

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF STAUNTON, VA
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023**



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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAUNTON
FEBRUARY 25, 2024

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Current Officers for 2024

Elders, Class of 2024

Sam Clem,
 Discipleship/Congregational
 Life
 Mary Meade, Worship
 Barbara
 Richardson,
 Congregational Life

Elders, Class of 2025

Stephany Morgan, Administration
 /Missions & Outreach
 Bret Ritchie, Administration
 Hugh Sproul, Property

Elders, Class of 2026

Susie Lendermon,
 Missions & Outreach
 Martha Tillen, Worship

Staff

Rev Jeff Binder, Interim Pastor
 Dr. Renee Huff, Minister of Music
 Heidi Marsh, Office Manager

Treasurers

Scott Wilson
 Amanda Avery
Clerk: Martha Tillen

Trustees

Stephany Morgan, Class of 2025
 Sharon Driscoll, Class of 2026
 Robert Mackay, Class of 2026

*In Loving Memory of Members Who
Joined the Church Triumphant in 2023:*

*Elizabeth Gilbert
Linda Mattox
Hilda Higgs
Rosalind Holt*
Doris Dixon*
Bernice Price
Sandy Kirtley**

**Ordained and installed as Ruling Elder*



2023 Church Statistical Report



Church First PIN 23219
 Presbytery Shenandoah
 Address 100 E Frederick St, Staunton, VA 24401
 Phone 540-886-0704 Fax 540-886-0705
 Email stauntonfirst@gmail.com
 Web Site www.1stpres-staunton.org

Membership			
Prior Active Members	124	Adjusted membership	124
Gains		Losses	
Certificate	0	Certificate	1
Youth Professions	0	Deaths	7
Professions & Reaffirmations	0	Deleted for any Other Reason	3
Total Gains	0	Total Losses	11
Total Ending Active Members	113		

Baptisms		Average Weekly Worship Attendance	28
Presented by Others	1	Friends of the Congregation	5
At Confirmation	0	Ruling Elders on Session	9
All Other	0	Do you have Deacons?	No

Age Distribution of Active Members		People with Disabilities	
17 & Under	0	Hearing impairment	2
18 - 25	14	Sight impairment	1
26 - 40	17	Mobility impairment	11
41 - 55	24	Other impairment	0
56 - 70	34		
Over 70	24	Gender Distribution	
Total Age Distribution	113	Women	71
		Men	42
		Non-Binary	0

Youth in Congregation			
Age 4 and under	0	Middle School (6th – 8th grade)	0
Elementary School (K-5th grade)	0	High School (9th – 12th grade)	0
		Total Youth	0

Racial Ethnic			
Asian/Pacific Islander/South Asian	0	Native American/Alaska Native/Indigenous	0
Black/African American/African	1	White	112
Middle Eastern/North African	0	Multiracial	0
Hispanic/Latino-a	0		
		Total Racial Ethnic	113

Budgeted Income	203,960		
Budgeted Expense	257,171		

Receipts			
Regular Contributions	223,238	Bequests	100,000
Capital Building Fund	15,125	Other Income	31,520
Investment Income	8,738	Subsidy or Aid	

Expenditures			
Local Program	233,671	Investment Expenditures	
Local Mission	4,052	Per Capita Apprt	
Capital Expenditures	132,761	Other Mission	

Rev. Jeff Binder, Interim Pastor

Greetings in the name of Christ Jesus,

I have the privilege of writing the pastoral update for our 2023 Annual Report. As we have heard reiterated throughout these past four years now, we all have experienced a variety of challenges and surprises with the pandemic – churches and institutions around the globe continue to feel the effects of the societal shifts during this time. In 2022 Pastor Karen announced her departure from First Presbyterian. This congregation continued in ministry and mission for over a year without a pastor through the able efforts of congregational leadership in partnership with the presbytery. I was able to join you all in July of this past year; Session and church leaders continuing to move forward despite setbacks and unforeseen circumstances. Through it all, First Presbyterian persevered.



I am encouraged by the spirit and dedication of this congregation to continue to move forward time and time again during these transitional times. Even with such uncertainties, we are reminded of one thing that is certain: Christ's church is always alive, always evolving, always bringing about God's kingdom. First Presbyterian has never been about one person, one program, or even one building. We are a living witness of God's love and grace in the world, and our very lives give witness to this truth time and time again.

In the coming pages, you will read about some wonderful things that have happened within the ministries and programs of this church in 2023. Our members and staff have been creative, persistent, and faithful time and time again. This is a reason to celebrate.

We also have reason to celebrate and to be excited for the year to come. Within this next year this congregation and leadership will honestly assess and discuss how we see God calling us as a congregation in the days to come. What an exciting time it is as we discern God's vision for First Presbyterian together!

Finally, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for this congregation as I serve as your Interim Pastor. While being intentionally temporary, my calling to walk alongside you during this transitional moment is one that brings great joy and peace to me personally and professionally. May we continue to give thanks to God for the blessings of 2023, and the opportunities of 2024!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Pastor Jeff

Interim Report: Six Month Observations (and follow-up from three-month report) Rev. Jeff Binder

January 9, 2024

Introduction

The six-month mark seems like a natural time to move beyond our initial observations and assessment to that of envisioning the future for First Presbyterian. Over the past six months we have achieved great things by re-instilling trust among congregants and leadership, offering quality worship experiences, addressing administrative needs and practices, and offering a sustainable, stable pastoral presence.

