

## **FOREST LAKE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** **2020 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 for Stewardship, Ed Black as Ministry Associate for Pastoral Care, Andrea Paschal as Director of Faith Formation, Bill Wannamaker as Youth Director, Adele Wyatt as Office Manager, Dr. Beth Mears as Director of Music, Sylvia Trimmier as Organist, Jodi Beckham as Director of Mission and Community Engagement, Laura Wannamaker as Kitchen Coordinator, Ebony and LC Eaddy as Church Sextons, and Stacy Rivera as interim Business Manager.

In February, Shannon Fancher was hired as Business Manager for 30 hours a week and Stacy Rivera became our part-time outsourced Finance Director. In September Andrea Paschal resigned as Director of Faith Formation and the existing staff took on the duties of the Director of Faith Formation to allow Personnel time to evaluate and plan for the next staff hire to support our congregational education and faith formation goals.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

On January 1, 2020, Forest Lake Presbyterian Church had 624 active members. During 2020, 11 members joined the church triumphant, 2 members transferred to other churches, 2 members deactivated their membership. 6 new members joined our congregation (2 transfers, 4 affirmations of faith). There was 1 infant baptism. On December 31, 2020, Forest Lake had an active membership of 615.

### **BUDGET**

The Session approved a balanced budget for 2020 of \$811,062. The Church received \$796,567.41 (or 98.21% of our projected revenue) in pledges and revenue and ended the year with a significant surplus of \$90,895.22. This surplus was due to strong financial support from our members and guests, personnel staff transitions, COVID restrictions to our regular programming and service, and careful stewardship by our Session Ministries and the Board of Deacons. The Session has made plans to use this overage entrusted to our care for the purposes of Christ in 2021 to support all aspects of our ministry.

### **OVERSIGHT ISSUES**

#### **Staff Changes**

In 2020, the decisions that Personnel and Session had approved in 2019, regarding changing the church's staffing model, were carried out and accomplished. The move to make the Business Manager a 30 hour a week position and to hire an outsourced Finance Director on an hourly basis has been done. Shannon Fancher began work as our part-time Business Manager in February of 2020. And Stacy Rivera, who has served as our interim Business Manager took on an hourly contract position as FLPC's outsourced Finance Director. This structure provides our congregation with extra financial checks and balances and has worked

very well in supporting our Session and congregation. Natalie O'Bradovich served another term as our volunteer church treasurer and provides monthly checks of our procedures as well.

Andrea Paschal left Forest Lake at the end of September to accept a position as the Director of Purposeful Education at First Presbyterian Church in Aiken, SC. After 14 years of ministry, Andrea left Forest Lake in a very strong position and she worked hard to help us transition her duties. Bill Wannamaker, Ed Black, and Laura Wannamaker assumed most of Andrea's regular duties. Jodi Beckham took on some of the duties related to communication and curriculum support of H3 groups. FLPC has compensated these staff for their extra duties, and this has given us time to evaluate what sort of skills and passions are most needed in our next staff configuration. Personnel has been monitoring the coverage of the duties of the Faith Formation position and working to identify a new staff description. The pandemic has really called much of how we do ministry and education into question and made it more difficult to discern how best to fill this need in our congregation's staffing. Personnel is committed to moving deliberately and prayerfully in defining our next staffing model.

### **Livestreaming Project**

Stewart Grinton and Ellen Skidmore began researching how FLPC might implement the technology that would allow us to livestream our worship services in 2019. The Stewardship and Administration Ministry requested endowment funds to purchase and install the equipment that would make this possible, and we envisioned it as a way to reach out into the community and to allow our shut ins and elderly members to worship with us. Never did we expect livestreaming to provide our only worship service. FLPC entered into a contract with Acoustical Design, LLC in February of 2020 to "purchase and install the equipment that will make [livestreaming] possible." (from the 2/6/2020 Session Minutes) The subsequent pandemic related shut downs created chaos in the work flows of Acoustical Design and the installation was prolonged both by the demands of the pandemic on their installation crews and also on some troubleshooting that had to be done to upgrade FLPC's wireless signal in the sanctuary. After much hard work and many tireless volunteer hours by Stewart Grinton, we held our first livestreamed worship service on Easter Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup>. Unfortunately, the learning curve and additional software and hardware issues made the first streaming efforts very frustrating for staff, volunteers and worshippers. As with all online communication, we are subject to variations in internet signals, but the regular streaming of worship is now stable and we have proof of a growing reach of the worship services of FLPC into the world. We have members in England and all over the country who now worship with us remotely, and services are shared and watched during the week, further expanding our reach into the world. We give thanks to God, and deep appreciation to Stewart Grinton who volunteered to make this dream a reality here at FLPC.

### **Capital Campaign Feasibility Study**

As you may recall, in late 2018, the Property Ministry brought to the Session a list of capital needs that Property felt needed to be addressed for the integrity of the building and for the ongoing support of mission and service. Along with recommendations from the Safety

Team, a total of 20 potential items, with working construction estimates, were received by Session. You may also recall that Session then approved an agreement in November to engage the Rev. Dr. Eric Skidmore to staff a Feasibility Study to carry out the directive approved in October. Dave and Suzanne Precht agreed to chair the Feasibility Study and working with them are Tom Leclair, Joe Davenport, John Hudgens, and Kevin and Sara Tyer.

