

**FOREST LAKE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**2018 ANNUAL REPORT OF SESSION TO THE CONGREGATION**

**STAFF**

The year began with a staff of Dr. Ellen Skidmore as Senior Pastor, Dr. Eric Skidmore as Parish Associate, Andrea Paschal as Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries, Carter Grant as Youth Director, Murphy Peele as Business Manager, Adele Wyatt as Office Manager, Dr. Beth Mears as Director of Music, Beverly Salley as Organist, Jodi Beckham as Discipleship Coordinator, Dr. Dan Holloway as part-time Interim Associate Pastor, and Bill Wannamaker as Interim Youth Ministry Coordinator.

In July 2018, the congregation dissolved the position of Associate Pastor and replaced this position with a part-time Director of Mission & Community Engagement (Jodi Beckham) and a part-time Parish Associate for Pastoral Care (Dr. Dan Holloway). Andrea Paschal's position was changed to Director of Faith Formation, and her duties were modified to include Christian Education for all ages. Eric Skidmore's duties were reduced in response to his growing responsibilities of his full-time job for the state of SC. Bill Wannamaker's position was made permanent, and Coretta Simmons was hired as Kitchen Coordinator. And in August, Beverly Salley retired after 45 years as our organist.

**MEMBERSHIP**

On January 1, 2018, Forest Lake Presbyterian Church had 618 active members. During 2018, 14 members joined the church triumphant, 2 members transferred to other churches, 11 members moved to the inactive roll, 30 new members joined our congregation (23 transfers, 7 affirmations of faith). There were 5 infant baptisms and 1 adult baptism. On December 31, 2018, Forest Lake had an active membership of 621.

**BUDGET**

The Session approved a balanced budget for 2018 of \$786,625. The Church actually received \$839,545 and ended the year with a significant surplus both because of careful stewardship by the leadership and strong financial support from our members and guests. The Session is making plans to determine the most faithful way to use this overage entrusted to our care for the purposes of Christ in 2019.

**OVERSIGHT ISSUES**

**Staff Changes**

2018 saw significant changes in our church's staffing structure. These changes were the result of several years of prayer and work by the Personnel Ministry. We believe that this new structure enables us both to meet the needs of our congregation for program and support while also ensuring that our personnel budgets do not prevent growth in our benevolent giving and program support. We recognize that change is difficult, but are certain that the change moves us in the direction of faithfulness and good stewardship. Session and Personnel is committed to making changes when

we believe they are necessary for the health and future mission and vision of our church. We are excited to welcome Sylvia Trimmier as our new organist in January 2019. Personnel continues to search for the right person to replace Dan Holloway as our Parish Associate for Pastoral Care.

### **Mission and Service**

2018 saw several new mission initiatives. We took on the task of feeding hungry children in our neighborhoods both by repeating our Spring Food Drive, in cooperation with an interfaith group of four other congregations, and also in a new way when we began a weekly food backpack program at Forest Lake Elementary School. Beginning in the Fall of 2018, FLPC delivered food for 20 students each week to provide food on the weekends for children who otherwise would be food insecure.

We also served autistic children and their families by making our facility available for the summer of 2018 to host CampMates – a day camp planned and carried out by the Autism Academy of SC for this underserved population.

2018 was also FLPC's first year as a member congregation of a local justice initiative – Midlands Organized Response for Equity and Justice (MORE Justice). As an active member of this interfaith local non-profit, we were a part of ensuring that our local law enforcement officers are being certified in Crisis Intervention Training to be better equipped to de-escalate encounters with the mentally ill. Please read the full report under Service and Benevolence to find out more.

### **Safety Team**

In light of the violence that has happened in congregations during the last year in our country, the Session formed a Safety Team, chaired by Dave Precht, to review and to advise Session on safety planning and violence prevention. That Task Force is working closely with Education, Property, Stewardship and Administration and Worship Ministries to ensure that plans are in place and training is done to be able both to prevent acts of violence and to safeguard everyone who comes into our buildings, both on Sundays and during the week. Each Ministry listed has its own list of objectives and goals related to safety. The Safety Team resources each of those ministries and makes periodic reports to Session to ensure progress.

