus, all the way from the North Pole in December. Such a magical experience was had by all! In February, Great Whites Pediatric Dentistry came to talk to all the students about dental health awareness. Best of all, we took a school wide walking field trip to the Engeman Theater to see Frozen! We were fortunate to be able to invite all our families as we had the whole theater to Weekday!

February also brought a fun dance in our Gym - we shifted it from a Spring Fling to a Sweetheart Dance for all students and parents to attend to dance the night away with a DJ! We are holding an Art Show in the Spring to display all the amazing artwork created by Weekdays finest & most talented students! We will be celebrating Earth Day in April with our annual visit from Steppin' Out Ponies and Petting Zoo Farm in the Church parking lot. It is quite a sight to see our students and staff interacting with the bunnies, chickens, goats and even Muriel the alpaca. A Special Person's Tea will be held in May where students get to invite one person to attend this special tea party tradition!

To help raise money, Weekday held the Kidz Kreations fundraiser in October for parents to purchase their children's art work, as it turned into a cutting board, memo pad, bag and more, to give as gifts for the holidays. In addition, we are having our biggest fundraiser, the Read-a-Thon, coming up this month, to help support student reading! Students will secure sponsors from friends and family to help raise money and earn prizes along the way! The money raised will go towards the new 2 year old classroom.

After school enrichment clubs are also being held throughout the school year with 8 weeks of fun during each 40 minute class. We have fall, winter and spring sessions for all clubs. All our after school enrichment clubs are now done in house by all our wonderful Weekday teachers, providing Weekday with all the income. This allowed us to have a built in sub to have at school everyday! The clubs include Soccer Stars, Science Club, Hip Hop, Art Club and Little Dribblers taught by Mr. John. These clubs are a wonderful experience to add to the enrichment of the day.

Our Moving Up and Graduation ceremonies will be held in June. This tradition is such a special day for all graduates to celebrate themselves and all their accomplishments at Weekday with their families. We will also be holding our summer camp for 6 weeks immediately following the end of the school year. The teachers are working on planning the weekly themes and making every day special for our campers. Each Friday, we will also have a special visit from the Ice Cream Man!

Weekday is very grateful for the guidance of the Weekday Nursery School Board, as well as the continued support and encouragement from Pastor Rachel and the church members and we look forward to more wonderful years to come!

Michelle Micucci
Director

Worship Ministry

Our services are all live and on-line. This is course for the future as we continue to reach many more worshipers with this combination of worship choices.

Additional banners are being bought for ordinary time, as well as other significant parts of our calendar year. Older banners that don't coordinate with the new ones will be hung in the Hartt Room to further the season and the enjoyment of those banners. We now have about four or more banners hanging in the sanctuary each week.

We continue to streamline the service to make all parts flow together.

- Brenda's prologue will begin just before the service begins to gently get the congregation ready for worship at 10:00.

- Only two ushers will bring the 4 plates forward. They will place them on the communion table and return down the aisle. If the prayer of dedication has begun, then they will wait till it is completed.

- Ushers for communion are to walk down the aisle along with the servers and just wait at the end of the pews while the choir is being served.

- Pastor Rachel serves communion to the choir in the choir loft.

- The congregation will come forward and return to their seats with the glass cups as there will be no baskets for collection of cups.

- More members are participating as weekly liturgists.

Under the direction of Janeen Crowley & Melissa Beyer our Sunday school continues to meet. We are rebuilding starting with our youngest members. There now seems to be a weekly group that comes forward for the pastor's children's sermon each week. Pastor Rachel engages the children in creative and kid-friendly children's sermons each week focusing on the lessons they will learn in their Sunday school classes.

Special worship services were held celebrating the Baptism of the Lord, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Rambo Spiritual Enrichment Sunday, Pentecost, Youth Sunday, World Communion Sunday, All Saints' Sunday, as well as many baptisms.

Advent and Christmas

- The 4th Sunday in Advent and Christmas Eve both fell on the 24th of December. We had a regular 10:00 service as well as a Christmas Eve service. Both were very well attended with some coming to both.

- Thanks to the collaboration of Pastor Rachel, Director of Music & Choir Director Brenda Clark and Chancel Choir Director Colleen Agovino, our Advent and Christmas season was again a beautiful worship experience for our congregation. A special note to a stunning Lessons and Carols Service, and a beautiful Christmas pageant. A variety of styles with soloists greatly added to the celebration of Advent and the Christmas season.