In early 2020, the Feasibility Study Team sent letters, met with several members of the church and received feedback on potential pledges and on the projects. The study was completed in March 2020. Ninety-two family units responded, indicating a willingness to pledge nearly \$900,000. In that March Stated Meeting, the Session approved a Capital Campaign with a goal of \$1,001,000. This figure included working budgets for the identified capital projects and a benevolent project of 10% of the total. The beneficiary of the benevolent component was still to be defined. Session also requested that plans for the playground and the shower projects be reviewed and brought back to Session for approval before any construction is begun.

All looked good at that time, but because of the pandemic, the Session voted to put the Capital Campaign on hold at their April meeting. However, members began to make donations to the church for the capital campaign that Session had approved, but not fully pursued. So, in December, the Session approved moving forward with the Capital Campaign with pledges to be identified between January and March and the 3-year campaign to kick off in July.

At the end of 2020, in advance of the Capital Campaign, donations of \$239,534.00 have already been received from 22 families and individuals in our congregation. The members of the Feasibility Study Task Group agreed to serve as the Capital Campaign Committee, and Session is working to identify a Building Committee to oversee the projects.

## **THE BOARD OF DEACONS**

### **Moderator: Shannon Fancher**

- Overhauled the care team assignment process, coded all members in the church's information system to their assigned deacon, and redistributed assignments based on the alphabet. This has made the assignment process easier when new members join the church.
- Each deacon mailed a letter with their contact information in February to everyone within their care group.
- Continued to mail the series of grief books to the relevant members of the church family.
- Continued soup ministry and started flower ministry.
- Received approval for a "caring for the caregiver" speaker series endowment request. Due to the pandemic, this series is planned for 2021.
- Designed and ordered new postcards and birthday cards for the church.
- Each deacon has written handwritten notecards to each member of their care group.
- Revitalized the Note Writing Team, which is responsible for writing notes to all members of the congregation throughout the year.

- Revitalized the HOPE (Helping Presbyterians Every Day) Team and held a service blitz in October.

## **THE MINISTRIES OF SESSION**

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

**Ministry Chair: Ward Warren**

**Ministry Co-Chair: Wayne Harris**

**Staff Liason: Jodi Beckham**

**Committee Members: Rebecca Timmons, Adriane Radekar, Ginny Jones, 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 interaction 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, but not limited to, the following groups and activities:

- FLPC Presbyterian Women\*
- FLPC Men's Breakfast
- FLPC Youth Basketball
- FLPC Church Retreat
- Public Safety Luncheon
- Flu Shot Clinic
- Presbyterian Women Fashion Show and Annual Retreat
- Advent Wreath Lighting
- Ice Cream Social and Bingo
- Senior Luncheons
- H3 Small Groups
- Wellness Activities
- FLPC Softball
- Daytrippers

Although we have been extremely limited with Covid-19 this year, we have successfully completed the below events:

- FLPC Church Retreat at Montreat March 6-9
- Parking lot ice cream social
- Parking lot movie
- Yoga classes
- H3 small groups – Nine small groups started up this Fall with 70 people involved in Bible study

- Flu Shot Clinic
- Blood Drive
- Worked to define Stage 1 and Stage 2 descriptive markers for the safety of our congregation
- C&C worked with Education Ministry to dissolve Kirk Night and to re-invent congregation-wide fellowship opportunities to replace the Wednesday night meetings. Unfortunately, Covid did not allow for this to resume.
- Trunk or Treat alongside FLY
- CPR Training with Andrea Paschal
- Senior lunches were held before Covid hit and twice virtually since Covid
- Daytrippers went to Charlotte before Covid
- Parking lot music events were held twice in July and again in September
- C&C created and adopted the below safety and security measures for planned events:

#### Safety and Security Duties - Care and Connections

- The Care and Connections Ministry is tasked with safety planning for smaller events such as senior lunch, H3 groups, potluck Sundays and various other fellowship events
- Our committee recognizes that there are several events in which we need to make sure we provide a safe environment to attendees. Below are our recommendations:
- H3 groups: each leader shall be responsible for holding their meetings in a safe environment. If a meeting occurs in a members' home, the homeowner will be responsible for making sure they have doors that lock if needed, proper lighting for home access and availability to call for first responders if necessary. If a meeting is to be held in the church after hours, the leader is responsible for making sure the doors remained locked while meeting. If someone needs to come in, they may access the door with the security code.
- Senior Lunch meetings will be carried out in well-known and safe environments.
- Presbyterian Women: All functions held by PW should be held in safe environments. It is the responsibility of the PW leadership to provide safety checks such as locked doors at all events. As mentioned above, if meetings are held in homes, it is the homeowners responsibility to provide safe environments. If events are held at church, it is the leadership's responsibility to make sure doors are properly monitored and locked at the conclusion of events. Leadership should have cell phones available for emergencies.
- Potluck Sundays and other C&C events held at the church: The chair of C&C will be responsible for making sure doors remained locked during events. If doors are opened to the patio for example, proper inspection after the event to make sure doors are locked will be the responsibility of the ministry chair.
- C&C Ministry Meetings: when monthly meetings occur at the church, the outside doors are to remain locked. Unless the church is open at the time, committee members will access the meeting room via the outside coded door. The C&C chair will have a cell phone for emergencies.