### **FLPC BOARD OF DEACONS**

This marked the first year of the Care Group method of congregational care by the Board of Deacons at Forest Lake Presbyterian Church. The goal of Care Groups is to support our congregation based on the needs of the individual church member or family rather than a blanket checklist of activities such as phone calls, card writing, meal delivery and visitation. Additionally, the roster of Deacons is to be reduced over time to 12 persons, and one goal of the restructuring is to strengthen this congregation's ability to care for each other.

Deacons have been divided into 3 different care groups. Care Group 1 tracks the care of active members and regular guests at Forest Lake. Care Group 2 tracks the care of congregants and guests that have experienced a major life change. Care Group 3 tracks the care of homebound and out-of-town members. Each deacon has a notebook containing a photo and contact information for the individual or family. Through the course of the year, general notes may be documented for future

deacons to better understand the context by which they can care for them, and how the person or family prefers to be contacted.

The term “creative care”, first uttered by Dan Holloway in our October meeting, well-describes the intention of our approach. The challenge has been to be observant without being nose-y, curious without being intrusive and above all respect the privacy of the individual in need.

Some examples:

Kenyon Foster kept in touch with Marie Maine and knew her husband Henry who passed away earlier this year had numerous plates on the wall at Flying Saucer, an achievement marking one’s successfully drinking all 200 of their beers on tap. Kenyon thought it would be meaningful to retrieve one of those plates and bring it to Marie at her home.

Kellah Edens-Hult sent photos to Hazel Harwood of the elements in the memorial garden which her gift provided and which were dedicated to her late son and husband. Hazel was able to enjoy these images before her passing and truly delighted in them.

But creative care doesn’t have to be fancy, it can be as steadfast as remembering birthdays.

Elizabeth Blevins has received numerous thank-yous for the handwritten birthday cards she sends. She loves to do it. The act is so simple yet makes a big impact on those that receive them.

Reducing the number of deacons to 12 compels the involvement of non-deacons into the on-going care of their brothers and sisters in Christ. Deacons are to identify persons in acquaintance with the folks on their lists and ask directly for appropriate assistance. In time this cultivates an organic care network which should lessen the strain on church staff, officers and the same active members. This makes for a more meaningful contact rather than the cold call from a deacon the individual may not have met before. This was a common phenomenon with the old method and the bi-annual Phone-a-thon which was not conducted this year.

The year has not been without opportunities for improvement. Communication is vital in order to facilitate this care. In 2019 there will be a change in meeting frequency and time devoted to care groups meeting amongst themselves. Trello.com, an online platform used by church staff and deacons to cross reference care efforts, will likely grow in use and allow us to make sure no one “falls through the cracks”. The exchange of care notebook sheets as individual’s migrate to and from different care groups has seemed to work though there may be ways to make this more efficient. It has been difficult at times to know what needs to be done. But it has also been important for us to understand that sometimes nothing needs to be done at all.

Beth Rozek gives a good example which is summarized below:

A church member called Beth to ask for help. Palmetto Health Richland Hospital had employed her caregiver and companion of 19 years, with insurance but due to changes in policy would do so no longer. Our member had to provide insurance for her caregiver but was unsure how to deal with the insurance agent, so she asked Beth if she would be present during the meeting. Without

knowing much about insurance Beth agreed, reminding her that she was in charge and had the right to ask questions and to say no if she didn't like what she heard. The Church member called as Beth was on her way over and said she had already seen the agent and taken care of her companion's insurance. Beth feels she really didn't do anything, but the fact that she was ready to be present and back the member up gave her the confidence to handle the matter on her own. Many times, the deeds themselves don't have to be much; it's the willingness to help which is of greatest importance.

All-in-all Care Groups seem to work. The years ahead will determine its sustainability. There are improvements to make but with each officer class, the roots of creative care should continue to grow and flourish at Forest Lake. The new perspective seems appropriate for the changes we see in the church at large. Serving Christ with our head, hands and hearts will always be our focus regardless of the way in which we conduct it.

