

# **Annual Report for 2025**



## **First Presbyterian Church**

Petaluma, California

PREPARED JANUARY 2026

print edition

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# Following Francis

JOHN CHASE, PASTOR

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My dear friends,

God's peace be with you! It is a privilege and a pleasure to share with you about our ministry together as First Presbyterian Church in 2025. I can't tell you how grateful I am to be here with you as your Pastor, and to join with you in discipleship, community, and service to Petaluma and to the world. You serve and lead in so many ways! Some of you are deacons and elders. Some serve on committees and commissions that help us make decisions about the work we do here and for the community. You work to feed the hungry, care for the sick, welcome the stranger, provide for the poor, and advocate for change in policy locally and nation-wide. You serve on local non-profit boards and give generously of your time and resources. You live out your faith in your lives at work, school, and home. Because of you, First Presbyterian Church is a healthy, vibrant church full of people who seek to follow Jesus and make a difference in the world. It is truly a joy to serve with you, and I continue to learn from you all about what discipleship looks like on the ground. Thank you.

It is also a joy to serve on this staff: Roger, Grete, Jane, Jenny, and Grant. They bring their energy, intelligence, imagination, and love to their work every day and I am grateful to call them colleagues and friends.

When I look back on 2025, it is clear that God is doing amazing things here through you all. At last year's Annual Meeting we joyfully honored Wayne Roberts for his outstanding servant leadership in 2024. Our worship of God continues to be full of energy, life, meaning, and depth. Our children's ministry is expanding, and I had the great joy of baptizing Tyler and Emily Relei. People of all ages are learning and growing in faith together. We gather for fellowship in many and diverse ways, building and strengthening relationships along the way. Our Presbyterian Women's group continues to grow in fellowship, study, and service. The Friday walking group, Drumming Circle, and Bingo Nights have provided wonderful opportunities for fellowship and fun. And we finally installed our permanent labyrinth that is occasionally (and beautifully) illuminated, and frequently walked by passersby.

This year you also gathered for Bible and book studies, sewed pillowcases for children battling cancer, planted and harvested produce from the church garden, stocked the veggie table and tended bees. You folded and hung origami peace doves in our sanctuary at a time when the world could really use a little more peace. You sang your hearts out, played instruments, rang bells, and made a joyful noise together. You mowed, pruned, painted, and repaired. You passed the plate, counted money, and managed spreadsheets. You lit candles, broke bread, sat in hospital rooms, sent cards, laughed and cried together. Because of your hospitality, our Petaluma neighbors and friends find a warm welcome here and quickly become an active part of our family of faith.

Financially, we are wrestling with the impact of inflation on our individual and church budgets, unexpected building costs, and the general cost of running a church. I am incredibly thankful for your continued generosity in giving! In February, construction will begin to renovate the Bethel House (church office) into a residential unit that will generate additional revenue. The office will likely be relocated to the downstairs of the Agape House. With growth, comes new challenges. Conversations are underway to figure out a more sustainable solution to manage our many tenants and our busy campus.

In terms of personal development, in 2025 I participated in a five-week leadership seminar out of which I developed a Community Green Initiative—five community engagement initiatives for the front lawn (“green”) of the church that include: (1) Neighborhood Block Party Concert Series, (2) Community Produce Stand, (3) Labyrinth, (4) All Hallows’ Eve Rest Stop, and (5) an expanded Blessing of the Animals Sunday celebration. Some of these have already taken shape! These initiatives serve our local community, foster relationships, reduce isolation, cultivate joy, encourage faith-based living, and enable our neighbors to come together on our campus. We have already met some fabulous neighbors in our B Street neighborhood.

This year I also found tremendous inspiration in the person and ministry of St. Francis of Assisi—my chosen subject for this year’s personal study and study leave. I fulfilled a lifelong dream, traveling to Italy and following in Francis’ footsteps, visiting humble chapels, spectacular cathedrals and quiet monasteries, walking forested trails, praying in dark caves where Francis prayed, and standing before his tomb in Assisi. A man of peace, reconciliation, justice and love, Francis is a source of wisdom for our time. It was a profound spiritual experience, capped off by miraculously running into Chris and Diane Olson in a crowded back alley in Assisi. Wild!

Locally, I took a more active role in Petaluma's Multi-Faith Clergy group, and continued with my Presbyterian "Fab 5 Cohort." I completed my term as the Presbytery Council Moderator and started serving as the Presbytery Vice-Moderator, extending my time serving on the Council. My new role took me to the PC(USA) headquarters in Louisville for a Moderators Training Conference.

I am so grateful for all that God has been doing here at First Presbyterian Church, and for you to read about it in this Annual Report. I have but scratched the surface. What a blessing it is to be a part of this incredibly faithful, inclusive, and loving congregation. As I watch your love for those in need, your love for one another, and your love for God, I find my own faith strengthened and nurtured. I am deeply grateful for you all and for the opportunity I have to serve alongside you.