This new year will begin with a formal congregational assessment using the “Conversations” material offered by *Holy Cow!* consulting. Following this assessment, I will facilitate a third workshop for the congregation that will introduce possible future ministry options for smaller congregations today.

First Presbyterian’s current realities are becoming more apparent. We are no longer living in the past from memories of “the good old days.” We are no longer operating from the instability and anxiety of pandemic life of the past four years, or even from the more recent pastoral transition. This is an appropriate time for this church to begin to envision its future, and most importantly, to listen for God’s voice within such a process.

Property/Facility

The church campus continues to serve as a source of identity, nostalgia, inspiration, and responsibility for this congregation. One interesting observation is that the buildings become “common place” after six months of ministry. I no longer look at the crumbling walls with the same urgency I initially had. I don’t see the emptiness of the sanctuary I did upon my first time preaching there. In some ways this is a good thing; it’s a reminder that the building has “staying power” for years to come – it’s not going to fall down tomorrow! With another perspective, however, it’s a reminder that many members of First Presbyterian have become de-sensitized to the issues of the building, both cosmetically and functionally.

Instead of noting the current building issues (these are discussed at most monthly session meetings), I offer some rhetorical questions as First Presbyterian moves ahead:

1. What role does this campus play in the mission of First Presbyterian?
2. If the church building was no longer here tomorrow, what would be missed the most?
3. If you could envision a brand-new church to build, what would it look like?

Worship

A few people have asked the question, “What about us going back to the chapel for Sunday worship?” That’s a fair question, given the size of the current congregation and active worshipping attendance (about 25 worshippers at this time).

There are pros and cons, of course, to worshipping in the chapel. I typically respond to such a question with a follow-up question that addresses the elephant in the room: “What do you do with the sanctuary?”

Worshipping in the sanctuary also has its pros and cons.

Both spaces are great options for Sunday worship, but is that what worship is all about? I am inclined to remember the very first Christians, and how they did not let a physical space define their expectations for worship life. And so, I ponder for First Presbyterian today as well:

1. What compels us to worship on Sundays?
2. How do you perceive a first-time visitor experiences worship at First Presbyterian?
3. How might God be calling First to re-imagine worship moving forward?

Session

We have a new class of two elders joining us on Session this year. One observation is that this congregation was unable to fill all three slots this year, and that those rotating off did not want to entertain the idea of returning in this moment. On top of this, the Clerk of Session has also resigned this year. Suffice it to say, there are several roles to fill, and not many volunteers stepping forward. Session will also be shaping the conversation for congregational decisions in the year to come as well, which is especially pertinent during an interim period. I am hopeful that the trust we have been establishing over the past six months will pay off with productive and loving ministry and mission in the months ahead.

My hope for Session moving forward is that we continue to develop our emotional intelligence and teamwork as a group by continuing with active listening, inviting honest communication, and making sure that participants feel heard, safe, and valued. The day to day work and decisions will always be part of the life of Session, but I am inspired by how this group continues to develop more as a team in the days to come.

Congregational Care

Congregational care continues to be a priority for an aging congregation. Several members are now homebound, and others have stepped away during the most recent pandemic and conflict. How is the church meeting their needs for community? While I appreciate making pastoral visits, my role as an interim is more about empowering other church members to meet some of these needs as we strive to understand the collective call to ministry as the church. How are we documenting the care that we are making so that no one is falling through the cracks?

The Congregational Life committee and Presbyterian Women both serve as positive sources of support for this needed ministry.

Staffing

A larger question of staffing needs will take place as this church make plans for the future. While the staff here perform well and are appreciated for their efforts, the question remains as to the efficacy of the current structure in the days ahead. Is a full-time pastor still needed? How about other staff?

Annual reviews have taken place for Heidi and Renee, both of which were celebrated, and both appreciative of the Session support. I would like to have a six-month review, as we as a Session also need to discern the future of my role as your interim minister. Some questions to ponder regarding staff:

1. Does the current staff structure reflect the ministry/mission needs of the church?
2. How might the church best support the staff moving forward?
3. Is the Personnel budget appropriate for this church?

Finance & Stewardship

When the Administration committee met in September, it was agreed to move forward with a stewardship campaign and a budgeting process. Both of these processes were completed in 2023, with an understanding that ongoing work in both areas will continue to be addressed throughout the year. While a stewardship campaign is not the only indicator of congregational vitality, it does present a good picture of activity, commitment, and vision for the future.

Session will continue to receive monthly financial reports from the treasurer(s). However, the larger questions of financial sustainability remain related to the ministry of the church:

1. How much deficit within the operating budget is acceptable for this Session?
2. How will Session prepare for the next unexpected expense related to property maintenance?
3. How can the endowment be used as a tool for ministry and mission moving forward?

Mission & Outreach

Mission continues to energize congregations near and far. In fact, most vital congregations have a good understanding of missional partnerships and participation as the central part of their identity.

Stephany has been initiating several mission opportunities over the past year, although response from membership has been varied. Mission is the central component to First Presbyterian realizing a dynamic future ahead.

1. What do our neighbors need from the church?
2. How does First Presbyterian understand its missional identity today?
3. How will this church invite and equip others who are not currently actively leading to take on future leadership in the church?

Presbytery

Session will continue to work with the presbytery within the "Conversations" assessment in the coming months. This assessment will not provide answers for "what to do next," but it will provide some intelligible information on the current realities of the congregation. Beyond our own internal conversation on future options for this congregation, my hope is that we can coordinate a time with other local congregations of similar circumstance, along with the presbytery, to discuss future options together.

