

Annual Report

2024



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
Report of Pastor Compensation	14
Membership Report.....	16
Session Report	17
Finance Team	18
Treasurer Report	19
Christian Education Team.....	21
Nominating Team.....	22
Worship Team.....	22
Mission Team.....	23
Invitation Team.....	25
MarCom	26
Building and Grounds Team.....	27
Deacon Teams	28
Personnel Team.....	30
Church Officers.....	31

***The Stewardship Team report is not available at this time.**

Report of the Pastor/Head of Staff for 2024

Nancy Birdsong

Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?” ~ Exodus 15:11b

*When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? ~ Psalm 8:3-4*



When I was 12 years old and hiking on the Appalachian Trail with a Presbytery camp group, I experienced a moment of pure wonder. At the top of the mountain, there was a beautiful, unexpected meadow of wildflowers that ended with a single tree at the edge of a cliff. Rays of sun were touching the tree in ways that made it seem like the light was coming from within. Beyond the cliff were mountains, and the dappled light made them sparkle in the distance like stars. Suddenly, I was acutely aware that such wonders are a gift from God. Prayers of praise began rising within me. I sensed the presence of the Holy whispering to my soul of God’s love for me and for all creation. Perhaps you have had such moments of acute awareness of God’s fingerprints on your life. Sometimes, we are stuck with wonder in a way that takes us by surprise.

At the beginning of 2024, the *Star Word* that I received at the Epiphany Feast was **“Wonder.”** Throughout the year, I have been trying to be more aware of God’s wonders in the world, my life, and the life of Southminster Presbyterian Church. I often see God’s fingerprints on this congregation, and in the blessing that you are in this world.

After receiving the *Star Word*, I looked around at the many people at the Epiphany Feast enjoying fellowship around the tables, while their gold paper crowns glistened in the candlelight. As they dropped their written gifts to Christ in the baskets by the manger and came to Stan and me to light their individual candles, the softness in their eyes was wondrous to me. I knew it came from the moments they had spent thinking about what their gift of love might be.

On Ash Wednesday, we moved from the wonders of God being revealed to us in Jesus Christ and sharing life with us, to the brevity of life and how God calls us to be intentional about the way we live it. As we travelled through the days of Lent and experienced classes, discussions, devotionals, the Maundy Thursday service with actors portraying the women in Jesus’ life, and the interactive Stations of the Cross, we contemplated our Christian journeys. On Easter, our music soared with the joy of Resurrection, and we celebrated the wonders of new life in Christ.

Although we experience the seasons of the Christian year over and over, the music, the dynamics of the congregation, and the presence of the Holy Spirit make them also feel fresh and new. What amazes me is how many members of the congregation not only participate but help to create and bring about these meaningful services and programs. Our Worship, Christian Education, and Fellowship Teams all have a part in providing these experiences.



Our Session has discussed the reality that if we want to grow in young adults and families with children, we need to offer more of a blending of traditional and contemporary music. Ruth Whatley’s creativity and diligence have helped us make great progress toward that goal. Most Sundays, we have 2 anthems, representing different genres. Depending on our age and stage in life, various musical experiences speak to our hearts, and we need to make space for everyone. Often, our moments of wonder on a Sunday come from the shared gifts of our talented and dedicated Sanctuary Choir, Vocal Ensemble, Bell Choir, and instrumentalists.



Children naturally possess a sense of wonder. Their eagerness to explore the world around them reminds us of the blessings that we so often overlook. With Melanie’s guidance and the caring of our Sunday School teachers and assistants, the children are also exploring their faith and learning the meaning of Christ-like compassion, love, and gratitude. At Thanksgiving, they provided a poster with leaves and asked us to write on them the things for which we are thankful. In special services, such as *Flipflops, Faith, and Fun* at the beginning of summer and *Backpack Sunday* at the beginning of the school year, they feel your support and love. It means so much to our children to have

a whole service dedicated to coming along beside them as they worship in their own way.

If we want to continue to explore and grow our children’s ministry, we need your help! Right now, we have two Sunday school teachers but not enough volunteers to simply be the extra person in the room. According to our safety guidelines, there must be more than one adult for any class or activity. Please consider signing up, even if it is just once a month or less. It would be incredibly sad to have to eliminate Sunday School for lack of volunteers. We also need nursery volunteers. Children enjoy adults of all ages, including those old enough to be a grandparent or a great grandparent. If you support the children in this way, I promise they will add joy to your life. It is encouraging to see the youth group meeting regularly to discuss their faith, have fun in fellowship, and engage in service. They are responding in positive ways to Melanie’s ideas, sense of humor, and sincerity.



New members often mention that one of the reasons they want to be a part of Southminster is our dedication to mission and service in the community. They are drawn to an active congregation that tries to make a difference in the world. Read the Mission Report to find out more about what we have been doing in 2024. At *The Church Has Left the Building* this year, in addition to all the projects in which

adults participated, our youth and children prepared over 1,000 luminaries for the Centerville-Washington Park District. If you ever have an idea for a service project, please don't hesitate to bring it to the Mission Team. What a wondrous thing it is that God calls us to be co-creators in making this world a better place and invites us to follow Jesus in ministries of compassion and care.

It is no secret that Presbyterians like to play, eat, and have fun together. Our faith is nourished in our interactions with one another. The Fellowship Team often works in the background for special dinners like our Heritage Sunday International Potluck and the Epiphany Feast. Groups like our women's circles, Elderberries, Presby groups, and card-playing gatherings strengthen our sense of community. Most recently, Pastor Stan started *Southminster Men of Faith*—filling a need for men to share their life experiences and faith journeys. Adult Education is not only offered on many Sundays after worship, but also through Wednesday night dinners and discussions.

While I see pastoral care as an important aspect of my call as your pastor, I am just one part of a greater network of caring ministries at Southminster. From *Care Connection* callers, to the Thursday prayer group, the prayer chain, and other Deacon ministries like Home Communion and the *Take Them a Meal* program, this congregation supports one another in amazing ways. Our grief group is a source of comfort and strength, and the *Hello, Good Morning* program pairs together people who would like someone to check in on them each day. It is a moving experience to witness how many of you are deeply committed to being there for one another. When I had surgery, you were there for me, too, and your caring meant so much to me.



In trying to do something for the community around us, we started the *Pumpkin Festival* three years ago. This year, we had over 700 visitors. I heard comments like, “Wow, this is a really cool church to do this” and “I come back every year.” It's especially nice to see so many volunteers from the congregation working together—over 110 of them! As they do in the Americana Festival, our Invitation Team had a booth and greeted people with warm smiles and a friendly welcome.

