

First Presbyterian Church
On the Square
Carlisle, PA



Annual Report
for 2021

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OUR VISION AND MISSION



“Through God’s love and power revealed in Jesus Christ and sealed by the Holy Spirit, we are called into a community of lively faith. Honored with a rich Presbyterian heritage, and committed to an enduring Christian witness, we respond to God’s grace through ministries of:

***Celebration**, worshiping God with gratitude and vitality;
and participating thankfully in community with each other;*

***Fellowship**, connecting people with each other and God in a Spirit of
wholeness and care in Christ’s name;*

***Spiritual enrichment**, educating people of all ages for growth in faith and service;*

***Outreach**, serving local and global missions in Christ’s name.*

The Meeting House on the Square is where deep roots are nourished and growing branches are celebrated in Christ’s name.”

First Presbyterian Church
Worshiping – Connecting – Educating – Serving
In Christ’s Name

AGENDA

**ANNUAL MEETING
First Presbyterian Church
On the Square
Carlisle, PA 17013**

Sunday, February 20, 2022

Call to Order with Prayer – Rev. Anthony D. Lorenz, Moderator

Clerk's Report

Declaration of a Quorum

Minutes of this meeting to be approved by the Session at its next Stated Meeting

Clerk's Report

Moderator's Comments

Committee / Group Reports

Pastor's Terms of Call – the Clerk

Adjournment with Prayer

PASTOR'S REPORT

February 20, 2022

Dear Friends,

An Annual Report attempts to capture the life and work of a congregation over the course of the year that has just passed. It is no easy feat. You don't need me to tell you that 2021 continued to be a year of disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We all struggled to find our footing during a time of uncertainty, learning to live with change in our ever-changing world.

The year began with a return to online only worship due to rapidly rising case numbers. By the beginning of March we were able to return to in-person worship in the sanctuary and observe the Season of Lent together as a congregation. Holy Week and Easter brought their own unique challenges when the pipe organ stopped working. Though the repair work was simple, it was not cheap, and the organ is once again serving us in worship.

The summer months provided a sense of relief as case numbers nose-dived and a sense that we were out of the woods prevailed. But then the variants showed up, first Delta and now Omicron. All these Greek letters remind me of studying Greek in college. The second half of the year has felt, at times, like a roller-coaster. At this point I think we all want off this ride!

2021 was a challenging year, I'm not going to sugar-coat it. We lost several long-time church members who were beloved by our congregation. Though many people have returned to in-person worship, we still struggle with what it means to have a digital worship experience, as well and how to integrate the two. We also face the reality of all churches these days as younger generations express little interest in traditional religious experiences and observances. How can we reach out to these generations with the Good News of Jesus Christ?

2021 has also been a year of great blessing. New members of our community have begun worshipping with us. We have been able to gather for times of fellowship and food, the church picnic was especially wonderful. The choir has returned and is once again providing beautiful music for our worship of God. And you have remained faithful and generous to the work and worship of First Presbyterian Church. Thanks to your generosity and the wise stewardship of the Finance Committee we are in better financial shape than we have been in several years.

Despite challenges and uncertainty in the world around us, there is one thing that remains sure and steady at all times, the steadfast love of God in the Lord Jesus Christ. Hebrews reminds us that though the world may change, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Let us hold fast to Jesus and in Him find life and love and salvation.

