

Annual Report

2023



7001 FAR HILLS AVENUE
DAYTON, OH 45459
937-433-1810
WWW.SMINSTER.COM

Table of Contents

Pastor/Head of Staff.....	3
Associate Pastor	7
Previous Minutes.....	9
Membership Report.....	14
Session Report	15
Finance Team	
Budget.....	16
Finance Report.....	17
Treasurer’s Report.....	18
Stewardship Team.....	19
Christian Education Team.....	20
Nominating Team.....	21
Worship Team.....	21
Mission Team.....	22
MarCom Team.....	23
Invitation Team.....	24
Building and Grounds Team.....	26
Deacon Teams	
Fellowship.....	27
Prayer and Presence.....	27
Personnel Team.....	29
Report of Pastor Compensation.....	30
Church Officers.....	31

Pastor/Head of Staff

Rev. Dr. Nancy R. Birdsong

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to God’s purpose.” (Romans 8:28)



This picture is of my favorite moment every year. At the Christmas Eve service, when everyone raises their candles in the darkness while we sing *Silent Night*, it touches my heart deeply. It is more than a moment of beautiful candlelight or a well-loved tradition. It is a proclamation of hope.

*Silent night. Holy night. Son of God. Love’s pure light.
Radiant beams from thy holy face. With the dawn of redeeming grace.*

In a world where images on the news bombard us with division, corruption, violence, and heartache, we need moments when we remember that despite the worst the world has to offer, hope still abounds. The church is a place where people come to worship God and to be a part of a community; a place where we help one another to grow in love, compassion, and discipleship. When I look out at your faces on Christmas Eve and know the struggles and grief that some of you have endured, I am reminded of the faith that has sustained you and the Christ-like love of this church family that has surrounded you.

We hold on to that hope both in our personal lives, and as a church. Southminster has a faithful, friendly, and resilient congregation. We got through the pandemic together and came out on the other side, maybe even a little stronger. We have discovered that the heart of this congregation can carry us through challenging times. We continue to try new and creative ways to be in community together and to reach out to the wider community beyond the walls of the church.

This past year has been one of transition, and change is never easy. Josh Sweeney left us to move to Kansas City when his wife was called to a church there, and the Personnel Team continues to work hard toward finding a new Director of Youth and Children’s Ministry. Jerry Stahley served as our interim Property Tech until Jim O’Neil took on that position. Sara Reynolds was our second nursery worker, until she left in December to accept a position at Dayton Children’s Hospital. That same month, Rev. Steve Schumm left us to move to Canada when his wife was offered a position as chair of Homiletics and Hermeneutics at the *Vancouver School of Theology*. Then we were blessed to have Rev. Stan Gockel come in as our Stated Supply Associate Pastor. It is not easy to jump into church life the Sunday before Christmas, but Stan comes with experience and flexibility, and we already appreciate his ministry among us.

While all of these staff transitions could seem daunting, our congregation has continued to put their trust in God and to move forward in ministry. The Christian Education Team has really stepped up in Josh’s absence and recruited volunteers to help with key activities for the children such as *Vacation Bible School* and *Backpack Sunday*. Some volunteers have taught the older children in the *Sermon 2.0* discussions while others have helped with Sunday School and *Children in Worship*.

Starting last September, I have been inviting our 12 to 18-year-olds to one special event a month so that they can keep in touch with one another and know that the church has not forgotten them.



It was fun recruiting and working with Jenny Miller, youth, and other volunteers in the CFC for *Breakfast with Santa* while Mark Locke supervised the college kids and youth in the kitchen. With the much appreciated behind-the-scenes help of Todd and Janet Hall and Lois Thorp, I put together a Christmas pageant for the children. Our youth readers did an excellent job, and the older children took the 2 and 3-year-olds by the hand to help them participate.



2023 included our usual special services, like the Epiphany Feast, and the Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday services. The *Stations of the Cross* experience was both in person and online so that those who were unable to get to the church during Holy Week could still take part. One of the positive responses to the pandemic was the livestream and the opportunity it gives for homebound members, those who go out of town, and those who are sick to experience worship with us. It also enables those seeking a new church to see a service. After looking through our website and listening to worship, one couple asked me to officiate at their wedding and ended up becoming active members.



Fellowship is important to folks at Southminster. In addition to the Presby groups, Book Discussion group, Knitters, and Grief Group, we have *Elderberries* for the over 50 crowd, and special events like

Heritage Sunday and the Women's Retreat. Offering a booth at the Americana Festival is another opportunity for volunteers to enjoy one another's company while inviting others in the Centerville area to learn more about us.



Our congregation's resiliency was on full display when it rained on the day of the *Pumpkin Festival*. We moved inside, which made all but one food truck leave, but it turned out that everyone stayed upstairs anyway, and we had lots of visitors who had a blast! The majority of those who attended were children, and there were lots of smiles on their faces! All of the events went well, and we had a line out the door of the Hospitality Room for painting pumpkins. Folks coming in the entrance to the Narthex were welcomed warmly by the Invitation Team and their volunteers.



*I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. (Isaiah 43:19)*

In the *Officer's Retreat*, Deacons and Elders talked about the importance of being aware of those areas of church life where we need to challenge ourselves to grow or to explore some new directions. Our *Director of Music Ministries*, Ruth Whatley, and I had previously been discussing how having more of a blend of both traditional and contemporary music could be meaningful to congregation members who respond to different styles. Then, the subject was also brought up by our officers as they contemplated things that could enhance people's experience in worship.

Some of the churches that interviewed me before I came to Southminster regretted having had separate traditional and contemporary services. The result had been to split the church where people only associated with those who went to the same service. When they asked me what I thought would help them, I suggested having one service where both kinds of music were offered. That is what our music ministry is trying to do, and we have had some great responses!



Another area where we hope to continue to see growth and new possibilities is in mission and community outreach. *The Church Has Left the Building* again brought our members together in service opportunities that helped us not only to “go” to church, but to “be” the church. One of the many projects from that day was the *Linda Vista House*. Since then, it has become a new focus project which the Mission Team and Session have embraced as something we want to support in multiple ways.

Linda Vista is a community-based nonprofit organization that provides housing to single women, including mothers and their children who are homeless. Many of them have experienced domestic violence. They can stay in a furnished apartment that provides a structured, safe place and the time needed to regain a sense of stability and economic security. They are given the assistance and education needed to meet the goals of their individualized self-sufficiency plans. *Linda Vista* has some significant challenges right now, and we are trying to help them re-organize and get the help they need to continue the life-changing work that happens there. Please be praying for this program and for us to find meaningful ways to make a difference.



Since we are one family of faith at Southminster, we care for one another like family, and we have grieved for those who have gone home to be with their Lord. While we trust in Christ’s promise of resurrection, we also miss their presence among us. I see pastoral care as one of the most important aspects of my ministry among you, and I’m grateful for so many people in the congregation who offer care to one another. Deacons do a particularly good job in reaching out to our homebound members through visits and cards. Our *Sunday Callers*, *Prayer Chain Partners*, and *Prayer and Presence* group keep us regularly praying for one another and for our world.

I want to thank our staff and office volunteers for their hard work, dedication, and sense of humor. Laughter makes each day brighter! Thank you to everyone in the congregation for the ways you participate in the life of the church and for the patience, grace, and ideas that you share. I am honored to be your pastor.

Peace and blessings,
Nancy

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Rev. Stan Gockel

Little did I know last August 8, when I got the call at 5:55 am to go to New Freedom Church in Lebanon to serve as a poll worker for the special election, that a new opportunity for ministry would result from that seemingly random assignment. Sitting at the ballot table next to Marie Sutton, I learned of the impending departure of the Rev. Steve Schumm for Canada, and of your need to find an associate pastor as soon as possible. After hearing more about Southminster from Marie, I told her I would be interested in talking further about the position. Two days later Nancy Birdsong called, and the rest is, as they say, history.

My interest in coming out of retirement to serve at Southminster stems from the fact that in all my years of ministry, going all the way back to 1980, I have done just about everything in ministry except serve on the church staff. I've been the sole pastor of small congregations and the lead pastor/head of staff of larger congregations, but I've never been the associate pastor, working with and supporting the work of the senior pastor. I am excited to be part of Southminster and am enjoying working with Nancy. Since I have had the responsibility of preaching the vast majority of Sundays over the last 43 years, I am grateful, at this stage in my life, not to have to prepare and preach a sermon every single Sunday.