- New candles and holders were purchased for the Christmas Eve candlelight service.

Vicki Field, Worship Chair

Music Department

2023 A Year of Music at FPC

2023 was FPC's first full year of Chancel Choir supported music since the pandemic. Our efforts to support worship through music were substantial during 2021 and 2022 including virtual choir rehearsals, recorded anthems, Warren family group singing, virtual piano and organ recordings for Zoom and You Tube presented services.

With God's grace we were able to return to regular choir rehearsal and weekly Chancel Choir singing through the leadership of Frances C. Roberts and Colleen Agovino. Their partnership in planning, preparation, and presentation of music is unparalleled.

Here are some of the titles presented this year: "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" – Bach, "Psalm 150" – C. Franck, "The Omnipotence" – F. Schubert, "Eternal Life" – O. Dungan, "Soon and Very Soon" – A. Crouch, "He Watching Over Israel" – F. Mendelssohn, "The Palms" -J. Faure, "Easter Hymn" – Mascagni, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" – Wilhousky, "Amazing Grace"- M. Hayes, "Chantons Noel" – M. Patterson

Our second consecutive "Lessons and Carols" service featured Advent and Christmas anthems, carols, folk songs and solos by our section leaders: Cynthia Corso, Barbara Fusco-Spera, Melissa Maravell, and Ken Kopicwicz. Our readers were terrific too! A big "thank you" goes to them.

The Chancel Choir was in full force as the choral segment of the Sunday School Christmas Pageant and completed a beautiful evening of seasonal favorites for the Pre-Service Music on Christmas Eve. We are grateful to have members who volunteer their service every year to make Christmas and other services special at FPC.

Instrumentals on harp (Susan Mann), guitar (Ken Gilbert and Matt Louis), tuba (Charlie Mann), and trumpet (John & Robert Blosser) added to the variety of piano and organ offertories throughout the year. My "About Today's Music" inserts in the bulletins have been well-received as helpful information about the music choices in the service.

Of particular note is the small ensembles of sopranos and altos (The Altotissimos) who provided selections during the summer and for Christmas Eve. It is wonderful to see the growth in confidence in our choral singers to make this step forward.

My other responsibilities include maintenance and tuning of the organ and pianos. Working with our wonderful music librarian, Joan Armet, to survey our collection, and provide data entry to "One License" to maintain copyright privileges for our online broadcasts are some of the ongoing tasks.

2024 brings thoughts of a "Tour of the Organ" for families and children - Continued outreach for summer and year long singers and musicians.

With God's help and your support – These things and so much more are possible.

Brenda A. Clark, CAGO, Ph.D.
Director of Music & Organist

Youth Ministry

The Youth Program is open to all young people in grades 6-12. Our goal is to provide opportunities to put our faith in action through service, mission and fellowship within our church community. In 2023 we did the following:

March '23 – Soles 4 Souls – Our youth sorted and bagged shoe donations that are repaired/refreshed and sent to various areas of the USA and the wider world.

September '23 - Kick-off BBQ – Youth participated in the all church BBQ with their families reconnecting with church friends.

October '23 – Pizza Lunch/Fellowship - Youth gathered in Fellowship Hall for a pizza lunch, gym games and assembled boxes for Operation Christmas Child church mission project.

November '23 – Box Packing for Operation Christmas Child - A multi-generational event where youth gathered with younger children of the church to finalize donations for Operation Christmas Child. The youth wrote notes of encouragement and care to be included in the boxes. Boxes were packed and sealed and prepared for shipping. In addition, Senior Highs spent some time in the Food Pantry sorting donations and making approximately 50 **Thanksgiving Bags for the ELC Food Pantry** clients.

December '23- Adopt A Family - We took a field trip to Target where youth shopped for gifts for 2 families for the ELC Adopt-A-Family program.

Our young people are a thoughtful, kind, enthusiastic group. They have incredible demands on their time. They bring joy to these experiences that allow them opportunities to connect with each other while serving members of our greater community.