C&C is desperately praying for the Covid numbers to decline as we anticipate a vaccine to come soon. Until then, we are doing our best to plan fellowship opportunities in a safe manner for all to enjoy. Some of the new activities that we hope to pursue in 2021 include a BBQ, oyster roast and outside coffee times before and after worship. We will begin to plan for a 2022 church retreat at Montreat. We are also trying to put together plans for a safe event in the spring for the congregation.

### Presbyterian Women

\*Presbyterian Women Officers in January of 2020 were: Sandy Helfer, Moderator; Caroline Streater, Moderator-elect; Beth Rozek, Secretary; Marje Warner, Treasurer; Stuart Hunter, Historian; Margaret Haymaker and Peggy Ann Burr, Missions Co-Chairs; Claudia McCollough, Spiritual Enrichment. The Pandemic changed PW planning and programs significantly, but new officers were installed on Sunday, August 9<sup>th</sup> and were Caroline Streater, Moderator; Ginny Jones, Moderator-Elect; Beth Rozek, Secretary; Linda Etheredge, Treasurer; Linda Team, Historian; Kathy Pittman and Julie Warren, Mission Co-Chairs; and Margaret Haymaker and Barbara Holbrook, Spiritual Enrichment. Caroline Streater was honored as a lifetime member of PW. A livestreamed kick-off for all circles was held on August 31<sup>st</sup> and several of the circles have met either virtually or in a hybrid fashion. The Mary Gooding Smith Scholarship recipients were Rose Beacham and Lindsay Cribbs. Benevolent support given directly by our PW Circles included: Birthday Offering - \$1445.00, Thank Offering - \$707.00, Local and Region Missions - \$2,477.52, and Support of Presbytery, Synod, & Churchwide Presbyterian Women - \$1,110.00.

### Ministry of Education

**Ministry Moderator: Eddie Bolton**

Focus has continued on the encouragement and support of developing disciples and transforming head, heart and hands in the service of Jesus Christ. Education tries to tell the stories of youth and children, so the congregation is connected inter-generationally.

We give thanks for the gifts and service of Andrea Paschal, FLPC's Director of Faith Formation, who resigned from the position in September 2020.

- In the spring, we readjusted by moving a lot of education programming to Zoom, including Time with Young Disciples and Sunday school.
- Andrea Paschal conducted many "driveway visits" and mailed weekly packets to families of young children.
- All third graders were presented Bibles on behalf of FLPC.
- A new curriculum for our children has been approved and is now being used: *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible Curriculum*.
- Confirmation classes for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders using the new PC(USA) curriculum, Big God, Big Questions, began in the fall.
- A Zoom children's Christmas program will be presented to the congregation on December 13.

- Thanks to the hard work of our library committee, FLPC's library catalog is available online.
- In August, the Education Ministry hosted a "Drive-Up" Back to School Blessing.
- At the beginning of the year, Forest Lake Youth (FLY) continued with their regular Sunday night and mid-week programming. They also had special events such as an Epiphany gathering, Souper Bowl of Caring, and youth Sunday.
- With the start of COVID, FLY switched to virtual gatherings via Zoom.
- During the summer, the Youth Director conducted "Front Porch/Driveway" visits with the youth, youth advisors, and Sunday school teachers.
- In the Fall, FLY restarted Sunday school, Sunday school, and mid-week activities usually outdoors with Social distancing guidelines in place.

Education continues to be very busy. All these programs, and so many more, are dependent upon volunteers from the congregation. We are grateful to the many members who give their time and talents to provide all the Educational Opportunities throughout the year.

## **Ministry of Personnel**

### **Moderator: Bud Hult**

#### **Introduction:**

To state the obvious, the year 2020 has been unusual and challenging. As with other FLPC ministries, Personnel has dealt with several unexpected policy matters either directly or indirectly related to the Covid 19 pandemic and/or this most divisive political election year. The following report provides a quarterly record of the work highlights of our ministry. Although necessary and important, some typical meeting agenda items such as annual staff review reports (with one exception) are not included in these highlights. All highlights which deserve special mention are bolded in black. In the first quarter, from January through March, while the church was open and fully functioning, we had four face to face meetings. One of these was a Called Meeting on January 21 for the purpose of hiring Shannon Fancher as Business Manager. For the last three quarters, from April to December, Personnel meetings were conducted via Zoom. Dominant themes for many of the early meetings in this period involved setting policies and procedures for staff as related to the Covid shutdowns of schools and the church. For the last two quarters, the dominant themes shifted to budget plans for 2020-21, transition plans for fully reopening the church, and plans to satisfactorily fulfill the vacated duties of the Director of Faith Formation, as a result of the resignation of Andrea Paschal. For all meetings through May, the minutes were excellently written and distributed by Jane Thesing, an accomplished secretary who served Personnel for several years. Unfortunately for us, Jane retired after the May meeting and the secretarial duties were then rotated for the remainder of the year. In the final quarter, two more of our most experienced and talented members, Judy Timmons and Rebecca Krueger retired for personal reasons. Fortunately, they were replaced by two very energetic and capable new members, Katherine Lockwood and Erlinda McCoy. Other Personnel Ministry members who served throughout 2020 were; David Hunter, RD Folsom and Drew Radeker. Our Senior Pastor, Ellen Skidmore significantly coordinated and scheduled much of the business which Personnel accomplished this past year.