With love and gratitude for you all, and for God's amazing grace and abundant mercy,

Pastor John

# Budget & Finance

SUSAN PEARCE, ELDER

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**Commission members:** Susan Pearce (Chair), Shawn Dooley (Treasurer), Dan Ellecamp, Eric Goodrich, Dan Mulkey, Pastor John Chase (ex-officio), Staff: Roger Johnson (Bookkeeper)

## **General fund: 2025 experience and 2026 budget:**

The table below presents the line by line detail of the general fund 2026 budget and actual experience for 2025. The Budget and Finance Commission recommended the 2026 budget to Session and Session approved it on December 11, 2025. The 2026 budget will be presented to the congregation at the January 2026 Annual Meeting.

In 2025, General Fund pledge giving was less than budget. Total General Fund giving was less than budget. Rental income was greater than budget. Total Operating expenses were less than budgeted for the year. BFC again commends the commissions for managing expenditures. Per Capita giving was less than budgeted. Investments income was positive this year. Overall, the finances of the church are in good shape thanks to the faithful giving of the congregation!

## **Ray Swain Building Fund (RSBF):**

Giving to the RSBF in 2025 exceeded budget. Many thanks to the faithful givers to the Ray Swain Building Fund in support of projects to maintain our campus. 2026 giving to the Ray Swain Building Fund will provide resources to make payments on the Agape House loans as well as to fund additional projects to improve the campus, such as conversion of the current office building to a rental apartment.

## **Accomplishments/actions during the year:**

- Bookkeeper Johnson continued to maintain high standards of accounting.
- In conjunction with the Facilities Commission, Smart Thermostats were installed in campus buildings in late 2023 and early 2024 so that heat

settings can be controlled via WIFI. Utilities costs in 2024 and 2025 were well-controlled as a result of this joint effort.

- Management of the banking team transitioned to Dan Mulkey. Many thanks to Dan Ellecamp, Mark Hale, Dan Mulkey, Eric Goodrich, Susan Pearce, and Shawn Dooley for faithfully counting and making the deposits of funds this year!
- Conducted a detailed analysis of pledge giving during the year.
- Completed and delivered employee performance review for Bookkeeper.
- Completed the Annual Financial Review for the year 2024.

Respectfully prepared and submitted,  
Susan Pearce, Chair  
2025 Budget and Finance Commission

<b>First Presbyterian Church of Petaluma General Fund</b>			2025		2026
Income			Budget	Actual	Budget
		Pledge Offering	178,830	164,525	174,500
		Non-pledge Offering	10,000	13,421	10,000
		Plate Offering	500	3,923	500
		Other Offering	0	0	0
	Total Offering		189,330	181,869	185,000
	Other		109,455	102,927	96,825
<b>Total Income</b>			<b>298,785</b>	<b>284,796</b>	<b>281,825</b>
Expense					
	Overhead				
		Pastor	122,531	122,360	126,092
		Personnel (non ordained)	79,051	70,298	90,214
		Facilities	87,010	92,975	88,391
		Office	2,500	2,940	3,115
		Per Capita (PCUSA)	3,344	3,344	3,400
		Mission Pledge (PCUSA)	2,000	2,000	1,500
		Budget & Finance	250	21	250
		Session	200	220	200
	Total Overhead		296,886	294,158	313,162
	Ministries				
		Worship	2,150	1,094	2,900
		Congregational Life	2,050	1,109	2,050
		Student & Family Ministries	500	159	750
		Outreach/Missions Local	5,250	3,354	3,550
		Adult Ministry	500	1,300	500
		Stewardship	200		200
	Total Ministries		10,650	7,016	9,950
	Miscellaneous		0	0	0
<b>Total Expense</b>			<b>307,536</b>	<b>301,174</b>	<b>323,112</b>
Excess (Deficit)			(8,751)	(16,378)	(41,287)

# Congregational Life

DEB STURGES, ELDER

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As I see it, the purpose of the Congregational Life Commission is to provide opportunities for us all to become better acquainted, to form connections, to foster friendships, and better learn how to support one another. Research shows again and again that social involvement is important to our health and longevity. And even though these events were mostly “church social” in nature, I believe that knowing each other is crucial to spiritually connecting.

A brief rundown of this year’s events:

## **March**

- The Celebration of Gifts Talent Show. March 15, 7pm.
- Beginning of Lenten Suppers with book discussion of *Freeing Jesus*, by Diana Butler Bass

## **April**

- Continuation of Lenten Suppers, total of six. 6pm on Wednesdays.
- Cleaning/clearing of rat infested storage shed, assisted mightily by Mark Sturges, Pam Sommer, and Dorothy Teply.
- Earth Day, coordinated with Garden Work Day. Much appreciated food provided by Outreach Commission, artistic seed packets designed and provided by Jonathan and David Jaramillo. April 27 after the worship service.