Since arriving at Southminster on December 11, I have been impressed by many things about our church. Southminster is a church of many strengths and gifts. One of those strengths was immediately evident, as I was able to join the choir for the Service of Lessons and Carols. I've sung in church choirs since I was in high school, and I've experienced church music ranging from extremely amateur to highly polished, almost professional. SPC has a wonderful tradition of quality church music, and it is a joy to be part of a music ministry led so capably by Ruth, Jim, and our excellent choirs.

A second strength is the way this congregation is engaged with the community. I actually experienced this in October, prior to being announced as your next associate pastor, when Libby and I attended the Pumpkin Festival. What a wonderful gift to the community! The Pumpkin Festival, A Great Start Pre-School, the food pantry, Clothes That Work, the Grief Support Group, Yoga, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, AA and Alanon, the intercessory prayer group—in all these ways and many others, SPC is a serving congregation and a beacon to the community.

Another strength is the way the congregation engages the mind as well as the heart. Southminster is a congregation of people who are serious about growing in their faith. I see this in those who are engaged in the Social Justice Book Club as well as the various small group studies that meet during Advent and Lent. SPC is a congregation of believers who are serious about deepening their experience of faith, growing their knowledge of scripture, and integrating their Christian experience with the issues of our day.

Another strength is the warm and caring Christian fellowship and support for each other that I see exhibited in the life of this congregation. SPC is a loving congregation of people who are willing to “bear one another’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2). An example of that is how well-organized the deacons are to help carry out the congregation’s caring ministries. This week I visited a long-time member of our church at the hospital who told me how much this congregation has meant to them over the years. I have heard such sentiments expressed several times in my first month with you. I look forward to working with Nancy and our deacons to continue the legacy of pastoral care and support that is the hallmark of this congregation.

As I move through this year as your associate pastor, I will be focusing on the following areas of ministry:

1. I will work with the Christian Education team to expand opportunities for engagement with scripture and for spiritual growth. To that end, Steve Davis and I will be offering a Lenten video study of "The Difficult Words of Jesus," by Professor Amy-Jill Levine each Sunday during Lent, immediately following the worship service. I will be offering an Easter season video study of "The Grace of Les Miserable," by Matt Rawle, starting in April. More details about both of these studies are coming soon.
2. I will be supporting the work of the Stewardship and Finance Ministry teams to help continue the financial stability of the congregation and grow our sense of what the concept of stewardship means and how it impacts every area of our lives as followers of Christ.
3. I will usually be preaching once a month and participating in worship leadership on a weekly basis. I will also be supporting Nancy's efforts to provide quality pastoral care to the congregation by reaching out to homebound and inactive members to let them know the church cares for them and wants to provide spiritual support and comfort in their journey through life.
4. I will be working with the Invitation and MarCom teams to share the good news about our congregation with the community. Along with that I will work with Nancy on classes for new and prospective members and make personal contacts with those who express interest in our church.

If I can ever be of service to any of you, don't hesitate to call or email me. I would be happy to visit you in your home, meet you for coffee and a donut at Bill's, have lunch at Agave and Rye, or talk with you in my office. I am honored to have this opportunity to serve with you for the next 1-2 years, and look forward to all the ways God will be at work in our midst to strengthen the bonds of our fellowship and draw us ever closer to the spirit and image of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Stan

SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

February 5, 2023

Annual meeting of the Congregation was called for the following purposes:

Receiving the Annual report 2023

Receiving the Budget for 2023

Acting on the Recommendation of Session for the Compensation Package for Installed Pastor, Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong

Electing At-Large Members of the Nominating Team

Electing Officers of the Corporation

The Meeting was Called to Order by Moderator, Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong at 11:09am, & opened with prayer.

A Quorum, of at least 39 members was present.

The Agenda was approved as presented. **MSA**

Approval of the Following Minutes

Called Congregational Meeting of January 16, 2022

Called Congregational Meeting of February 13, 2022

Called Congregational Meeting of December 11, 2022 **MSA**

Brief Presentations by

Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong, Pastor/Head of Staff – Emphasized need to return to Church after a hard 2 years. Our faith is supported and strengthened by being together for Worship and Fellowship in a Christian Community. Then reaching out to the broader community is easier and more fulfilling.

Rev. Steve Schumm, Associate Pastor – Acknowledged that by rejoining us in March of 2022, he caught us on the “upswing” after COVID years and looks forward to what is to come.

Josh Sweeney, Director of Children and Youth Ministries – The Children’s Ministry is growing, even while the Youth Ministry struggles. Plans for 2023 include a PrayerGound in the Sanctuary; revamping of VBS; bringing back Wednesday Night Fellowship events.

Clerk’s Membership Report for 2022:

Total Active Membership Reported, December 31, 2021:

<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
167 (42.8%)	223 (57.2%)	390

Gains:

17 and Under	2	0	2
18 and Over	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>13</u>
Total Gains	7	8	15

Losses:

Letter of Transfer or Removal from Rolls	2	2	4
Death	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>14</u>
Total Losses	8	10	18
Total Active Membership, December 31, 2022	166 (42.9%)	221 (57.1%)	387

Age Distribution of Active Members

25 & Under:	31 (8%)
26-40:	57 (14.7%)
41-55:	51 (13.2%)
56-70:	90 (23.3%)
Over 70:	<u>158 (40.8%)</u>
 Total	 387 (100.00%)

REMOVED BY SESSION ACTION

Lois Livingston
 Alex Stapleton
 Baxter Stapleton
 Christine Stapleton

MEMBERS RECEIVED BY TRANSFER

Lois Cromes	3/6/22
Mildred (Millie) Moore	3/6/22
Mark Heggie	3/6/22
Toni Heggie	3/6/22
James MacKnight	8/6/22
Margaret (Peg) Stark	9/27/22
Richard (Dick) Stark	9/27/22

DEATHS

Glenda Hime	1/2/22
Thomas Shultheis	1/26/22
Billie Platt	3/1/22
Madileen Gravenstine	3/13/22
Marion Laing	3/30/22
Robert Leland	8/31/22
Adele Pitsinger	9/3/22
Ken Snavely	9/17/22
Gloria Guest	10/22/22
Ken Cherry	11/18/22
Gordon Alders	12/5/22
Jean Gravlin	12/11/22
Charles Cooper III	12/14/22
Esther Haney	12/15/22

MEMBERS RECEIVED BY AFFIRMATION

Linda Denmark	8/23/22
Valerie Fletcher	4/24/22
Carole Mitchell	8/23/22
Chris Norman	8/23/22
Holly Roschel	4/6/22
Stephen Roschel	4/6/22

MEMBERS RECEIVED BY CONFIRMATION

Ethan Michael Baez	3/22/22
Wesley Donovan Baez	3/22/22

Memorial Moment: Prayer for Those Who Were Lost in 2022: Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong

Election of At-Large Members of Nominating Team for 2023 – Gretchen Cleaves,
 Suzi Dameron, Marianne Farmer, Mark Ferguson, Richard Jester, Jeanne Leatherbury,
 Peg Sperry. **MSA**

Session Team Reports (in order they appeared in the Annual Report)

Finance Team – Ryan Battelle: Started 2022 with \$147,000 deficit, but finisher with nearly \$20,000 in the black!

Stewardship: Janice Young – Instituted Growth campaign to counteract the budget deficit. Conducted successful fall Stewardship campaign,

Christian Education: Mary Baez – Graduated a significant Youth Group in June. Started Community Movie Nights in summer; restarted Children’s Sunday School & Puppets; Had successful VBS & Blessing of the Backpacks. Adult Ed classes continued, with some new formats.

Nominating: Gretchen Cleaves – All Deacon positions were filled. Still short 2 Elders as of 12/31.

Worship: Lois Thorp –New events started in 2022 were the Lenten Candle Extinguishing, Easter Flower Cross & Chrismon Tree. Restarted the Heritage Sunday Celebration, Candle Table on Sundays & Hanging of the Greens.

Mission: Jill Matteson – Continued to sponsor programs like Church Has Left the Building, Food Pantry, Blessing Box, Clothes That Work, etc. The new project in development is “Helping Hands” which we hope to get up & running in 2023.

