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The First Presbyterian Church

*In the heart of Gardner since 1866 ~ Serving from the heart of God*

**~ 157th Annual Meeting ~**

*Presenting the:*

*2023 Annual Report*

9:45 AM

Sunday, January 28, 2024

It is the mission of First Presbyterian Church of Gardner to become the hands and feet of Jesus, as we worship together as believers, grow in the word of God, and serve Him in our community and world. Our congregation is biblically-based and committed to fellowship, prayer, outreach, and sharing Jesus Christ.

Our vision is to glorify God by being a warm, caring, and loving church to members, as well as newcomers, and to others in the community, through outreach to people of different ages and faith history.

**THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**Gardner, Kansas**

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION/CORPORATION**

**157th ANNUAL REPORT for the year 2023**

**9:45 AM, Sunday, January 28, 2024**

**CALL FOR THE MEETING**

“The 157th Annual Meeting of the Congregation/Corporation of the First Presbyterian Church, Gardner, Kansas, is called for the 28th day of January in the year of our Lord 2024, to transact such business as may be brought to the floor of that meeting.”

The hour and time have arrived.

Ron Crabbs,

Clerk of Session

**THE ENUMERATION OF ATTENDANCE**

The following is the official count of the attendance at the 157th Annual Meeting of the First Presbyterian Church, Gardner, Kansas:

**Members present: \_\_\_\_**

**Visitors present: \_\_\_\_**

**Moderator present: \_\_\_\_**

**Others present: \_\_\_\_**

**Name and capacity: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Total present: \_\_\_\_**

**OPENING PRAYER**

God of Grace and Mercy, God of Community and Connection, guide us by your Spirit as we gather together today. Remind us of your presence with us and your purpose for us. Lead us to be the body of Christ here in this corner of your world. Show us the way you would have us go in order to share your love, To serve your purpose, to be your people, and to bring others into your light. We are grateful for your gifts to us and for your work among us .Use us and and all that we offer to extend your grace through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.

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**2023 - Pastor – Kimby Young Annual Report**

I can honestly say, this was the hardest year of my life with the unexpected death of my sister in June. I can also say this congregation carried me through the last 6 months. I appreciate your outpouring of love and support, and your continuing comfort and care. I have said it before, that I don’t know how people who do not have faith are able to live through loss and grief. Knowing my sister and my parents are with God, that they are living eternally in complete wholeness and joy, and that I will see them all again, is an immense blessing.

When the associate executive of the Presbytery preached for me, she told you to take care of me. And you have done so. She also talked about role reversal. She said “your pastor is deeply wounded and needs care.” She said that the care giver needs to be the care receiver for a while. She did not know you as I do. She did not know that you are a congregation of care givers, that your love flows freely and fully, especially to those who are in need. You are very good at showing practical love in a variety of important ways. The interesting thing is, that kind of care often grows out of suffering. Those who have lost much are best at loving much. Many of you know what I am going through because you have faced hardship, challenge and loss. Because of your losses, you know what helps. That shared experience opens wide doors of compassion and connection. You share God’s love. We are healed by understanding, sympathy and hope.

Henri Nouwen wrote a book called “Wounded Healers.” In it, he talked about this phenomenon that out of our darkest times, God can create grace. If we understand suffering, we are better able to help others who suffer. Jesus is the model of that mercy. Only thru the crucifixion, death and suffering of Jesus is resurrection possible. We learn from loss. We are made stronger in our suffering. Out of death - new life grows. Jesus was wounded so that we might be healed. We who follow Jesus are called to the same experience. If we allow God to work through us, even our wounds become opportunities to bless others.

All of this is to say, in reflecting on 2023 in the life of the church, for me it is a bit of a blur. I’m not certain I accomplished anything but survival this year. I recognize that sometimes survival is enough. As the pages of this report witness, you accomplished a great deal more. You lived the generosity of God’s grace in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

As I look to the future, I am hopeful of all that we might accomplish together. In our shared joys and sorrows, we have a strong community of caring. We have many gifts to offer, much wisdom from experience, and persistent faithfulness as disciples of Jesus Christ and witnesses to the resurrection promise. God will bring wholeness and new life because we are able to be vulnerable in our life together, because we are able to love as Jesus loves. I anticipate God will use even my weakness to build new strength for this congregation. I look forward to both healing and inspiration in the year 2024. By God’s amazing and overflowing grace in Jesus Christ our Savior.