Yours very truly in Christ,
Pastor Tony Lorenz

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

RECEPTIONS

Baptism

Letter of Transfer

Reaffirmation of Faith

Profession of Faith

DISMISSALS

Letter of Transfer –

Fred Bean to Derry Presbyterian Church, Hershey, PA

Suspension/Removal to Inactive List –

Michael & Ashley Gogoj

Michael Stewart

DEATHS AND FUNERALS

Active Members:

Margaret Wolford Owen – February 2, 2021

Gloria M. McDowell – March 24, 2021

William Edwin Meashey – May 5, 2021

Ronald S. Palyo – August 20, 2021

Ruth Hockersmith Mowery – October 18, 2021

Ellen Jane Wallace Darr – November 19, 2021

Joseph E. Grabey – December 31, 2021

Inactive Members

Non-Members:

Roy L. Cogar – November 26, 2021

David F. Duncan – November 26, 2021

WEDDINGS

Colleen Bess Ashbaugh and Brian Alan Taylor – October 10, 2021

CLERK OF SESSION REPORT

The Session of First Presbyterian Church in Carlisle, Pa. consisted of 11 Ruling Elders in 2021: Richard Darr, Deb Ryerson, Ray Thomas, David Killian, Barbara Allen, Lynda Mann, Joe Shane, Fred Seltzer, Bruce Bailey, Carlton Walker and Charlie Thompson.

Our Session met 12 times through the course of 2021, several times through Zoom conference call facilities, and then returned to in-person meetings at the church as vaccines against COVID-19 emerged, case counts started to drop and we reopened the church for modified in-person worship.

Minutes of all Session meetings are kept in the church office and are available for review by any interested member.

On Nov. 21, 2021, following worship, we had our first in-person congregational meeting since the onset of the pandemic in March 2020 for the election of the following candidate slates to new terms of service as Ruling Elders and Deacons.

Elder, for two-year terms ending in 2023:

Lyn Barr; Denise Kelly

Elder, for three-year terms ending in 2024:

Dr. Bruce Bailey; Richard Bressler; Carlton Walker

Deacon, for a two-year term ending in 2023:

Susan Palyo

Deacon, for three-year terms ending in 2024:

Connie Husler; Dennis Husler; Megan Crum; Suzanne McKinnon

The Session expresses our thanks and appreciation to Bruce Bailey and his fellow Nominating Committee members Deb Ryerson, Lynda Mann and Tracy Sommers for their diligent efforts in filling these slates.

We did not welcome any new members to our rolls in 2021, but we trust that we will be adding to our numbers in the year to come. We mourned the deaths of seven members, and saw four others transfer to other churches or ask to be withdrawn from our rolls. This leaves our current active membership list at 228.

On behalf of the Session, I want to let the congregation know that we are grateful for the steady guidance Reverend Lorenz has provided through the course of the coronavirus pandemic. While each of us has surely had our own strong opinions about what safety protocols should be in place at which venue, through it all Tony has been focused on keeping our church free of any outbreaks and our congregation, as a body, as safe as possible. There were no guidebooks for leading a church congregation through a pandemic, but I think it can be said, Tony's leadership was an outstanding – if not always understood or appreciated – expression of Christian love and concern for our members.

For the Session, I would also like to note the outstanding work of our staff in directing worship, keeping the administrative affairs of the church humming, and keeping our historic building in good shape through the year.

We also tip our hat to the unsung heroes who make sure those of us who are not physically present in the pews have the fullest possible access to our worship services: Ray Thomas, Joe Shane and, again, YouTube uploader Pastor Tony.

And we appreciate the happy help offered by the Rev. Bill Beck, whether it be assisting in worship, filling in for Tony when he's off, or helping to deepen our understanding of our faith in Sunday school classes.

Looking ahead, and understanding that we can't fully know what the course of the pandemic will be in 2022, this is a good time to think about not letting its restrictions become an excuse for being a lesser version of ourselves. Believe me, I write these lines as much in encouragement to myself as anyone else, cognizant of the creeping tendency to let the times we're in become a reason to put things off, or not act at all. So let's be thinking what we can do in 2022 to enhance our faith journey together. Maybe that's checking in with a fellow congregation member that you haven't seen for a while; inviting a friend, family member or colleague to a Sunday service or other program; participating in one of our activities or projects like Space for God, the next church rummage sale, or assisting the Deacons with one of their many expressions of care. It is in exercising these "faith muscles" that we can make First Presbyterian the brightest reflection of God's love that it can be.

