



MINISTRY
HIGHLIGHTS
2020





Prince of Peace
Lutheran Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

PURPOSE STATEMENT & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PURPOSE STATEMENT

*We are disciples of Jesus who are empowered
by God's extravagant grace to grow in faith,
serve in love and live in joy.*

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We proclaim Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

We are embraced by God's extravagant grace.

We celebrate Christ's life-giving presence through word and sacrament.

We live Jesus' way by welcoming and inviting all.

We are called to be good stewards-generously sharing God's gifts.

We are God's hands and voices at work in the world.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

61 Route 70 East
Marlton, New Jersey 08053

The Reverend Brett W. Ballenger

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**Minutes from the 58th Annual Congregational Meeting of Prince of Peace
Sunday January 26th, 2020**

The meeting was called to order by President Bob Price at 11:55 A.M. Pastor Ballenger led the opening devotions and prayer from the Litany in the Book of Reports.

President Price thanked everyone for attending and encouraged everyone to share their views and opinions. Since ministry at POP is a partnership between members and staff, he thanked all the staff and council for their support.

Mary Scout was appointed to serve as Parliamentarian for today's meeting. President Price appointed Lori Hartley as timekeeper and Robert McLellan as the head teller.

Mary Scout then explained to the congregation her role as Parliamentarian; to give advice to the chair and any other member who requests it. She also explained the procedures to be used for making a motion during the meeting.

President Price explained that according to our bylaws, a quorum of 54, 10% of our voting members, is needed to conduct business. Robert McLellan reported that there are 79 voting members in attendance at today's meeting and a quorum had been met.

President Price then stated that it has been our practice to limit debate on each topic under discussion to allow an opportunity for everyone who wishes to speak. A motion was made by Scott Rush and Seconded by Ginny Fink, to limit the debate so that each person may speak only twice on an issue for only two minutes each time. Each person may speak only once on an issue until all have spoken that wish to do so, then a person may speak a second time. The motion to limit debate was adopted.

President Price requested a motion to limit the meeting to two hours. A motion was made by Kim Syvertsen. The motion was passed.

President Price next requested that anyone who wishes to speak should line up behind the microphones, wait to be recognized by the chair and state their name before speaking. The time keeper will notify those when speaking when there are 30 seconds remaining, as well as when the two-minute time limit has been reached. This is to ensure that all those who wish to speak will be heard, as well as to manage our time efficiently.

President Price asked for approval of the agenda. It was approved as presented.

President Price then presented the minutes of the 57th annual meeting held on January 26th, 2019. Since there were no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as presented.

Pastor Brett was then called on to present the report of the nomination committee. He thanked those that served on the nominating committee for their time and service; Ginny Fink, Aimee Morin, Sharon Elliott and Pastor Brett. This year, four council members are leaving; Lori Hartley, Pauline Ahern, Pam Haan and Sharon Elliott. Aimee Morin will be leaving after serving one year as our Youth Representative. Walter Stridick, Michael Parker, Lorraine Hoilien and Rob Herb were nominated for a two-year term; Allison Shingleton was nominated for a one year term and Tyler Hoilien was nominated for a one-year term as the youth representative.

President Price then explained the voting process and asked for nominations from the floor. Since there were none, the nominations were declared closed and he requested the tellers to distribute the ballots. After a few minutes the ballots were collected, and the voting was declared closed.

The 2019 Treasurer and Financial Secretary's reports were presented. Since there were no additions or corrections, the reports were accepted as presented.

At this time, Robert McLellan presented his report on the election of new council members. 76 people voted. Michael Parker, Rob Herb, Lorraine Hoilien and Walter Stridick were elected to two-year terms, Allison Shingleton and Tyler Hoilien to one-year terms.

The 2019 Book of Reports was presented. There were no additions or corrections and it was approved as written.

Pauline Ahern presented the Sustain Campaign report:

\$71,041.18 was pledged for 2019, of which \$68,463.18 was received in 2019.

\$22,790.00 is pledged for 2020, of which \$1,142 has been received as of this date.

Combined pledges for 2019 and 2020 is \$95,073.18.

Pastor Brett presented his report to the congregation. He shared that things are always changing; how people understood Christianity ten years ago is different than today. As Christians, we are followers of the Light.

Our Food Pantry is overflowing. For the summer meals program, we received help from St. Joan of Arc, Congregation Beth Tikvah, Muslim friends and others not associated with our church. We continue to invite others to help us with this important ministry.

Most of our new members are transferred from other Lutheran congregations.

Last year, we slashed the budget by \$20,000. For the first time in years, we are in the black by \$5,000. This is in large part due to the Sustain Campaign. \$140,000 was given outside the budget. \$15,000 was a grant by the ELCA. \$12,000 in donations of food were given by WAWA.