Respectfully submitted,

Stewart Grinton  
Moderator

## **THE MINISTRIES OF SESSION**

### **Ministry of Care and Connections**

**Ministry Moderator: Caroline Streater**

The function and commitment of the Ministry of Care and Connections is to enhance the congregation's sense of oneness as believers in Christ through a wide variety of events and activities that provide for Christian fellowship among members and visitors. This ministry helps build authentic connections between people and engages in forms of care for the congregation not already accomplished through the Board of Deacons. This ministry is responsible for the following 2018 groups and activities:

- FLPC Presbyterian Women including their Annual Birthday Offering Luncheon and Annual Retreat
- FLPC Men's Breakfast
- FLPC Annual Church Retreat
- Public Safety Appreciation Luncheon
- Sesqui State Park Picnic
- Flu Shot Clinic
- Salt Shakers
- Advent Wreath Lighting
- Ice Cream Social and Bingo
- FLPC Golf
- Senior Luncheons
- Other fellowship outings throughout the year
- Joint youth basketball teams with North Trenholm Baptist Church
- Co-ed adult softball team

## **Ministry of Education**

**Ministry Moderator: Barbara Holbrook**

Focus has continued on the encouragement and support of developing disciples and transforming head, heart and hands in the service of Jesus Christ. Adult education continued with Sunday morning classes, weekday studies of scripture and literature, and Wednesday evening programs. Education tells the stories of youth and children within the congregation.

In the spring, we focused on discipleship by presenting second-graders with Bibles, recognizing high school graduates and acknowledging members who completed long term studies on Discipleship Sunday. "Welcome Home Sunday" brought everyone together with breakfast as we began fall programming and recognized and commissioned Sunday School teachers.

Sacramental education for children took place with three Sundays set aside during Lent to explore why we worship, baptism and communion. 'Lent in a Bag' activities were provided for use at home to focus on preparing for Easter. During the fall, with parent volunteers, a Worship Workshop was held to discuss the Lord's Supper, how we pray, and how to use a Bible. Children continue to be involved in worship leadership as Ushers once a month with an Adult Mentor.

Confirmation classes for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders began in the fall for nine youth using the new PC(USA) curriculum, Big God, Big Questions. Each youth has a mentor and parents also participate in weekly discussions. This class will continue into the spring of 2019.

FLY (Forest Lake Youth) continues to be an active group. We started the year by welcoming Carter Grant as the new Youth Director and asked Bill Wannamaker, FLY Advisor Extraordinaire, to serve as a Youth Ministry Coordinator to help moderate the Youth Advisory Council and mentor Carter. During the year, the youth participated in a BRIDGE mission weekend in the spring and the fall; led a wonderful Youth Worship Service in February; participated in the Trinity Presbytery Youth Rally Day at Camp Fellowship; and attended the High School and Middle School Montreat Youth Conferences and Raleigh Youth Mission trip. Youth are engaged in worship leadership at least once a month and engaged in other special events during the year that included two Lock-ins, themed parties during the year, a 6<sup>th</sup> grade 'kidnapping' breakfast to welcome the rising students to FLY, and bowling.

FLY members have been very involved in many activities with and for the congregation by holding fundraisers and participating in service around the church and with other ministries, like Gills Creek Clean up, inviting guests from other ministries to speak with FLY, volunteering at the Garage sale, writing Christmas cards for shut-ins, and making and giving out Christmas cookies. Fellowship opportunities increased to include Sunday night FLY, dinners together at Kirk night, and dinners in a restaurant on Thursdays. In the fall, a High School Girls Bible Study began and Carter and Bill, along with other Youth Advisors try to visit youth at their school sports or other events.

Carter Grant has reached out to the Young Adults (post college and before children) in our congregation for bimonthly fellowship at a restaurant or the movies. The college students are

invited to a FLY Alumni event during the holidays to catch up on their lives; and Education is pleased to support Bobby Counts in attending the Montreat College Conference to start the new year.

Our children and youth continue to participate in programs at Fellowship Camp and Conference Center. During the summer, a group of 17 children and youth attended, one college student was a counselor, and Andrea Paschal, Director of Faith Formation, served as Chaplain of the Week. Members of the congregation supported the campers by sending postcards to campers. On Election Day, a group of 11 children and youth spent a day doing service work at Camp and a group of 14 attended the annual Winter Camp overnight retreat.

Other educational opportunities provided during the year were hosting a Holocaust exhibit and panel conversation with our Jewish neighbors; hosting a Lombard Mennonite Conflict Resolution Conference; Vacation Bible School “Fishers of Men” that focused on life during Jesus’ day, led by Kelly Kissiah and Shannon Fancher; a book study of Mudhouse Sabbath in the summer that continued in the fall; and hosting a Created By God human sexuality weekend for 5<sup>th</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> graders with adult volunteers.