### **First Quarter (January – March)**

**January 21 (Called Meeting).** --Personnel approved both the letter of offer to **Shannon Fancher for the position of Business Manager, and the process of hiring her. This completed, Shannon's first day of work was February 10.**

**January 28 Meeting** (Rescheduled from February)---It was reported that the 2020 approved budget for FLPC staff provided a 2% salary increase and a 1% bonus (based on a 2019 surplus) for each staff member.

**March 3 Meeting---** **1)** The property management contract with Trinity Property Solutions (TPS) was completed.----**2)** The contract with TR Bookkeeping Services and Stacy Rivera was reported to be in place and that Stacy was being paid as a contract employee. This contract includes a list detailing the responsibilities of both the new Business Manager and those of TR Bookkeeping Services.---- **3)** Our new Kitchen Coordinator, Laura Wannamaker, was reported to be advancing her credentials by taking a ServSafe class. An important question was whether she would be required to pass a standardized class post-test to keep her position approval. After investigation, it was determined that because FLPC is not a DHEC Kitchen (not subject to requirements of DHEC approval), Laura was not required to take and pass this test. However, since the class is a “Best Practice”, Personnel encouraged Laura to take the test and assumed responsibility for the required test fee. Moreover, Personnel was willing to pay Laura for the hours she spent studying for the test.-- -- **4)** As part of the transition for dealing with the pandemic and school closings, Personnel conducted an e-mail vote on March 17 in order to provide temporary FLPC childcare support for two staff members. With some safety qualifications added, the vote passed unanimously.

### **Second Quarter (April—June)**

**April 7 Meeting-** **1)** As reported by Ellen, the use of new questions in the annual review process for some staff members resulted in the revision of their respective position descriptions in a positive way. These revised staff position descriptions were proposed and approved. ----**2)** **As part of the Stage 1 recommendations for Personnel from Session,** Ellen reported that the church office hours have been reduced for all staff. Only two staff could be scheduled for office work from 8:30-1pm Monday through Friday. Staff will work remotely using the Office 365 software and be available by appointment for in-person, hospital or other facility visitation. In addition, the office staff would have responsibilities for some security actions- locking doors, turning out lights. Ellen asked for discretion of closing the office when it is necessary. This request was unanimously approved.

**May 5 Meeting-** **1)** Personnel discussed extensively the PPP loan. It was reported that FLPC applied for a Payroll Protection Program Loan- available through the CARES Act from the federal government . On May 4<sup>th</sup>, our church received \$78,109 in federal funds as a forgivable loan for payroll. This money must be used to continue payroll for our staff. Concerns were raised about the public perception of the church in receiving federal money and there was agreement that these would be communicated to Session and S&A. If possible, It was recommended that, at year's end this money be repaid to the federal government.----**2)**Ellen reported what the staff are currently doing to keep the church office working and operating in a safe fashion. She stated that although there is an immense amount of information on covid and church policy guidelines, it is often conflicting so that



different churches and denominations are all doing different things. Personnel expressed strong support for requiring all outside visitors to wear masks, observe social distancing and use hand sanitizer where advised. **Personnel was unanimous on the message to staff: Err on the side of being safe and careful.**

**June 2 Meeting-** 1) Ellen reported that staff are now coordinating with one another to assure office coverage while also recognizing the need to be in the office outside the current scheduled hours. This need for flexibility and coordination is based on concern that increased presence by staff as well as increased cars in the lot would send the **wrong** signal at this time— that FLPC is returning to “business as usual”. 2) The **FLPC Covid 19 Reopening Office Guidelines** document was conditionally passed after extensive discussion and edits in real time. The final draft was approved by e-mail and then approved at the June session meeting. This is the official document which includes detailed descriptions of FLPC actions as well as required employee actions to ensure that FLPC is actively working to mitigate the spread of infectious diseases such as Covid-19 in the workplace and to enable FLPC to transition to **stage 2 in** reopening. All FLPC employees were required to and all did eventually sign this document.

### **Third Quarter (July-September)**

#### **There was no meeting in July**

**August 4 Meeting-** 1) On an update of the Kitchen Coordinator ServSafe class and certification, Ellen reported that Laura Wannamaker is still waiting for the ServSafe testing centers to reopen and when that happens, she will take the certification exam.----2) Concerning the FLPC Covid-19 reopening, Ellen reported that the staff was back to regular hours. The staff agreed that they should each wear masks as they come and leave the building and every time they leave their offices. Ellen cautioned that because this was still a transition period, measures should be taken to discourage too much traffic in the office.----3) From a survey, on whether and when to return to in-church services, Ellen reported that about 70% voted to wait for some period of time while about 30% voted to return immediately. She mentioned that she was leaning toward reopening church services in late September or early October.----4) Under new business, the committee briefly reviewed the first draft of the FLPC Staff Emergency Policy document. This includes a comprehensive plan for staff procedures in the event of severe weather, natural disasters and active shooter(s). Several recommendations were approved for revising this document.