I feel blessed to work with such a great church staff. They are all dedicated and hard-working, plus we have lots of fun together! I am also grateful for our regular office volunteers who so graciously offer their time and cheerful presence. In 2024, we kept our Personnel Team busy! We said goodbye to Property Manager, Joe Rieder, who was with us only for a few months before he realized that he couldn't make the needed time commitment. Then, along came Mike Beach, who is doing a great job and knows so much about keeping things running in this big building. It was sad for us when Katie Rice had to leave us to accept a full-time job with medical benefits, but we certainly understood. Natalie Lockhart joined us in the nursery, and the little ones seem to adore her. Melanie Woodruff came to us early in the year, and she has been wonderful with both the youth and the children. We are blessed to have her on staff. Stan has been our Stated Supply Associate for over a year, and I'm grateful for his ministry, collegiality, and kindness.

Friends, serving as your pastor continues to be a delight. Thank you for letting me be a part of your lives and for nourishing me in faith through your kindness and example. I pray for God's continued blessing on our ministry together in the coming year.

The last moment of wonder I had at the end of 2024 was during the children's Christmas pageant, when Ruth's baby had the part of the Christ child. Used to seeing a manger with a doll in it, I had forgotten that Simon was there until he suddenly stretched his legs, and I saw his little foot sticking up in the air, and his hand grabbing his toes. It touched and warmed my heart to think of the reality of God coming to us as a vulnerable baby who also stretched and cooed and needed the care of his parents. Wonder of wonders that the love of God showed up in our world in such a beautiful way.

Peace and blessings,
Nancy



Report of the Associate Pastor

Stan Gockel

I sit at the computer to write my second annual report with gratitude for the opportunity to serve as your Stated Supply Associate Pastor. Last year my report offered the observations of one who had been with you for a period of one month. Now I have the benefit of 13 months with you, and so perhaps my reflections on the year past can help you look to the future, anticipating the new season to come when an installed associate pastor will allow me to return to the state of retirement, and you can move forward into a new season of ministry and mission.

I have enjoyed many things about this congregation: your progressive outlook that welcomes all people, regardless of age, race, background, or sexual orientation; your commitment to being a mission-minded congregation in Centerville, and Washington Township and beyond; the quality and variety of worship music under Ruth's excellent leadership; and our talented and committed church staff. Working with Pastor/Head of Staff Nancy Birdsong has been a great joy; her caring pastoral presence, passion for ministry, and attention to detail shine through in everything she does. Having served nine previous churches as senior or sole pastor, it is indeed good for me to have Nancy as a close colleague and friend to share ideas and offer encouragement to each other!

Here are the primary ways I have tried to make a difference at SPC throughout 2024:

Education/Spiritual Formation

I provided staff support to the Christian Education Ministry Team and helped lead studies for adults, including "The Hard Sayings of Jesus" (Amy-Jill Levine), "The Grace of Les Misérables" (Matt Rawle), and "Light of the World: A Beginners Guide to Advent" (Levine). I also co-led a study of Diana Butler Bass' book "Freeing Jesus: Rediscovering Jesus as Friend, Teacher, Savior, Lord, Way, and Presence." These classes allow adult members to deepen their faith and expand their biblical understanding. A high point was our Wednesday evening gathering to share food and fellowship and view and discuss episodes of the landmark TV series on the life of Jesus, "The Chosen." We plan to resume the program with season 5 in September. I also worked with Melanie Woodruff, after she joined our staff to plan and implement the Stations of the Cross experience during Holy Week. This was an interactive experience for all ages, and the response from those who went through it was positive.

Invitation Ministry Team

I have met regularly with this team to explore how we can be a more welcoming and inclusive congregation. These efforts include the Southminster 101 classes Nancy and I led for prospective members. We are grateful for the eight new members who joined the church in 2024. Team members and volunteers also staffed the SPC booth at the Americana Festival on July 4, the Pumpkin Festival on October 13, and served as greeters for Breakfast with Santa in December.

Southminster Men of Faith:

The new ministry I began this year is Southminster Men of Faith. We had an initial meeting in July to judge the level of interest, then began regular biweekly meetings in August. So far about 15 men from our church have participated. Southminster Men of Faith is open to any man in our church and community who desires a deeper connection with other men and wants to grow in his journey of faith with Christ. A sad reality of our culture is that too many men live in isolation from other men. Or, if they do spend time together, they often talk of surface things like sports or politics. SMOF is for men who

want something more. Our meetings include times of prayer, breathing exercises, a check-in where each man can share how he is doing, and a time of discussion and reflection on what it means to be men of faith in the world. We follow some important ground rules: confidentiality—what is said in the group stays in the group; speak for yourself—use ‘I’ statements; any man may pass; and we are here to listen to each other, not try to fix each other. I believe there is a hunger among many men to go deeper in their connection to each other and with Christ. I anticipate growing this ministry and expanding our opportunities for connection in 2025. What is most exciting to me is the potential this ministry has to grow and transform our congregation in many positive ways.

In addition to these ministry areas, I gave staff support to the Deacons, Stewardship and Finance ministry teams, participated in worship leadership each Sunday, preached once a month, and assisted Nancy with pastoral care of our members. Always, my focus has been to do all I can to support and grow Southminster’s mission of being “the head, heart, and hands of Jesus, driven by God’s love for our church and the world beyond.” Thank you for the honor of serving as your Associate Pastor.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Stan Gockel

**SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 4, 2024**

Annual meeting of the Congregation was called for the following purposes: Receiving the Annual Report of 2023 Receiving the Budget for 2024
 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
 Meeting of the Corporation to follow.

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

A Quorum of at least 39 members was present.

Approval of the Following Minutes

Called Congregational Meeting, of February 5, 2023

Called Congregational Meeting, of December 3, 2023 **MSA**

Brief Presentations by

Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong, Pastor/Head of Staff – Pointed out all the staff transitions we had experienced through the year, giving examples of how we had persevered and continued to move forward.

Rev. Stan Gockel, Associate Pastor – Pointed out how impressed he has been in his short time here by all that goes on here and by our strengths and gifts.

Clerk’s Membership Report for 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
Deaths	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>
Total Losses	8	7	15
Total Active Membership, December 31, 2023	157 (40.6.0%)	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	<u>29 (7.49%)</u>
		Total	387 (100.00%)
		Median Age = 66 y.o.	

**SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
February 4, 2024**

Thomas Shultheis	Jan 26, 2022
Billie Platt	March 1, 2022
Madileen Gravenstine	March 13, 2022
Marion Laing	March 30, 2022
Robert Leland	August 31, 2022
Adele Pitsinger	September 3, 2022
Ken Snavely	September 17, 2022
Gloria Guest	October 22, 2022
Ken Cherry	November 18, 2022
Gordon Alders	December 5, 2022
Jean Gravlin	December 11, 2022
Charles Cooper III	December 14, 2022
Esther Haney	December 15, 2022

MEMBERS RECEIVED BY AFFIRMATION

Linda Denmark	August 23, 2022
Valerie Fletcher	April 24, @022
Carole Mitchell	August 23, 2022
Chris Norman	August 23, 2022
Holly Roschel	April 6, 2022
Stephen Roschel	April 6, 2022

MEMBERS RECEIVED BY CONFIRMATION

Ethan Michael Baez	March 22, 2022
Wesley Donovan Baez	March 22, 2022

Election of At-Large Members of Nominating Team for 2023 – Gretchen Cleaves, Chair,
Presented the following names: Mark Ferguson, Valerie Fletcher, Richard Jester, Jeanne
Leatherbury – Deacon Representative. (Joan Johnson will serve as session Representative)

MSA

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

Finance Team – Ryan Battelle: Started 2023 with \$91,000 deficit, but finisher with \$27,000 surplus!

Stewardship: Pete Garland – Thanked the Congregation for its support throughout the year.

Christian Education: Mary Baez – Thanks to all who stepped up to help keep the education programs going. Pleased to have been able to add Wednesday evening programs.

Nominating: Gretchen Cleaves – Not all positions were filled by the end of 2023. Some who had previously agreed to serve had later declined and new candidates are still needed. The team was able to begin the process of staffing an APNC for 2024 as well.

Worship: Lois Thorp –. Restarted passing of the offering plates during Worship. We have also been able to grow our Nativity Collection. Due to generous donations, an upgrade to our sound system was accomplished!

Mission: Jill Matteson – Due to widespread participation, 13 teams were sent out into the community for ‘The Church has Left the Building’ annual day of Mission.

MarCom: Pastor Nancy –Katie Rice continues to keep our name out there on social media.

Invitation: Jean Gaffney – Implemented a new concept of Radical Welcome, to try harder to make everyone feel welcome. Again sponsored a booth at Americana Festival; implemented a “Blessing of the Animals” program in summer.

Building & Grounds: John Woods –Hired Jim O’Neil as new Property Manager. A huge thank you to Jerry Stahley for his work as Interim Property Technician.

SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
February 4, 2024

Personnel: Liz Ferguson – Still in need of a Nursery Care Worker – Please spread the word.

Deacon Team Reports:

Fellowship: Art Nitsch – Thanks to all who helped support the various activities.

Prayer & Presence: Joanne Yost – Hello, Good Morning Care Connection; email Prayer Chain all going strong. Increased outreach to homebound through monthly cards sent.

Presentation of 2024 Budget Chair of Finance Ryan Battelle – Approved budget shows a possible \$112,000 deficit for 2024.

Questions or Comments on Annual Report

Motion to Receive Annual Report MSA

Memorial Moment: Prayer for Those Whom We Lost in 2023: Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong

Personnel Team Chair – Liz Ferguson – presented the 2024 Terms of Call for Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong, for which both pastors left the Sanctuary. Liz then called for a motion to approve these terms as presented. **MSA**
Pastors were called back to the Sanctuary.

Adjournment and Closing Prayer: Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong at 11:34AM

Attachments: Terms of Call for Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong
Meeting of the Corporation – Feb 4, 2024

Respectfully Submitted
Lois Thorp, Clerk

Southminster Presbyterian Church
Annual Congregational Meeting
February 4, 2024

MEETING OF THE CORPORATION

Meeting called to order at 11:35AM, by Vice-President Pete Garland

Pastor Stan Gockel opened with prayer.

There was a quorum in attendance.

Docket before the Corporation: The Election of Officers of the Corporation for 2024.

Nominations as Recommended by Session:

President: Pete Garland

Vice President: Glenda Wright

Secretary: Lois Thorp

Treasurer: John Breed

Motion was made, seconded and approved to elect the above nominees as officers for 2024.

Other Business: Having no other business before the corporation, it was moved, seconded and approved to adjourn.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Pastor Stan Gockel at 11:37AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lois Thorp,
Secretary, Clerk of Session

SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
 February 4, 2024
 REPORT ON COMPENSATION – INSTALLED PASTORS
 Presbytery of Miami Valley - Year 24

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

Annual Cash Salary		
Housing/Utility Allowance		
Medical Supplement Reimb		
SECA (portion	\$	
Deferred Income	\$	
(Annuity, Life Insurance, IRA, 403b, retirement savings, dental insurance, etc.)		
Other (please specify):	\$	\$
Sub Total	\$ 107,781	\$ <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) \$ 107,781 \$ 112,092

ESTIMATED PENSION/MEDICAL DUES \$ 42,035 \$ 43,716

SECA (portion) \$ 8,201 \$ 8,529

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):	425 (BWC)	130(BWC)
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)	4 weeks	4 weeks
Study leave (minimum 2 weeks including 2 Sundays)	2 weeks	2 weeks
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. acknowledge

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

Clerk of Session

Date Signed

SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MINUTES OF CALLED CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
September 8, 2024

Meeting called to order at 10:54 am with prayer by Rev. Stan Gockel.

A quorum of at least 39 was present.

Gretchen Cleaves, Chair of the Nominating Team, offered the following motion on behalf of Session and the Nominating Team:

Motion: To elect the following individuals to serve as members of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee

Gregg McCullough

Laurie Bankston

Patty Izor

Linda Meily

Jill Matteson

Stephen Roschel

Ethan Baez

MSA

Thanks was offered to the Nominating Team.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 with prayer by Rev. Dr. Nancy Birdsong.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Bowers, Clerk of Session

**SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REPORT, 12-31-2024**

Membership Report

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Total Active Membership, December 31, 2023	157 (40.6.0%)	230 (59.4%)	387
Gains:			
17 and Under	0	0	0
18 and Over	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>
Total Gains	3	5	8
Losses:			
Letter of Transfer or Removal from Rolls	1	1	2
Deaths	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>12</u>
Total Losses	8	6	14
Total Active Membership, December 31, 2024	153 (40.2.0%)	228 (59.8%)	381