**2023 Session’s Annual Report**

The Session met in 11 stated meetings, 2 congregational meetings and 1 Session action conducted by email requiring a vote to approve an urgent recommendation.

The Session consist of twelve voting members plus the pastor who serves as moderator. Ron Crabbs serves as Clerk of Session and is not a voting member. The Session overall responsibility is for the spiritual welfare as well as the financial and programmatic operations of the Church. On January 9, 2023, the following members were elected to serve in the following positions for 2023: Elder Laura Gourley was elected President of the Corporation, Elder Ron Crabbs elected as Clerk of Session and Secretary of the Corporation and Elder Wayne Rollf elected as Treasurer. The Session organizational structure is built on four pillars – Worship, Discipleship, Mission and Finance and Operations. Three Elders and members of the congregation volunteering to lead each pillar serving on the various committees.

**Class of 2023 Class of 2024 Class 2025**

Worship Karl Allen Seth Cooper Davis Tropansky

Discipleship Amber Hildreth Mitch McSwane Linda Wolf

Mission Larry Atwater Tracy McCabe Karen Elliott

Finance & Operations Laura Gourley David Sinclair Randy Rieger

Clerk of Session Ron Crabbs

The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is celebrated fifteen times during the year.

Rev. Kimby continued to conduct a yearly session retreat held in January/February for members to review our current state, goals and future aspirations. The training is beneficial for new elders coming on board.

The 156th Annual meeting of the Congregation conducted on Sunday, January 29, 2023, with members in fellowship and electronically by Zoom.

Presbytery did not schedule a reading of our session minutes due to the virus and social distancing.

We wish to extend a heartfelt thank you to our third year Elders who are rotating off of session - Karl Allen, Amber Hildreth, Larry Atwater and Laura Gourley for their time and talents dedicated to serving God and congregation. We appreciate the service and dedication of the returning Elders Class 2024 and 2025. We welcome those newly installed as the Class of 2026 – Ginger Crist, Lynn Moldrup, Larry Schick and Poppy Zurcher

We are extremely fortunate and appreciative to have an outstanding group of people dedicated to serving on the Board of Deacons, Administrative Assistant, Treasurer, Musical Director and staff, Youth Directors and Custodians all going above and beyond to provide outstanding congregational care, administrative support, financial management, musical talents and maintenance/operational support to our church…Well Done,

We are tremendously blessed to have Rev. Dr. Kimby Young as our pastor, spiritual leader and moderator of our session. She has done a marvelous job inspiring the congregation with her weekly messages encouraging members to share the good news throughout the community. Her positive “Can Do” attitude is infectious inspiring everyone to dream big, seeking new opportunities. We are extremely grateful for her frequent visits to members in the hospital, having surgery, recovering at home and those who are living in a nursing home. We are grateful for her Leadership, Love and Support to our congregation.

Ron Crabbs, Clerk of Session and Secretary of the Corporation

**2023 Clerk of Session Annual Statistical Report**

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Membership on December 31, 2022.……………………………......................177**

**Additions:**

Profession of Faith………………………….. 7

Reaffirmation……………………………….. 0

Transfer of Membership……………………. 0

Restored to Active Rolls……………………. 3

TOTAL ADDITIONS……………………… 10

**Sub-Total after Additions………………………………...................................187**

**Losses:**

Dismissals by Transfer……………………… 0

Death………………………………............... 5

Other Losses…Inactive……………………... 14

TOTAL LOSSES……………………………. 19

**Membership on December 31, 2023……………………………........................168**

**OTHER STATISTICS**

**Baptisms:**

Persons 17 and under………………………. 3

Adult………………………………............... 1

TOTAL BAPTISMS……………………….. 4

**Weddings:**

Members………………………………......... 0

Non-Members……………………………… 0

TOTAL WEDDINGS……………………… 0

**Funerals:**

Member……………………………….......... 5

Inactive Member……………………………. 0

Non-Member……………………………….. 0

TOTAL FUNERALS……………………… 5

**2023 Finance and Operations Pillar Annual Report**

The Finance and Operations Pillar consists of Finance, Building and Grounds, Personnel, IT and Memorial Funds. Please find below a summary of each of these areas.