**September 1 Meeting-** 1) Personnel recognized and applauded **Laura Wannamaker for passing the ServSafe exam.** In each of our meetings from March to August, Personnel got updates on Laura’s situation in her efforts to improve her credentials as Kitchen Coordinator. Throughout, she has shown great patience and determination and we so appreciate her accomplishment.----2) **Personnel approved a motion to officially move to stage 2 of the FLPC COVID-19 opening guidelines** as described in the Ministry Overview Stage 1 and Stage 2 Recommendations.----3) **The resignation of Andrea Paschal, Director of Faith Formation was accepted and approved.**----4) Discussion focused on several Personnel activities and responsibilities which needed to be addressed following Andrea’s resignation. These include: a) Conducting and exit interview with Andrea; b) Meeting and planning with current staff on how to temporarily assume some or all of Andrea’s duties as DFF; c) Deciding if the DFF position should continue as is or be modified in some way; d)

Planning a way for the congregation to thank and honor Andrea for all her work and service at FLPC.

#### **Fourth Quarter (October-December)**

**October 6 Meeting- 1)** Several activities were discussed in relation to Andrea Paschal resignation as DFF. These included the many ways in which she was thanked by Personnel and the FLPC congregation as well as the completed exit interview which yielded valuable information for a transition plan to ensure that our Christian Education Program is supported. --- **2)** Ellen reported that many of the DFF duties which Andrea leaves are being assumed by four staff members. Where these duties are significant, the staff will be paid a per/hour rate and keep time-cards for accurate compensation. This arrangement should help evaluate the needs of our educational program and facilitate decisions on what staff configuration best serves FLPC moving forward. --- **3)** Personnel voted to inform Stewardship and Administration that Personnel's majority wishes to repay the funds provided for us through the PPP (CARES Act) since it appears that we will not need that money to retain our staff for 2020.

**November 3 Meeting- 1)** A special tribute of thanks was given to Judy Timmons and Rebecca Krueger for all their many years of good service to Personnel. Both are now retiring and are being replaced by Katherine Lockwood and Erlinda McCoy. The latter were given a warm welcome. --- **2)** With some minor amended changes, **the Staff Emergency Policy and Procedures Guidelines document was approved by a unanimous vote.** **3) -- Personnel approved a proposed 2021 budget totaling \$508,980. This is unchanged from the 2020 budget.----4)** After total expenses for 2020, Personnel expects to have a surplus in their annual budget. After some discussion, Personnel favored recommending that Session give one time, annual bonuses to all staff, using some of the year end surplus from the Personnel budget. This would not involve any increase in annual salaries. Exact bonus increase figures per each staff member have not yet been determined.

**December 1 Meeting- 1) Personnel approved a motion that each staff member would receive an 8% bonus check for 2021. This was based on its available surplus and that there would be no staff salary increases for next year. The total cost of an 8% bonus for each employee would be \$26,443.15. This recommendation will be voted on at the January 2021 Stated Session Meeting.----2)** Ellen stated that careful evaluation of how the duties of the former Director of Faith Formation, Andrea Paschal, are being differentially assumed by staff is important and will continue into 2021. This is to address the question(s), "Do we need to hire a new DFF or should this position be changed?"---**3)** Selected proposed revisions of the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual were reviewed. These focus on: a) Clarifying the benefits for part-time employees that work more than 20 hours per week as well as differentiating between Salaried and Hourly employees, and, b) Updating The Personal Leave section to include how part-time employees accrue such leave. Personnel members were asked to review the recommendations for discussion and voting at the January 2021 meeting.

## **Ministry of Property**

### **Moderator: William Hunter**

- Transitioned from a property management company to a part time in house Business Manager.
- Installed the handrails in the chancel given by Jim Rowell in memory of Jane Rowell.
- Installed a dehumidifier in the library and continued work to fix a recurrent roof leak.
- Replaced the HVAC units in the parlor and library.
- Replaced the Ginko tree, that had been given in honor of Karen and Travis Webster and that had been injured by the yard service.
- Held a clean-up day April 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Gutters were installed.
- Continuous replacement of the LED lights in the Sanctuary as they go out. It appears there are only about 15 lights left to be replaced.
- Kitchen Coordinator, Laura Wannamaker, successfully completed the ServSafe class and examination.
- Removed a dead pine tree, the sycamore tree from the playground and dead bushes from the property.
- Used Endowment Fund reward to purchase new washer and dryer.
- Filled sink holes in the field.
- Don Keever donated a refrigerator to the church.
- With a partnership with Dominion Energy switched florescent bulbs to LED ballast and bulbs in the Community Room, downstairs offices, choir room, stair well, welcome center lobby, connecting point lobby, S211, S212, and downstairs restrooms. Have plans in place to replace more in 2021, and complete the project in 2022. This work addresses our goal of reducing the amount of energy FLPC uses.
- Welcomed Lillian Dennis to the property ministry as the new secretary. After years of dutiful service, Judy Timmons decided to step down as secretary.
- Worked on Covid 19 policies for the kitchen and use of facility.
- The elevator had a period where it was not working properly. After several service visits, it appears to work properly now.
- The bus was vandalized and the catalytic converter was stolen. This was replaced. The battery was also not holding a charge, even after replacement. A kill switch was installed so the battery could be disconnected when not used.
- William Hunter and Sissy Ervin disassembled a rotten and unsafe wooden structure on the playground. A company was hired to remove the wood and various other items around the church.
- Motion sensors were installed in the stairwell at the welcome center and outside the second floor elevator door to reduce energy use.
- Reviewed liability insurance and renewed the church's limits of coverage.
- A schedule was created to monitor when preventative maintenance should be accomplished.
- The fellowship hall sound system quit working and was fixed.
- The library roof continued to have leaks. Through our warranty, the company made several repairs. They then performed a water test and found and repaired a few more spots. This has stopped further leaks.