## **May**

- Gaelic Heritage Celebration, with Scottish folk dance lesson and shortbread cook-off after the worship service. Sandy Peterson, Jane Shelly, and Meagan Dowdall each won a foxglove plant, the national flower of Scotland. May 18

## **September**

- Fall Bounty BBQ, September 14, after the worship service.

- World Communion Sunday (September 28) did not have an international pot luck this year. Is there interest for next year in sharing our family heritages over traditional foods?

### **October**

- MASSIVE Rummage Sale! SO many helpers! Ledra kept us all going with her homemade lunches. We made almost \$3000 for the general fund. And cleared out attics, garages, closets and basements, providing goods for those who could use and enjoy them. October 11, 9am-3pm

### **November**

- Thanksgiving Luncheon, November 11, organized by me, but truly managed by Roger Johnson in the kitchen. We served nearly 90 dinners, and they were delicious!

### **December**

- Christmas Caroling Tea—Headlined by the Men's Quartet, led by Jane Shelly and Jenny Smith, December 16, 2pm.

I have enjoyed figuring out how FPCP works (still in process), and serving in this way. But none of these events could have materialized without the help of many. Thank you to Pastor John, the deacons, other commissions, and numerous volunteers who stepped up to make them successful. Your willingness astounds and blesses me.

Deb Sturges, Elder, Congregational Life

# Deacons

PAM SOMMER, DEACON MODERATOR

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The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, and lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress.

The year 2025 in review was again full and a strong ministry of the church. Our Board of Deacons met six times during the year in the Fireside Room, Koinonia Hall and on Zoom. Moderator Sommer distributed Agendas, Treasurer's Reports and Pastor's Reports in advance of meetings. She also acted as Secretary and provided minutes which were distributed for approval.

The Deacons are active in so many areas of the church and are so effective that you may not realize how much they do. The following are the areas for which the Deacons are responsible including a brief report.

## **Communion**

Led by Annie Louis, was provided to the congregation every month including coordinating the preparation of the elements and recruiting of servers. Other communion services were conducted on special occasions such as Ash Wednesday and Maundy.

## **Connections Team**

Led by Marcille Roth, provided numerous outreach services to the congregation which included 100 phone calls, 42 cards, 106 visitations, and 2 emails. The team included Kate Glose, Cretia Horn and Joyce Schipper.

## **E-Cards**

Pascale Webb made sure birthday e-cards were sent to congregants.

## **Kitchen**

Coordination was overseen by Troy West and Chris Olson. They maintained equipment and supplies and provided support to renters and church events. Troy made sure coffee was provided during all Sunday church services.

## **Memorials/Receptions**

There was one memorial service and one memorial reception in 2025: Jim Symons, celebration of life service, February 8; Juanita Ashe Memorial Service Reception, June 28. Deacons participated in the arrangements for the service and reception in collaboration with Pastor John and Facilities.

## **Nominating Committee**

Mark Sturges served as the deacon representative.

## **Prayer Chain**

Coordinated by Dorothy Teply. She accepted phone calls or emails from congregants requesting prayers. Dorothy sent out emails to 60 people on the prayer chain. 62 prayer requests were sent out and 13 follow-up contacts made. She also provided 20 personal individual prayers for congregants immediately after service at the prayer bench. This is the second year for this activity and was appreciated by those using it. Dorothy and others will continue to offer this form of individual prayer.

## **Support Services**

This ministry, led by Pascale Webb included areas of services such as meals to families, if needed.

## **Treasurer**

Diane Olson kept the finances up to date.

## **Transportation**

Coordinated by Mark Sturges and the Connections Team. 13 rides were provided.

## **Additional Information**

- 1) Approved the Mission Outreach Commission request for funds to purchase a picnic table from a local hardware store for the church front lawn.
- 2) January 2025, the Elders approved to equally share coffee hour hosting with Deacons, providing baked goods and fruit for every Sunday worship service. This entails set up and clean up.
- 3) In light of the outdoor shed deemed unsuitable for storage of the church medical equipment, the deacons approved the clearing out and donation of most of the equipment to Max Home Care – Recycled Medical

Equipment, located in Petaluma. Thanks to Mark and Deb Sturges who coordinated the removal of the equipment and secured Max Home Care for pick up, cleaning and reuse. A few medical equipment items were cleaned and are available to borrow. If you have a need let us know.

- 4) Approved the purchase of tablecloths for church use.
- 5) Deacons coordinated the distribution of poinsettias to congregants.
- 6) Deacons approved 20 \$50.00 grocery gift cards for the pastor and office coordinator to give out to folks in need.
- 7) Benevolence: Pam Sommer and Marcille Roth (Vice-Moderator) oversaw our benevolence ministry, helping provide basic areas of service and financial assistance for those in need. There were no requests this year.