Faithfully submitted,
Charlie Thompson
Clerk of Session

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Committee Members: Pastor Tony Lorenz, Lynda Mann, Ron Richcreek, Art Thompson, Richard Tritt, Deb Ryerson (chair).

The Committee supports the activities of those who plan and lead worship on a weekly basis, including Pastor Tony, music director Ron Richcreek and organist Art Thompson, for whom we are all grateful.

The COVID pandemic, while starting to weaken, continued to challenge activities at First Presbyterian, and for all churches. We continued worshipping remotely during January and February. We re-opened for worship in March but had a well-orchestrated system in which congregants had to make reservations and were seated by ushers according to a safety-inspired seating grid. Elder Fred Seltzer created the grid and led other ushers in achieving proper social distancing during this time.

The Worship Committee, along with Session, advised the Pastor on worship practices and the ever-evolving question of whether or not to worship in person.

- Our committee met four times (Feb. 10, April 14, Nov. 8, and Dec. 10) in 2021 but also continuously worked to provide readers and ushers and to prepare pre-packaged communion elements, once in-person communion resumed.
- The Lenten Concerts and Soup Luncheons were canceled once again in 2021. However, Pastor Tony suggested we do a canned soup collection for Project SHARE in lieu of our usual luncheon profit contributions. Partnership for Better Health matched our contributions.
- Around late spring, we stopped requiring worship reservations and began using the balcony again. Although Good Friday attendance was weak, everyone was pleased with live Easter attendance.
- Like last year, the Worship Committee handled Christmas decorating prior to the first Sunday in Advent. Specifically, those assisting were Bob Davis, Trudy and Bruce Bailey, Lynda Mann, Deb and Ron Richcreek and Deb Ryerson. Rick Line, Lynda Mann, and Deb Ryerson took the decorations down in early January 2022. Instead of a Hanging of the Greens luncheon, Parish Life assisted us with a Soup Luncheon following worship on Dec. 5.
- The committee once again offered the sale of both virtual and real poinsettias at Christmas to honor friends and loved ones. For the first time, at least in recent memory, the committee bought them from Ashcombe's, which provided a great price and especially good quality.

- Lynne Hofferica agreed to continue working on the flower aspect of worship. The committee will once again invite members to purchase flowers in memory or honor of loved ones but will not do this every week. We also will continue to use the lovely silk seasonal arrangements purchased last year. Details of the fresh flower purchases will be worked out in early 2022.

Sunday Attendance by Month, 2021:

Having met virtually for part of the year and then by reservation, our best attendance figures come from the second half of 2021. Below, we have listed the total and average attendance for each month.

	Total	Avg
• July	216	54
• August*	220	44
• September	187	47
• October*	224	45
• November	234	58
• December	204	51

Average Weekly Attendance for July-Dec. 2021: 49

(* Months with 5 Sundays)

- Christmas Eve, 5 p.m. 15
- Christmas Eve, 8 p.m. 59

Respectfully submitted,
 Deb Ryerson
 Chair, Worship Committee

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

As we were able to open our doors again for worship, in-person Sunday school resumed. Pastor Tony and Reverend Bill Beck led the adult class in an exploration of what it means to be a Presbyterian. A combined children and youth class was led by Barb Crum, Lynne Hofferica and Joe Shane using the *Feasting on the Word* curriculum which follows the liturgical calendar.

During times when we were unable to meet in-person, we were blessed with the technology to have Wednesday evening Bible Study, also led by Pastor Tony and Rev. Bill Beck. This was an excellent way to remain connected and to discuss God's word.

Respectfully submitted,
Joe Shane
Chairman, Christian Education Committee

PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

Again this year, a big word of thanks to all who donated their time and refreshments to help make Fellowship Hour a welcome part of our Sunday service. Your weekly contribution to the hospitality of our congregation following worship is truly appreciated!