Moving forward:

Following the "Conversations" assessment, we are invited to begin to make plans to move forward as a congregation. Some of the conversations that will need to take place include decisions that will not be unanimous or easy. Other decisions will create fertile ground for new days of ministry and mission ahead. In all of it, we need to remind ourselves and one another that this is a practice of faith for us as people of faith. May we be courageous, grace-filled, and Spirit-led in the months to come.

In Christ,



Pastor Jeff

First Presbyterian Church
Profit & Loss
 January through December 2023

	Jan - Dec 23
Income	
001 · Pledged Operating Fund \$115060	124,240.00
003 · Unpledged Offerings \$34000	
003A · 4th Sunday Loose Plate	395.00
003 · Unpledged Offerings \$34000 - Other	28,409.31
Total 003 · Unpledged Offerings \$34000	28,804.31
04 · Rental Income \$25400	
Rental Income - Other	27,320.00
004 · Rental Income \$25400 - Other	4,200.00
Total 004 · Rental Income \$25400	31,520.00
05 · Memorial Fund \$500	6,724.96
06 · Capital Improvements Income	15,125.00
007 · Trust Income \$25000	8,737.80
08 · Offerings-Designated Miss \$2000	2,673.00
09 · Unpledged Designated Fund \$2000	129,275.49
Total Income	347,100.56
Gross Profit	347,100.56
Expense	
1000 · ADMINISTRATION \$5850	
1100 · Computer Expenses	524.24
1200 · Office Machine Maintenance	148.47
1300 · Office Supplies	3,263.19
1400 · Postage and Delivery	975.00
1600 · Advertising and Promotion	148.50
1700 · Committee and Session	664.50
Total 1000 · ADMINISTRATION \$5850	5,723.90
2000 · BUILDING AND PROPERTY \$78300	
2100 · FACILITY MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR	
2110 · Building & Maintenance Supplies	4,872.21
2120 · Maintenance and Repairs	11,266.96
2130 · Major Repairs	18,093.95
2155 · Pest Services	219.00
2150 · Insurance Expense	19,654.75
Total 2100 · FACILITY MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR	54,106.87
2500 · UTILITIES	
2510 · Electricity	12,390.39
2520 · Natural Gas	16,618.08
2530 · Telecommunications	4,932.24
2540 · Water-Sewer-Trash	3,761.21
Total 2500 · UTILITIES	37,701.92
Total 2000 · BUILDING AND PROPERTY \$78300	91,808.79
4000 · CONGREGATIONAL LIFE \$3000	871.76
5000 · MISSION AND OUTREACH \$5000	4,051.83

First Presbyterian Church
Profit & Loss
 January through December 2023

	Jan - Dec 23
6000 · PERSONNEL EXPENSES	
6200 · Office Manager \$44099	
6216 · Disability Insurance	-93.12
6210 · Office Manager Salary	26,160.96
6211 · Benefit - Health Insurance	14,037.72
6212 · Benefit - Pension	3,548.41
6213 · Benefit - Life Insurance	378.95
6214 · Benefit - Dental Insurance	-0.12
6215 · Vision	-0.12
	44,032.68
Total 6200 · Office Manager \$44099	
6500 · Music Staff Salaries	
6520 · Chior Director Salary \$16092	16,092.00
	16,092.00
Total 6500 · Music Staff Salaries	
6870 · SUBCONTRACTORS	
6871 · Bookkeeping Expense \$4000	3,860.00
6873 · Facility Cleaning \$8000	9,429.23
	13,289.23
Total 6870 · SUBCONTRACTORS	
6980 · Payroll Expenses \$5000	5,000.04
6990 · Workman's Comp Insurance \$430	561.25
	5,561.29
Total 6000 · PERSONNEL EXPENSES	78,975.20
7000 · TERMS OF CALL \$62750	
7100A · Effective Salary	
Pastor Salary	20,000.04
Housing Allowance	12,499.92
Dental Insurance	222.78
	32,722.74
Total 7100A · Effective Salary	
71008 · Reimbursable Expenses	
Continuing Education	150.00
Professional Fees	339.10
Travel Expenses	616.26
7100B · Reimbursable Expenses - Other	1,139.53
	2,244.89
Total 7100B · Reimbursable Expenses	
7100C · BENEFITS	
7700 · Social Security Compensation	3,000.00
7110 · Health Insurance	11,599.98
7120 · Pension	3,400.02
7130 · Life Insurance	400.02
7135 · Temporary Disability	199.98
7150 · Fidelity Annuity	6,250.00
	24,850.00
Total 7100C · BENEFITS	
Total 7000 · TERMS OF CALL \$62750	59,817.63
8000 · WORSHIP \$7200	
8400 · SUBCONTRACTORS	
8484 · Substitute Pastors	3,800.00
8410 · Substitute Organist	100.00
8420 · Guest Musicians	225.00
8430 · Instrument Maintenance	1,303.03
	5,428.03
Total 8400 · SUBCONTRACTORS	
8000 · WORSHIP \$7200 - Other	2,082.47
	2,082.47
Total 8000 · WORSHIP \$7200	7,510.50

First Presbyterian Church
Profit & Loss
January through December 2023

	Jan - Dec 23
9000 · Presbytery \$6800	7,055.00
9700 · Reconciliation Discrepancies	0.02
Total Expense	255,814.63
Net Income	91,285.93