- The handrails next to the playground were peeling and beginning to rust. A company came and sandblasted the railings and repainted them.
- About  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the church's sidewalks were power washed.
- Annual re-waxing of tile floors

### **Ministry of Service and Benevolence**

#### **Moderator: Anne Fowler**

Although 2020 was not the year we had planned, God was at work through heads, hearts and hands of the FLPC congregation and members of this ministry. And while many of our projects were canceled or postponed, FLPC proved that despite a global pandemic, we would find ways to serve in 2020. 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 16) churches to commit to this mission, helping deal with families in need because of homelessness.

FLPC served the Family Promise organization in monetary donations this year instead of hosting families at the church due to the COVID shutdown. FLPC provided \$3,350 to support the housing and living expenses of homeless families through the Family Promise organization. The Christmas Eve offering is designated to support Family Promise of the Midlands.

Linda Byrum and Christi Cooper were co-coordinators for the program and attended monthly zoom meetings for all church coordinators in the program. Some highlights of the program this year:

- Continue to support families who have completed the program to ensure they do not slip back into homelessness.
- A donation of a mobile home by Clayton Homes was dedicated as a transitional home for a family in the program.
- Qualified families are housed in apartments, motels and other housing provided by companies at reduced rates.
- Tomorrow's Promise provides enrichment activities (Sports, music, art, dance) for students of homeless families.

Family Promise has done a great job continuing to support the homeless this year. FLPC looks for

#### **Environmental Stewardship:**

FLPC continued to maintain and encourage all of our congregation to participate in caring for God's Earth while safely modifying our activities starting in the Spring due to Covid 19.  
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- Recognition—FLPC received our Ten Year Certificate as a Presbyterians for Earth Care Congregation, our Three Year Certificate as a PEC Hunger Action Congregation, and recertification by the Columbia City Green Business Program.

- Community Service and participation—Our semiannual FLPC Adopted Gills Creek Waterway Cleanups through Keep the Midlands Beautiful led FLPC volunteers. We collected over 500 pairs of shoes for Keep the Midlands Beautiful Shoe recycling- by-reusing project. We interacted with local congregations through Greenfaith and hosted a dinner program in March about Climate Action for Columbia area congregations.
- Recycling—Our church recycling was collected by Forest Acres, and our congregation was encouraged to participate in our Terracycle recycling- by- upcycling program and donating used ink cartridges to benefit Camp Fellowship. The composting from our kitchen was made and used in our Kids' Garden.
- Gardening-- Our 3 gardens –SCWF certified Habitat Garden, Raingarden, and Kids' Garden (donated all produce of fruit and vegetables to Rehoboth UMC Food Pantry)-- were maintained by our Green Garden Team with volunteers.
- Education--Our planned “Love All God’s Creatures” Earth Sunday Events were postponed until 2021, but education continued with our media, worship, and during activities.

### **Support for Local Schools**

FLPC staff attend the quarterly NERMA (Northeast Richland Ministerial Alliance) meetings Richland School District Two facilitates. These meetings are attended by many other Columbia congregations of various denominations for the purpose of providing information about RSD2 and how these congregations can support the schools.

### **Backpack Program**

The Forest Lake Presbyterian Church Back Pack program exists to provide weekend meals for elementary students who attend Forest Lake Elementary School and who suffer from food insufficiency. It has been estimated that 57% of the all its students are members of families eligible for free and reduced breakfast and lunch programs.

When Covid hit, changes had to be made, and in November 2020, district administration decided to temporarily suspend Back Pack programs and instead take advantage of federal food programs that could meet the needs of all its students. Therefore, during the calendar year 2020, the usual cycle of delivery was reduced to a total of 22 weeks with a total of 640 weekend packs delivered.

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

Although we were unable to host Unumb Center for their annual summer camp, we did make a donation to Unumb, and we look forward to hosting them in the future.

### **Meal Packaging Event**

FLPC was scheduled to host a meal packaging event through The Outreach Program, on Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Due to Covid, we decided to postpone the event to 2021, when it is safe to hold a gathering at church.

**Elf Tree:**

In 2020, We served 6 schools: Forest Lake, Dent, Condor, Keels, Windsor and Jackson Creek.

One hundred thirteen (113) children from those schools were provided gifts.

Another twenty-four (24) older children received gift cards. Jodi coordinated that effort.

In addition to gifts and gift cards, several congregation members donated money with which to buy gifts. That money was used to purchase gifts for the elves left on the tree and for a donation to Shelvis and Nancy Smith - Mather.

**Homeless Kits**

Service & Benevolence again 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. Due to Covid, we were no longer able to procure gift cards, so we adjusted the price of the kits to \$3. 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. In 2020, approximately 20 kits had been purchased by congregation members.