The Deacons on the committee, Anita Ashbaugh, Connie Husler and Deb Richcreek, always stood at the ready to volunteer their time and efforts to the Committee's events. A special word of thanks to Deb Richcreek for always being such a go-to source of advice and help. So many others helped out frequently too, contributing food items and whatever was needed to support various events. Thanks to all!

Highlights of 2021 events include:

WELCOME BACK TO SUNDAY SCHOOL: A Potluck/Sandwich Luncheon was held to welcome all back to the regular Sunday school season. Held at Letort Park on October 3rd, the event was well-attended with many in the congregation contributing side dishes and desserts. Thank you to all who attended!

HANGING OF THE GREENS: Instead of our usual Hanging of the Greens – a full-congregation participation event – a small group made up of Worship Committee members and friends decorated the church beautifully in 2021.

THE ADVENT LUNCHEON was held on December 5th, consisting of soup, bread & dessert. The soups were delicious! Thanks to all who contributed, served, and cleaned up afterwards. Thanks to all!

I owe a huge thanks to all those who lent their talent and expertise to make the “life of the parish” so vibrant during my six years as Committee Chairman. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted,
Ray Thomas
Chairman, Parish Life Committee

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The 2021 Nominating Committee consisted of: Bruce Bailey, chair; Lynda Mann; Tracy Sommers; and Deb Ryerson.

After careful consideration of skill sets needed on both boards, attempting to have all facets of our church family represented, and our nominees' ability to serve at this particular time, the committee was able to nominate the following slates to the congregation:

SESSION:

3-year term: Bruce Bailey (2nd term), Richard Bressler & Carlton Walker (2nd term)

2-year term: Lyn Barr & Denise Kelly

DEACONS:

3-year term: Megan Crum, Connie Husler (2nd term), Dennis Husler (2nd term) & Suzanne McKinnon

2-year term: Susan Palyo

The congregation elected these officers without opposition at a congregational meeting held after worship on November 21, 2021. We are grateful for their willingness to serve, and for the careful consideration given by all prospective candidates we reached out to.

Respectfully submitted,
Bruce Bailey,
Chairman, Nominating Committee

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

In 2021, the Human Resources Committee consisted of: Dick Darr (chair); Ellen Darr; Barb Allen; Jim Crum; Vicki McLaughlin; and Tracy Sommers.

The committee met several times in 2021 and continued to consider the vacant Christian Educator position. The position was advertised through the Carlisle Presbytery and other neighboring presbyteries. After several months of no interest and/or applications, we were frustrated and decided to begin reassessing the situation.

Staff reviews were conducted periodically and a full review was conducted at the end of the year with the Head of Staff. All staff members are doing well in their jobs and performing at high levels. Raises, varying up to three percent, were approved for all staff by the committee and then by Session.

We were saddened by the untimely death of Ellen Darr who served on the HR Committee for many years. Her care and compassion for the church staff will be deeply missed. Due to Ellen's illness and Dick's need to be with her, Elder Barb Allen led the HR Committee in the last few months of 2021.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Human Resources Committee,
Pastor Tony

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Introductory Remarks

During the year, in-house financial reports received by the Stewardship and Finance Committee were changed from an accrued accounting basis to a cash accounting basis as recommended by our comptroller and approved by the Committee. An important advantage of the cash basis method is that it facilitates the reporting of directed benevolence giving such as Food Bank, One Great Hour, Blanket Fund, etc. on the Income and Mission statements, for example, and that these amounts can be easily tracked.

In-person meetings of the Stewardship and Finance Committee resumed in May. The previous monthly meetings during 2021 were held via Zoom due to the ongoing pandemic.

The following describes the normal process and methods used by the Stewardship and Finance Committee to prepare the budget for 2021:

During 2020, the various session committees were responsible for monitoring expenses within their respective areas. Based on that monitoring, each Session Committee chairperson had the opportunity for 2021 budget input. The Stewardship and Finance Committee was responsible for monitoring all aspects of financial matters for the congregation including the gathering and analysis of data to be used for the upcoming budget proposal. In accordance with their responsibility, the Church Session made all final financial decisions throughout the year 2021.