MarCom: Todd Hall – Transitional year with some team member changes. Updated the website to a more user-friendly version. Katie Rice has made a significant impact on our online visibility and with overall communications. Hoping to build on this in 2023 with a consistent marketing message.

Invitation: Jean Gaffney – Strong effort was made in 2022 to reach out to guests at church and through the Live Stream Digital registry, Sponsored New Member Classes and received 13 new members throughout the year. The biggest event was planning & hosting a booth at the Americana Festival on July 4th.

Building & Grounds: John Woods – Major projects of the year included replacing 3 of 4 outdated HVAC systems, along with several other maintenance repairs & replacements. The Choir Loft was reconfigured for safety; upgraded our security system with added cameras; said goodbye to Property Technician Jimmy HoShue.

Personnel: Liz Ferguson – Glad to have filled all jobs, and assisting in the hiring of the MarCom Coordinator, Katie. Brought forth the Compensation Package for Pastor/Head of Staff Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong. (Nancy left the Sanctuary for this discussion). Liz pointed out a 3% raise was given to all the staff, who did not receive any raise in 2021. After explaining a couple of errors & typos, Liz asked for a motion to approve the package. **MSA** Nancy was then called to return to Sanctuary. A copy of Approved Compensation Package appears at the end of the minutes.

Deacon Team Reports:

Fellowship: Art Nitsch - Held some outdoor events, including Laura Nile Tuell’s Farewell; Backpack Sunday Picnic Lunch; Hymn Sing in the Pavilion; Trunk or Treat. Elderberries returns on March 4th.

Prayer & Presence: Deanna Brewer – Hello, Good Morning ministry had 18 participants in 2022; Care Connection calls were made from the callers’ homes; email Prayer Chain grew to 105 members.

Questions or Comments on Annual Report

Motion to Receive Annual Report **MSA**

Presentation of Proposed 2023 Budget Chair of Finance Ryan Battelle

Adjournment and Closing Prayer: Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong at 11:44AM

Attachments: Terms of Call for Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong
Meeting of the Corporation – Feb 5, 2023

Respectfully Submitted
Lois Thorp, Clerk

SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
February 5, 2023

**REPORT ON COMPENSATION – INSTALLED PASTORS
Presbytery of Miami Valley – Year 2022**

City/Location: Dayton
Pastor: Dr. Nancy Birdsong

Church: Southminster Presbyterian Church

	2021		2022
Annual Cash Salary	\$ 48,638	\$	50,097
Housing/Utility Allowance	\$ 48,637	\$	50,097
Medical/Dental Supplement Reimb..	\$ 521	\$	536
SECA (portion more than half only)	\$	\$	
Deferred Income	\$	\$	
(Annuity, Life Insurance, IRA, 403b, retirement savings, dental insurance, etc.)			
Other (please specify):	\$	\$	
Sub Total	\$ 97,796	\$	100,730
Free Use of Manse	yes / X No		yes / X No
If yes – not less than 30% of above	\$	\$	
EFFECTIVE SALARY (total above)	\$ 97,796	\$	100,730
ESTIMATED PENSION/MEDICAL DUES	\$ 36,185	\$	37,270
SECA (portion half or less only)	\$ 7,482	\$	7,665
REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES (NEED TO SHOW AS ITEMIZED FOR COM PURPOSES)			
Travel (auto @ IRS rate up to this amount)	\$ 1,000	\$	1,000
Continuing Ed. (min. \$1,750 for 2022)	\$ 1,220	\$	1,750
Professional Expenses/Books	\$ 1,500	\$	1,500
Other (please specify):	\$ 425(BWC)	\$	425 (BWC)
Voluntary contribution to Fidelity 403b			
From professional Expenses	\$ 1,000	\$	1,000
ANNUAL LEAVE			
Vacation (minimum 4 weeks including 4 Sundays)	4 Weeks		4 Weeks
Study leave (minimum 2 weeks including 2 Sundays)	2 Weeks		2 Weeks
Cumulative? # of weeks?	4		4
Other			

The above terms were approved by the Congregation at its meeting on February 13, 2022



Clerk of Session

2-13-2022

Date Signed

**SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

February 5, 2023

Meeting called to order at 11:42 a.m., by President Kathy Jester, who opened with prayer.

Docket before the corporation: One item – the election of the officers for 2022.

Nominations as recommended by Session:

President: Kathy Jester

Vice President: Janice Young

Secretary: Lois Thorp

Treasurer: Patty Izor

Asst. Treasurer: Larry Schlotterbeck – Not an elected office but he is recognized for his service.

Motion was made, seconded and approved.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:46 a.m. with prayer by Rec. Dr. Nancy Birdsong.

Respectfully submitted,
Lois Thorp,
Secretary, Clerk of Session

**SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MINUTES OF CALLED CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

December 3, 2023

Meeting called to order at 11:10 a.m., by Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong, who opened with prayer.

A quorum of at least 39 was present.

Gretchen Cleaves, Chair of the Nominating Team, on behalf of Session and the Nominating Team, presented this

Motion: *“To elect the following slate of officers for 2024, Class of 2026:*

ELDERS:

Andrew McKenzie – Building & Grounds

Shailendra Dwyer – Worship

Jill Matteson – Mission

Christina Bowers - Personnel

Glenda Wright – Stewardship

David Short - Worship

Cyndi Platt - Christian Education

Linda Denmark - Finance

DEACONS:

Jeanne Leatherbury – Prayer & Presence

Robbie Herner - Fellowship

Brenda Giannelli – Compassion & Assistance

Meeting Adjourned at 11:14 a.m. with prayer by Rev. Steve Schumm

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REPORT 12-31-2023

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Total Active Membership, December 31, 2022	166 (42.9%)	221 (57.1%)	387
Gains:			
17 and Under	3	0	3
18 and Over	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>12</u>
Total Gains	9	6	15
Losses:			
Letter of Transfer or Removal from Rolls	3	3	6
Death	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>
Total Losses	8	7	15
Total Active Membership, December 31, 2023	157 (40.6%)	230 (59.4)	387

Age Distribution of Active Members

22 & Under:	15 (3.88%)	65-79:	86 (22.22%)
23-39:	69 (17.83%)	80 & Over	100 (25.84%)
40-64:	88 (22.74%)	Unknown	29 (7.49%)
		Total	387 (100%)

MEMBERS RECEIVED BY TRANSFER

Stephen Calvert
 Mary Sroka-Calvert
 Robert Fraser
 Gwen Fraser

MEMBERS RECEIVED BY CONFIRMATION

River Gaffney
 Caleb Overturf
 John Overturf

DEATHS

Ann Fahnlne	1/21/23 (Elder)
Margaret Mueller	2/15/23
Walter Kaiser	3/15/23
Colleen Reynolds	5/30/23
Joseph Ricketts, Jr.	7/29/23
Lois Cromes	8/15/23
Daniel Strayer	9/6/23 (Elder & Deacon)
James Schardt	10/3/23
George Lawson	12/11/23 (Elder & Deacon)

MEMBERS RECEIVED BY AFFIRMATION

Christian Bowers
 Cantus Chan
 Doeun Chan
 Patricia Van Oss Davis
 Thomas Davis
 Greg McCullough
 Sharon Short
 David Short

REMOVED BY REQUEST

Ian Barlow
 Jane Barlow
 Katlin Barlow
 William Barlow
 Garrett Barlow

TRANSFERS OUT

Joan Vandawaker

CLERK'S SESSION REPORT

It was a busy year for your Southminster Session. The January meeting each year is full of important business items, such as approving the Officers of the Corporation for 2023, who were: President: Janice Young, Vice-President: Pete Garland, Secretary: Lois Thorp, Treasurer: John Breed. Patty Izor served in the non-elected position of Assistant Treasurer. We also welcomed 1 new Elder: Jason Schenck, who joined the Mission Team. Additionally, Session approved the expense of new stair railings for the Chancel steps and replacing the 3 AED units which had become obsolete. Pastor Steve Schumm & Josh Sweeney planned and executed a podcast series for Advent.

In February we met the new Scout Leader and agreed to support the purchase of a new bus. March brought the sad news that Josh Sweeney would be leaving SPC after Easter to move to Kansas.

A Blessing of the Animals service for summer was approved in April. In May, we approved the formation of a committee to explore the advisability of establishing an outdoor Memorial Garden area with columbarium. In June, Session approved the search for a Stated Supply Pastor. Over the summer we lost 2 Elders who stepped down for health reasons: Jason Schenck & Ginny Suarez.