Respectfully submitted with a grateful heart,  
Pam Sommer, Moderator

# Facilities

LOREN DOOLEY, ELDER

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**Facilities Commission Members:** Loren Dooley (Facilities Elder), Pastor John Chase (ex-officio), Karyl Crook, Steve Crook, Dan Ellecamp, Chris Olson, Mike Roberts, Mark Sturges, Wayne Roberts and Troy West

**The 2025 Challenge:** The 2025 Challenge was to continue maintaining and improving our church facility, along with increasing and stream-lining our rental opportunities. For many years Steve and Karyl Crook have been key to handling our rental opportunities. At the end of 2025 they are planning to step away from these responsibilities, which will require the Church to find a way to replace them as seamlessly as possible. At the end of 2025 we have 8 tenants to manage and control. The income from these tenants is crucial to the sustainability of our church.

A byproduct of having tenants is being able to accommodate their needs, e.g. utility issues like heat, water, electricity, and their various church configurations, e.g. concert in the Sanctuary, party in Koinonia Hall, outdoor concert. The Facilities Commission has become responsible for many of these duties.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

**Agape House Progress:** The Agape House needs interior and exterior painting. The first floor furnace was replaced in January. The Fijians are renting the upstairs and part of the downstairs of the Agape House. Substantial work still needs to be done to present the Agape House to future renters.

**Outdoor Lighting:** Mike Roberts and Adam (Wayne Roberts' nephew) have installed new lighting around the Sanctuary, Educational Wing and Koinonia Hall. They come on at dusk and go off at 10pm. Next time you are at Church between these times check it out.

**Janitor Service:** Karyl Crook has been managing our contract Maid/Janitor service to clean the common areas (Restrooms, kitchen, Koinonia, Sanctuary) before 8am Mondays and on Fridays pm. The Facilities Commission has been relieved from doing the janitor work, however we are still responsible for interfacing with the service and buying supplies.

**Tree Removal and Cleanup:** Troy West removed 2 trees between the Agape House and neighbor. The neighbor provided a new fence in exchange.

**Floor Maintenance:** The Koinonia Hall, Kitchen and bathroom tile floors were cleaned. The Sanctuary carpet was shampooed and all coffee stains were removed. In July while Open Arms Playgarden Preschool was closed, the old carpet flooring in the Nursery was replaced with non-absorbing flooring.

**Grounds Maintenance:** Mowing and weed eating continue to be challenging. Thanks to Wayne and Troy for meeting these challenges. Talk to Wayne if you want to be on the lawn mowing team.

**Pest Control:** We had a variety of pests during the year, including mice, rats and gophers. We contracted out the extermination work to ATCO and the pests seem under control.

**Plumbing Repair & Maintenance:** The list includes toilet repair and fixing leaks.

**Inspections:** We passed the city fire inspection and the fire extinguisher inspection.

**Security System:** Steve Crook finished installing and testing cameras on the outside corners of the Sanctuary to provide security of church grounds.

**AVL System:** Steve Crook worked with Grant Bramham to repair and upgrade our Sanctuary AVL System.

## **NEW PROJECTS FOR 2026 AND BEYOND:**

**Office Building Project:** We have put together a team to prepare preliminary design documents and expenses to remodel the Church Office into a 2 bedroom, 1 bath residential property. We believe that this effort could be funded in large part by the Ray Swain Fund, and have members of our Congregation provide the skilled and non-skilled labor. This could be a 6 to 9-month project, at which time we would have a substantial, new revenue stream.

## **Parking Lot Repairs**

## **Removal of the Discovery Room Trailer**

Thank you for those on the Facilities Commission for your help and dedication!

We are a Christ-centered community, committed to encountering God through—

- Scripture, prayer, sacrament and song
- Welcoming all
- Breaking bread together
- Caring for creation
- Serving the community
- Offering our lives as a witness to God's love and justice in the world

(FPCP Mission Statement adopted by Session April 25, 2019)

# Mission/Outreach

SUE CARSON AND PHOEBE ANTONIO, ELDERS

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Our commission is responsible for activities and projects that involve the wider Petaluma community. In addition to our own hosted activities, we partner with local organizations, contribute to local nonprofits, and welcome the public to a variety of events.

## **Church Garden**

Jack Schipper continues to manage our on-site garden. He plans the garden layouts, purchases plants, soil and amendments, coordinates planting days, and manages volunteers that help with the garden and the veggie table. This year, generous donations from the congregation allowed us to purchase metal troughs to replace many of the old wooden boxes. The new planters make it easier to plant, weed, and harvest, and we're hoping to replace the remaining wooden boxes in 2026. We always need help with the garden, so please contact Jack directly if you're interested in joining the team. Our seasonal pay-what-you-will Sunday veggie table is a primary source of funding for the garden. While everyone is welcome to take what they need and want, we're grateful for donations. In addition to vegetables harvested from our church garden, congregants donate extra produce from their home gardens including plants, flowers, and home-canned treats.