The Finance subcommittee meets monthly to review the Church finances. This includes reviewing the check register, Balance Sheet and Income and Expense Statements for both the month and year-to-date. In cooperation with the other church pillars, the committee prepares and monitors the annual budget. The committee also reviews any other financial business brought to the Church throughout the year for approval prior to being presented to Session.

Please find below a brief summary of the Finances):

2023 Income: $308,484.55

2023 Expenses: $292,111.43

**2023 Year-End Balance**  $16,373.12

Although at times throughout the year expenses far exceed income, God and the congregation generously provide for the Church’s needs. As shown in the financial summary above, by year-end annual income typically covers (or nearly covers) annual expenses. The Income and Expense Statement for 2023 and the 2024 Approved budget are available for review upon request.

The Finance subcommittee completed several administrative projects during the year, including:

* Contracted for I.T. support services
* Implemented electronic payment options for congregational financial offerings
* Filed for property tax exemption status for JOY Closet (still pending at state of KS level)
* Reviewed/revised wedding fees policy
* Reviewed/revised the scholarship policy
* Prepared the 2024 annual budget

The Building and Grounds subcommittee completed several, significant updates and repairs:

* Air conditioning repairs
* Landscape work
* North sidewalk repairs
* Outside lighting updated – walkway lights added on east sidewalk
* Painted storeroom in Fellowship Hall
* Replaced south sidewalk in front of church (damage caused by contractor causing natural gas leak)
* Fellowship Hall carpet cleaned

The personnel subcommittee is made up of the third- and second-year reigning Elders. Following review, a 3% increase was recommended for full-time staff only, which was subsequently approved by Session and incorporated into the 2024 annual budget.

Thank you to everyone who serves on the Finance and Operations Pillar for their service throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Gourley

Dave Sinclair

Randy Rieger

**2023 Discipleship Pillar Annual Report**

January – June:

* January- Decisions made for Sunday School for following months. Started looking for assistance for classes through bulletin and email. PYF participated in the annual Winter Retreat.
* February- Discussion from 1st of three open forums with congregation. Discussed Senior Recognition. Discussion on increasing Sunday School groups to three classes instead of two. TDC was at 30 out of 48 spots filled.
* March- Discussed Easter egg hunt for Sunday school, as well as the outdoor grilling and music being worked on by all pillars. Discussed feedback from congregational meetings from Feb- concerns that Sunday School schedule inconsistent. Discussed finding money in budget for youth ministries leadership. PYF attended Sidewalk Prophets concert in Hays. TDC at 43 filled spots.
* April- BBQ initially set for June was discussed. Continued discussion on 3 Sunday School classes for next school year. PYF had a fundraiser on 4/23- Chicken Noodle lunch. TDC discussed. Only 2 spots opened. Discussed possible volunteers.
* May- Looked at regular attending children for Sunday School. Discussion on finding teachers for next school year. Discussion on hiring a leader position for Sunday School. Discussed doing children’s activities throughout the summer month. Marsha Cooper volunteered to temporarily lead the Sunday School program. PYF gearing up for Mission Trip in July.
* June- No meeting was held this month.

July – December:

* July- BBQ moved to September. Continued to work on having three Sunday School classes and addressed staffing of teachers. Job description for Youth Director was provided by pillar and given to Finance for review. PYF attended their mission trip. SAS series went well during this time frame. TDC had 48 kids attend.
* August- Session approved potential funding for Youth Director. Looked into additional funds to help fund this position. Funds spent on curriculum for all three Sunday School classes. Teachers for classes finalized, including assistants. SAS had some volunteers for some classes, but Marsha was responsible for organizing and leading most classes.
* September- Discussion on the Christmas Eve Childrens Pageant. Looked at Heartland for potential interns for the Children’s Church leadership position but was unable to find someone. Sunday School started with three classes this month and had a solid attendance. PYF had incoming 7th grade kids start and doubled attendance.
* October- Verified at least 17 participants for the Christmas pageant. Discussed costuming. Discussed Mrs. Claus dates. PYF helped with Trunk or Treat. Deposit in for next year’s TDC.
* November- Cast list for Christmas Eve pageant finalized with roles for all kids. Mrs. Claus finalized for 12/10 reading. PYF had a very successful brunch fundraiser. TDC reported that will old camp third week of June 2024.
* December- Went over the first practice of Children’s pageant and made some adjustments based off feedback. Discussed whether to hold Sunday School on annual meeting January 28th and decision was made to hold at normal time. Marsha is working on January/February schedules for Sunday School. PYF 1 year away from announcing the location of the next Mission Trip. Discussed finding way to digitally receive money from parents of PYF kids. Pastor Kimby’s midweek Bible Study class is going very well.