Age Distribution of Active Members

22 & Under:	12 (3.15%)	65-79:	83 (21.785%)
23-39:	72(18.90%)	80 & over	101 (26.51%)
40-64:	83 (21.785%)	Unknown	<u>30 (7.87%)</u>
		Total	381 (100.00%)

Median Age = 66 y.o.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

DEATHS

Glenn Harvey	January 2, 2024
Paul Lentz	January 12, 2024
David Jensen	January 27, 2024
Melita Minnis	March 20, 2024
Patricia Custer	April 8, 2024
Clyde Allison	May 10, 2024
Roger McClung	June 29, 2024
Robert Woods	July 1, 2024
Edna (Edie) Lansiedel	August 10, 2024
William (Bill) Artman	September 15, 2024
Jodell Schlotterbeck	November 10, 2024
Margaret (Maggie) Jones	November 26, 2024

TRANSFERS IN

E. Jane Alter	March 17, 2024
Robert Alter	March 17, 2024
Leo Theilman	Nov. 17, 2024
Sue Thielman	Nov. 17, 2024

TRANSFERS OUT

Anita Leland	March 27, 2024
Jason Schenck	Sept. 20, 2024

ALL NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED

E. Jane Alter	March 17, 1014
Robert Alter	March 17, 1014
Richard Mehl	March 17, 2024
Barbara Phillips	March 17, 2024
Pam Chastain	Nov. 17, 2024
Leo Thielman	Nov. 17, 2024
Sue Thielman	Nov. 17, 2024
Cora Wells	Nov. 17, 2024

Session Report for 2024

Your 2024 Session stayed busy all year with the business of the church. In January, we welcomed Pastor Stan Gockel to his first official Session meeting. We also welcomed new Elders: Chris Bowers – Personnel Team, Linda Denmark – Finance Team, David Short – Worship Team & Glenda Wright – Stewardship Team. Additionally, Officers of the Corporation were approved: President - Pete Garland; Vice-President – Glenda Wright; Secretary – Lois Thorp; Treasurer – John Breed. Joan Johnson was appointed as Elder Representative to the Nominating Team.

Much of our time in February, March & April was spent on generating a document to submit to the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry regarding the viability of Southminster employing a permanent, installed Associate Pastor. We were visited by Executive Presbyter Terry Kukuk & our liaison to the COM Lucinda Isaacs. They were there to present us with questions & topics of discussion to consider and answer truthfully before forming an APNC.

Also in February, due to ongoing & rising building maintenance costs, the idea of establishing a permanent Capital Improvements Campaign was discussed, voted on and approved. It was also approved that any remaining donations to the Growth Campaign, which ends in May, be transferred to the new Capital Improvement Fund. We approved the purchase of a new van by the Scouts. In March we learned of the newly hired Director of Children & Youth Ministries, Melanie Woodruff's knee injury & subsequent surgery. She was however able to start work from home as she healed.

The highlight of the April meeting was a ZOOM interview with Josh Sweeney in Kansas. He was seeking confirmation of his readiness to become a Minister of Word and Sacrament. Linda Denmark was approved to serve as Assistant Treasurer, taking over from Patty Izor.

By September, the Building & Grounds Team had a new, revised Schedule of Building Fees and Policies they presented for approval. We also approved an additional \$4,000 to add to the B&G budget to cover the necessary masonry work. The Finance Team raised some concerns again, stressing the need for a capital improvement fund. They are also reviewing the Preschool's lease agreement which renews in May 2025.

October and November were "budget months". Every team submitted their proposed 2025 budgets to Finance Team. Finance also presented the rather grim picture of the 2024 deficit and concerns for 2025. When the draft budget for 2025 was presented, it showed an over \$140,000 deficit. We approved Stan Gockel's 2025 contract effective 12/12/24. We also approved the hiring of Mike Beach as Property Technician.

In December, we approved the actions of the APNC should continue. The budget for 2025 was not approved.

Thank you,

Lois Thorp

Finance Team Report

Southminster Presbyterian entered 2024 with a budget deficit of \$112,923. It is by the grace of God, acting in the hearts of all those associated with Southminster, that we will close out 2024 with a surplus of \$100,496. Total receipts were \$855,912. Total expenses were \$755,416.

Finance oversees almost \$900,000 in investments, including both restricted funds (endowments) and general long-term savings vehicles. In 2024, our investment income, after fees, was 23,066. Our total investment balance grew from \$805,592 on 12/31/2023 to \$857,690 on 12/31/2024.

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). Finance considers our investments to be well managed (by two separate investment houses) and to have fared better than the overall market in 2024.

We received no estate gifts in 2024.

Finance wishes to extend its deepest appreciation to Ron Kuker for his unwavering dedication to the financial success of Southminster for the past 6 consecutive years. Ron departs Finance after 2024 because of term limits.

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 2025 our per capita - which is the church's tithe to the Presbytery - is \$54.24 per member.

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), Linda Denmark (Assistant Treasurer), Bob Murphy (investments), and Ron Kuker. Stan Gockel serves as the staff member. Special thanks to Janice Young and Pete Garland for participating in many Finance meetings representing Stewardship. Double-Extra-Super-Bonus thanks to Sharon Ark for compiling innumerable financial reports and answering unending questions with poise, professionalism, and competence.

**SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2024 BUDGET VS. ACTUAL
2025 BUDGET**

DESCRIPTION	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	Variance Increase (Decrease)	2025 Budget (Draft)
Receipts				
General Fund Receipts	550,000	603,117	-	550,000
Loose Offering	2,000	5,779	-	2,000
Telesite Lease Payments	89,000	89,000	-	89,000
Mortgage/Building Repair	5,000	6,346	1,346	5,000
Investment Inc./Dist. Foundation/Endowment	25,500	25,500	-	25,500
Investment Fund Net Income	-	89,677	89,677	-
Per Capita-Receipts	4,000	3,097	(903)	4,000
Building Usage Fees	5,000	5,525	525	5,000
Pre School Lease Income	13,780	12,386	(1,394)	13,780
Growth/Capital Improve	12,000	3,239	(8,761)	12,000
Columbarium Receipts	-	-	-	-
Memorial/Special Gifts/Covid	-	575	575	-
TOTAL RECEIPTS	706,280	844,241	137,961	706,280
Expenses				
Salaries and Benefits:				
Pastor/ Head of Staff	169,718	168,122	(1,596)	157,642
Associate Pastor	93,696	90,829	(2,867)	108,022
Director of Youth Ministry	45,170	32,986	(12,184)	44,571
Director of Children Ministry	-	-	-	-
Other Education/Nursery Staff	10,397	9,257	(1,140)	11,233
Worship Staff	53,866	53,052	(814)	55,241
Office/Facility	136,566	116,526	(20,040)	135,535
Payroll Expense&Flexible Spending Account	2,200	2,045	(155)	2,200
Total Salaries and Benefits	511,613	472,817	(38,796)	514,444
Program/Team/Administration				
Invitation Team	4,000	1,415	(2,585)	4,000
Christian Education Team	13,650	5,906	(7,744)	13,000
Worship Team	37,000	33,819	(3,181)	36,850
Board of Deacons	3,950	1,313	(2,637)	3,950
Mission Team	19,000	7,426	(11,574)	17,500
Communication Team	8,610	3,393	(5,217)	8,610
Stewardship Team (includes per capita)	22,530	20,829	(1,701)	22,991
Office Expenses	65,950	63,806	(2,144)	78,850
Facility Expenses	132,900	144,687	11,787	151,100
Debt Retirement	-	-	-	-
Total Program/Team/Administration	307,590	282,594	(24,996)	336,851
TOTAL EXPENSES	819,203	755,411	(63,792)	851,295
NET RECEIPTS/(EXPENSES)	(112,923)	88,830	201,753	(145,015)