With the retirement of Treva Miles as Library Committee Chair and other members moving away, Education had to begin looking at the future of the Church Library. FLPC is fortunate to have a library that Parish Associate Dan Holloway says is “better than many church libraries he has seen.” The water damage that began in 2017 and continued with the storms of 2018 has created issues with moisture in the carpet and in books causing a concern with the growth of mold. The water damage made it necessary to remove some books. However, we have identified three church members, professional librarians, who have stepped in to lead in the vacancy left by Treva’s retirement and Beverly Heath’s move to Summerville. Our faithful library volunteers are working with these volunteer Librarians to continue to move us forward in our mission to provide a library that encourages learning and discipleship. Our future goal includes making our collection searchable through our website.

Education continues to work with the FLPC Safety Task Force to look critically at the areas and programs for all ages to determine the safety needs and policies. Education has done a review and update of the Nursery Policy and the Child Protection Policy to include standards for electronic communications between adults and minors.

Education continues to be very busy. Looking over the calendar helps us marvel at the volunteers required for all these opportunities. It only takes about 1.5 to 4 hours per month to teach Sunday school, but with 5 adult classes, 2 youth classes and 3 children’s classes, volunteers have given a total of 684 hours of their time. Kirk night dinners require 3 to 4 volunteers to set up and also to clean up that results in about 288 volunteer hours for 24 dinners. Nursery volunteers, parents and other members, work alongside the paid Nursery Staff to care for our youngest disciples 1 hour every 4 months for a total of 194 volunteer hours per year. Youth Ministry has many outlets for volunteers either through ongoing ministry or one-time events. Most Advisors volunteer between 2-4 hours per month and over the past year have given a total of 960 volunteer hours.

## **Ministry of Personnel**

### **Moderator: Bettianne Davenport**

As explained in the beginning of the Annual Report, it has been a year of discernment, change and transition. We are convinced that the new staffing model is a faithful one that will carry us into the future that God has planned and that allows us to ensure that we balance both the needs of our congregation and our call to serve the world. To arrive where we are now, Personnel accomplished the following in 2018.

- \* Conducted six meetings open to the congregation in order to explore the church's priorities in hiring a new Associate Pastor (to replace Michael East) or other possible positions. After much study and discussion, at a congregational meeting in July, it was decided to replace the Associate Pastor's position with a part-time Parish Associate of Pastoral Care (20 hours a week), and a Director of Mission and Community Engagement (30 hours a week).
- \* Wrote new job descriptions for the Director of Mission & Community Engagement, the part-time Parish Associate for Pastoral Care, and the Director of Faith Formation.
- \* Established the Youth Ministry Coordinator position, held as an interim position by Bill Wannamaker, as a permanent, part-time position for up to 10 hours per week.
- \* Received an endowment grant for a full-time summer intern to work with our youth. Carter Grant held this position for the summer.
- \* Held a reception for Beverly Salley who retired as our organist, in August, 2018. She was presented with a monetary gift, a resolution of thanks, and an engraved cruet to be placed in her honor in the sanctuary for communion.
- \* Continued Dan Holloway's employment as part-time Parish Associate for Pastoral Care through December 30, 2018. We held a Going Away Reception for Dan and Carol on December 30, and presented him with gifts of appreciation for his service.
- \* Appointed search committees for a new organist and for a part-time Parish Associate for Pastoral Care.
- \* Arranged for the Associate Pastor's office to be divided into two offices in order to accommodate the new staffing model.
- \* Provided Continuing Education (money and time):
  - Murphy completed the course work and project required for certification through the Church Administration organization.
  - Andrea Paschal attended the Association for Presbyterian Church Educator's Conference (APCE) in Louisville, KY and also a Church Educator training in at St. Simon's Island, GA. Andrea was trained as a POINT person for our Presbytery to serve as a resource in curricula for other congregations in our area.
  - Bill Wannamaker and Carter Grant attended training for youth ministers in Montreat.
  - Jodi Beckham's course at Lutheran Seminary on communication and branding, and a small group webinar on Small Group theory.
  - Ellen Skidmore completed Clergy Coaching with Mark Tidsworth of Pinnacle Leadership Association, and attended a week long retreat on Contemplative Prayer at Mepkin Abbey in Moncks Corner.