First Presbyterian Church Account Balances - December 2023

Restricted	Accounts	As of December 30, 2023		
	General Memorial	\$	77,214	Restricted for Worship
	Martha Grafton	\$	4,731	Restricted for Worship
	Thomas & Martha Grafton	\$	34,728	Restricted for Worship
	Men's Brotherhood - Mission		CLOSED OCT 24 2023	Restricted for M & O
	Men's Brotherhood - Property		CLOSED OCT 24 2023	Restricted for Property
	Sub- Total Restricted	\$	116,673	
Unrestricted				
	Men's Brotherhood - General		CLOSED OCT 24 2023	
	Money Market -HVAC Funds		CLOSED Dec 2023	
	Money Market-Missions		CLOSED DEC 2023	
	CD/Atlantic Union/3 mo (10%)	\$	7,100	
	CD/Atlantic Union/7 mo (40%)	\$	28,750	
	CD/Atlantic Union/13 mo (50%)	\$	35,900	
	Roper	\$	248,939	
	Silling	\$	53,486	
	General Endowment	\$	904,026	
	Checking	\$	24,326	
	Sub-Total Unrestricted	\$	1,302,527	
	Grand Total	\$	1,419,199	

2024 BUDGET (approved on Dec. 12, 2023)					
INCOME	2024	2023 YTD	2023 Budget	2022	Comments
PLEDGED	\$ 165,000.00	\$ 124,240.00	\$ 115,060.00	\$ 138,540.00	*2024 pledges total \$144,670
RENTAL	\$ 37,500.00	\$ 31,520.00	\$ 25,400.00		
UNPLEDGED	\$ 28,750.00	\$ 28,804.31	\$ 34,000.00		
MEMORIAL FUND	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 6,724.96	\$ 500.00		
TRUST INCOME		\$ 8,737.80	\$ 25,000.00		
OFFERINGS M&O, MISC.		\$ 2,673.00	\$ 4,000.00		
UNPLEDGED DESIGNATED FUND		\$ 129,275.49			*accounting change in 2023
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 235,250.00	\$ 347,100.56	\$ 203,960.00		
EXPENSES					
PERSONNEL					
OFFICE MANAGER					
Salary	\$ 26,998.00		\$ 26,161.00		
Benefits	\$ 19,148.00		\$ 17,938.00		
MUSIC DIRECTOR					
Salary	\$ 16,607.00		\$ 16,092.00		
INTERIM PASTOR TOC					
Effective Salary	\$ 80,000.00		\$ 40,000.00		
Reimbursable Expenses	\$ 7,000.00		\$ 3,500.00		
Social Security	\$ 6,000.00				
Benefits	\$ 31,700.00		\$ 19,250.00		
SUBCONTRACTORS					
Maintenance/Janitorial	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,080.00	\$ 8,000.00		
Bookkeeping	\$ 4,000.00		\$ 4,000.00		
OTHER					
Payroll	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,583.00	\$ 5,000.00		
Workman's Comp	\$ 430.00	\$ 428.00	\$ 430.00		
MINISTRIES					
Administration	\$ 6,350.00	\$ 5,067.00	\$ 5,850.00		
Building/Property	\$ 78,300.00	\$ 77,684.00	\$ 78,300.00		
Congregational Life	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 490.00	\$ 3,000.00		
Discipleship	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00		
Mission/Outreach	\$ 3,643.00	\$ 3,182.00	\$ 5,000.00		
Worship	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 6,541.00	\$ 7,200.00		
PRESBYTERY					
	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 7,055.00	\$ 6,800.00		
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 305,676.00	\$ 219,359.00	\$ 247,021.00		
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 235,250.00		\$ 203,960.00		
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 305,676.00		\$ 247,021.00		
ENDOWMENT DRAW	-70426		-43061		

Treasurer's Report 2023

First, we want to thank our "Enablers". These are the special people in our church that help your treasurers perform their functions. Our previous treasurers, Catty Clem and Deborah Norville, kept a steady hand during some challenging times for our church. Rhonda Ritchie, in her role of bookkeeper and payroll specialist, publishes the account-by-account reports we use to keep track of the financial position of our church. Pastor Jeff, for his leadership as Interim Pastor and his focus on re-stabilizing our church and supporting your present Treasurers in performing their financial responsibilities. Lastly, and most importantly, our Office Manager, Heidi Marsh, as she implements the many facets of her job with particular skill while maintaining her friendly and helpful demeanor.

The Treasurers main function is to collect and deposit monies, sign all checks on behalf of the church, and to give Session some management reports which allow them to monitor the health of the church and to help in guiding future actions.

Our Income Statement shows how the church performed in the areas of income and expense. Our church received income of \$347,100.56 and had expenses of \$255,814.63 for a total Net Income of \$91,285.93. Of the total income, \$124,240 came in as the result of pledges. The rest of the income is proceeds from rent, unpledged offerings, trust income and specific bequests. That income was unusual as proceeds from Trusts and Estate donations supplemented our income. Our expenses are largely driven by both property expenses in support of our buildings, and from payroll expenses. Both categories were unusual as we replaced our A/C system in the sanctuary (over \$100,000) and our payroll expense only reflected a partial year of Pastor as Interim. These two factors will not repeat themselves in 2024.