On Saturday, August 19, the Elders & Deacons of SPC gathered for a retreat. There were 12 Elders & 8 Deacons present. The theme of the day was "How to be the Church GOD Intends us to be?" Discussion centered around what's good about our church and where we can improve. Some areas that were of most importance were connecting better with the community; improving and encouraging volunteerism; more hands-on mission projects.

At the August meeting we learned from Finance Team Chair Ryan Battelle that the HVAC loan had been paid off! This was accomplished very early thanks to the \$10,000 Reynolds & Reynolds grant plus the generosity of the congregation. In September we approved the slate of officers for 2024 of 7 Elders (an 8th Elder was approved later) and 4 Deacons. In October we met The Reverend Stan Gockel & his wife Libby, and we subsequently approved his hiring as Stated Supply Associate Pastor. We heard from John Woods, Chair of the Building & Grounds Team that our elevator has reached the point of near obsolescence and will need to be replaced in the next 3-5 years. In November we addressed the possibility of revamping the structure of Session since it has become increasingly hard to fill 21 seats on a yearly basis. This will be revisited in early 2024. Session approved the formation of an A-PNC in 2024, with input & guidance from the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry. We said a sad farewell to Pastor Steve.

The final clerk's report revealed that we received 15 new congregation members through the year, but we also lost 15 through death or other means, so we ended the year with 387 members, the same as we started with in January.

Your 2023 Session: **Andrew McKenzie & John Woods**-Building & Grounds Team; **Mary Baez & Cyndi Platt**- Christian Ed. Team; *Ryan Battelle - **John Breed**- Finance Team; **Gay Amos & Jean Gaffney** – Invitation Team; **Shailendra Dwyer & Todd Hall** MarCom Team; **Joan Johnson & Jill Matteson**-Mission Team; **Gretchen Cleaves**-Nominating Team; **Liz Ferguson & Marie Sutton**-Personnel Team; **Pete Garland & Janice Young**-Stewardship Team; **Lois Thorp**-Worship Team & Clerk of Session

*Ryan Battelle is an honorary member of Session as the Chair of Finance Team

**SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2023 BUDGET VS. ACTUAL
2024 BUDGET**

DESCRIPTION	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	Variance Increase (Decrease)	2024 Budget
Receipts				
General Fund Receipts	525,000	561,969	25,000	550,000
Loose Offering	3,000	2,638	(1,000)	2,000
Telesite Lease Payments	89,000	89,000	-	89,000
Mortgage/Building Repair	-	7,225	7,225	5,000
Investment Inc./Dist. Foundation/Endowment	25,500	26,375	875	25,500
Investment Fund Net Income	-	7,926	7,926	-
Per Capita-Receipts	5,000	2,837	(2,163)	4,000
Building Usage Fees	5,000	3,898	(1,102)	5,000
Pre School Lease Income	13,768	15,088	1,320	13,780
Growth Campaign	105,000	92,504	(12,496)	12,000
Columbarium Receipts	-	-	-	-
Memorial/Special Gifts/Covid	-	75	75	-
TOTAL RECEIPTS	771,268	809,534	38,266	706,280
Expenses				
Salaries and Benefits:				
Pastor/ Head of Staff	163,692	164,726	1,034	169,718
Associate Pastor	100,268	103,016	2,748	93,696
Director of Youth Ministry	27,021	8,749	(18,272)	22,585
Director of Children Ministry	17,734	8,477	(9,257)	22,585
Other Education Staff	10,005	8,357	(1,648)	10,397
Worship Staff	51,830	51,032	(798)	53,866
Office/Facility	125,904	111,796	(14,108)	136,566
Payroll Expense/Flexible Spending Account	2,700	1,860	(840)	2,200
Total Salaries and Benefits	499,154	458,013	(41,141)	511,613
Program/Team/Administration				
Invitation Team	4,000	1,978	(2,022)	4,000
Christian Education Team	11,650	7,074	(4,576)	13,650
Worship Team	29,150	3,923	(25,227)	37,000
Board of Deacons	4,400	1,090	(3,310)	3,950
Mission Team	16,000	8,467	(7,533)	19,000
Communication Team	5,010	3,578	(1,432)	8,610
Stewardship Team (includes per capita)	22,709	21,347	(1,362)	22,530
Office Expenses	62,250	60,556	(1,694)	65,950
Facility Expenses	129,400	173,315	43,915	132,900
Debt Retirement	79,210	35,317	(43,893)	-
Total Program/Team/Administration	363,779	316,643	(47,136)	307,590
TOTAL EXPENSES	862,933	774,656	(88,277)	819,203
NET RECEIPTS/(EXPENSES)	(91,665)	34,878	126,543	(112,923)

FINANCE TEAM

Southminster Presbyterian entered 2023 with a budget deficit of \$91,665. It is by the grace of God, acting in the hearts of all those associated with Southminster, that we will close out 2023 with a surplus of \$26,952. Total receipts were \$801,608. The income from our investments through the same period was \$7,926. Total expenses were \$774,656. Consider that these financial results are due, in part, to the Growth Campaign, which is a transient event in the life of the church – it will end in 2024.

During the course of the year, we routinely transferred money from our investment funds in order to meet our obligations. This sort of movement is normal, as we no longer receive monthly income from the cell tower. Instead, we receive a single annual payment of \$89,000 in May, all of which is moved to our investment accounts until it is needed in the general fund. 25% of the \$89,000 is permanently invested in our Southminster Foundation in order to provide a nest egg for when the cell tower no longer provides any income (in 2038).

Finance asks the congregation to consider that we are working to increase our investment account balances in order to guarantee annual income of at least \$89,000 after the cell tower income ceases in 2038. This means we must increase our investment funds to more than \$2,000,000 from where we are today (just under \$1M). Turmoil in the financial markets during 2022 and 2023 dampened growth of our investments, but Finance considers them to be well managed and to have fared better than the overall market.

We received no estate gifts in 2023.

Finance wishes to extend its deepest appreciation to Patty Izor for her unwavering dedication to the financial success of Southminster for the past 7 consecutive years. Patty's leadership - first as Treasurer, then as Assistant Treasurer – was key to our successful navigation through these unsettling economic times. Patty will be leaving the Finance team in early 2024.

Thank you to Mike Farmer for his devoted service to Finance for the last five years. Mike's counsel was invaluable to the team, and we wish him and his family blessings as they moved to a new congregation.

The Finance team thanks the congregation for their generous and timely financial support. We ask also that you remember the church in your estate planning. If you have questions regarding estate giving, please contact the church office or finance via email (finance@sminster.com.)

Please remember that pledging for the year helps us establish and maintain a budget for the church. If you are able to make a commitment, we would like to encourage you to do so each year. Also remember that for 2024 our per capita - which is the church's tithe to the Presbytery - is \$53.05 per member.

Finance oversees almost \$900,000 in investments, including both restricted funds (endowments) and general long-term savings vehicles. In 2023, our investment value increased by \$5,943, due to market conditions. That figure is after the transfer of \$52,500 for cash shortfalls and \$26,375 in budgeted monthly transfers to our general checking. Investments went from \$799,649 in 2022 to \$805,592 in 2023.

The Finance team meets every third Sunday of the month at 11:45 AM. Contact anyone on staff or the team chair, Ryan Battelle (finance@sminster.com), if you have any questions.

Team Members: Ryan Battelle (Chair), John Breed (Treasurer) Patty Izor (Assistant Treasurer), Bob Murphy (investments), Ron Kuker, and Mike Farmer.