## **Ministry of Property**

### **Moderator: Steve Hyman**

The Ministry of Property's function is to review and approve of the routine and non-routine needs of the church building and grounds. Committee was chaired by Steve Hyman and had nine capable and dedicated members: Cindy Welborn, Judy Timmons, Sissy Ervin, Tommy Stallings, Crawford Young, William Hunter, Harry Hoppmann and Wendell McCoy. 2018 proved to be a busy year for Properties and some of their major accomplishments were:

- Property members led and participated in the organ task force committee in finalizing the budget and completing the organ construction punch list. This included removing the horizontal beam from behind the minister's seats; staining the wood paneling; and adding covers on the electrical outlet boxes in the chancel floor. Also installed the dedication plaque honoring Caroline Meredith for her generous gift.
- Produced sketches and estimates for improvements to the two restrooms adjacent to the community room. The final design and work on the restrooms was postponed.
- Authorized the purchase and installation of energy efficiency management components such as LED lights; occupancy sensors for lighting; and heating and cooling controls.
- Helped organize and participated in the annual day-of-service projects.
- Assisted in soliciting pricing for and approved the installation of a well and the improvements to the church's lawn sprinkler system.
- Assisted in soliciting pricing for and approved the installation of new carpet and ceramic in the connecting point lobby, corridors leading to the education wing and to the parlor.
- Assembled to-do work lists for a fall FLY fundraiser.
- Authorized the installation of two new access windows for getting out onto the two flat roofs and then utilized them to physically keep the roofs clear.
- Assembled a list of hopes and dreams for next year, then formed a committee which prepared a recommended priority list for session review and consideration.
- Applied for a SC Interfaith Power and Light grant for additional LED lights in the Sanctuary, Narthex, office suite, and classrooms.

## **Ministry of Service and Benevolence**

### **Moderator: Tom Leclair**

In 2018, God was at work through heads, hearts and hands of the FLPC congregation and members of this ministry. The following represent some of the activities that were a part of the Service and Benevolence ministry this year. We are excited about continuing the transformative work of the Service and Benevolence Ministry in the coming year.

### **Family Promise:**

Family Promise of the Midlands opened its doors in December 2014, after more than two years of multi-denominational effort. FLPC was one of the first (of 15) churches to commit to this mission, helping deal with families in need because of homelessness.

As of November, seven (7) families totaling twenty-seven (27) people have been served in 2018. FLPC hosted families three times in 2018. Hosting families takes the participation of about 40-50 congregation members who assist in a variety of ways, before, during and after the hosted week. As a congregation, we have continued to embrace the families: sheltering, feeding and getting to know them a little bit.....with love, kindness and excitement.

### **Environmental Stewardship:**

Forest Lake Presbyterian Church achieved its annual recertification as a PSUSA Earth Care Congregation and coordinates with PSUSA Hunger Ministry as a certified Hunger Action Congregation. The congregation was encouraged to participate in all Environmental Stewardship activities.

Environmental Stewardship Ministry accomplishments included:

#### FLPC Gardens:

We maintained our three environmentally friendly gardens: Habitat Garden; Erosion Control Rain Garden; and Kids' Garden.

We held planting and harvesting events for all ages and we donated all produce, including fruits and vegetables, from the Kids' Garden to the Rehoboth UMC Food Pantry.

We qualified for Clemson Carolina Yards certification.

#### Environmental Stewardship Education:

Earth Sunday: "Eco-Justice" was celebrated with a congregational event of exhibits from environmental community groups and was followed by a Kids' Garden picnic and planting event.

Environmental Stewardship education was taught in our Sunday School classes and information was frequently in FLPC media.

#### Recycling:

Recycling in FLPC's building was maintained by Anchor Recycling Company. Composting from our kitchen was used in our garden and we continued participation in Terracycle "upcycling".

#### Community Service:

Our congregation participated in semi-annual cleanups with our Adopted Gills Creek Waterway.

Our shoe recycling project collected over 200 gently used shoes from our congregation as part of a Keep the Midlands Beautiful reusing project.