Our Balance Sheet shows the longer-term financial position of our church as it reveals total assets and liabilities. It includes such things as cash on hand, endowment and memorial funds as well as fixed assets such as our new A/C installation. Our Total Assets as of December 31 are \$1,598,950.54. This compares with assets of \$1,165,238.13 in 2022.

Your treasurers believe we are at an inflexion point in the life of our church. While we still have the financial resources to make a difference in our community and world, the simple fact of our diminishing congregational giving and the continued draw of building maintenance on our expenses call for some inspired leadership from your Session and a renewed push from our congregation for increased financial and volunteer support. The next several years will reveal the choices we make.

Amanda Avery and Scott Wilson
Treasurers

Clerk of Session Report

I think that it's safe to say that the work of Session is a team sport, so I'd like to take a minute to recognize last year's team.

Thanks to Rev. James Smith, Rev. Seth Normington, Mary Kay Adams and Beth Smith of the Administration Commission for their help during the first half of the year.

Thanks to the Session members who served in 2023. They have met on the second Tuesday each month and worked to keep us moving forward. I will let them share what their specific committees have been working on, but let's thank them specifically for their willingness to serve on Session, to chair committees and the work they have done. Amanda Avery, Mary Meade, Ron Lowman, Barbara Richardson, Sam Clem, Stephany Morgan, Bret Richie, and Hugh Sproul.

Special thanks to Amanda Avery. Amanda has completed her term on Session. We are grateful for her tireless efforts to make sure the pulpit was filled and keep up with all the details of pulling off a worship service every Sunday. If you attended worship online or in person last year, you have Amanda to thank. Special thanks to Ron Lowman. Ron has completed his term on Session. We are grateful for all he brought to improving our building and grounds and all the problem solving to care for this church. You can thank Ron for keeping the roof over our head, the heat in the winter and the AC in the summer.

Thank you to Scott Wilson and Amanda Avery for serving as Treasurers. Session has especially appreciated a monthly financial update.

Thanks to Stephany Morgan and Jenny Dixon for serving as our Trustees.

Special thanks to Jenny Dixon. Jenny has completed her term as Trustee. Thank you for serving.

Thanks to Heidi for printing out and emailing all our meeting paperwork. We also appreciate your grace when reports weren't quite on time.

Rev. Jeff Binder, we thank you for joining us as our Interim Pastor. We are grateful for your role as moderator in the Session meetings. We appreciate your guidance, your perspective, your attention to detail and your wisdom.

- Paige Kullman

Music Director's Report 2023

At the beginning of the year we had an adjustment period when Otto, our Organist and technical resource guy, left.

The use of the chapel for services was well-received. One of the Speakers on the wall was re-connected which helped those hear in the Chapel.

Many thanks should go to Scott Wilson, Gary Havens and Robert Richardson who helped out with singing, playing piano and percussion, in the program early on.

Recording in the Chapel was uploaded to the Internet / Facebook via personal Cell-phone by Sam Clem or Renee Huff. Thanks to our new Interim Pastor, Jeff Binder, for allowing us to use his Camera Stand for recording.

After several Sundays the actual Microphone from the Pulpit in the Sanctuary was brought over and used in the Chapel for an easier listening experience.

Once the congregation moved to the Sanctuary the issue of Sound clarity, organ function, and recording/uploading processes began.

Many Thanks should be given to Sam Clem who has had to continually troubleshoot and run the Sound system / online streaming platform each Sunday.

- The Magewell recording device in the Sanctuary is what allows us to connect the in-house camera video-stream directly to the Church's FaceBook page. The challenge is that FaceBook updates and changes their upload coding requirements (establishing new hoops to jump through) for no rhyme or reason that can be detected, causing the streaming process to malfunction. Sam's expertise and many years of computer savvy have indeed worked to the church's advantage. Many months of 2023 were a challenge to properly set-up - as protocols and permissions were elusive and very intricate to determine. Throughout the year, there was always the possibility that the permissions would reset every Sunday, so it was never known would have to be done that day. Sam arrived more than an hour before the service, often through the week, to figure out what was necessary before recording every Sunday!

Annual License w/Podcasting, Category B average weekly attendance 26 to 100 was renewed. # A-735647 licensed for 1st Presbyterian Church of Staunton, VA

- CONCERNS FROM CONGREGATION reported- Sound quality issues were discussed. Congregants noticed a lack of clarity and couldn't hear during the service. The impaired quality might be helped by converting the old desktop computer in the balcony (that Otto gave us), vs. a newer laptop for processing speeds.
- Discussions were had about our internal sound system quality issue due the lack of our Overhead Speaker in the Sanctuary being in place. Communication with Otto Pebworth was required to proceed.

In the Fall, we are happy to report the the Handbell Choir started back up again after a long absence, and performed beautifully during the holidays.

Annual Evaluations occurred in October and some planning was done for getting the main speaker put in place (ceiling of Sanctuary) sometime next year. We will coordinate with Otto for connections.

A decision was made to purchase a headset microphone for the pastor. If we considered an all-in one-kit/ combo units (receiver, bodypack and headset) they begin around \$700.00 on sale. Otherwise, they ranged from \$700 to \$3,000! As we already had the receiver, we thought we could use that and pair a new bodypack/headset to it. Well, turns out lots of research later, there are four different types of body packs and microphones that can work for our receiver. The ONE perfect match body-pack is no longer being made - so all of the options left were tricky. We bought these (below) and Sam cleverly worked with the sales rep and figured out how to pair them in-house. Ask Sam for the whole delightful story.