Pastor Brett reminded and encouraged us to fill out the Intent to give cards. He also encouraged us to look at the Book of Reports to see all that we have done. Pastor Brett thanked us for all our support, especially with his mother's death and all of the other deaths that occurred in 2019.

Pastor Brett is rearranging his work schedule where he will have off both Mondays and Tuesdays to provide for two consecutive days off, as approved by the Congregation Council.

Catherine Salender thanked Pastor Brett, and we all agreed whole heartedly.

Pastor Brett asked if there were any questions and there were none.

There was a motion to discuss the spending plan. Pauline Ahern moved that the spending plan for 2020 as approved by the Council, on pages 8-20 be presented. Bob Price gave directions on how to do this. The staff was given a choice to leave during this discussion and they chose to leave. There was a vote, and the motion carried to approve the spending plan for 2020.

Allison Shingleton expressed the need for nominations for the Endowment Committee. A total of five members are to sit on the committee, one from council. Two new members are needed for three year terms.

Melinda Ota was nominated and accepted. Catherine Salender was nominated and accepted. Laura Glatz was nominated, but retracted. Melinda and Catherine were voted in.

Pastor Brett thanked Laura Glatz for making the luncheon happen and for the use of an Action Team.

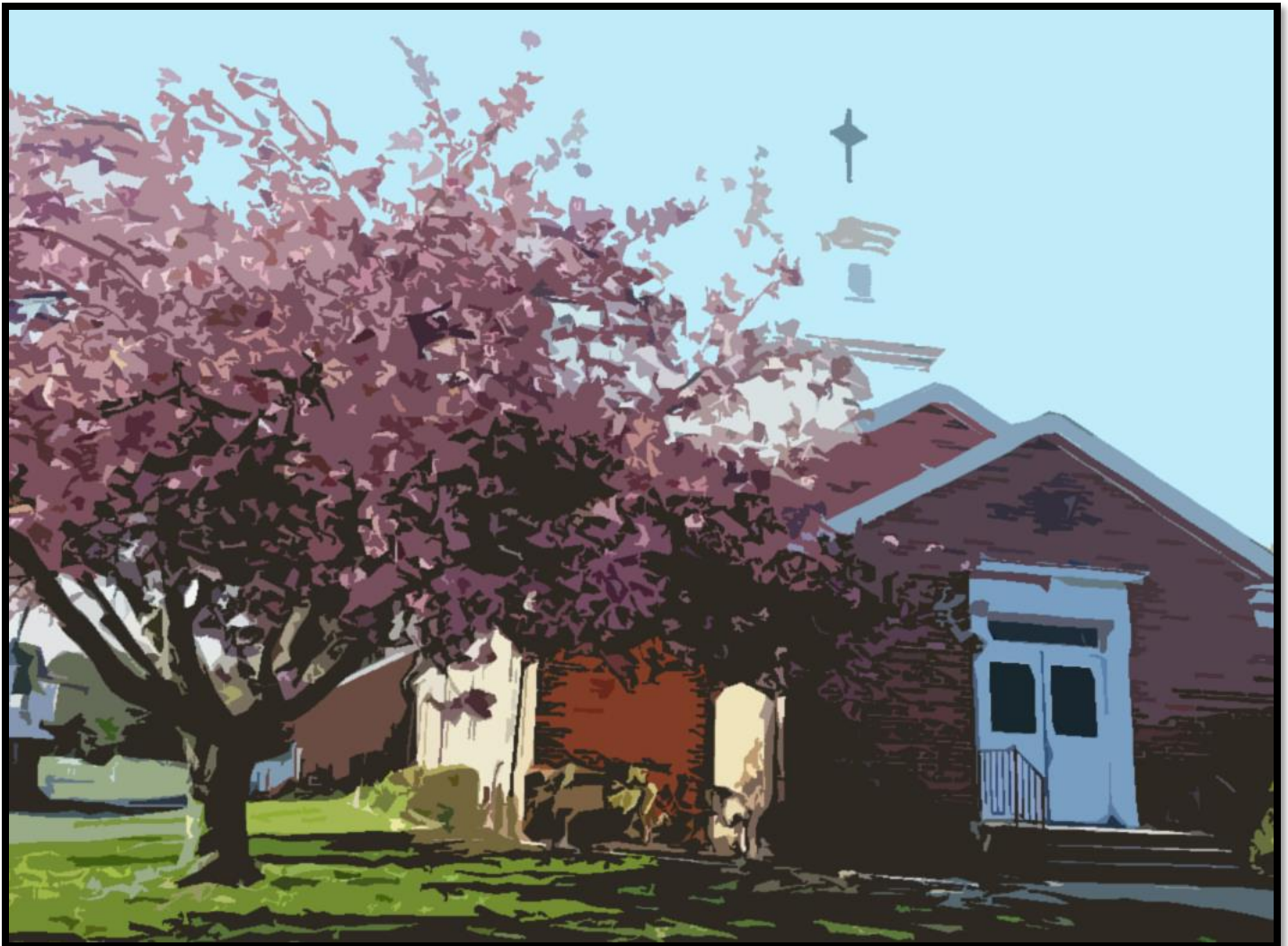
The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:58 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Elliott
Council Secretary, 2019

Thank you to Lisa Schaffer for taking notes in my absence.



CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church,

How can the year 2020 be described? The word remarkable first comes to mind. As the world around us constantly changed, presented new challenges and new fears, we could always remember and be comforted by our Faith in God through His Word and renewed strength and caring given by His Son, Jesus. Even though we may not have been able to meet in person to worship and celebrate, we knew that the Prince of Peace Family was still there and always in our prayers.

Foremost in the minds of the Prince of Peace Staff and Church Council throughout this year were, as always, the health, safety, spiritual growth and our love of our members. The decisions whether to be together for worship in the Sanctuary, outdoors, or online have been the results of much thoughtful discussion and prayer. It was difficult to have to change how we celebrated Lent, Easter, Advent, and Christmas. Rites of passage such as baptisms, weddings and funerals, fun events like the Easter Egg hunt and the annual Church Picnic were virtual, or different, or held not at all.

Fortunately, we at Prince of Peace are blessed by God to have a fantastic, talented, inventive, and Faith-filled Staff. Pastor Brett. Music Director Guy, and Church Administrator Laura have worked hard to keep the Prince of Peace family together throughout the year. They provided meaningful ways to worship that included Pastor Brett's online sermons and messages of faith and Guy's wide variety of music and helping everyone to learn to sign words when we could not sing aloud. Laura provided a way for all of us to be informed of what was happening through her technology and communication skills. The Staff found new ways to have Discipleship Practice, Vacation Bible School and Confirmation classes to help our youth remain involved in the church and the worship of God.

Even though the church building was closed, the Property Ministry continued its work with ventilation systems, new windows, siding, repaved parking lot and more. The group's volunteers continue the upkeep of the building and the grounds. Social Missions Ministry continued its effort to feed more and more people during these times of need. Thanks to the efforts of this group and its many volunteers and donors of food and funds, the Food Pantry and the Summer Meals Program continued to do God's work.

Also, thank you, the Prince of Peace Family, for your continuing support of the Church and its ministries. Your stewardship in terms of time, talent, and money allows our ministries to continue their fine work. It has been my honor and pleasure to serve as your Council President these past two years. May God bless all of you and keep you safe and healthy.

Robert Price, 2020 Prince of Peace Council President



Robert Price – President of Council

ADDICTIONS, MENTAL HEALTH, AND HEALTH MINISTRY

Members: Ann Orcutt, Pauline Ahern, Lori Hartley, Allison Shingleton, Sharon Elliott, George King, Laura Glatz and Lorraine Hoilien.

Despite COVID - 2020 was another interesting and active year for this ministry. Here are the highlights:

- While in the pandemic, we helped with telephone contacts to each member of our Prince of Peace family. This contact was followed up by a second call. After, there were notes, texts, cards and messages in an attempt to keep us together.
- Sharon Elliott Submission Report: *"Just before the pandemic hit, I was looking for a sense of purpose and a way to serve others. Combining my love of making soup and wanting to serve, I began making soup or a casserole weekly for two homebound parishioners, and sharing Pastor Brett's sermon with them and another parishioner who did not have access to the Internet. Doing this has been a great blessing for me and I have received much more than I have given. It has helped me to feel more connected and has given me a way to be God's hands and feet in the world."*



Lorraine Hoilien



- We organized a few Coffee Talk meetings on the grounds of Prince of Peace. At these events we met in person. We socially distanced, wore masks and were able to spend a little time with other members of our Prince of Peace family. Each time we held this event about 20 people participated.
- We organized and held a zoom lecture for the congregation titled COVID-101. The lecture was given by Karen Kramer. In her presentation she educated the attendees about current COVID information. About 20 families attended this presentation. We received a lot of positive feedback from the lecture.



- Continued to check and update POP first-aid kits.
- Researched options and continued to brain storm for ideas to present relevant lectures to our Prince of Peace family.
- Maintained the Ministry's bulletin board and provided announcements of important resources and activities in the community related to health, mental health, and substance abuse.

Future plans include:

Along with the safety committee, we are hoping to present a COVID Vaccination zoom lecture.