## **Support for Local Schools**

In May 2018 FLPC partnered with two other churches, a synagogue and a mosque in conducting a food drive for the summer food pantries of Richland School Districts One and Two. Grocery bags were handed out to the families of the congregations participating and those were distributed in their neighborhoods to be filled with food and comfort items. The following weekend, the participating congregations delivered the filled grocery bags to FLPC where they were sorted and divided. Three hundred eighty (380) bags of food and comfort items were collected and distributed to the Richland School Districts One and Two summer food pantries. This was the second year for our collection and collaboration efforts and our ministry hopes to continue the event on an annual basis.

In July and August 2018, FLPC conducted a school supply drive for Condor Elementary School. The congregation donated two and a half bins of general school supplies and 25 backpacks. Those supplies were delivered to the Condor Guidance Counselor who distributed them as needed.

Throughout the 2018 school year, approximately 15 FLPC congregation members participated in Forest Lake Elementary School's Mentoring Matters program. Mentors met with their children at school two times or more per month for thirty minutes or more each session.

With the assistance of an endowment fund grant, FLPC began a weekly food backpack program at Forest Lake Elementary School. Each week we purchase, pack, and deliver food to twenty (20) students who normally receive food on weekdays through free or reduced lunch programs. The food backpack program provides food on the weekends for those students. The food backpack program lasts throughout the school year and for the second semester of the current school year, the program will serve twenty-five (25) students.

With the assistance of an endowment grant, FLPC provided grants of eight hundred dollars (\$800) each to six school principals. The grants were to be used at the principals' discretion for the needs of students attending their schools. The principals used the grants to purchase clothing and health and comfort items for the children attending their schools. One principal used the funds to organize a storage area at the school for clothing and health and comfort items.

## **CampMates: Autism Academy of South Carolina Summer Camp**

On Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 am until 2:30 pm from the first week of June through the first week of August 2018, FLPC hosted CampMates summer camp conducted by the Autism Academy of South Carolina. The total number of campers attending the camp throughout the summer was 85 and another 45 volunteers and staff from the Autism Academy participated in the camp's programs. Camp activities included healthy eating classes, life skills classes, music and art classes, yoga, and organized physical activity sessions.

In addition, through a grant from the endowment fund and through financial and labor contributions by the Autism Academy, the vacant lot adjacent to the church parking lot was fenced so that the lot would better serve the needs of CampMates and of FLPC.

### **Elf Tree:**

In 2018, FLPC continued the annual Christmas outreach to the social workers at six local elementary schools to identify those children and families that fell between the cracks and were not being served through existing programs. Social workers submitted to FLPC a child's name and information, along with the information for the other children in the home. Elves were then designed and produced by Janyce Collins. The elves were placed on trees located in the lobby and Connecting Point. Elves were selected by FLPC members who purchased gifts for the children based on the information provided by the social workers. FLPC provided Christmas gifts for 150 elementary aged children and twenty unaccompanied youth during the Christmas season.

### **Homeless Kits**

Service & Benevolence assembled homeless kits and offered them to the congregation at cost (\$8.00 per kit). The kits contain a \$5 food gift certificate, an all-day bus pass, socks, water, tooth brush and paste, towelettes and information card for local services available to those in need. The kit is designed to be transported in a congregation member's car and available for handout when the occasion arises as the congregation member is out and about in Columbia. As of November 2018, seventy-five kits had been assembled and over sixty had been purchased by congregation members.

### **Midlands Organized Response for Equity and Justice (MORE Justice)**

FLPC was one of twenty-seven (27) congregations that participated in MORE Justice activities in 2017 and 2018. Following months of research, refinement, and planning, MORE Justice crafted specific requests for specific public officials for the 2017-18 annual cycle, narrowing down from the two broad topics of concern – education and mental health – that were chosen at the assembly in November of 2017 from among the many concerns that had been raised in house meetings. At the Nehemiah Action Assembly on April 23, 2018, MORE Justice posed these requests to public officials. Over 1,300 people from 27 local congregations attended the Nehemiah action, which was held at Brookland Baptist Church. (The weather was less than ideal, with driving rain likely keeping many home who would otherwise have attended. If the weather had been better, we believe the turnout would probably have exceeded 1,500.) Drew Radeker of this congregation was on stage at the action and participated in posing the education requests.