- LizPltRdT4Tan LIZ Plat Omni HS Mic, Shure TA4F, Tan - 220.00
- BLX1-J11 BLX Wls Bodypack TXM, J11- 139.00

Several soloists agreed to participate in the holiday music and it is felt that the music program is slowly and steadily reinventing itself. We are hopeful to see 2024 arrive! Both the Handbell and Adult Choirs will begin then

Both Gary Havens and Dr. Huff will be attending the Massanutten “*Ringing in The Springs*” Handbell Retreat February 16th – 18th, 2024. We believe that new ideas and experiences will come from this participation. I look forward to 2024 and feel a new, fresh excitement about the new year.

Blessings to All,

Dr. Renee Huff

Director of Music

1st Presbyterian Church of Staunton, VA

Office Manager's Report 2023

2023 was a year in contrasts. It was out of the ordinary as it began without a pastor - and ended with our Interim Pastor, the Rev. Jeff Binder. Since Jeff started, I've seen a gradual increase in church life, activities, and morale. I believe that church leadership has much to do with these positive changes.

The work continued as usual in the office in 2023, as pulpit supply was provided by Worship, bulletins and newsletters were created, bills were paid, and records were maintained and updated. I continued to work with community members for concerts and events, and outside contractors.

I endeavored to communicate with Session in anticipation of upcoming events, questions, and the like. Without a pastor until July 2023, much anticipation, organization, and general vigilance was required to keep the wheels in motion. The goal was to seamlessly perform duties and keep things under control.

Initiative and communication were crucial in balancing enforcement of church policies while maintaining diplomacy with strength and consistency and maintaining discretion and professionalism at all times.

Before Pastor Jeff's arrival, preparations were made to make his transition to our church as seamless as possible (necessary paperwork, setting up voicemail and the like, and providing instructions where needed). I hope this was helpful!

Publicity for upcoming events and services became a priority. When the idea of a new pantry was introduced, I promoted this new service and coined the term "Home Goods Community Pantry". Also created, posted and mailed flyers for various church events.

I continued to maintain the church website, updating it as I became aware of events. I communicated with web developers as needed.

In addition to normal, ongoing bookkeeping duties, there was additional activity as a new HVAC system was installed, a capital campaign was initiated, and grants and donations were received. A large contribution was made to our church which was put in the endowment fund, and the Men's Brotherhood account was converted to a money market account, and then converted to three separate CDs.

Membership numbers were reviewed and updated.

Heifetz started renting in Potter.

As with many rental arrangements, some late payments had to be pursued through the office. These issues were resolved.

I'm greatly encouraged by the enthusiasm of church members to start over and move ahead with new and current programs. It's very encouraging to see life, love, healing, and enthusiasm in our church again. It's great for morale in the office and throughout our church.

2024 is starting off strong, and I look forward to even more growth and activity this year. Many thanks to all who volunteered and helped in the office, including Scott Wilson, Fay Knicley, Amanda Avery, and Stephany Morgan.

- Heidi Marsh

Worship Committee Report 2023

For the first months of 2023 we continued with the excellent guest preachers Bronwen Boswell, Karen Edwards, Amy Fetterman, Melissa Harmon, Janet Onnie, and Mark Wilson and Elder Mary Meade.

On July 2nd the Rev. Jeff Binder preached his first sermon as our new Interim Pastor. This was a communion service which also marked the return of our traditional communion bread and juice, ending the months of pre-packaged communion cups and tiny pieces of bread. Rev. Binder now bakes the large loaf that is broken during the service.

He also began a different script for the liturgists that join him every week. After a welcome and announcements from Pastor Jeff, the liturgist reads the Words of Praise, the Opening Prayer, the Assurance of God's Grace, and the Passing of the Peace. Then the liturgist sits back down in the congregation, and Pastor Jeff conducts the rest of the service on his own. This has been a welcome change, easier on the liturgist and a more concentrated focus on Pastor Jeff's reading of the scripture passage and his message.

The Worship committee consists of myself and Mary Meade as co-chairs and Renee Huff as the music director. There are many people from the congregation who contribute to our worship services. Besides Renee's talents on the piano, organ, and voice are Gary Havens, our volunteer organist and pianist, Robert Richardson on drums, the Pick-Up Choir (Dick Cox, Emma DuPont, Jackie Eakin, Gary Havens, Eddie Homes, Mary Meade, and Scott Wilson), and the Handbell Choir (Catty Clem, Emma DuPont, Gary Havens, Renee Huff, Susie Lendermon, Robert Richardson, and Ann Weiland). Our ushers have been led by Barbara Richardson, and helped by Amanda Avery, Alice Herbst, Robert Richardson, Scott Wilson, and Sharon Wilson. Last, but not at all least, is the AV Crew who has kept our streaming portion of the service going: Sam Clem, Renee Huff, and Robert Richardson.

Mary and I have decorated the sanctuary at Easter and Christmas with flowers from Honey Bee's Florist and poinsettias from Milmont's nursery. The Christmas decorations were put up by Charlie Trumbo, Pastor Jeff, Amanda Avery, Dick and Sherry Cox, Molly Cox, Susie and Chuck Lendermon, Sue Ann McAllister, Mary Meade, Barbara Richardson, Martha Tillen, and Scott and Sharon Wilson.

The Worship committee in 2024 will continue troubleshooting our streaming/on-line experience, improving the sound quality in the sanctuary, and including the choirs more regularly.