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

Throughout this time of the COVID-19 pandemic, MORE Justice continues to advocate for positive systemic change in our community. Presently, all MORE Justice meetings are being held remotely. Below is a summary of where things stand in the four problem areas MORE Justice is tackling right now:

- Mental health: Things have been progressing steadily toward the Richland County Sheriff's Department and City of Columbia Police Department having all their officers certified in Crisis Intervention Training, which significantly reduces the potential for an outcome of injury or death in a law enforcement encounter with someone suffering from mental illness. The pandemic has slowed this progress because of training cancellations, but this largely seems to be back on track.
- Education: MORE Justice continues to advocate for more consistent, effective, and productive school climate and school discipline practices, asking that Richland One and Richland Two School Districts fully implement the programs and practices that those districts already endorse. Obviously, school is very different under present circumstances, and dealing with the pandemic seems to have taken first priority for the districts (which is understandable). Richland Two has taken recent steps toward a more robust implementation of its school climate enhancement practices, hiring two new employees for that purpose.
- Housing: The COVID-19 crisis has piled on an extra layer of hardship for those facing dire housing circumstances, particularly since South Carolina's temporary moratorium on evictions ended in May. In any event, such a moratorium is only a temporary treatment for a symptom of the chronic condition of unaffordable housing in our area. The last statistics we have indicate that 44% of renters in Richland County spend over 30% of their monthly income on housing expenses. With pandemic-related job losses and underemployment, that

figure has no doubt risen. A person making minimum wage would have to work 89 hours a week to earn enough to pay rent for a one-bedroom Columbia apartment at the average rent. The gap between the need for affordable housing and the number of affordable units available is also quite large in Columbia. Measures to deal with the Midlands' pervasive but rarely discussed housing affordability problem are being studied by Richland County Council now, and the affordable housing trust fund advocated by MORE Justice is being considered as a viable long-term option. (An affordable housing trust fund provides financing through grants and low-interest loans to developers who agree to covenants for their developments tying maximum rents to a percentage of area median income.) The City of Columbia has also convened a task force on Columbia's housing affordability problem, and a MORE Justice-designated member sits on that task force. The task force is in the process of making specific recommendations to the city.

· **Crime/gun violence:** This is the newest problem area MORE Justice has taken on. The membership voted to advocate for the implementation of Group Violence Intervention (usually called by its initials, GVI), a program that has been very successful in reducing gang and gang-related violence in a number of communities (including, somewhat famously, Boston, Massachusetts, as part of "the Boston miracle" in the 1990s). We are still in the stage of having discussions with local officials about implementing this program here.

### **Ministry of Hope**

S&B sent Julie Warren and Jodi Beckham on a mission trip to the Ministry of Hope home in Maseru, Lesotho in southern Africa, February 26 - March 9. Julie and Jodi travelled with Nancy Dimmock (MOH co-founder) and Sally Harwood (ex. dir.) along with 4 others from Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in NYC. This mission team worked on projects around the house like restoring an old chicken coop and resurfacing a patio but they would tell you the main purpose of the trip was to show these beautiful children Christ's love from the other side of the world. When they returned, Julie and Jodi spoke about the experience in Sunday worship in May, the children's Sunday school class, to Senior Lunch, and the youth Sunday school class.

### **Sandwich Blitz**

On Sunday, December 6, this congregation made over 850 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the soup kitchens at Transitions and Christ Central Ministries. Over 30 households participated in this service project. Participants brought their sandwiches to the Wreath Lighting that evening, making it a great a great way to connect and serve safely during COVID.

**Cooperative Ministry** held quarterly Congregational Advisory Committee meetings in 2020 attended by Pam Appleby and Jodi Beckham. These meetings are attended by various Columbia congregations to hear what is going on at CM and how we can help.

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

### **Ministry of Stewardship and Administration**

**Moderator: Elder Corky Clark**

The Stewardship and Administration Ministry (S&A) is comprised of seven (7) members including Elders Corky Clark and Dave Precht. S&A has oversight and responsibility for the financial and administrative functions of the Church including budget preparation and monitoring of the church's financial health. Stewardship activities are coordinated by S&A members Brad and Kristy Woodward with staff assistance provided by Eric Skidmore. Stewardship activities include the annual Stewardship campaign and wills emphasis/financial planning education events. The Endowment Committee has four (4) members including Chairman Corky Clark and Elder Dave Precht. The Endowment Committee is responsible for and reviews the Endowment fund's financial performance and determines the annual interest distribution amount in accordance with the Endowment Fund Agreement. The annual interest distribution amount and recommended projects must be reviewed and approved by both S&A and the Session. Ellen Skidmore and Shannon Fancher serve as staff liaisons to S&A and the Endowment Committee.

### **S&A 2020 Highlights**

After a successful Stewardship Campaign, the 2020 operating budget was set at \$811,062. This was \$11,890 over the prior year's budget.

On March 15<sup>th</sup> the Capital Campaign Feasibility Study Team, led by Dave and Suzanne Precht, reported to Session on their preliminary work indicating that 92 households would commit to almost \$900,000 in contributions toward a Capital Campaign to provide much needed renovations and long delayed maintenance items at the church. Based on the results



of the Feasibility Study the Session approved moving forward with a Capital Campaign with a goal of raising \$1,001,000 for the recommended projects including a 10% benevolent component.