For 2024:

* Continue to search for permanent leadership for Sunday School programs.
* Continue to focus on stability and growth of the Sunday School Classes
* Travelling Day Camp support and execution.
* PYF support and growth.

**2023 Worship Pillar Annual Report**

January 2023 – December 2023:

* January- Decisions made for Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, Cantata, and Easter services. Discussed other upcoming Sundays for February.
* February- Discussion and decision made to grant a leave of absence for the Pianist for an ill Mother. Discussed updates to the sound booth, coordinated additional details for Holy Week, and started planning for special services through the end of May.
* March- Discussed upcoming Easter Cantata and potential opportunities for collaborating with the community in the future, such as a community Cantata or Easter/Christmas program. Sound booth updates were completed and looking at opportunities to provide AED training for the church. Discussed special services through the end of June.
* April- Discussed preparation for Summer Sunday’s, specifically coordination for worship team and staff while vacations occur. Discussed upcoming Sundays, Psalm sermon series, and special services through the end of June.
* May- Discussed preparation for Summer Sunday’s, specifically coordination for worship team and staff while vacations occur. Discussed upcoming Sundays, Psalm sermon series, and special services through the end of the summer including a joint Worship for PYF to present on their Mission trip, with the decision to combine services for Aug 6 and perform August’s communion on July 31. Additionally, discussed the need for updated Usher training.
* June- No meeting
* July- Discussed possibly doing a Fall Usher training or refresher course. Began discussions for special services through the end of the year, including the Christmas Cantata and other combined services. Additionally, discussed the need to replace the sanctuary monitors due to monitor resets occurring.
* August- Discussed choirs and other special music group practices resuming after Labor Day. Discussions for special services through the end of the year, including the Christmas Cantata and other combined services, and decided that the Dec 17, 24, and 31 Sundays would be combined.
* September- Discussed how the choirs were doing since their resuming post-Labor Day. Also, discussed upcoming services and special services through the end of 2024.
* October- Reviewed and discussed the Worship Pillars budget for 2024 and decided that the budget needed to remain un-changed from 2023. Additionally, discussed upcoming services and special services through the end of 2024.
* November- Discussed upcoming services and special services through the end of 2024. Discussed and decided that the sanctuary monitors need to be replaced and that larger monitors could be used. The pillar is looking for replacement monitors.
* December- No meeting

For 2024:

* Continue to support Worship service planning.
* Continue to support Pastor, Worship band, Organist, and Pianist
* Update sanctuary monitors

**2023 Mission Pillar Annual Report**

Mission Elders: Larry Atwater 2023, Tracy McCabe 2024, Karen Elliott 2025

We received 4 denominational offerings.

One Great Hour of Sharing during Lent (for disaster relief)

Pentecost offering in June (for youth and young adult ministry)

Peace and Global Witness in the fall (for peace and justice ministries)

And Joy offering in December. (For retired church workers and ethnic schools)

We also received the 2 PW Offerings to support projects for women and children.

Birthday offering in the spring and Thank offering in the fall.

Souper Bowl Sunday was promoted in January and received by February 12th.

Food was divided between the outdoor pantry at Joy Closet (for small items) and the Johnson County Multi-Service Center of Gardner. You helped collect 173 items and $476.92.

Joy closet is highly successful, reaching out in the community in many ways.

Our church is being asked to volunteer on every 4th Saturday.

Three $1500 scholarships were awarded to students at GHE High school.

Joy Closet collects multiple donations from the city garage sale, and probably will again in 2024. Plan to help on the 1st Saturday of May.

Fair Trade had a chocolate tasting on May 7th, as well a hot chocolate tasting on Dec 3rd. Sales go to support farmers and workers all over the world.

Our Participation in the JOCO fair parade was a success.