The requests posed at the Nehemiah action were as follows:

#### **(Pertaining to education; asked of Richland Districts One and Two school board members)**

1. Will you meet with MORE Justice within 45 days to develop a discipline scorecard for each school in the district and make those public by August 2018?
2. Will you champion the hiring of a PBIS coach for the district to conduct a robust implementation of PBIS in the five schools with the highest suspension rates by August 2018?

*\*PBIS stands for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports ([pbis.org](http://pbis.org)) and is proven to decrease discipline referrals and suspensions, increase teaching time, decrease things like bullying and teacher turnover, and increase academic achievement and parental engagement. The thrust of the program is to change not just discipline methods but also to reduce the instance of behaviors that call for discipline in the first place. Our local school districts already use some PBIS techniques, but implementation levels have varied widely between schools. Discipline and academic achievement data from schools in which PBIS is implemented robustly bear out that this program works.*

**(Pertaining to Crisis Intervention Training, asked of Chief Skip Holbrook of the Columbia Police Department and Sheriff Leon Lott of the Richland County Sheriff's Department):**

1. Will you ensure that all officers become certified in Crisis Intervention Training by April 2020?
2. Will you meet quarterly with MORE Justice, beginning in July 2018, to report back on this commitment?

*\*Crisis Intervention Training is a program for training law enforcement officers in techniques shown to deescalate encounters with mentally ill persons in a manner that poses a minimum risk of harm to the mentally ill person, the officer, and others who may be present during the encounter. Both Richland County and the City of Columbia already endorsed the program and had some officers certified in the training; however, the percentages of officers certified was very low. MORE Justice research indicated that law enforcement officers value this training highly and recognize that it can help save lives, including those of officers.*

**(Pertaining establishing a Clubhouse, asked of Richland County, City of Columbia, Lexington County, West Columbia, and City of Cayce councilmembers):**

1. Will you go with a delegation from MORE Justice to visit Gateway House in Greenville, SC within 45 days?
2. Will you send a [Richland City/County] staff member to attend the New Clubhouse Development Training [in Location(s) on Date(s), 2018]?
3. Based on those visits, will you meet quarterly with MORE Justice and other stakeholders, beginning in July 2018, to develop a plan to establish an accredited Clubhouse in Richland/Lexington County?

*\*A Clubhouse is a place designed for people with severe and persistent mental illness. It is a structured community resource concerned with increasing job skills, obtaining supported or independent housing and employment and building meaningful relationships. People who participate in Clubhouses are proven to have better outcomes, such as a greater likelihood to find gainful employment, live independently and build constructive relationships that ward off feelings of stigma and isolation. While the national employment rate for adults living with a mental illness is 15%, accredited Clubhouses have nearly tripled that, with 42% of members working on real*

*jobs in industry. Members of Gateway House in Greenville, the only accredited Clubhouse in South Carolina, have emergency room or hospital recidivism rate of less than 0.1% monthly and an incarceration rate of less than 0.01% annually, saving Greenville alone about \$2 million. The national average cost per member per year for a Clubhouse is the same as the average cost of two visits to a Richland County emergency room.*

The invited officials were provided with the requests several days in advance of the Nehemiah action, in an effort to avoid officials feeling as though they were being put on the spot at the action.

Disappointingly, only one member of the Richland One school board attended the action, and no members of the Richland Two school board did so. We secured enthusiastic yeses from the one attending member. Following the action, MORE Justice has met with school board members, and we are continuing to work toward achieving these goals.

We fared better with regard to the mental health-related requests. Chief Holbrook and Sheriff Lott agreed to certify all their officers within slightly extended time frames beyond 2020, for administrative feasibility reasons. We see this as a huge victory, though we know we are just at the beginning of the training for these many officers.

Mayor Benjamin also gave his enthusiastic agreement to the Clubhouse requests, and we gained some agreement from some councilmembers.

MORE Justice continues to follow up on the implementation of goals for the 2017 – 2018 cycle.

MORE Justice is now in a new annual cycle. House meetings were held in August and September and were hosted by FLPC team leaders. (The current FLPC team leaders are Xan Skinner and Drew Radeker.) These are rather informal gatherings designed to elicit ideas about what MORE Justice might address during this year. Following the house meetings, a community problems assembly was held on November 5 and the attendees voted to address housing during the 2018-19 cycle. The process will culminate in specific requests being made at the 2019 Nehemiah action.