## **New Members**

Mission/Outreach is responsible for helping interested attendees join our congregation. Early in the year, Bob Heyman and Dianne Trumpy hosted a brunch at their home so prospective members could get acquainted and ask questions. We eventually welcomed 10 new active members, and an additional group is interested in joining at a future date. Anyone who would like information about membership should contact Pastor John.

## **Block Party**

This year we hosted a "block party" for our nearby neighbors that featured live music, hot dogs and snacks, and games for children and adults. Bob Heyman found a great band for the afternoon; Sue Carson, Donna Wall, and Phoebe Antonio did shopping and distributed flyers (as did one of our neighbors!); Meagan Dowdall coordinated activities for children; and the Facilities team did a

masterful job with setup and cleanup. Purely social, our goal was to position our church as a welcoming and accessible part of the community. Despite inclement weather, the party was a success and we expect to offer similar events in 2026.

## **Labyrinth**

It seemed clear this year that our congregation lacked the energy and enthusiasm to even maintain our temporary labyrinth, so we decided to use a church work day to remove it. Unexpectedly, not only did a team of volunteers from the church come to help, but several neighbors and passersby expressed interest in the labyrinth. Consequently, Troy dug out the old labyrinth and Phoebe found a simpler design that allowed for wider paths. Church members helped lay out the version, donated and hauled bricks to the site to outline the path, and Dan Mulkey began keeping the weeds down. We lit the labyrinth for the Christmas concert and for Longest Night, and hope to offer special events for the congregation and neighbors in 2026. If you'd like to help maintain the labyrinth or add a commemorative brick (or several) to the labyrinth, contact the church office.

## **Other Congregational Support**

The Mission and Outreach team continues to support public-facing events of the church, notably the spring and Christmas concerts, and the annual Christmas carol sing. We assist with publicity, ushering, and help recruit volunteers to set up, clean up, and bring snacks for such events. We also continue to support the Longest Night service with internal and external promotion and coordination. Mission and Outreach supports internal events led by other commissions, too, this year including extra assistance for the rummage sale, Earth Day events, and annual "hanging of the stars" during Advent.

## **Community Organization Outreach**

Our church has engaged with the Petaluma People Service Center for a number of years, and hoped to do two major projects with that organization in 2025. Unfortunately, organizational changes forced PPSC to pull back on planned activities, but we did collect coats and participated in the Christmas "giving tree" program. Joyce Schipper and Phoebe Antonio continued to work with the Blue Zones faith-based transformation team in 2025, helping plan and host a meeting of faith-based leaders in the spring. Despite reasonably good attendance and enthusiastic discussions, we were unable to recruit additional churches to our team or coordinate a follow-up event. It appeared there was little interest in mutual projects, so we dropped out of the program. As in previous years, our church rang the Salvation Army bell downtown in early

December. The commission also matched member donations to local nonprofits during Advent, an annual tradition.

Sue Carson and Phoebe Antonio, co-Elders  
Bob Heyman, Jack Schipper and Donna Wall, Commission members

### **Matching Gifts Recipients for 2025**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Member Gifts</b>	<b>Matching Gift</b>	<b>Total Giving</b>
Young Life	775.00	750.00	1,525.00
PPSC	200.00	150.00	350.00
Community Matters	75.00	75.00	150.00
Redwood Empire Food Bank	75.00	75.00	150.00
FPCP Garden	225.00	225.00	450.00
Ryan's Case for Smiles	75.00	75.00	150.00
PC(USA)	100.00	100.00	200.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,525.00</b>	<b>1,450.00</b>	<b>2,975.00</b>

# The Office

ROGER JOHNSON, BOOKKEEPER & OFFICE COORDINATOR

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I have to say that I am glad 2025 is behind us. There were some high points—a new granddaughter, Maggie Elizabeth, and a reconnection with my daughter, Stephanie. On the downside, both Maren and I lost sisters and became the last survivors of our immediate families. And medical issues for each of us took a more prevalent role.

But enough of that. The day-to-day continues, but there does seem to be more activity in the congregation. Drumming Circle, Walking Group, Presbyterian Women, Bingo at Brewsters, and our traditional Thanksgiving Potluck Luncheon. More things on the horizon.

As far as accomplishments, other than the routine, we were able to establish an account with the California Department of Justice for finger-print verifications, as mandated by our Child Safety Policies. Previously, we could make verification via the county, but new requirements necessitated state-level checks. As you can imagine, the process was anything but straightforward.