TREASURER'S REPORT ANNUAL FINANCIAL RESULTS

	2023	2022	2021
Total Receipts	809,534	838,955	773,263
Total Disbursements	774,656	819,075	636,456
Net Excess (Deficit)	34,878	19,880	136,807

Select Financial Information

Current Assets - General Fund

Cash & CD's	48,620	59,223	219,507
-------------	--------	--------	---------

Assets - Investment

Dayton Foundation	305,865	278,196	337,673
Morgan Stanley	499,727	521,453	492,216
Total	805,592	799,649	829,889
Total Cash and Investments	854,212	858,872	1,049,396

Liabilities -

Withholdings & Misc	37	1,231	940
PPP Loan	-	-	-
Other Debt	-	135,000	-
Total Liabilities	37	136,231	940

Equity Reserve -

Other Designated Funds	85,072	93,629	109,895
------------------------	--------	--------	---------

Key Transactions/Activity - 2023

- * Southminster had 2 items capitalized in 2023. The balance of our new HVAC system \$53,132 and an Ovation sound system for \$21,407. Total \$80,303.
- * Market value of investments increased by \$84,818 due to underlying market conditions.
- * Southminster received the fifth annual payment on the sale of the cell tower lease for \$89,000. There will be 15 additional annual payments through 2038.
- * The loan for the HVAC system of \$135,000 was paid in full in 2023 using proceeds from our Growth Campaign.
- * \$3,475 was received in memory of Jean Gravlin, Charlie Cooper, Colleen Reynolds, Joe Ricketts, Lois Cromes, Dan Strayer and George Lawson. The Memorial Funds Policy is located in the Church office along with the Memorial Designation form.
- * In addition, 74,320 was received from the congregation for items such as designated gifts, mission offerings, flowers, youth events, emergency assistance, Presbytery Diaster Assistance, etc.

In Christ - John Breed, Treasurer

STEWARDSHIP TEAM

The Stewardship Team mounted a two-year Growth Campaign in March 2022 to feed the deficit in the 2022 church budget. An Ambassadors Group was organized and gave input into the campaign of which the goal was to raise \$400,000. Bob Cornett, an outside unpaid consultant gave advice on several occasions. Mary Baez chaired the Campaign. While the pledges came in for a total of \$241,370, at the close of 2023 the amount of money received was \$231,803. The campaign will end in May 2024.

Janice Young chaired the Southminster Team while Art Nitsch, Ben Baez, Mark Platt, Glenda Wright, and Pete Garland served as members. Steve Schumm supported the Team as the Staff Resource.

The actual 2024 Annual Campaign, entitled “*More than a Window*” began in August. Steve Schumm submitted several words to an AI Group and poof, we had a campaign song entitled, *Through These Hallowed Walls*. Ruth Whately found a composer who put a melody to lyrics which the congregation sang every Sunday during the annual event. At the close of the campaign, the Stewardship Team held a Stakeholders’ Luncheon. Over seventy people were entertained with music by Ethan Kuchta, a choir member, and short presentations by a few representatives of the outreach programs our church’s Mission Team oversees: the Food Bank and the Boy Scouts.

Other events that were implemented during the year were 16 Pod Casts conducted by Steve Schumm for Minute for Missions presentations during Worship. Each Team invited people into our church to see what we are all about. Not all the pod cast were played during worship services because of limited time, but they are still available on the website for viewing. Some of them are The Pumpkin Festival, The Women’s Retreat and Elderberries.

Two classes, organized by the Stewardship Team, to encourage church members to consider including Southminster in their Wills, Trusts, and other Estate Planning mechanisms were held in the Spring and Fall. Seven congregation members have acknowledged they have done so.

Each Session Team submitted their 2024 goals to the Stewardship and Finance Teams to help in the establishment of a budget for 2024. The goals were distributed on Stewardship Sunday, copies are available in the church office.

One goal, agreed upon by Session, is exploring the viability of an outside Columbarium on the south side of the building. A committee was formed to research the possibility. The Buildings and Grounds Team, The Stewardship Team, and other church members, will be organized by the Chair of the Finance Team to research the project.

As of Friday, December 31, 2023, 89 households have pledged \$411,194, towards the goal of \$550,000. During the 2023 year 96 households pledged \$434,605 toward the goal of \$500,000.

The Stewardship Team is extremely grateful to other Session Teams and church groups that assisted with the campaign: The *Music Committee* that supplied special music during the campaign; The *Invitation Team* that supplied postage and Time and Talents documents; The *Fellowship Team* that made and served the Stakeholders’ Luncheon; The *Finance Team*, The *Missions Team*, and The *Building and Grounds Team* that gave Minute for Mission Presentations; Individual church members who spoke on “What Southminster Means to Me.” and the people contributing to the 16 Pod Casts.

Altogether it took over fifty church members to plan and implement the 2023 Annual Stewardship Campaign.

Janice Young, Chair, Stewardship Team

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TEAM

2023 proved to be a challenging year for Christian Education. Our objective was to keep offering the education opportunities where we've seen growth while incorporating new programs to entice others to join. After losing Josh Sweeney, the Director of Children and Youth, one of our team's main goals was to continue our children and youth programs without the supporting staff position. We also focused on new adult education and family programs throughout the year that were open and shared with our broader community outside of the church. This challenged our small team to be decisive, utilize our resources effectively, and get creative with our education offerings.

The best strengths within our Christian Education team are to make decisions as a group, devise a plan of action, and deliver programs/events/studies quickly. Here are some of our 2023 highlights:

Children and Youth (Family) –

1. Created a prayer ground within the sanctuary for families with small children.
2. Held a virtual and interactive Stations of the Cross
3. Continued Sunday School, Sermon 2.0, Children & Worship without a Director.
4. Collaborated with various teams for a successful Blessing of the Backpacks service.
5. Reformatted VBS to be geared towards families and part of our Wednesday evening learning and fellowship series.
6. Oversaw the children's area at our Pumpkin Festival
7. Used grant money to expand our resource library with a focus on children's content.
8. Cleaned and reorganized our children's closet.

In 2024 we hope to continue activities for the younger church attendees and play a role in recruiting and hiring a new Director of Children and Youth.

Adult Education –

We worked to encourage attendance and got creative with adult programming. This included several events with guest speakers and incorporating fellowship along with the studies. Some of our top events and programs include:

1. Facilitated a CPR class.
2. Introduced new formats including our Wednesday evening learning and fellowship class.
 - a. Held most Wednesday evenings throughout 2023 and open to everyone.
 - b. Watched and discussed the 1st & 2nd seasons of "The Chosen" television series with meal.
 - c. Included an adult VBS component with guest speakers while kids were in their programs.
 - i. Danger with Technology and Kids
 - ii. Think for Yourself – Media Literacy
 - iii. Mental Awareness with Kids
3. Continued Adult Ed Classes:
 - a. Adam Hamilton's study of Luke
 - b. Lent "8 Habits of Evangelism"
 - c. "The Witness" written and taught by Lou G.
 - d. Sermon on the Mount
 - e. Advent "Redemption of Scrooge"
4. Supported events like the women's retreat, small groups, church has left the building, and Stewardship's annual campaign along with time and talent program.
5. Built our own social media Advent Community Outreach Calendar to correlate with the "Redemption of Scrooge" study.

NOMINATING TEAM

The Nominating Team began meeting in January to receive preparatory information and instructions. Our task was to present Elders and Deacon candidates to Session and the Congregation for approval for the Class of 2026.

We accumulated candidate suggestions for each position. Each member of the Team then took responsibility for making calls for a specific Team position. We meet every two weeks to update each other on our progress.

We were unable to complete our task with total success. One of our current Elders has moved to a different Team and a replacement has not been found. Another Elder candidate and Deacon candidate reconsidered and declined in late November, and we were unable to find replacements. We will continue to search for replacements. However, eight Elders and three Deacons were found.

The Nominating Team was also tasked with selecting an Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC) to search for a replacement for Steve Schumm who left mid-December. We have begun to select members and have found five at this time. We are continuing to search for the remaining members.

My thanks go to the 2023 Nominating Team of Suzi Dameron, Marianne Farmer, Richard Jester, Mark Ferguson, Peg Sperry, Jeanne Leatherbury and Joan Johnson (Session Rep.).

Submitted by Gretchen Cleaves, Chair.

WORSHIP TEAM

The Worship Team was very busy during the year with various projects. We helped with the Epiphany Feast in January. In February we included the Candle Extinguishing for each Sunday of Lent. For Ash Wednesday we once again provided a soup supper for the congregation as a start to the Lenten Season. Then on Easter Sunday, we provided the Flower Cross to be decorated in the Narthex and then moved outdoors for passersby to enjoy. In May we had the wonderful opportunity to sponsor a community concert for the musical group *Astralis*. This was offered as an outreach project rather than a money-maker and was well attended. Pentecost at the end of May was a successful Sunday with lots of balloons sent home with kids and adults alike.

Over the year we received several donated Nativity sets to grow our collection. In September, we brought back the passing of Offering Plates during the service. This required recruiting more Ushers to manage the process and, we were grateful to all those who helped and continue to do so. We even bought new lighter-weight brass plates to make it easier for everyone.