~ Kim Gilbert

Youth Coordinator



Ministry Leadership

Clerk of Session – Marcia Mercer

Assistant Clerk – Cathy Coleman

All Church Nominating Committee – Susanne Haffner

Board of Deacons Co-Moderators – Jeannie O’Brien & Carolyn Louis

Corporation Officers

President – Marcia Mercer

Secretary – Dennis Crowley

Treasurer – Robert Spiller



Meaning of Membership in the Presbyterian Church (USA)*

Membership in the Church of Jesus Christ is a joy and a privilege. It is also a commitment to participate in Christ's mission. A faithful member bears witness to God's love and grace and promises to be involved responsibly in the ministry of Christ's Church. Such involvement includes:

- proclaiming the good news in word and deed,
- taking part in the common life and worship of a congregation,
- lifting one another up in prayer, mutual concern, and active support,
- studying Scripture and the issues of Christian faith and life,
- supporting the ministry of the church through the giving of money, time, and talents,
- demonstrating a new quality of life within and through the church,
- responding to God's activity in the world through service to others,
- living responsibly in the personal, family, vocational, political, cultural, and social relationships of life, working in the world for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment, participating in the governing responsibilities of the church, and
- reviewing and evaluating regularly the integrity of one's membership, and considering ways in which one's participation in the worship and service of the church may be increased and made more meaningful.

**From The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Part II. Book of Order, 2013-2015.*

2023 MINISTRY TEAMS

Finance

Dennis Crowley (chair) (elder)
Kevin McKerr (staff)
Bob Spiller (treasurer)
Rev. Rachel Vione (staff)

Memorial Garden

Peggy Denniston
Jane Hudson
Leslie Latchford
Krista Mellinger-DeRoma
Sharon Noonan

Memorial Fund

Jane Hudson

Personnel

Kim Gilbert (chair) (elder)
Diane Lobaugh
Marcia Mercer

Property & Maintenance

Pat Bell
Janeen Crowley
David Ofsharick

Stewardship

Jeff Barasch
Jack Coleman (chair)
Anita D'Amico Stambouly
Jane Hudson
Bob Spiller
Christine Spiller (elder)
Rev. Rachel Vione (staff)

Children's Ministry

Melissa Beyer (elder) (SS coordinator)
Marlena Dentrone
Christine Nastos Mitchel
David Ofsharick (elder)
Jeannie Reed
Rev. Rachel Vione (staff)

Youth Ministries

Kim Gilbert (chair) (elder)
Rev. Rachel Vione (staff)

Membership

Marilyn Barker
Peggy Denniston
Susanne Haffner (co-chair)
Barbara Healy
Carolyn Louis
Diana Montusi (co-chair)
Shelley Pierce
Libby Yoskowitz
Rev. Rachel Vione (staff)

Pioneers

Sharon Noonan (chair)

Presbyterian Women

Peggy Denniston
Leah Fink
Andrea Gladding
Diana Montusi (moderator)

Local & Global Missions

Marilyn Fox (chair)
Jane Hudson
Florence Ogg

Peacemaking

Greg Brown
Cathy Coleman (chair)
Anne Mateer
Pat Reeves
Audrey Van Deusen

Weekday Nursery School

Tina Berger
Meredith Byers
Amanda Carnesi
Jim Decker
Casey Lynch
Cindy Mies (elder)
Lauri Polio
Ali Troy
Kathleen Wansor
Michelle Micucci (director)
Rev. Rachel Vione (staff)

Sanctuary Guild

Sharon Noonan (chair)

Worship

Vicki Field (chair) (elder)
Barbara Healy
Sharon Noonan
Brenda Clark (staff)
Rev. Rachel Vione (staff)

All Church Nominating Committee

Janeen Crowley
Tim Gladding (deacon)
Anne Mateer
Sharon Noonan
Florence Ogg (elder)
Tiffany Thomas (deacon)

Ecumenical Lay Council

Vicki Field
Kim Gilbert
Shelley Pierce
Rev. Rachel Vione (staff)



Our Mission Statement

First Presbyterian Church of Northport is a welcoming community that invites all people to learn about and respond to the Word of God as found in the Old and New Testaments.

Our mission is to be shaped by, proclaim, and live out the good news of Jesus Christ. We are committed to supporting the spiritual development of our congregation by feeding the spiritually and physically hungry, caring for the sick and lonely, nurturing children, and reaching out to those in need in our local and global communities.