I would like to make a shout-out to Steve and Karyl Crook for their years of dedicated service. There are so many things that they did that made me realize how much we relied on their efforts.

# Personnel

SHAWN DOOLEY, ELDER

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2025 was another very smooth year for the Personnel Commission (PC). This means that there was very little to talk about, which speaks to the quality of the staff here at FPCP! We are lucky to have the talented staff we have to support our church and it's programs!

The Commission itself consists of Shawn Dooley as the Elder/Chairperson and Eric Goodrich as a member-at-large.

Due to the length of tenure of our staff, a decision was made to only conduct reviews every three years. Following is a list of all FPCP staff positions:

Pastor: Rev. John Chase  
Music Director: Jane Shelly  
Organist/Pianist: Jenny Smith  
Student Ministries & Events Coordinator: Grete Hansen  
Bookkeeper & Office Coordinator: Roger Johnson

As we look forward to 2026, we plan to have all position descriptions updated as appropriate. In 2025, Grant Bramham has continued to be our Audio-Visual Coordinator (AVLC). The AVLC is a contracted position with the church.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shawn Dooley  
Personnel Commission Chairman and Elder

Eric Goodrich  
Personnel Commission member

# Student Ministries

GRETE HANSEN, STUDENT MINISTRIES & EVENTS COORDINATOR

MEAGAN DOWDALL, STUDENT MINISTRIES ELDER

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Our Student Ministries program started to see some growth in 2025! We welcomed new friends into our classroom and loved having new faces and new energy on Sunday mornings.

We made significant progress in making our church worship services and outreach even more child-friendly. Our sanctuary now hosts a PrayGround that allows for children to fellowship prior to service and provides coloring materials and toys for children to bring back to their seat during services. Activities are rotated throughout the month and there are even flameless candles to allow the lighting of candles in prayer.

Our bulletin highlights the inclusivity of family and children in our worship service with a message and also exhibiting children's artwork as the cover. During service, children have participated with welcoming, readings, lighting of the Christ candle and music.

During the warmer months, we have outdoor games, toys and a chalk bucket, as well as a smaller picnic table.

## **Some highlights from our year:**

- Super Bowl Sunday
- Bringing back the backpack drive for schools in our community
- Children in Worship Sundays
- First annual Charlie Brown Christmas Community Outreach event
- Sunday School kids joining the Bell Choir
- Helping with the Labyrinth renovation
- Working in the community garden
- Nature walks to see the seasons changing
- Experiencing God's word through our Godly Play curriculum

In 2026 we will continue our efforts to support an active, multigenerational, Christ-centered faith journey for children of all ages.

# Worship

CHARLES FULTON, ELDER

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## **The Worship Commission is tasked in the Standing Rules with:**

- ❖ Evaluating and recommending improvements for the worship ministries and activities of the congregation
- ❖ Planning seasonal celebrations of the church
- ❖ Overseeing and supporting ministry teams, including the AVL Team, Choir and Worship Ensemble, Bell Choir
- ❖ Preparing annual budget request and overseeing the spending of the commission's budget

## **GOALS FOR 2025**

- a) Opportunities for children to participate in leading worship
- b) Increase celebrations with the surrounding community
- c) Effective Publicity for Worship, Special Events and Joint Services

## **The members who served on the 2025 Worship Commission:**

Marcille Roth; Debby Sturges; Rony Kurniawan; Jenny Smith, Pianist/Organist; Jane Shelly, Music Director; Pastor John Chase; Charles Fulton, Worship Elder.

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

**Paraments, Flowers, & Candles - Marcille Roth:** Bouquets and paraments artistically arranged and coordinated throughout the year, including hanging banners. New Candles purchased. Prayer Table candles maintained by Adam and Julian. Children's PrayGround Table supported by Grete Hansen and Meagan Dowdall. Contributed Name Tags. Worked with Deacons on communication. Looking into conserving Banners.

**Music Director, Sheet music - Jane Shelly:** Choir singing, Worship Ensemble and Bell choir ringing throughout the year. Special music with Jane's flute students added, and provided during summer worship. Jane Increased her effort greatly this Year, more Christmas carol events, greater children's participation.

**Organ Upkeep, Piano Tuning (Will Reid), Organ music - Jenny Smith:** Piano is tuned to support music 3 times. Jenny provided organ and piano for worship and

rehearsal throughout the year. Jenny is a star in our music ministry and we could not succeed without her. Jenny got new organ music books.

**Lights & Audio/Visual (Grant Bramham/Daniel Weidlich) - Rony Kurniawan:**

Grant, Daniel and Troy provided excellent AVL control. Grant requested improvements to light control through Rony. The Music Reserve Fund provided funding from generous contributions from the Christmas Concert.