TREASURER'S REPORT ANNUAL FINANCIAL RESULTS

	2024	2023	2022
Total Receipts	844,241	809,534	838,955
Total Disbursements	755,411	774,466	819,075
Net Excess (Deficit)	88,830	35,068	19,880

Select Financial Information

Current Assets - General Fund

Cash & CD's	70,203	48,620	59,223
-------------	--------	--------	--------

Assets - Investment

Dayton Foundation	337,986	305,865	278,196
Morgan Stanley	519,704	499,727	521,453
Total	857,690	805,592	799,649
Total Cash and Investments	927,893	854,212	858,872

Liabilities -

Withholdings & Misc	54	37	1,231
PPP Loan	-	-	-
Other Debt	-	-	135,000
Total Liabilities	54	37	136,231

Equity Reserve -

Other Designated Funds	87,582	85,072	93,629
------------------------	--------	--------	--------

Key Transactions/Activity - 2024

- * Southminster had 1 items capitalized in 2024. Power Sweeper for building maintenance. Total \$3,842.40.
- * Value of our investment portfolio increased by \$52,098, due to underlying market
- * Southminster received the sixth annual payment on the sale of the cell tower lease for \$89,000. There will be 14 additional annual payments through 2038.
- * The Growth/Capital improvement fund, with congregation contributions, grew to a total of \$8234.
- * Memorial gifts were recieved in 2024, totaling \$8,605. The Memorial Funds Policy is located in the Church office along with the Memorial Designation form.
- * Contributions from the congregation for items such as designated gifts, mission offerings, flowers, youth events, emergency assistance, Presbytery Diaster Assistance, etc., less funds distributed for designated/approved expenses, resulted in remaining balance of \$36,941.

In Christ - John Breed, Treasurer

Christian Education Report

2024 was a 'building year' for Christian Education. Our team was blessed with not one but two new staff supports which led to amazing education offerings and programs for the church. Stan Gockel went above and beyond, leading many of our adult learning sessions on Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights. Our prayers were also answered when Melanie Woodruff became our new Director of Children and Youth who brought new ideas to the table and upped attendance across all our children and youth activities.

Christian Education also continued to get creative with our education offerings for all ages to share learning opportunities with the community outside of the church. Here are some of our highlights:

Children and Youth (Family) –

1. Facilitated a mandatory education class for all adult volunteers working with our children.
2. Implemented background checks for adult volunteers working with children and youth.
3. Held a virtual and interactive Stations of the Cross
4. Continued Sunday School, Sermon 2.0, and Children and Worship which included inter-generational activities, updated material, "Stew" the Bear initiative to bolster stewardship amongst young families.
5. Added age-appropriate learning programs in the nursery
6. Collaborated with various teams for Blessing of the Flip Flops and Backpacks services
7. Reformatted VBS to be engaging, community focused, and offsite! We had one of the best VBS attendances in years.
8. Oversaw children's area at our Pumpkin Festival which included a new addition of a cake walk.
9. Sponsored a very successful Church Has Left the Building event making luminaries for the park district with many of our youth families participating.
10. Cleaned, reorganized, and decorated all the kid areas at the church.

In 2025 we hope to continue activities for the younger church attendees along with focusing on new youth opportunities and attracting young families.

Adult Education –

One huge focus in 2025 was to incorporate studies that connect biblical teaching with contemporary culture. Some of our top events and programs include:

1. Continued our Wednesday evening learning and fellowship discussions
 - a. Held most Wednesday evenings throughout 2024 and open to everyone
 - b. Watched and discussed the 3rd and 4th seasons of "The Chosen" television series over a community meal
 - c. "The Grace of Les Miserable"
 - d. Held a Holiday Support chat and activity during Advent
2. Continued Adult Ed Classes on Sundays including:
 - a. "The Difficult Words of Jesus" by Amy-Jill Levine for Lent Study
 - b. "The Grace of Les Miserable" for Easter Study
 - c. "Freeing Jesus" by Diana Butler Bass
 - d. Steve Davis Online Bible Study – Journey Through the New Testament
3. Supported events like the women's retreat, Stations of the Cross, small groups, church has left the building, and Stewardship's annual campaign along with time and talent program
4. Built our own social media Advent Community Outreach Calendar surrounding "the meaning of Christmas" with daily photo challenges

We already have some exciting ideas lined up for 2025! One of our key focuses will be to increase participation in adult and family education. Team: Gay Amos | Cyndi Platt | Steve Davis | Mary Baez (Chair) | Stan Gockel (Staff) | Melanie Woodruff (Staff)

Worship Team Report

Your Worship Team had a very productive year. In January we welcomed Elder Shailendra Dwyer & Elder-Elect David Short to the Team. The Epiphany Feast was well attended. We even needed to add more tables & chairs to the original set-up.

February brought the start of Lent with our traditional home-made Soup Supper for Ash Wednesday. The attendance was also greater than expected, but there is always enough food! Stations of the Cross was being planned by the Christian Education Team, and we offered our help in hosting. Director of Music Ministries, Ruth Whatley, let us know of her plans for a Cantata for Mother's Day. She asked that we also plan the Music Appreciation Celebration for the same day. We opted to serve cupcakes with to-go containers rather than a cake.

Planning for Heritage Sunday brought the same challenges we faced last year of scheduling a Pipe & Drum Corps and Celtic Dancers, due to the World A 'Fair event happening the same weekend. We talked later in the year and led to the decision to exchange Sundays between Heritage Sunday and CHLB, so that Heritage Sunday will now be celebrated in September and CHLB moves to May.