On March 24<sup>th</sup> the Endowment Committee met to review fifteen (15) projects that were submitted by the various church ministries and the Board of Deacons. Grant Requests totaled \$70,200. The amount available for distribution was \$59,497. All projects were recommended for funding at either their full requested amount or at a slight reduction below the original request. Both S&A and Session approved the Endowment Committee's recommendations.

The endowment projects approved were:

- First Responders Luncheon - \$1,500
- Stephen Ministry & Deacon Speakers -\$1,000
- Spiritual Retreats - \$1,000
- Update FLY Room with Furniture & Drapes -\$5,200
- New Washer & Dryer - \$1,200
- Senior Resources - Meals on Wheels -\$9,000
- Pastor's Emergency Fund -\$4,897
- Unumb Center Autism Camp -\$600
- Helping Families in Need - Richland 2 -\$7,500
- Healthy Seminarians - \$1,200
- Live Streaming Supplement - \$1,600
- Thornwell - FLPC Endowment - \$6,000
- Thornwell - Operating Fund - \$7,000
- Advent Wreath -\$3,000
- Backpack Buddies -\$7,800

In April, with the full on-set of COVID-19, S&A recommended to Session that the Capital Campaign be put on hold and evaluated monthly for a possible restart date. Session approved the recommendation. Even though the Capital Campaign was put on hold, generous FLPC members have already contributed almost \$200,000 to the Campaign. In December, S&A recommended to Session that the Capital Campaign be restarted. Session approved that recommendation.

Also due to COVID-19, S&A recommended to Session and Session approved taking out a loan under the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). This was done out of an abundance of caution to ensure we could keep our staff employed even if our member contributions significantly declined during the year. Fortunately, we never needed to use the PPP funds and they were returned in-full to our bank in October.

In April, due to the hard work of Ellen Skidmore and Stewart Grinton, our Live Stream project was completed allowing us to stream our Sunday morning worship services. This project was funded primarily with Endowment funds.

In August S&A approved a proposal from The Hobbs Group to perform an Agreed Upon Procedures review of the church's financial records. FLPC endeavors to have a financial review every three (3) years. The Hobbs Group's work was completed and a final report received in November. There were a few minor exceptions noted in the report and the church Treasurer, Natalie O'Bradovich, addressed each of those in detail offering explanations and corrective action where appropriate.

The Financial Policy and Procedures Manual was reviewed and updated by S&A and the updates were approved by the Session in September.

The Stewardship campaign began in October and has received 223 pledges totaling \$713,639 toward our 2021 church budget. There are currently 311 total giving units (individuals and families) in our congregation. 72% of those church giving units have made a pledge of financial support as of December 30th.

### **Ministry of Worship**

#### **Ministry Moderator – Jane Shear**

2020 brought about a very different church year for FLPC. Our last service in the Sanctuary was March 15<sup>th</sup>. Worship approved a motion to support the Governor's directive for safety & gave Ellen, Beth & the Chair of Worship permission to decide, with Session's approval, when to again hold worship in our Sanctuary. All in person activities came to a screeching halt. New & innovative services took their place.

- Priority was given to live streaming. We decided to hold one Sunday service, 10 AM. Email links, along with emailed bulletins were provided for at home worship. The online service had some initial problems but is presently running smoothly. Our services were also carried on Facebook, YouTube & Vimeo.
- Drive in services (8:30 AM) began May 31<sup>st</sup> (Pentecost)—Ushers directed cars to socially distant parking. The signal was broadcast on a non-FM radio station which participants could tune into on their car radios. The sound system was also available for those who wished to listen to the service in that way. No one was allowed to get out of the car & Communion was not served. The last drive-in service was held September 13.
- Palmetto Pipes & Drums was held in the parking lot on September 27 & was a huge success.
- Musical events, held in the parking lot included a Hymn sing & a bluegrass event
- The Stage 2 reopening of the Sanctuary occurred September 20, following the Stage 2 guidelines.
- Prepackaged Communion elements were used for the October 4<sup>th</sup> Communion
- Police presence, which was started on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, has been discontinued until we return to more “ordinary times.”
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Beth & Sylvia, along with guest musicians, continue to provide the congregation with wonderful/meaningful music.

SPOCC continues to take the lead in serving as ushers, parking lot attendants & security guards.

ZOOM is used for meetings, the Children's Christmas program, prayer groups, etc. A new Advent display was designed by Margaret Harris. The design was approved by Worship, funded by an Endowment Fund Grant, and was dedicated December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Arts in worship, led by Margaret Harris & Jane Van Wyke, completed a new baptism hanging which was used for the baptism of Evan Taylor.

An Election Eve service was held November 2, 2020 that had a small congregation in attendance and that was livestreamed.

FLPC hosted Community Thanksgiving service in our sanctuary with community clergy leading worship. The service did not include a congregation in the sanctuary, but was livestreamed for all of the congregations.

Worship has taken the lead in preparing for Advent, decorating both the inside & outside of FLPC.

A Longest Night Service and two Christmas Eve Services were held. All of these services were livestreamed.

Our hope is that we will return to the Sanctuary in 2021. We do believe that some of the changes brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially live-streaming, have been positive additions for our members.

**NEXT YEAR IN THE SANCTUARY!**