The Holy Smokes BBQ didn't go as planned because of heavy rains but actually worked out great as everyone had to go inside and it felt like better fellowship occurred.

Weather again played a part in the annual Trunk or Treat event. Because of the predicted cold weather, the event was held inside. Both it and the chili dinner were a great success with an estimated 200 people participating.

Operation Christmas Child was successful as 123 boxes were packed.

Children's Christmas project was completed, and the gifts were delivered to the Baptist church for distribution. We had 10 children with 5 gifts each.

Respectfully Submitted

Larry W Atwater

Mission Pillar 2023.

**2023 Music Ministries Annual Report**

Music Ministries has had an amazing year. Many thanks go out to Theo Borge, Tom Dean, Karen Elliott, Nancy Falkner, Jason Hopper, Bob Horner, Bea Judah, Doug Judah, Jason Smith and Oliver Schwab for sharing their talents. Our church is so blessed by The Praise Band leading music for the second service. In addition, the Praise Band members graciously offered their talents to the Mixed Choir for both Cantatas this year. They also took on the challenge for the first annual Holy Smokes outside community event. I am always so blessed by each praise team member for their selfless dedication and love for the Lord and our Church.

In addition to presenting anthems each week, the Mixed Choir presented two complete cantatas this year; ‘This is God’ presented at Easter and ‘Song of Joy’ was presented for Christmas. Both were very successful in bringing God’s message to our congregation. Many members of the choir willingly offered their voices or instruments to provide special music for the 8:45 service throughout the summer months. Thank you to Rhonda Atwater, Shana Devlin, Ella Falkner, Nancy Falkner, Chesley Jones, and Oliver Schwab for their willingness to share. A very special ‘Thank You’ goes out to Vanessa Marriott for her willingness to play the piano this past year. We are so grateful for your willingness to share your talents with our choir and our congregation.

The bell choir welcomed three new members this year; Tony and Jennifer Waite as well as Theo Borge. We will miss those members that left us this year due to changes in their lives. We wish Nalleli Rollf all the best as she heads off to college. We will miss Tyson Hildreth as he pursues different avenues in life. Lois Barber as she takes on the travel world with her family. It is with deep sadness to say goodbye this year to Susie Lane. Susie was an active part of the bell choir for several years. We miss your smile, sense of humor and your infinite love for God, your family, and your church. We look forward to the day we join you in God’s bell choir praising Him for eternity. The Bell Choir continues to rehearse and present when they could. Members struggled with sickness and activity schedules. Their continued dedication to our church and bell choir allowed them to participate as they could.

The year ended on a wonderful note with fabulous Christmas Eve services in which many members of the Music Ministry willingly shared their talents on so many different levels. It is always a blessing to end the year with the celebration of the birth of our Savior.

Special Thanks to Alice Rollf for her continued service to our Lord playing the organ. Alice prepares music each week and occasionally special music all out of love for God and our Church. You are such a blessing to us all.

I am blessed and grateful to be a part of this ministry. God’s love presented through music makes the struggles of life around us just a little bit easier. As we move forward together, I pray that God will continue to bless this ministry and to use each of us to further His kingdom to His glory through the love for music.

In His Service and Through His Love,

Dean Faulk

Director of Music Ministries

**2023 Presbyterian Youth Fellowship Annual Report**

Youth ministry at FPC continued to educate and inspire our seventh through twelfth graders in 2023. Regular meetings and special events serve to reach the kids through fellowship, evangelism, worship, and scripture.

The tradition of the annual winter continued MLK weekend in January. This year’s focus was sexuality, which is something the PYF tackles every few years. The topic can be intimidating but is needed more than ever. We discussed everything from anatomy and physiology to wise decision making and responsibilities. This was done from a biblical perspective as well as a focus on realistic application in real life.

Music has always been one of the best ways to reach kids. Our group attended the Winter Jam tour in Kansas City that was headlined this year by We the Kingdom and Jeremy Camp. We also traveled to Hays, Kansas in March for an intimate concert experience with Sidewalk Prophets.

We hit the road again July 8-17 for an unforgettable mission trip. Seven youth and two adults spent the week serving with Next Step Ministries in Columbia, South Carolina. We joined several other youth groups for a week of service that included numerous home repair projects and time spent alongside existing helping agencies. After touring the USS Yorktown at Patriots Point, some of our youth saw and swam in the ocean for the first time during a day trip to the beach in Charleston. We also spent some down time hiking in Tennessee and went zip-lining underground in Louisville, Kentucky on the way home. When we got back, we led worship and gave a presentation to the congregation.