One of our favorite events to support is the Pentecost Sunday celebration. Ruth arranged for us to have a Liturgical Dancer perform. There were lots of balloons to send home with everyone!

For All Saints' Sunday, we were very appreciative of everyone who submitted pictures of loved ones they had lost, and of the video put together by Katie Rice.

Planning for Advent began in earnest with ideas for Hanging of the Greens. We are so grateful to all who helped that day, and to Property Technician Mike Beach, for his help as well. We also thank everyone who has contributed a Nativity Scene to our collection. It is growing very nicely!

Plans for a great 2025 are already underway! I very gratefully thank all the members of the team for their work and dedication to all the projects this year. We say goodbye to 2 members this year, as Jerry Craig transfers to the Building and Grounds Team, and Lois Thorp retires after 6 years.

Team Members: Jerry Craig; Elizabeth Davis; Elder Shailendra Dwyer; Janet Hall; Elder David Short; Cindy Stevens; Elder Lois Thorp – Chair; Holly Woods, Nancy Birdsong (Staff Liaison)

Respectfully Submitted by Lois Thorp, Chair

Nominating Team Report

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 2027. We accumulated candidate suggestions from each team member for each position. Each member of the Team then took responsibility for making calls for a specific team opening. We meet every two weeks to update each other on our progress.

We were able to complete our task with total success. One of our current Elders has moved to a different team and a replacement was found. Eventually, seven Elders and six Deacons were selected and approved by Session and the Congregation. The Nominating Team was also tasked with selecting an Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC) to replace Steve Schumm who left mid-December 2023. We had selected five members last year and three members this year. The slate was presented to Session and approved.

The 2024 Nominating Team: Suzi Dameron, Richard Jester, Mark Ferguson, Peg Sperry, Jeanne Leatherbury (Deacon Rep.) and Joan Johnson (Session Rep.). Special thanks to Suzi, Richard, Mark and Peg for their years of service as they "retire" from the Nominating Team.

Respectfully Submitted by Gretchen Cleaves, Chair.

Mission Team

The Mission Team seeks to reach out and offer support to others in local and global communities. The vision that guides our work is: “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 appreciate the support from Southminster’s congregation and staff throughout 2024.

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.
 - We keep a Blessing Box on the church campus that makes quality food available to those in need in the community. We have noticed that people from the local community contributed items in the Blessing Box to share with others. In 2023, we installed a second Blessing Box on the campus of Chevy Chase Park Apartments.
- 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. In 2024, we were excited to add two new projects to serve others. One of the new projects was a youth and family project, described below, and was led by Melanie Woodruff. We were also pleased to have some new team leaders this year.

Projects for CHLB 2024:

- Linda Vista, Inc. – completed several major chores and administrative work.
- Ronald McDonald House – prepared lunch and dinner for approximately 50 residents.
- House of Bread - prepared and served over 200 lunches for guests and prepared boxed to go lunches. A church member offered musical entertainment for the families.
- Casseroles for St. Vincent/The Castle – approximately 26 Church members prepared and delivered breakfast and dinner casseroles.
- Crayons to Classrooms-assembled and delivered 500 journals for use in classrooms.
- Crayons to Classrooms-sewed and delivered 30 “pocket hugs” to be used by students.
- The Castle – performed outdoor work and landscaping around the grounds.
- Hannah’s Treasure Chest – prepared mailings for Hannah’s Treasure Chest.
- St. Vincent de Paul Apple Street Women’s Shelter – helped with a small craft project and helped to serve lunch.
- Family & Youth Project/Centerville-Washington Park District – prepared approximately 1000 luminaries for the annual December Luminary Walk sponsored by the park district.

In 2025, due to schedule changes, our annual “Church Has Left the Building” will be moving to the spring. We plan to have a smaller version of CHLB in spring 2025, then return to the usual projects in spring 2026.

- 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 & consumable gifts and prepare meals for the guests at The Castle. Mission Team helps the Castle on a more regular basis.
- Participated in National Long-Sleeve Shirt Drive for farm workers, sponsored by the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs. Church members donated shirts to this worthwhile cause.
- 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 information 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 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. Some youth and adult volunteers gathered the notes and items into plastic shoeboxes. With these generous donations, 66 boxes and other assorted items were delivered to the VA Hospital, to be given to veterans in time for Christmas.

New Projects in 2024

- Lenten Collection for Items from Linda Vista's Wish List
Congregation members donated over 200 household necessities, which were delivered to Linda Vista in April. This was much appreciated by LV residents and the executive director.
- Dayton Habitat for Humanity Build.
- Several Southminster members volunteered at the Flyer Nation Build in May 2024. We plan to attend another build in 2025.
- House of Bread
In November, we began to have volunteers serve at House of Bread on a monthly basis. We plan to continue this project in 2025.
- Holiday Decoration Donation/Sale
Church members donated holiday decorations. They were displayed in the Narthex to be sold for a donation. All donations were sent to The Castle. We plan to try this again in 2025, with the hope that it will be even more successful.
- Winter Clothing Collection for the Haitian Community in Springfield
The Mission Team, with the leadership of SPC members Dorothy and Robert Fyffe, organized a collection of winter clothing for children and adults for our Haitian neighbors in Springfield. Southminster members responded generously with donations. The Fyffes and Mission Team members, on behalf of Southminster, delivered four large loads of winter garments to the Haitian Community Help and Support Center. Leaders at the center expressed gratitude for Southminster's generosity.

Developing Project

- 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 offered support to Linda Vista, Inc. in 2024, with some grant funds, the Lenten collection and the CHLB projects. Ms. Gooden spoke to the Presbyterian Women of Southminster group in September, and the women's groups offered support, as well. We plan to continue to seek out ways to expand our support of this organization, in ways that can best serve Linda Vista and its vision for empowering women to improve the condition of their lives.

As we move into 2025, we will continue to work to extend God's love to community members. We welcome ideas for outreach from Southminster members and invite new members to participate on The Mission team.

We appreciate the dedication from the members of the 2024 Mission Team and thank them for their efforts. Team members: Pastor Nancy Birdsong (Staff Representative), **Jill Matteson**, Linda Denmark, Pete Garland, Joan Johnson, Ron Kuker, and Sharon Short. Thank you to Kevin Dickson for his work with the Food Pantry. We are excited to welcome Mary Baez, Elder, to the Mission Team in 2025.