**Worship Leaders & Greeters - Debby Sturges:** Debby arranged for Worship Leaders and Greeters throughout the year. Her efforts to keep the leaders and greeters informed and enhancing the congregation worship experience is fabulous. The Worship Commission supported Debby, Sue, and Phoebe for many events, including Earth Day, Gaelic Heritage, Blessing of Animals, and the Block Party.

**Interaction with Other Commissions - Charles Fulton:** Charles worked with the Facilities, Budget & Finance, and Student Ministries Commissions on coordination and communication.

## **GOAL EFFORTS**

### **Kids Participation**

- Kid's work on replacing candles, handing out name tags, greeting, Worship Ensemble and Bell Choir
  
- Four youth participated as 2025 Greeters: Timmy, Sophie, and Tyler & Emily
- Timmy, Sophie and Parker are in the Bell Choir
- Julian sings in the Worship Ensemble
- Tyler often lights the Christ candle in worship
- The children processed in with the banners for Earth day and Gaelic Heritage Sundays

### **Community Opportunities**

- ❖ Debby Organized Earth Day, Gaelic Heritage, and World Communion Sunday events
- ❖ Blessing of the Animals service in the sanctuary was well attended & appreciated. Origami peace doves were folded and hung in the sanctuary. Stars strands were hung before Christmas.

- ❖ The Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at B'nai Israel Jewish Center was supported by Pastor John reading Scripture and Jane leading Music.
- ❖ Christmas Concert attended by community and well received, generous contributions were received.
- ❖ Carol Sing at Walnut Park was rained out so we held it in the church with Janes flute choir.
- ❖ Longest Night service was planned by Phoebe and Pastor John, and included our illuminated labyrinth.

### **Communication/Publicity**

- ❖ Pastor John continues to create content and post events on our church website and social media outlets. Mission/Outreach and Worship commissions have added budget and had conversations about hiring a publicity and social media specialist.
- ❖ Picture takers are stepping up including Ledra Brady, Phoebe Antonio and others.
- ❖ Pastor John continues to encourage us to practice generous hospitality by being a welcoming and hope-filled congregation. Though getting new members is not our motivation, we were excited to receive several newcomers and new members in 2025.

*The Worship Commission is grateful for and would like to thank everyone involved in participating in meaningful worship experiences this year!*

# Music Ministry

JANE SHELLY, MUSIC DIRECTOR

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2025 has been a year of tremendous growth and change both for me personally and for the Music Ministry. There were four themes reflected in the story of the year.

*1. Pastor John started gently guiding me toward seeing myself as a music minister rather than solely as a professional musician (I resisted mightily).*

As part of my effort to respond to Pastor John's efforts, I have enrolled as an auditor at St Bernard's Seminary in Rochester, NY. My goal is to audit all the classes required for a Master's in Pastoral Theology. I was not prepared for how much I would love the course work!

*2. Fulfilling the mission of the Music Ministry: To enhance the liturgical experience of the congregation and support Pastor John's vision for the service.*

Part of enhancing the liturgical experience is responding to feedback. Here are two examples which I want to highlight. First, the Worship Commission passed on some feedback that members of the congregation felt the tempos of the hymns and Worship Ensemble tunes were too slow. Jenny and I listened and have boosted the tempos when appropriate to the song. Additionally, I re-assumed leadership of the Worship Ensemble (WE) to make sure the changes were consistent week to week.

The other feedback we got was that you wanted to sing more Christmas Carols. Pastor John and I talked about this and, while we agreed that we want to keep Advent for its rich theological, liturgical, and musical import, we felt it important to provide opportunities for lots of carol singing outside of the Sunday worship services. In addition to the Christmas Concert and the Community Carol Sing, we added two new opportunities for carol singing: A Christmas Tea and Carol Singalong in Koinonia Hall hosted by Deb Sturges, and a carol "run out" to Ridgeway Post Acute Rehab center.

Our music ministry mission statement carries with it the understanding that our efforts are not performances. What we do is an offering; an offering to the Lord

and to the congregation; an offering that we hope will contribute to a sense of drawing closer to God in our communal worship.

### *3. The Worship Commission's commitment to involving more kids into the services.*

Julian has joined the Worship Ensemble. Parker, Tim and Sophie have joined the Bell Choir. It is wonderful to have them and their youthful vibe with us. They have proven themselves to be a vital part of the Music Ministry. A perfect example of how important they are was seen in the Christmas concert. The first half of the concert was dedicated to the choruses in the Christmas portion of Handel's Messiah. The piece is a series of Biblical texts, some written for soloists and some for choruses. Julian, Parker, Tim and Sophie read the texts that would have been heard between the choruses. In the second half of the concert, the Bell Choir accompanied the carols we sang. Parker, Tim and Sophie shone as ringers. Members of the WE, including Julian, led a rousing version of Feliz Navidad to bring the concert to a close.