Our staff has had an incredible year and deserve particular thanks. Heidi and Renee worked very hard during the first part of the year with all the various pastors, Renee helped get the AV set up, and Charlie helped everywhere when there were special services and guest musical groups.

- Amanda Avery

Mission and Outreach Report 2023

First Presbyterian in work and service in community and beyond.

New Outreach Efforts in 2023

Home Goods Pantry: Opened July 2023

Pantry was opened to provide paper, cleaning supplies, baby and hygiene products one day each month. We have served a total of 43 individuals and families in the six months we have been opened.

Volunteers: Donna Goble, Paul Goble, Sue Ann McAllister, Sharon Wilson, Stephany Morgan

Assistance for an Afghan family living in Staunton: Initiated assistance for an Afghan family in March 2023, along with PW. Congregational donations provided, rent supplemented, home goods and baby supplies provided.

Volunteers: Donna and Paul Goble

Church World Service sponsored School Kits (PW fulfilled in prior years): 18 School Kits were filled and delivered.

Volunteers: Sue Ann McAllister, Stephany Morgan

Outreach to MBU students: Joint effort between First Presbyterian and Pastor of Christ United Methodist Church, with assistance of MBU Chaplain to outreach to students. Our volunteer coordinators, Mary Meade and Martha Tillen, attempted to reach out to students in different ways, we have had no response. Our efforts will continue.

WARM Cold Weather Shelter Program: Waynesboro Area Relief Ministry (WARM) expanded its cold weather shelter program into Staunton this year. In Sept./Oct. First Presbyterian and Second Presbyterian joined together to invite other local churches to each provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner for one day while the WARM guests were residing at Expo, the week of March 18 - 25, 2024. We have been successful in making that happen. First Presbyterian will provide the Sunday evening meal, March 24th, and Monday, March 25th, breakfast and lunch.

Churches involved: Olivet Presbyterian, Staunton Church of the Brethren, Salvation Army, Arbor Hill Church of the Brethren, Second Presbyterian, First Presbyterian (Covenant Presbyterian joined the effort in January, 2024)

Baja Mission: We assisted the Baja Mission team, a Shenandoah Presbytery supported mission, in their fund raising effort to support their 2024 mission trip to Baja. Congregational member purchased Mums, which were beautiful, that the team was selling to raise necessary funds for their next mission trip.

Volunteers: All who spread the word and/or purchased a potted mum.

Sacks of Love: In December, we received an invitation from Third Presbyterian to join with a team from their church to help fill lunch bags for elementary students to take home. This is a program started by First Baptist Church a number of years ago and it involves one evening of about 1 ½ hours preparing food for about 100 students. . The actual evening of service is in February, 2024.

Volunteers: Sharon Wilson, Scott Wilson, Barbara Richardson, Susie Baker, , Sue Ann McAllister, Pastor Jeff.

Ongoing Service

Trinity Lunch (2 Teams): We have 2 teams that alternate months in preparing and serving lunch to those in need at Trinity Episcopal Church. 25 -40 persons are served each month

Volunteers: Scott Wilson, Susie Baker, Robin Knott, David Lowman, Amanda Avery, JoAnn Tigert, June Jordan, Barbara Richardson, Sharon Wilson, Margaret Armstrong, Jeff Binder, Stephany Morgan

Meals on Wheels: We have 2 teams that serve monthly by delivering meals to shut ins.

Volunteers: Steve Hollar, Patt Hollar, Paul Goble, Donna Goble

Haiti Education Foundation Financial Support: We collected donations from the congregation and matched with Mission and Outreach funds to send to HEF in support of schools in the mountains of Haiti.

Christmas Giving Tree: Congregation members provided gifts for 17 individuals in our community who have few resources or available family.

Our work and service continues into 2024.

- Stephany Morgan

Congregational Life Committee Report 2023

Members: Sam Clem, Alice Herbst, Sara Lewis Anderson, Sharon Driscoll, David Lowman, Barbara Richardson, Chair

Card Writers: Cindy Cooke, Sharon Wilson, Alice Herbst, Sara Lewis Anderson, Barbara Richardson

Cards are sent to the VIPs every month and on their birthday. Special remembrances were delivered to the VIPs for Valentine's Day, Easter, July 4, in the fall, and Christmas by volunteers and members of the committee. Paige Kullman, Susan Lendermon, Andra Borrell, Louise Whipple, Cindy Cooke, and members of the committee helped deliver.

In anticipation of having lunches and dinners, volunteers inventoried and cleaned the church kitchen. Robin Dietrich, Jamie Morris, Sue Meniktos, Alice Herbst, David Lowman, Sara Anderson, Barbara Richardson helped.

Members of the congregation have been gathering after the church service to socialize and have refreshments of coffee, cookies, pastries, and sometimes fruit and candy. Many members have made this possible with their contributions: Alice Herbst, Sara Lewis Anderson, Renee Huff, Andra Borrell, Robin Knott, Sam Clem, Mary Meade, Sharon Wilson and Barbara Richardson. The committee assisted with the receptions for the Rev. Binder and the reception after Sandy Kirtley's funeral.

The committee organized the Church picnic on September 10, and arranged for chicken and drinks to be provided, with members bringing side dishes and dessert. Hugh Sproul hosted the picnic at his home.

The committee arranged for lunch after church for the Annual meeting June 4, and for the Town Hall meetings August 6 and October 15. Eddie Homes decorated the tables for Oct. 15. Ron and David Lowman, and Sam Clem prepared the Christmas lunch on Dec. 10. Eddie Homes and Martha Tillen decorated the tables.