Respectfully submitted by Jill Matteson, Team Chair

Invitation Team Report

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: Two rounds of Southminster 101 gatherings were held in February and again in October. Our goal was to do three rounds of gatherings, but it was difficult to fit those in with the expanding calendar of events.

Upgrading the Welcome packet that we give guests on Sundays was a focus for the team. We created two new items for the packet:

- A list by month of **Happenings** that take place annually throughout the year.
- **Grow Your Faith at Southminster Presbyterian Church – Find Your Niche:** This handout is divided into these highlights: Sunday Worship, Special Worship Focus, Learning, Fellowship, Involvement Opportunities

We also added Stan’s handout about “How to Speak Presbyterian”. These are also the kinds of attachments we can add to email to people who reach out to us through Connection Card.

Tom Novak continues to schedule volunteers as greeters at the Welcome Center and the church entry doors both upstairs and downstairs. Gretchen Cleaves provides the team with a list of those guests who fill out an information card. The team reaches out to guests who visit twice or more about attending Southminster 101 Gatherings. Pastors mail a welcome letter to all who fill out the card. Eight new members were added in 2024.

Community Events and Support to Other Teams: The team once again hosted a booth at the Americana Festival. We had an excellent group of volunteers handing out small flags, pinwheels and beads. Once again, we featured the Wheel of Fortune where participants could win prizes. Plenty of information about the church, the youth activities and mission work were on display. Despite the rain, the booth was a success. It’s a challenge to set up and tear down everything on time that day. New this year was attaching logo information about the church on to the US flags given out.



We provided volunteers from the team to greet at Breakfast with Santa and the Women's Retreat. We made and distributed gift bags for The Blessing of the Backpacks. The team duplicated its Americana booth for the Pumpkin Festival and shared the large tent with the Mission Team. Our location was where people entered the festival, and this worked well for the volunteers who like to greet and kick off the fun atmosphere of the day. The team chose to do the Blessing of the Animals every other year and is beginning to lay plans with other teams for this event in 2025.

Time and Talent: We decided not to update the Time & Talent Booklet this year. Instead, we focused on the Volunteer Form. We met with Melanie Woodruff to expand the number of volunteer opportunities offered for working with our youth. Marj Lawson and Tom Novak are working on updating the Small Groups handout. Todd Hall has suggested we put the volunteer form online. There was an improvement in the number of people responding to the Volunteer form with 34 forms returned in 2024 compared to 24 forms returned in 2023. As the Stewardship Team stressed, the church needs a commitment of time as well as money from members. The volunteers were noted and forwarded to the appropriate team leaders.

Goals for 2025:

- Work with other teams to offer The Blessing of the Animals.
- Continue the church's presence at the Americana Festival. Continue to carry out and update the Time & Talent project.
- Work with other teams to carry out the Pumpkin Festival, Women's Retreat, Breakfast with Santa, Blessing of the Backpacks and other events.
- Schedule at least two rounds of Southminster 101 gatherings and facilitate onboarding of new members.

Other: Stan Gockel became our new staff liaison. We are thankful to the church office that does so many things to support our efforts. The people on our team that make this all possible: Gay Amos, Janet Hohenstein, Max Jenks, Tom Novak, Brenda Ricketts, Kate Scarpero and Jean Gaffney. These people continue to help with special projects: Adrienne Dickson, Mark Ferguson, Cheryl Hartman, and Marj Lawson. The team is especially thankful to volunteers who support the team projects.

MarCom

MarCom has been mainly supported by Katie Rice to:

- Maintain our website
 - Updating current events, posting new features as needed.
 - Support Bulletin posting and 'Slides' for worship and memorial services.
- Spread our message via social media:
 - Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube
- Work with Google analytics to understand how individuals interact with us.
- Leverage grants from Google to help push our message out through social media.
- Coordinate communications for teams to promote events, such as:
 - Pumpkin Festival, Musical programs such as concerts and All Saints Day presentation.
- Setting up an initial attempt at an online directory for Southminster.

Katie's last day with us was December 31, 2024. The committee will strive to maintain the core functions as best we can for the time being. Regards, Todd Hall, Chair

Buildings and Grounds Report

The Southminster Buildings and Grounds Team worked in 2024 to maintain our facility with routine and emergency maintenance and repair projects including the following:

- In November, Southminster hired Mike Beach as the new Building Property Technician. Mike brings lots of experience having worked as a maintenance technician and residential plumber. Many thanks to everyone that filled in as necessary to cover various issues, especially Sharon Ark for handling maintenance calls. Also, thank you to Liz Ferguson and the Personnel Team for finding and hiring Mike.
- The Community Room kitchen has undergone some upgrades. The old cabinets and plumbing fixtures have been removed. New cabinets and countertops have been installed. A hand washing sink has been installed. The plan is to install a three basin sink for cleaning dishware soon. As of this writing, the sink has been moved to its permanent location and mounted to the wall. The next step is to attach plumbing supply and drain lines then install a proper ventilation fan over the stoves. All costs for the upgrades are supplied by private donations.
- The Building Fee Schedule and Facilities Use Policy were reviewed, updated and approved by the B&G Team and Session.
- The building suffered some leak damage due to the high winds and rain during the September hurricane leftover. Ceiling tiles were replaced in the Narthex and Nursery. Water also leaked into the women's locker room. The windows in the hallway from the Coffee Corner to the Education wing were re-caulked hoping it will fix that issue.
- Some minor electrical work was fixed in the building. A GFCI outlet was replaced in the Coffee Corner. The Pavilion electric was faulty causing a breaker to constantly trip. Faulty wiring was found and fixed. An emergency light was fixed and replaced in the Sanctuary.
- The pressure relief valve was replaced on the CFC boiler. All 3 boiler systems were flushed and treated with corrosion preventive chemicals as needed.
- It has been noted that 3 external doors need to be replaced as they are rusting out and water leaks underneath or are barely able to lock. The cost was \$8,000 for door 12 and \$3,500 each for doors 2 and 6.
- A need for additional freezer space was noted. We have about half the storage space we used to when the old one failed and was replaced with a donated one.
- The parking lot will need to be re-sealed soon.

Submitted by: John Woods, Chair

Deacons Report

Dear Southminster Family,

On behalf of the Deacons of Southminster Presbyterian Church, we are pleased to share a summary of our ministry's activities throughout 2024. It has been a year filled with blessings as we have had the privilege of serving in the areas of **Prayer & Presence**, **Fellowship**, and **Compassion Assistance**. We are truly grateful for the ways in which God has guided our efforts to care for and nurture our church family, and we look forward to continuing this ministry in the year ahead.