These were just some of our large-scale events. We met most Sunday nights throughout the year for study and fellowship. Weekly gatherings are invaluable to the development of our kids’ faiths. One of our series was Darkroom Faith. This encouraged kids to ask tough questions about their faith and to discuss them openly among friends. This is a goal in everything we do.

After struggling with no upper-classmen for a couple of years, the PYF graduated an active senior. Nalleli Rollf completed her PYF career with three mission trips and three canoe trips under her belt as well as many retreats, concerts, and weekly gatherings. She was an excellent senior leader whose presence will be missed in the Youth Chapel on Sunday evenings. She is attending Colby Community College in Colby, Kansas studying equine production and management. She will surely continue to grow in her faith and minister to others in her new community.

As 2023 comes to an end, we are looking forward to the new year. The group has changed dramatically over the past few years. Attendance and participation have grown slightly, and oddly enough the group is almost all boys right now. This is unusual for us but also for the youth ministry in general. But as the group changes, we continue to adapt and meet the kids where they are to guide them in their faith and in life.

The PYF would like to thank the congregation for your continued, very generous support. Lives in Gardner and across the country continue to be changed through you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dave Rollf

Youth Advisor

**2023 Deacons Annual Report**

**Members of the Deacons by Congregational Groupings**

**2023 Officers**

MODERATOR……………………………… Carl Frahme

CO-MODERATOR………………………… Marsha Cooper

SECRETARY…………………………………. Lynn Moldrup

NOMINATING COMMITTEE………….. Lynn Moldrup

COMMUNION CO-CHAIR………………. Kelly Johnson

COMMUNION CO-CHAIR……………….. Susan Rushing

BREAD MAKER………………………………Judy Lenahan/Shana Devlin

GRAPE JUICE and CUPS……………………. Kelly Johnson

POLISH SILVER…………………………… Carl Frahme

TELEPHONE SHUT-INS…………………… John Kunkle/Barbara Sue Sweetwood

FUNERAL DINNER CO-CHAIRPERSO…. Debbie Pickell

FUNERAL DINNER CO-CHAIRPERSON…. Judy Lenahan

FUNERAL DINNER VOLUNTEER CALLER Shirley Harley

**Communion**

Post Covid, we have been having traditional Communion but using gluten-free bread in place of conventional bread.

**Cards Project**

The Deacons shared the process of sending cards to all on the church list on birthdays, anniversaries and Christmas, and to offer get well, thinking-of-you, and sympathy wishes.

**Funeral Meals**

We offered funeral meals on several occasions and were able to provide hospitality to several families. Thank you to all who served or contributed food.

**Congregational Service**

We were able to assist at several congregational potlucks. The Deacons have taken a lead in developing a new Church Directory. Instant Church Directory will be used to develop a picture-containing directory in early 2024.

Respectfully submitted: Carl Frahme – Moderator

**2023 Presbyterian Women’s Annual Report**

**2023 Presbyterian Officers:**

* Moderator: Lois Barber
* Co-Moderator: Vera Beach
* Secretary: Alice Rollf
* Treasurer: Teri Winegar
* Program Studies: JoLynn Clark & Lynn Moldrup
* Mission: Karen Elliott & Sharon Frahme
* Local Services (Kitchen): Debbie Pickell & Judy Lenahan
* Involvement & Action: Shana Devlin & Susan Rushing
* Nomination Committee: Paula Waters, Joyce Scarlett, Marsha Cooper, Kim Allen

**PW Accomplishments for 2023:**

**Justice & Peace:** We are called to share God’s love with the world, by being God’s hands in the world. We answer God’s call to “do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God” (Micah 6:8). Presbyterian Women in the Congregation, Presbytery and Synod groups respond to local or regional justice and peace needs. Our work can be action, advocacy, or awareness-building—or a mixture depending on the gifts of our groups. Each meeting we learned about a different cause, including: MLK Day, Random Acts of Kindness Week, Mr. Rogers’ Day, Earth Day, World Humanitarian Day, International Day of Peace, Children’s Book Week, and International Volunteer Day. For Children’s Book Week we asked Joy Closet if they could offer a free book to all children coming to the store. They agreed to doing that and over 70 books were given to children.