Ron and Denise Lowman opened the church during the Christmas parade, brought cookies, and prepared hot chocolate for the public. Sam Clem purchased the hot chocolate and marshmallows. Sara Lewis Anderson, Louise Whipple, and Barbara Richardson helped, as many people watching the parade came in to get warm, eat cookies, drink hot chocolate, and use the bathroom.

- Barbara Richardson

Presbyterian Women Report 2023

Coordinating Team members of Presbyterian Women: Susan Lendermon, hostess chair, Jamie Morris, Community Outreach, Sharon Driscoll, Corresponding Secretary, Robin Knott, Treasurer, Alice Herbst, Telephone Tree, Donna Goble, Bible Study, Barbara Richardson, Session Liaison. The Board meets quarterly.

Presbyterian Women meet monthly. They resumed monthly covered dish meetings on March 21, after the COVID pandemic. Members bring a covered dish for the dinner meeting. The group has been having a Bible study, "Celebrating Sabbath." The Christmas luncheon was Dec. 5. Seventeen attended, as did The Rev. Binder. Sherry von Oeyen played the piano for the group to sing Christmas carols. Donna Goble, Susan Lendermon, Barbara Richardson, Robin Knott, and Alice Herbst have led the Bible studies.

Donations have been made to:

Contributions have been made to SACRA, the Church HVAC fund, the home goods pantry, World Central Kitchen after the earthquake in Turkey and the fires in Maui, an Afghan family, New Directions, Valley Mission, Salvation Army, Period Packs, CWS cleaning buckets, and food for needy students at Staunton High School.

Sharon Driscoll sends cards monthly for the birthdays of members. She sends cards from PW on other occasions, also.

Presbyterian Women do not plan to meet in January and February, but will resume monthly meetings on the third Tuesday in March.

- Barbara Richardson

Property Committee Report

Following is a year-long look into what has been accomplished by property and what still needs to be addressed.

1. Largest item for the property was the undertaking of the AC systems in both sanctuary and Frasier buildings. These systems are new and more efficient, giving us years of life as well as reducing electric bills.
2. The doors on the front of the sanctuary have been completely sealed and repaired.
3. There have been several maintenance issues with the roof. Those have mostly been addressed and we now have a contract with the roof company to clean gutters on a biannual basis to stop us from having roof leaks.
4. Frasier building has had upgrades from leaks in the roof that caused the upper floors to have ceiling collapses. They have been repaired and rooms repainted. The parlor in the Frasier also has some water damage and that space was repainted and repaired, looking better than ever.
5. Church kitchen has had some upgrades and repairs. The dishwasher was serviced and is working fine now, as well as the addition of two new stoves and two new refrigeration systems.
6. Boiler system has been serviced and worked on. It is still a costly expense due to age and size; also finding parts are not easy and are also costly. This is something property will have to address in the future.
7. Lastly, the church elevator is down. The service team will be out to repair in a couple of weeks.

Property wishes everyone at first Presbyterian church a happy and wonderful 2024.

- Ron Lowman

Administration Committee Report

A financial review was conducted in 2022. M. Hannah Bush, who had performed the most recent review, was contacted and agreed to do the review. The review disclosed that the back balance on the church software did not agree with the accountant's balance in Quickbooks. This discrepancy has been corrected.

- Hugh Sproul

Discipleship Committee Report

The Discipleship Committee consists of Sam Clem (Chair), Debbie Norville, Dr. Renee Huff.

Committee members explored ideas for congregational education, spiritual growth, and mission projects. Additionally, we discussed topics such as expectations for members and new members, and finally, leadership recruiting.

Two members expressed interest in a mid-week study program. Pastor Jeff volunteered to lead the initial program and submitted a brief list of topics of personal interest.

As resources have been overtaxed in 2023, the committee decided to begin any new programs in 2024.

- Sam Clem

Trustee Report & Election

Trustees: Jenny Dixon, Stephany Morgan

The Trustees have been in communication with Jeff Adams, the lawyer with whom First Presbyterian contracted to work through the incorporation process. This has been a long drawn out process having begun with approval by session and congregation in 2020. During 2023, the names of the current Trustees were submitted to the court for certification (as required), and approved. An additional required legal document certifying that the Trustees have the authority to make decisions about the property, with permission from the session, has yet to be completed and submitted to the court.

With two new Trustees, Sharon Driscoll and Robert Mackay, elected to serve beginning January 1, 2024, the process takes a step back to legally certify them before we can again move forward. Ongoing communication with Jeff Adams continues to get the process back on track moving forward.

Stewardship

Sam Clem, Jeff Binder (pastor), and Stephany Morgan

Our annual stewardship campaign was initiated on October 15th with dedication Sunday on December 10th leading into a time of fellowship and gratitude as we joined together for our annual Christmas dinner. Members of our congregation spoke each Sunday about what stewardship meant to them and why they pledged. These members included Cindy Cooke, Scott Wilson, Amanda Avery, Sam Clem, Mary Meade, Hugh Sproul, and Stephany Morgan. As of December 14, 2023, \$144,670.00 was received from 16 households.

Recognizing that God calls us to stewardship of our time, talent, and finances in service to him throughout time, and our church is responsible for stewarding resources provided, we request that we join together in reviewing our stewardship to God through First Presbyterian each quarter of the year 2024.