Prayer & Presence

The **Prayer & Presence** ministry has experienced a particularly fruitful year. We received 240 prayer requests and updates throughout 2024, and we remain steadfast in lifting up the needs of our congregation in prayer.

Intercessory Prayer continues to be a central part of our ministry. Every Thursday morning at 9:30 a.m., we gather to pray for the needs of our church and community. We are deeply thankful to all who join us in this vital time of intercession.

Our **Home Communion Ministry** remains committed to serving our homebound members, and our **Care Connection Team** continues to reach out with love and support. This year, **Britt Platt**, with the help of office volunteers sent 444 cards to homebound members, offering prayer and encouragement.

A special thank you goes to **Shirley Oglesbee**, who went above and beyond by sending 91 birthday cards to congregation members over the age of 79. These thoughtful gestures have meant so much to those who received them.

Fellowship (Review by Sandy Stevens)

The **Fellowship** branch has had a vibrant and engaging year, participating in several all-church events and hosting many activities that helped build connections and foster community.

In **January**, we kicked off the year with an **Epiphany Potluck**, where we provided ham, rolls, and cake. For **Heritage Sunday**, we again came together for a potluck, this time featuring bangers and mash. The **Pumpkin Festival** in October saw our team organizing fun games like ring toss, corn hole, and a "guess the candy corn weight" challenge. These activities added to the festive spirit and brought everyone together.

The **Elderberries** group had a particularly fun and diverse year, with **First Friday of Fun** events throughout the months. Each event featured coffee and desserts, and attendees brought their own lunches. Highlights included:

- **February:** A presentation from the Washington-Centerville Library on *Aging With Humor*.
- **March:** Author **Sharon Short** shared insights on *Lessons from a Writing Life*.
- **April:** **Pete Garland** spoke about *United for Ukraine*.
- **May:** A lively **Cinco de Mayo** celebration with a luncheon, costumes, and music.
- **June:** **Pastor Nancy Birdsong** displayed and discussed her paintings.
- **September:** The **Bethany Bluegrass Band** performed.
- **October:** **Quilter's Dream** by **Toni Heggie** and other Southminster quilters.
- **November:** **Fred Bartenstein** presented *Industrial Strength Bluegrass*, focusing on Southwestern Ohio's musical legacy.

- **December: Dr. Sky Lantz-Wagner** spoke about the experiences of international students at the University of Dayton.

Additionally, the **Bereavement Committee**, a part of our Fellowship Team, provided support during funerals and memorial services, hosting receptions to care for grieving families throughout the year.

We are also grateful for the ongoing success of **Coffee Corner**, which has been a lively place of fellowship every Sunday morning, offering coffee, drinks, and treats. Special thanks go to the team and various Presbytery groups and individuals who supported this important ministry.

Finally, we want to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of the **Fellowship Team—Mel Kelly, Art Nitsch, Robbie Herner, Linda Wiggers, Sandy Stevens**, and **Pastor Stan Gockel** (staff liaison)—for their hard work in organizing and supporting all these events. Your dedication has made this year truly special for all of us.

Compassion Assistance

The **Compassion Assistance** Ministry remains focused on meeting the practical needs of our church family. We continue to provide meals, emotional support, and encouragement to those facing difficult times.

At our final meeting of the year, we were fortunate to have **Pastor Nancy** join us and share valuable insights on expanding and enhancing our caring ministry. We look forward to incorporating her suggestions as we continue to deepen our commitment to serving others.

Gratitude & Looking Ahead

We are deeply grateful to all who have supported the Deacon ministry in 2024—whether through volunteering, prayer, or financial contributions. Your ongoing commitment strengthens our church community and reflects the love of Christ in tangible ways. As we move into the new year, we will continue to meet quarterly on the fourth Sunday of the month after worship, and we invite anyone interested to join us.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to another year of faithful service and fellowship together.

With heartfelt thanks,
Britt Platt, Deacon Moderator

Personnel Team Report



Have you ever felt like the above picture? I'm guessing that our Staff, Volunteers and the Building and Grounds, Christian Education and Personnel Teams felt like that in 2024. They successfully balanced their existing responsibilities with the responsibilities of the various open staff positions we experienced in 2024. A HUGE thank you to all the people who put forth the extra effort to keep our building and programming running. Nancy, Sharon, Ruth and the many more who are too many to mention by name, you are all truly appreciated, and we are grateful for your efforts!!

2024 began with openings in our Director of Children and Youth Ministries and our Nursery. We were thrilled to fill both of those positions hiring Melanie Woodruff in March as our new Director of Children and Youth Ministries and Natalie Lockhart in April as our second loving face in the Nursery. But just as we thought we were fully staffed, the Property Technician position opened up again. Although we were able to fill that position in June, August unfortunately found us looking to fill that position again. In October we celebrated being fully staffed again with the hiring of Mike Beach as our new Property Technician. Unfortunately, we are ending the year with the sad news that Katie Rice will be leaving us to pursue a full-time position in an entirely different field. She will be missed, but we wish her the best of luck in her new job.

Although 2024 brought its share of challenges, it also brought the constant reminder that we don't face our challenges alone- "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God..."Philippians 4:6. We look forward into 2025 knowing that whatever challenges are presented, we have an amazing Congregation, Staff and Teams that will continue to lead us, and for that we are thankful.

Liz Ferguson, Personnel Chair

2025 Church Officers

Session

Class of 2025

Gretchen Cleaves
Jean Gaffney
Todd Hall
Peter Garland
Liz Ferguson

Nominating *
Invitation *
Marketing & Communications *
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 & Grounds *
Christian Education *
Worship *
Stewardship
Finance *

Class of 2027

Mary Baez
Andrea Calim
Kim Catchpole-Patton
Doeun Chan
Valerie Fletcher
Joan Johnson

Mission
Invitation
Christian Education
Building & Grounds
Nominating
Mission

Board of Deacons

Moderator: Britt Platt

Class of 2025

Art Nitsch
Sharon Boyko
Sandy Stevens
Joanne Yost

Fellowship
Prayer & Presence
Fellowship
Compassion & Assistance *

Class of 2026

Brenda Giannelli
Robbie Herner
Jeanne Leatherbury

Compassion & Assistance
Fellowship
Prayer & Presence

Class of 2027

Laurie Bankston
Cantus Chan
Steve Davis
Gregg McCullough
Britt Platt

Prayer & Presence
Fellowship
Prayer & Presence *
Fellowship
Prayer & Presence

- Team Chair