We were pleasantly surprised to learn of generous donations in the fall which 1. Covered the expense of all the musical acts for the Pumpkin Festival, and 2. Better yet, allowed for a complete upgrade of our sound system in the Sanctuary and for the live stream.

The Worship Team is responsible for scheduling Liturgist, Ushers and Communion Servers, as well as preparing the elements for each Communion Service. If you would be interested in becoming a member of this team, or if you would like to join the Usher Team or the Liturgist Team, please contact Lois Thorp.

Team: Jerry Craig, Elizabeth Davis, Janet Hall, Irene Mathis, Cindy Stevens, Holly Woods, Lois Thorp, Chair, and Nancy Birdsong (staff liaison.)

MISSION TEAM

In 2023, the goal of Southminster's Mission Team was to continue our outreach into the community in keeping with our vision: "Church is not where we attend; the Church is where we participate to glorify God, to nurture each other, and to extend God's love to the world." We are thankful for the countless ways that the congregation and community members, as well as the Church staff, have supported our projects.

Ongoing Projects include:

- FISH Southeast Food Pantry – led by Kevin Dickson.
 - The Food Pantry is our team's most active and long-lasting program.
 - We keep a pantry on the church campus and discreetly deliver food to those in need within a five-mile radius.
 - We keep a Blessing Box on the church campus that makes quality food available to those in need in the community. In 2023, we installed a second Blessing Box on the campus of Chevy Chase Apartments. We are currently looking into other locations for an additional Blessing Box.
- Church Has Left the Building (CHLB) – led by Mission Team and volunteers.

This is one of the major outreach projects by members of the congregation and supports our Matthew 25 goals. On a Sunday in the fall, in lieu of our regular worship service, members of the congregation go out into the community to serve many of our local mission partners.

Projects for CHLB 2023:

 - Linda Vista, Inc. – completed outdoor cleanup and some indoor repairs.
 - Ronald McDonald House – prepared lunch and dinner for approximately 50 residents of Ronald McDonald house.
 - House of Bread - prepared and served over 200 lunches for guests and prepared over 200 boxed to go lunches.
 - Little Dresses for Africa – learned to sew little dresses and continued to sew them at home and sent them to little girls in Africa.
 - Receiving Blankets for Brigid's Path – learned to sew receiving blankets for babies. Approximately 22 blankets were later delivered to Brigid's Path for use by families.
 - Casseroles for St. Vincent/The Castle – prepared and delivered approximately 63 casseroles.
 - Crayons to Classrooms – assembled and delivered 512 journals for use in area classrooms and sewed and delivered approximately 50 "pocket hugs" to be used by area students.
 - Food Blessing Bags – assembled Blessing Bags with snacks and water, for later distribution to those in need.
 - The Castle – performed outdoor work and landscaping around the grounds.
 - Hannah's Treasure Chest – prepared mailings for Hannah's Treasure Chest.
- Clothes That Work - led by Mary Stahley.

Volunteers from the congregation donate clothing to this organization and it is delivered to the facility in Dayton.
- The Castle
Volunteers from the congregation donate monetary and consumable gifts and prepare meals for the guests at The Castle.
- Participation in the National Long-Sleeve Shirt Drive for farmworkers, sponsored by the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs.

Church members donated over 30 shirts.
- Assistance with Southminster's Pumpkin Festival

The Mission Team worked with the Worship Team to decorate the Church and grounds for the second annual Pumpkin Festival. The Mission Team had an informational booth about mission and outreach projects at our Church and had a game available for children to play.

- November Blessing Box Collection –
Church members donated a large quantity of non-perishable food items to be used to fill the Blessing Boxes.
- Shoeboxes for Veterans with the Dayton VA Hospital –
This year, the congregation purchased and donated items listed on ornaments hanging on the Narthex Christmas tree. Preschool students from A Great Start Preschool wrote notes to the veterans. Volunteers gathered the notes and items into plastic shoeboxes. With these generous donations, 51 boxes and assorted items were delivered to the VA Hospital, to be given to veterans in time for Christmas.

Developing Projects

- Helping Hands Project
We continue to work on this project to offer help and kindness to seniors in need in our community. We hope to use the talents within our congregation and match them to those who need assistance.
- Linda Vista, Inc.
Linda Vista, Inc. is a community-based nonprofit organization located in Dayton, which provides housing and support for single women and mothers who are homeless. We began with some support of Linda Vista, Inc. in 2023, and plan to continue to seek out ways to expand our support of this organization.

We thank the members of the 2023 Mission Team – Pastor Nancy Birdsong (Staff Representative), Elder **Jill** Matteson, Linda Denmark, Kevin Dickson, Pete Garland, Joan Johnson, Ron Kuker, and Jason Schenck.

We welcome input from the congregation, as well as anyone interested in becoming part of the team. We hope that, with God's help, we can continue our efforts to extend His love to community members.

Respectfully submitted by Jill Matteson, Team Chair

MARCOM TEAM

MarCom continued to serve Southminster in 2023, working to improve internal communications as well as reaching out to the community. When it comes to internal communications, I feel that although not perfect, the Microsoft Teams implementation at least gives Teams and Session a central place to share documentation including team minutes, annual reports, etc. Katie Rice has been an important staff member helping other teams and special events promote Southminster to the community. We primarily leverage Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and Google, while we see printed publications becoming less effective. Katie also helps with consistent and effective signage for our festival presence, such as the now annual Pumpkin Festival and our presence at the Americana Festival

The team worked on creating a motto, or tagline message that we can leverage through our marketing efforts. Many ideas were considered, and during the Leadership Retreat in August, the recommendation was to use 'Southminster ... More than a Window' or simply 'More than a Window'. I feel this is a welcoming and interesting lead in to most anything we want to present to the community. It introduces us, as well as leads the topic to explain more. More about our missions, special events, worship services, vacation bible school, pumpkin festival and the Americana Festival. It allows the person who first hears it to hopefully be interested in 'what is more?'. We will see how this actually pans out, but I think it is a very positive first step in helping us define a consistent marketing message to the community at large.

We are also looking at putting into place an online membership directory. Research was done as far as working with a 3rd party provider for such services, but the committee felt we could at least attempt to put something together that we could self-manage on our site. Online forms have been developed and prototypes of an online directory have been shared with Session. We would very much like to get traction on making this come alive soon in 2024.

There had been discussion earlier in the year about how to make our outdoor electronic signage more inviting and engaging. Although this is not the responsibility of MarCom, it seems the messaging has become more interesting. Especially around the Christmas and New Year's holidays, I have even seen some gentle animation on our sign. I feel this is a positive step.

Those who have been involved in the MarCom team this past year have been Katie Rice, Shailendra Dwyer, Todd Hall, Chair, and Steve Schumm (staff liaison.)

INVITATION TEAM

The Invitation Team leads the congregation in their mission of inviting people into relationship with Christ, warmly welcoming them to Southminster, introducing them to all Southminster has to offer and bringing them into membership (if they desire). During 2023 the Team focused on the following:

New Members: Gretchen Cleaves, church office volunteer, provides lists of guests from which the Invitation Team acquires contact information for reaching out. We held several Southminster 101 gatherings where Nancy Birdsong and Steve Schumm spoke about being a Presbyterian and about our church specifically. The Inquiry Class name was changed to Southminster 101 which seemed to have more appeal. The number of new members this year was 15. Three of those were teens from the confirmation class facilitated primarily by Josh Sweeney. Cheryl Hartman and Kate Scarpero continue to do the behind-the-scenes tasks involved in new membership.

The team focused on studying "Radical Welcome" which was one of the *Eight Habits of Evangelism* (<https://8habits.org/>). Effort was made to get the Radical Welcome ideas out to the congregation since everyone needs to help welcome our guests and encourage their relationship with the church. The team did a presentation during the first Lent Table Talk about Radical Welcome. Members are becoming more comfortable with encountering guests, introducing themselves, and talking about the church. Some new members said they were drawn to the church due to our friendliness and the many activities offered.

Tom Novak once again scheduled volunteers to be greeters and to host the Welcome Center during church services. Several team members support this effort by being available in the narthex to further greet guests, answer questions and introduce guests to other members. Tom has also spearheaded updating the Welcome packet distributed to guests at the Welcome Center.