**Birthday Offering:** In February, Presbyterian Women, their families, and the congregation generously contributed through their birthday Offering gifts to help chosen recipients find real solutions for projects related to health, education, economic development and needs for women and children.

**Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday**, March 5, reflected on God’s call to Mary and her faithful response. Women served in all positions at both Sunday church services.

**Spring Brunch:** Spring brunch was held on April 29th, with around 60 ladies in attendance. Speaker for the morning was Rachel Kroh from “Sleep in Heavenly Peace,” a group that makes bed frames and provides mattresses and bedding for those in need. A free will offering was taken and was donated to this group.

**Bible Study:** Spring Bible Study, “Keep Your Love On” by Danny Silk; Fall Bible Study “Desperate for Hope” by Vaneetha Risner

**Book Club:** Out of a discussion during a meeting, we came up with having a Book Club group. We would all read a Christian book on our own over the summer, then have a social gathering and discuss the book. The First book was “Sister Circles” by Nancy Moser & Vonette Bright. We soon learned this is a series of 5 books, so 4 events have been held with one more coming up in January.

**Ladies Retreat**: A fun group of 18 ladies attended an overnight Retreat at the Heartland Camp in Parkville in August. The Retreat was led by Paula Waters and Brenda Jones. The theme was “Stepping Out with Jesus.”

**Ladies Night Out:** Was held November 2 with a fall theme. A salad supper was enjoyed by all. After dinner, the Officers for 2024 were installed by Lois Barber. Then we made fall Wreaths for shut-ins and Advent coloring books for children.

**Thank Offering,** November 19: The Thank Offering is one of Presbyterian Women’s two offerings. Received in the fall each year, it gives women a tangible way to express their gratitude for the special blessings in their lives. Thank Offering grants range from $5,000 to $50,000. At least 40 percent of the offering funds health ministries.

**Christmas Luncheon:** December 2. A Christmas Tea was held at Fellowship Hall with a delicious luncheon and a White Elephant gift exchange afterward. Kimby Young brought many types of tea, and we were able to taste test many flavors. We ended the day with a cookie exchange. (Note: We had planned a “High Tea” at the Zurcher residence but due to illness it was cancelled for this year.)

**Women’s Fellowship Circle:** The Women’s Fellowship Circle meets the 1st Wednesday of every month in the morning, from March through November. The group enjoys fellowship and devotional time. The women make activities for the children to do in church for holidays and back to school.

**The services of the Gardner Presbyterian Women:**

* PW Mitten Tree - Winter clothing for local schools
* Baby blankets for new mothers
* Lap robes for residents in care facilities
* Food pantry and Community Family Support Services
* Operation Christmas Child Shoebox program
* Children’s Christmas Program
* Prayer Shawls (contact Poppy Zurcher if you wish to learn how to make them)

Respectfully submitted by,

Lois Barber, PW Moderator 2023

**2023 Joy Closet Annual Report**

**About JOY Closet:**

JOY Closet Thrift Store is a mission of First Presbyterian Church. We serve the Gardner-Edgerton, Wellsville, and Baldwin area school districts and provide free vouchers for families in need to shop for free clothing, bedding, and shoes. Vouchers are in schools, churches, and area social agencies.

**JOY Closet Board:**

**Cindy Rollf, Ginger Crist, Cathy Cochran, Margaret Drovetta, Karen Elliott,**

**Kim Allen, Larry Atwater, Lois Barber, Vera Beach, Kimby Young**

The board is involved with the operations of JOY Closet, by volunteering their own time and talent. Each year we celebrate together with an event in Fellowship Hall honoring our volunteers. Other ways in which we honored the volunteers is by providing shirts, snacks, water bottles and insulated cups. All that we are able to accomplish is through the efforts of our many volunteers and it is our desire that we express our appreciation to each one of them. Often the volunteers comment about how much volunteering enriches their own lives. The volunteers feel a part of a special community.

**Ten Year Anniversary:**

This past October, JOY Closet completed ten years of service to the community. Volunteers and shoppers enjoyed celebrating all week with special drawings, snack items complimentary of our friends at Hostess Foods, and a Saturday hot dog and chips event on the front sidewalk. This anniversary brought back many memories of how we started and the difficulties that we have overcome. We are so grateful for the blessings we have received and for the opportunity we have been given to help others.