The 2021 budget was an estimate of the anticipated income and expenses of the church with due consideration to the final results of several past budgets, pledges received as of 12/31/2020 and the latest data available on total expenses and income of the church through Nov. 30, 2020. Trying to predict the impact COVID-19 would have on a new budget complicated 2021 budget preparation. Following the process mentioned above, the Church Session approved the budget for 2021 at their December 2020 Session meeting.

Income and Expenses

The budget for 2021 anticipated an income of \$264,129 with projected expenditures of \$267,895 where income would receive an injection of \$3,766 from investment liquidations in order to balance the budget. These liquidations occurred during 2019 market highs in the expectation that the past pattern of successive budget shortfalls would continue indefinitely.

Major expenses during the year included raises in the cost of maintenance contracts and property insurance and the cost (approx. \$1,900) of replacing a failed power box in the pipe organ. (The failure occurred on Good Friday). However, a budget shortfall did not in fact occur because in 2021 income exceeded expenses by \$37,070 where actual income was \$260,853 and expenditures were \$223,783. It is important to note that the reason income exceeded expenses in 2021 was due in large part to the ongoing vacancy in the Christian Education position and the Choir Director position being filled late in the year.

Investments and Trusts

The church holds money in trusts and investments from the generosity of members and former members. The majority of these are held either by F & M Trust Company or in a New Covenant Fund, part of the Presbyterian Foundation. The church receives dividends and/or distribution checks throughout the year from these entities which are budgeted as income. In past years, shares of New Covenant Fund were redeemed to pay bills and meet payroll when a gap between income and expenses demanded such action. Fortunately, such was not the case for the year 2021.

Memorial Funds

Special gifts to our church are directed into one of two memorial funds. Gifts to the Davidson Property Fund are used for unexpected expenses related to the Church's physical property and grounds. Gifts to the Mission and Ministry Fund are used for unexpected expenses pertaining to the broader mission and ministry of the Church. Each Memorial Fund receives gifts that can be designated either as a donation or an endowment. Persons interested in making a gift to either fund should ask the church office for a copy of the May 2019 version of the Memorial Funds Description in order to determine which fund best suits their intentions. Additionally, consultation with the pastor is highly recommended.

Thank-you

To everyone who made a commitment to First Presbyterian Church by pledging in 2021, Thank You! We depend on your support for both the financial health and the vitality of our congregation. Likewise, Thank You to everyone who supported the work of the church during 2021 through special gifts and donations.

If you haven't yet pledged for 2022, it is not too late. Pledge forms, usually found on a table in the social hall, are still available. As you consider your pledge and/or support of First Presbyterian Church, please take some time to consider how God is leading you to support our congregation's mission and ministry. We are grateful for your generosity and we invite you to continue your generosity in 2022.

Respectfully submitted
Fred Seltzer
Chairperson, Stewardship and Finance Committee

~ Finance-related attachments provided separately ~
(Pages 15-25)

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

In 2021, the Property Committee supervised:

- Maintenance and inspections of the elevator and fire alarm systems
- Maintenance and partial replacement of the fire suppression system in the kitchen
- Regular maintenance of heating and cooling systems
- Significant replacement of valves and corroded black pipe in the boiler system
- Replacement of broken light switches in the basement, sanctuary and choir room
- Solving the high water bill problem. An outside pipe was cracked causing water to leak continually.

On behalf of the congregation we would like to thank our church sexton, Chuck Adler, for his good work of keeping our building clean and tidy, and to Mike Stamey for all his help.