### *4. Pastor John's plan to have FPCP do more reaching out into the community.*

Following Pastor John's lead, the Music Ministry added two "outreach" events in addition to the annual Community Carol Sing. On December 7, the bell choir, along with Jenny and Charles visited Windsong of Sonoma Senior Living, an assisted living facility in Petaluma. The residents loved it, sang along and have invited us back. They were especially impressed with Parker, Tim and Sophie! Our bell choir is truly intergenerational: Parker is 10 and Homer just turned 90!

Our run out to sing carols at Ridgeway Post Acute was another wonderful effort at community outreach. Jenny played the church's electric piano. Susan, Homer, Dan M, Lonna, Charles and I led the singing. Several of the clients sang along. They seemed really pleased to have us visit.

And of course, our Annual Community Carol Sing! This year, we decided to publicize the church as a rain location and it was very fortunate that we did. The weather was terrible, so it was really nice to be able to move inside so we could be warm and dry!

Our Music Ministry has grown to 25 strong and I feel we have become a cohesive community within our church family. The choir, bell choir, and Worship Ensemble have all grown musically as well, reaching new levels of proficiency and musicality.

- The choir tackled Messiah

- The Bell Choir learned no fewer than six arrangement of carols
- The Worship Ensemble expanded its repertoire to forty songs

I cannot close this report without mentioning the real star, the real glue in our Music Ministry and that is Jenny. Jenny is a consummate musician, an icon of patience and a very, very, valued colleague!

Shalom to all!

Jane

# Nominating Committee

SUSAN PEARCE AND SUE CARSON, ELDERS

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## **The members who served on the Nominating Committee:**

Members at Large: Joyce Schipper, Pam Sommer, Deacon Representative: Mark Sturges, Session Representatives: Susan Pearce, Sue Carson, Pastor John Chase, ex-officio

Our task was to identify and call candidates to serve as Session Elders (Ruling Elders), Deacons, and Nominating Committee members-at-large in 2026. The following members were presented and approved by the congregation during the November 23, 2025 Congregational Meeting:

### **Deacons**

Joyce Schipper – Class of 2027 (1<sup>st</sup> term)  
Dorothy Teply – Class of 2027 (2<sup>nd</sup> term)

### **Elders**

Jackie Moseley – Class of 2027 (1<sup>st</sup> term)  
Shawn Dooley – Class of 2027 (2<sup>nd</sup> term)  
Meagan Dowdall – Class of 2027 (2<sup>nd</sup> term)  
Deb Sturges – Class of 2027 (2<sup>nd</sup> term)  
Charles Fulton – Class of 2027 (2<sup>nd</sup> term)

### **Nominating Committee (members-at-large)**

Ledra Brady  
Sue Carson

### **Deacons Outgoing**

Marcille Roth  
Pascale Webb

### **Elders Outgoing**

Sue Carson  
Phoebe Antonio

*The Nominating Committee is grateful for these members who have served and those who have said yes to serving the congregation and others.*

# Session & Statistical Report

SHAWN DOOLEY, CLERK OF SESSION

## Session Meetings

January 16	July (no mtg)
February 20	August 7
March 20	September 18
April 22	October 16
May (no mtg)	November 20
June 19	December 11

## Congregational Meetings

January 26, November 23

## Those preaching the Word of God during worship in 2024

Rev. John Chase: January 12, 19, 26; February 9, 23; March 2, 9, 16, 23 30; April 6, 13, 17, 20, 27; May 25; June 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; July 6, 13, 20, 27; August 3, 10, 24, 31; September 7, 14, 21, 28; October 5, 19, 26; November 2, 9, 23, 30; December 7, 14, 21, 24

Rev. Bob Conover: January 5, February 2

Rev. Dr. Nancy Martin Vincent: May 4

Rev. Alex Peterson: May 18

Scott Quinn: August 17

Rev. Eric Beene: November 16

Linda Dragoo: December 28 (children's Christmas story)

Grete Hanson: February 16, May 11, October 12 (Children in Worship Sunday)

## Statistical Information

Membership — 12/31/24 85

### Additions:

Confirmation of Faith	6
Reaffirmation of Faith	0
Certificate of Transfer	1
Total	7

### Subtractions:

Deceased	3
Certificate of Transfer	0
Removal of Membership	0
Total	3

Membership — 12/31/25 89

Infant/Child Baptisms	1
Teen/Adult Baptisms	1

Holy Communion was served times:	14
Weddings	0

From where we are  
to where you need us,

**Jesus, now lead on.**

From the security of what we know  
to the adventure of what you will reveal,

**Jesus, now lead on.**

To refashion the fabric of this world  
until it resembles the shape of your reign,

**Jesus, now lead on.**

Because good things have been prepared  
for those who love God,

**Jesus, now lead on.**

Surround us with your presence,  
inspire us with your purpose,  
confirm us in your love.

**Amen.**