If you have not been involved with MORE Justice but are interested in becoming involved, please contact Xan or Drew.

### **FLPC Financial Contributions to Missions and Organizations**

In addition to the financial donations and donations of services set forth above, FLPC through S&B contributed money to the following organizations:

Camping Ministries of the Carolinas  
Centennial ARP Church  
Children's Garden  
Columbia Pastoral Counseling Center  
Cooperative Ministry  
Family Promise  
Frontera de Christo Mission  
Harvest Hope

Medical Benevolence  
Ministry of Hope  
Montreat Retreat Center  
Oliver Gospel Mission  
Salvation Army Woodyard Fund  
Sister Care  
Washington Street Methodist Church Soup Kitchen  
Women's Shelter

### **Ministry of Worship**

**Moderator: Stuart Hunter**

FLPC continued to provide opportunities for worship throughout the year. Sunday worship services were held every Sunday (with one exception on September 16 when services were cancelled due to Hurricane Florence). Two services were held each Sunday January-June and August 19-December and a number of special services were held including Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday Communion and Seder Supper, Good Friday, Community Thanksgiving, Advent Wreath Lighting, Longest Night, and Christmas Eve. A number of focused services were held during Sunday worship including Officer Ordination (1/7), All Saints (1/13), Celebrating the Gifts of Women (2/4), Youth Sunday (2/11), Kirkin' of the Tartans (4/8), Wills Emphasis (4/22), Earth Sunday (4/29), Celebration of Discipleship (5/6), Confirmation (5/20), Welcome Home Sunday (8/19), World Communion (10/7) and Dedication Sunday (10/21).

The Sacrament of Communion was celebrated five times throughout the year during Sunday morning worship services and seven additional times at special services, events, and retreats. Home communion was also celebrated once. On World Communion Sunday we were honored to have members Donald and Gisele Akah and Emmerencia Tingu and members of their extended family lead us in worship with songs from worship in their native Cameroon and to have Donald translate the communion liturgy into Agi'Mbeligi, which, along with English, they grew up speaking in Cameroon.

15 funeral/memorial services were held at FLPC during the year (2 of which were for non members) and Ellen officiated at 2 more away from FLPC. Five children and 1 adult were baptized in 2018.

The music ministry led the congregation in living into the new pipe organ. Long-time organist Beverly Salley retired in August, and a number of guest organists played for worship throughout the remainder of the year. In addition, two organ concerts were held -- an organ dedication concert occurred on February 11 by Dr. Joby Bell, and another meaningful concert by Matthew Whitehouse on September 23.

The Arts in Worship group continued to provide enhancements for worship. New this year was the addition of a multitude of origami doves on Pentecost and the display of prayer shawls on Welcome Home Sunday. World Communion Sunday was enhanced by the use of a variety of breads served in baskets.

Liz Roberts, worship committee member and professional photographer, took Sam Holland's photographs of the stained glass windows and produced beautiful note cards that are now available for purchase.

The ad hoc safety task force worked hard and long in developing new safety procedures and policies for FLPC, and one outcome of the work was the move to form a new committee, the Sunday Point of Contact Committee that combines the greeters, ushers, and Connection Point volunteers under the Worship Ministry. A new and enhanced training program is planned and will take place in early 2019.

In addition to the countless hours that the paid staff spends planning and implementing worship activities, it takes a large number of volunteers and staff to support Worship activities. Many individuals are engaged in the worship ministry through ushering, greeting, staffing the connecting point, singing in the choir and ringing hand bells, and keeping the nursery. Additionally, talented musicians added to the beauty of worship for special services.

Rough estimates of volunteer hours include:

Music ministry		
	Chancel choir practice and Sunday morning worship	2624
	Handbell choir practice and performances	256
	Children's choir - planning, rehearsals, & performances	47
Ushers	(5 X 2 X 44) + 1 hour @ 20 funerals/misc services)	440
	5 X 1 X 8 for summer schedule	40
Nursery	(4 X 52)	208
Greeters	(4 X 52)	208
Connecting point	(3 X 53 weeks)	156
Communion team	(baking, preparation, cleanup)	20
Flower committee	(3 X 52 weeks + 20 hours Advent)	<u>176</u>
	TOTAL Volunteer Hours	4175