In 2022, the property Committee will re-group to evaluate the needs of our historic structure and to continue the high level of maintenance performed in the past.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Property Committee,
Pastor Tony

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN
FAITH CIRCLE

Faith Circle meets every fourth Monday of each month at 2:00 PM from September through May. Officers are: Jean Kretzing (Moderator); Connie Husler (Secretary); and Debby Madden (Treasurer).

In the Fall we promote the Thank Offering and in the Spring the PW Birthday Offering. On Mother's Day we take turns helping with Deacons collect for Blanket Sunday (for Church World Service).

Debby Madden graciously offered to lead us in our Bible Study, based on the book Into the Light: Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament, by P. Lynn Miller. Currently we use the PW Horizon Bible Study, What My Grandmothers Taught Me, Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus, by Merryl Blair.

We are thankful for the many years Pat Grabey has been with us, serving as our secretary. Sadly missed but not forgotten is Ellen Darr, whose spiritual contributions inspired us all.

We welcome any who wish to join us!

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Kretzing
Moderator

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TREASURER'S REPORT

The Presbyterian Women's checkbook balances as of December 31, 2021:

Santander: \$ 3,046.98
M&T: \$ 5,810.51

The Presbyterian Women would like to thank the church's members and friends for their support during the year. The following donations were made for/to:

- Blanket Sunday: \$ 1,056.00
- Thank Offering: \$ 850.00
- Birthday Offering (to the National Presbyterian Women)
- First Presbyterian Church (to Board of Deacons for local missions)
- Project SHARE
- Pastor Tony (in support of the over-the-counter medical supply mission in Syria)

Nationally in 2021 when so many natural disasters occurred, PW sent funds to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for wildfires and tornados.

The Presbyterian Women of our church strive to support both financially and prayerfully as many organizations and individuals as possible.

Respectfully submitted,
Debby Madden
Treasurer

BOARD OF DEACONS

The Deacons who faithfully served the congregation in 2021 are: Anita Ashbaugh, Rita Beck, Ryan Crim, Jamie Hoffman, Connie Husler, Dennis Husler, Kari Kornish, Rick Line, Kathy Mulvey, Deb Richcreek, Tracy Sommers and Vicki McLaughlin.

In our congregation

We reached out to 12-15 members on our Care and Concern (formerly called Shut-ins) list through visits, cards, and phone calls. Home Communion were also served to include them as an important part of First Church.

We comforted 13 members who lost loved ones through the *Journeying Through Grief* program, a series of booklets that provide helpful insights on the process of grieving. We provide *These Days* devotional booklets for members and friends of our congregation. Recent initiatives that we continued are sending notes to members who were prayed for in congregational prayers each Sunday and at the Deacons' meeting. We also sent 16 gift cards and notes to our college students in December, just prior to finals week.

In our community

We served three Sunday evening dinners at "My Brothers' Table" at the Salvation Army; raised over \$207 in bell-ringing for the Salvation Army; and delivered 138 bags of holiday cookies to Carlisle Truck Stop Ministry. We continued to give Visitor Bags with information about us, our mission, and activities to new people who worship with us.

Monetary donations were sent to Community Cares, Adult Employment Skill Center, Project Share (an additional amount was sent in lieu of the donations typically received at Lenten Luncheons which were cancelled in 2021), Safe Harbour, SPY, Christian Counseling Center, Samaritan Fellowship, and Maranatha.

In lieu of our traditional Mission Sunday (cancelled due to COVID), we concentrated our mission focus on Community Cares. We provided one dinner and two breakfasts to the shelter in Carlisle, collected "urgently needed items," collected winter coats and blankets, and sponsored an Angel Tree to provide gifts for 15 children in the family shelter in Shippensburg.

In the world

Together with Presbyterian Women, we sponsored Blanket Sunday on Mother's Day. In honor of Father's Day we conducted a fundraiser that helped to fund meals for "My Brothers' Table" and other programs throughout the year.

Thank you to everyone in the congregation who supported our projects through donations.

Respectfully submitted,
Anita Ashbaugh and Rita Beck
Co-moderators