During the Session Retreat, it was emphasized that members need to be more welcoming to youth. The team ordered more pop-it fidgets to give to juvenile guests. We are trying other ideas as well.

Community Events and Support to Other Teams:

Blessing of the Animals on June 25 – Marj Lawson had encouraged the team to do this for years, and finally this year we felt we could add it into the mix of summer events. We followed some of the ideas presented in "Blessing the Animals," an article in *Presbyterians Today*, March/April 2023. We had fun planning all the details around this kind of event, but the most fun was hosting the over 30 dogs and one cat who attended the program on the front lawn of the church. Around 45 humans attended.



Americana on July 4th – The team secured the same excellent spot for the booth this year. The Platt family provided transportation for the gear. Volunteers spent the first few hours handing out small American flags which people love to wave during the parade. The rest of the day the booth featured the Wheel of Fortune where people could win small prizes. The booth also featured photos of activities and handouts about upcoming activities such as VBS. Water and treats were made available for pets. It was a great day for the team to demonstrate in person to thousands that Southminster is a contributing part of the community. The team devotes about nine months to planning and preparing the booth.

Other Events the team supported were: Pumpkin Festival, Women’s Retreat, Blessing of the Backpack Sunday, Breakfast with Santa, Piano, and Flute Concert. We ordered and distributed paperback easy reader books as gifts for participants.

Time & Talent: The team scheduled a different team each month to display information about the team on the Time and Talent table near the narthex.

Tom Novak and Adrienne Dickson updated the Time & Talent booklet and volunteer form. These materials were mailed out with the Stewardship materials with the help of Jan Hohenstein and Max Jenks. Jean Gaffney collated the volunteer requests and shared this with team leaders. The Time & Talent effort takes from August to December to complete.

Goals for 2024:

- ✓ Focus on ways to attract new members, continue to encourage Radical Welcome with special focus on youth.
- ✓ Continue involvement in community focused events and support other team events.
- ✓ Execute Time & Talent activities and seek out continual improvements.
- ✓ Update and improve the Welcome packet for guests.

In conclusion, the people on our team that made this all possible were Elders Gay Amos, Jean Gaffney, and members at large, Cheryl Hartman, Tom Novak, Brenda Ricketts, and Kate Scarpero. Our wonderful support group members helping with specific projects are Mary Baez, Adrienne Dickson, Mark Ferguson, Marj Lawson, Jan Hohenstein, and Max Jenks. Steve Schumm was our indispensable staff liaison, and our quality outreach.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

The Southminster Buildings and Grounds Team worked in 2023 to maintain our facility with routine and emergency maintenance and repair projects including the following:

*In August, Southminster hired Jim O'Neil as the new Building Property Technician. Jim brings lots of experience as a general contractor and all-around handyman. Many thanks to Jerry Stahley for stepping up as the interim Property Tech.

*The final phase of the AC overhaul was completed with the installation of the front office system in May. New systems have been installed for the Sanctuary, front office, CFC and kitchen. Loans were taken out to pay the upfront costs and with donations from the Growth Campaign all loans have already been paid off. Thank you all for your generous donations.

*Several unexpected items caused Buildings and Grounds to request additional funding from Session. First the front office AC system requires a smoke/fire alarm integrated into the building system. That was not accounted for during the AC overhaul. Cost is expected to be \$6,800 with work done by Johnson Controls. Second, two circulating pumps failed and need to be replaced for a total cost of \$3,700. Third, many of the doors do not meet fire code, have safety issues, or need weather seals and need repaired. Total cost is expected at \$4,400 to repair all the doors. The CFC boiler system experienced a few leaks due to over-pressurization. We had Rieck install a safety interlock to avoid such failures in the future.

*New railings were built and installed by Mike Stevens in the sanctuary on the steps up to the chancel. New AED's were bought (mostly through donations) and installed within the church. One of the old ones was donated to the Scouts, which they refurbished at their cost, so that each troop can have an AED while on camp outs, which frequently happens on the same weekends.

*Several stained or damaged ceiling tiles were replaced in the CFC. Some were caused by leaks in the roof membrane near drains which have been repaired.

* The kitchen freezer failed and was junked. A donation of a full-sized residential freezer was received. The walk-in kitchen refrigerator had the compressor repaired.

*During the Church has Left the Building event we had several Scouts help with landscaping issues like cedar bushes around Pavilion were removed, ground hog hole filled by door 12 and overgrown vines and bushes removed around door 11.

*Most of the external lighting had failed due to water intrusion, all are replaced.

*A main drain from the sanctuary collapsed just inside door 3. The drain was dug out, replaced and the flooring repaired. A clean out was installed at the point of repair.

*After repairing or replacing several of the heating water pumps in the building, several others failed and had to be repaired/replaced. We should be in good shape now on the water pump front.

*We received donations to update the kitchens. After discussion it was decided to use it to modify the kitchen in the Community Room. The current configuration was not very useful. Unused and obsolete items will be removed, and useful items will be installed. It won't be a fully functional kitchen but will be useful for those who use it.

B&G Team members: Elders Johns Woods, Chair, and Andrew McKenzie. Members at large: Steve Campbell, Mark Locke, Linda Meily, Dan Strayer. Staff Liaisons are Nancy Birdsong and Jim O'Neil.

FELLOWSHIP TEAM

Fellowship was able to participate in many all-church events this year. For Epiphany, we had a potluck and provided ham, rolls and cake. For Heritage Sunday, again we had a potluck with bangers and mash provided. A reception with cookies and crackers was hosted for Blessing of the Backpacks. The team setup games for the Pumpkin Festival including ring toss, pumpkin bowling, guess how many candy corns it would take to match the weight of a large pumpkin, and corn hole games. A Stewardship Stakeholder's luncheon including lasagna, salad and biscuits was hosted after the stewardship campaign was completed.

Elderberries had a fun year and enjoyed programs for everyone interested in our First Friday of Fun events. At each event before the programs, coffee/tea/water and dessert were provided and attendees brought their own lunches. In February, Bill Corfield and Art Nitsch lead us in song. Kevin Risner from Washington-Centerville Library presented a program on the Great Dayton Flood of 1913 in March. Cinco de Mayo was celebrated in May with a taco bar and music fun with Art Nitsch. In October, Needles & Hooks displayed hats they had created for the Pumpkin Festival and some of their other ministry projects. At our October meeting, Hanna's Treasure Chest explained the many ways they help needy children and their families with toys, clothing, and other necessities and told of a much larger facility they are moving to which will allow them to expand their service to the community. A Medicare update and Christmas songs concluded the year in December.

The Bereavement committee is part of the Fellowship Team which provides help as needed to them for funeral services. Memorial reception's are hosted through the year.

Coffee Corner was up and running every Sunday morning with drinks and treats. Thanks goes out to the Team and different Presby groups and other individuals who helped support this opportunity for fellowship after our Sunday services!

Thank you to the Fellowship Team for their efforts resulting in good food, fun and fellowship, including members Darlene Irwin, Mel Kelley, Linda Wiggers, Art Nitsch, Sandy Stevens and Pastor Steve Schumm (staff liaison.)

DEACON'S PRAYER AND PRESENCE

Prayer and Presence has oversight for many ministries. Our team is comprised of a small but dedicated group of Christians striving to serve in the ministries of member care, love, compassion, prayer, and community service. Our tasks are not without challenges and together we have continued to work to identify those challenges and find ways to make our work more meaningful.

Care Connection Callers

This ministry extends the love, care and hospitality of Christ to those connected with Southminster Church, through regular phone calls. Special prayer requests or needs are recorded and then are confidentially relayed to the intercessory prayer group and the pastors. Many people who do not answer when called from an unfamiliar number do call back with their prayer requests, which has been a blessing because it means that more people are successfully reached.

Final Care Connection Calls Statistics for 2023: Calls Made – 1,248; Call Connections Made – 511 Requests for Prayer – 298; Post Cards sent – 77

Follow-up Calls and Communication

This ministry offers spiritual support and encouragement to individuals recently discharged from the hospital or rehabilitation services, who face life challenges, or have lost a loved one.

In 2023, Southminster Prayer and Presence team made extra effort to reach the homebound members of our congregation with "snail mail" cards. Approximately 40 members received at least one card per month. With age and life circumstances, we feel this media has been the best way to connect with these individuals. We welcome suggestions for names of individuals to be added to our list.