**Vouchers:**

The number of vouchers presented and the monetary value represented are shown below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2021 | 658 | $22,988.05 |
| 2022 | 945 | $42,045.08 |
| 2023 | 1,406 | $64,556.40 |

**Designated Donations:**

Our shoppers and volunteers have the opportunity to be involved with helping others through monetary donations made at the checkout counter. This year we chose the following recipients to receive donations:

Jan/Feb New Horizon Therapeutic Ranch $1,388.95

Mar/Apr JOY Closet Scholarship $4,793.82

May/Jun Be Head Strong $1,235.58

July/Aug USD 231 kid’s lunches $1,365.85

Sept Answer the Call $ 911.00

Oct. Secret Santa Wellsville $ 971.25

Nov/Dec Gardner Gold Special Olympics $2,013.24

Yearly Total $13,781.72

**JOY Closet Scholarship**

This year, we began a scholarship fund for Gardner Edgerton seniors to apply to their first year of college. A scholarship review board judged 40 applicants on both their academic success as well as their involvement in the community through service. We were able to award three seniors with $1,500 scholarships. Recipients were: Nalleli Rollf, Lauren Mulwa, and Adelyn Meder.

**Honors and Recognition**

JOY Closet Volunteers received the 2023 You Make a Difference Award from Kansas State Grange in September. We were also honored by the Gardner Edgerton Chamber of Commerce in their annual *GE Magazine* with a feature article about our non-profit. We are grateful for these recognitions.

Being in a position to help others has its humble moments. It is an honor to be able to provide goods to people who are in need and to listen to their stories. On more than one occasion this year, there were tears shed in appreciation. God’s presence is real. It is our hope this ministry has been a blessing to all.

Respectfully submitted,

Vera Beach

**Matthew 25:35-36 NIV**

**35For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’**

**Part B**

**ITEMS REQUIRING CONGREGATIONAL VOTE**

Terms of Call – 2024

Total Package - **$** **88,699.56** (up 1105.25)

Salary - 27,300.23 (up 795.15)

403b SRA - 9,000

Housing - 25,000

Total effective salary for calculating taxes and PCUSA - **$ 61,300.23** (up 795.15 )

Professional expenses - auto, CE, etc. **$3,000**

Benefits PCUSA required – 39% of income:

Medical – 27 % - $ 16,551.06 (up 214.69)

Death/disability – 1 % - $613.00 (up 7.94)

Pension – 11% - $6,743.03 (up 87.47)

Subtotal – 39% - ($ 23,907.09) (up 310.10 )

Optional Benefits with PCUSA not required

Dental - $ 445.56

Vision - $ 46.68

Total dues to PCUSA – **$24,399.33** (up 310.10 )

Total expenses for the congregation - **$88,699.56** (up 1105.25)

Other non-financial benefits:   
(in keeping with Presbytery’s minimum requirements for minister’s terms of call)

4 weeks vacation (including 4 Sundays)

2 weeks study leave (including 2 Sundays)

The mileage reimbursement rate from the Presbytery is $ .67 cents per mile and will be submitted under the professional expense line.

In the box numbers for social security – $9378.94 and $4,689.47. (15.3% and 7.65% of 1st numbers).

*\*the IRS mileage rate for 2024 is .67 cents per mile.*

Note: The pastor’s compensation does not include the “employer’s matching contribution” social security benefit of 7.65%. Clergy are classified as “self-employed” (not employees) and are responsible for paying the entire social security tax (normally 15.3%). These IRS rules apply only to ordained clergy; all other church staff are classified as employees and receive the regular employer matching contribution social security benefit of 7.65% of 1st numbers and are responsible for paying the other half (normally 7.65%) through payroll (FICA) tax withholding.

For the compensation package outlined above, the social security tax the pastor would be required to pay would usually be $8,987.65. Regular employees earning a similar salary would pay half of this amount ($4,493.82) and the other half would be paid by the employer on their behalf. Many employees do not realize that their employers are making these payments on their behalf. Pastors are also subject to state and federal income taxes, local property taxes, personal property taxes, sales tax, etc.