Hello, Good Morning

This ministry pairs individuals who live alone; asking them to call each other daily to be certain their partner is up and in no need of assistance. 2023 started with 14 members participating in this ministry and at year end there were 18 participants enjoying the care and fellowship of a daily call. The ministry continues to go very well.

Home Communion

This ministry provides monthly communion to people who are not able to attend regular worship services and who are open to having a Home Communion team come to their home or facility. Each month teams of 2 volunteer Elders and/or Deacons reach out to serve Communion and share Christian love and fellowship. Both servers and recipients are enriched by this visible demonstration of God's continuing care and grace. Home communion is open to any member who is unable to attend worship in person as the result of illness, age, or disability.

Homebound, Hospital and Rehab visitation

This ministry coordinates visitation opportunities to those connected with Southminster Church who are homebound or live in care facilities. The visits and in some cases phone calls are typically made monthly. Many visits occur as extended time together when home communion is delivered. The most welcomed visits occur when we arrive with cookies to share and stories to tell about events, sermons, and a recap of activities at Southminster. Those we visit also delight in sharing stories from their lives. These visits are blessings to all.

Intercessory Prayer Group

This ministry consists of a group of dedicated and discreet individuals who meet weekly to pray for the needs of members of Southminster Church, their families and loved ones. Prayers are lifted for, but not limited to, needs identified through Care Connection calls; as well as for those living with serious illness, job loss, death of loved ones, those in the military and needs identified via Prayer Chain. This very special group honors all the prayer requests that have been gathered during the week. The Prayer Group consists of 4 faithful members but is open to anyone who wishes to join, even if only now & then.

Prayer Chain

This ministry relays special prayer requests to a group of 110 compassionate and caring prayer partners, who pray for each prayer request. The Prayer chain exists via email and phone calls.

There were 168 Prayer Requests in 2023. *1 John 5:14 says, "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us."*

Stephen Ministry

This ministry provides one-on-one confidential, loving care by trained lay people who companion with others who are faced with difficult life events such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or relocation. Unfortunately, the pandemic brought this ministry to a halt. However, Southminster has three Stephen Ministers remaining. These dedicated servants have spent many hours in training to serve our members. This ministry is an unused treasure waiting to be of benefit to those who need an ear to listen, someone to care and someone to walk with them as they go through difficult times in their life.

Prayerfully submitted,
Linda Wiggers, chair

PERSONNEL TEAM

I read a quote many years ago. I no longer remember the source, but the yellowed sticky note in my office reminds me to trust in God: "God knows you....God meets you at the edge of every new beginning." Unfortunately, new beginnings usually go hand in hand with goodbyes, and 2023 has certainly been a year of goodbyes and new beginnings for the staff at Southminster. In March we said goodbye to Josh Sweeney, our Director of Children and Youth Ministry, as he headed to Kansas in support of his wife's new Pastoral calling. We have been searching for a replacement and have been grateful for the outstanding work of Pastor Nancy, the Christian Education Team and all the volunteers who have stepped up to support our children and youth in the interim. In August we welcomed Jim O'Neil as our Property Maintenance/Facilities Coordinator. Much gratitude to Jerry Stahley and Sharon Ark who covered those responsibilities while we conducted our search. In December we said goodbye to Steve Schumm, our Stated Supply Associate Pastor, who headed to British Columbia in support of his wife's new tenured professorship position. We followed that goodbye with the welcoming of a new Stated Supply Associate Pastor Stan Gockel. A "chance" meeting at the August polls between Marie Sutton, a personnel team member and Pastor Stan led us to this new beginning. If that isn't God meeting us at the edge of a new beginning, I'm not sure what is!! December ended with one more goodbye as our Nursery worker Sarah Reynolds took a new position at Children's Hospital that prevented her from continuing to work with us. We acknowledge that this year has been challenging for Pastor Nancy and the office staff and office volunteers, with much change and many unknowns. We ask that you share in our thanks for their teamwork and efforts throughout 2023.

I wish to personally thank all the members of the Personnel Team for their hard work this year and a special thanks Bob Burkman for his past years of service as he rotated off the team at the end of December.

While we continue to search for our open positions of Director of Children and Youth, and Nursery staff we remain hopeful and optimistic, remembering to trust in God's presence in our "new beginnings".

Liz Ferguson, Chair of Personnel

**REPORT ON COMPENSATION – INSTALLED PASTORS
Presbytery of Miami Valley - Year 24**

City/Location Centerville Church Southminster Presbyterian Church
Pastor Dr Nancy Birdsong

	<u>2023 (PREVIOUS YEAR)</u>	<u>2024 (CURRENT YEAR)</u>
Annual Cash Salary	\$ <u>53,604</u>	\$ <u>55,748</u>
Housing/Utility Allowance	\$ <u>53,604</u>	\$ <u>55,748</u>
Medical Supplement Reimb.	\$ <u>573</u>	\$ <u>596</u>
SECA (portion <u>more than half only</u>)	\$ _____	\$ _____
Deferred Income	\$ _____	\$ _____
(Annuity, Life Insurance, IRA, 403b, retirement savings, dental insurance, etc.)		
Other (please specify):	\$ _____	\$ _____
Sub Total	\$ <u>107,781</u>	\$ <u>112,092</u>
Free Use of Manse	yes / x no	yes / x no
If yes – not less than 30% of above	\$ _____	\$ _____
EFFECTIVE SALARY (total above)	\$ <u>107,781</u>	\$ <u>112,093</u>
ESTIMATED PENSION/MEDICAL DUES	\$ <u>42,035</u>	\$ <u>43,716</u>
SECA (portion <u>half or less only</u>)	\$ <u>8,201</u>	\$ <u>8,529</u>
REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES (NEED TO SHOW AS ITEMIZED FOR COM PURPOSES)		
Travel (auto @ IRS rate up to this amount)	\$ <u>1,000</u>	\$ <u>1,000</u>
Continuing Ed. (see min. terms)	\$ <u>1,750</u>	\$ <u>1,750</u>
Professional Expenses/Books	\$ <u>1,500</u>	\$ <u>1,500</u>
Other (please specify):	<u>425 (BWC)</u>	<u>130(BWC)</u>
Voluntary contribution to Fidelity 403b		
From professional expenses	\$ <u>1,000</u>	\$ <u>1,000</u>
ANNUAL LEAVE		
Vacation (minimum 4 weeks including 4 Sundays)	<u>4 weeks</u>	<u>4 weeks</u>
Study leave (minimum 2 weeks including 2 Sundays)	<u>2 weeks</u>	<u>2 weeks</u>
Other	_____	_____

A provision for a minimum of twelve weeks paid family medical leave per the Book of Order G-2.0804 is included in these terms of call. acknowledged

The above terms were approved by the Congregation at its meeting on (date) _____

Nancy Birdsong
Clerk of Session

1/22/2024
Date Signed

2024 CHURCH OFFICERS

SESSION

CLASS OF 2024

Gay Amos
Mary Baez
John Breed, (Treasurer)
Joan Johnson
Lois Thorp
John Woods

Invitation
Christian Education *
Finance
Mission *
Worship *
Building and Grounds *

CLASS OF 2025

Gretchen Cleaves
Jean Gaffney
Todd Hall
Peter Garland
Liz Ferguson

Nominating*
Invitation *
MarCom*
Stewardship
Personnel*

CLASS OF 2026

Christina Bowers
Shailendra Dwyer
Jill Matteson
Andrew McKenzie
Cyndi Platt
David Short
Glenda Wright
Ryan Battelle
(Not currently serving as an Elder)

Personnel
Worship
Mission
Building and Grounds
Christian Education
Worship
Stewardship
Finance *

BOARD OF DEACONS

Moderator: Britt Platt

CLASS OF 2024

Steve Davis
Mel Kelley
Shirley Oglesbee
Britt Platt
Linda Wiggers

Prayer & Presence
Fellowship
Compassion & Assistance
Prayer & Presence
Prayer & Presence*

CLASS OF 2025

Kim Catchpole Patton
Art Nitsch
Sharon Boyko
Sandy Stevens
Joanne Yost

Prayer & Presence
Fellowship
Prayer & Presence
Fellowship
Compassion & Assist*

CLASS OF 2026

Brenda Dinwiddie Giannelli
Robbie Herner
Jeanna Leatherbury

Compassion & Assist
Fellowship
Prayer & Presence

Team Chair = *