- Workshops provided by Wayne Grant from Thrivent on financial health.
- Coordination of support to church members in need of assistance during health issues.

Our ministry greatly appreciates all the wonderful support we have gotten from the congregation. We welcome new members to our ministry at any time.

Respectfully submitted, Lorraine Hoilien

COMMUNITY BUILDING

No annual report would be complete without seeing the words COVID and Zoom.

2020 has been a year like no other and since most of the activities for this ministry have been moved online, perhaps we jokingly should rename this ministry to Building *ZOOM-munities*.

While COVID has prevented our beloved members from gathering in person for most of 2020, we prayerfully hope for things to change in 2021. And we ask you to pray with us so that the wonderful activities of this Ministry can flourish with face-to-face, or rather, mask-to-mask gatherings.



Walter Stridick



In spite of all the turmoil in our 2020 routines, two notable activities in which the Building Community Ministry undertook included a ZOOM based game night and, more successfully, an online Lenten Scavenger Hunt for those in the Discipleship Practice Ministry.

We welcome any ideas/suggestions/hints on how we can continue to responsibly reach out to others in the community in 2021 regardless of the COVID situation.

In case you were wondering what groups and activities fall under the Building Community umbrella, a summary of these are listed below:

Circle Lydia
Community Picnic @ POP
Lay Eucharistic Ministry
Mens' Group
Young at Hearts (YAHs)

Coffee Hour & Kitchen Supplies
Evesham Fall Harvest Festival
Mary Magdalene Easter Egg Hunt
Peace Circle
Welcome Wagon

A big "thanks" to all who continue to, in one way or another, support these groups and activities over the last 12 months.

Serving Christ with you,

Catherine Salender
Building Community Ministry Chair
Walter F. Stridick
Building Community Ministry
Council Rep



Pre-Covid Book Group

FAMILY & EDUCATION MINISTRY

LIBRARY MINISTRY

The POP library continues to be a resource for the members and friends of the congregation. Books are available for all ages and cover a variety of topics, including such subjects as Bible stories, theological studies, and titles that can support individuals and families as they face many of life's ups and downs. Catherine Salender has been working diligently to ensure our library shelves filled with current, relevant reading material. Please contact the church office if you would like to visit the library.

ADULT FORUM

We are looking forward to gathering for Adult Forum discussions as soon as possible. Adult Forum will meet again most Sundays in the Rainbow Room between services, where we can bring a cup of coffee or tea to enjoy a variety of topics and presenters. We welcome adults of all ages for learning, fellowship and discussions that help us relate to the issues and concerns that we face as Christians in the world today. We try to develop a program that is interesting, timely and will generate a lively discussion among those who attend.

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

The Thursday Morning Bible Study is the place to find resources designed to help adults grow their faith, refresh their spirit, and equip them for ministry. This study focuses on group reading and discussion of scripture, branching off in different directions. We typically read a particular book of scripture over a good number of sessions, sometimes months. Pastor Brett leads this study, and the Zoom link is located in the weekly announcements. Thank you to everyone who helps make this a successful learning experience.



Kim Syvertsen & Lola



DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICE and CONFIRMATION

This year Prince of Peace Discipleship Practice and Confirmation met in a hybrid format. We have been meeting both in Zoom and in the Black Run Preserve. The theme for this year has been Divine Encounter, and we have explored God's creation when walking through the beautiful Black Run Preserve. We have experiencing God in nature, and also notice the changes that happen as the seasons change. We even had a sighting of family of beautiful deer running through the woods.

Pastor Brett has been leading our Divine Encounters, and we look forward to getting back into the woods soon. Until that time, we have lively, engaging Zoom worship together, and even met each Sunday night during Advent for our candle lighting service.

Virtual Vacation Bible School was a great success in 2020! Our theme this year was Compassion Camp, and 30 children participated on Zoom! We had music and crafts, and Bible stories and yoga, and Pastor Brett led our opening and closing activities each morning. Liz Dietz and Chris Keltos organized amazing crafts and put together bags of supplies to send home to our children. Our most sincere thanks go out to Mr. Kirk, Ms. Florance Kerber, and all the amazing teachers who made our first ever Virtual Vacation Bible School an amazing success!

Submitted by Km Syvertsen

FINANCE MINISTRY

The year started as it normally does, with our teams of counters tallying and depositing the weekly offerings, and Mary Hansen and I logging the offering data into the computer to produce monthly income tables and keep records of your annual giving. When Covid shut down our in-church worship services, members and friends of Prince of Peace began mailing in your offerings, allowing me to continue to financial procedures throughout this pandemic. People have been extraordinarily generous in faithfully supporting the church through their monetary gifts, time, and gifts-in-kind.

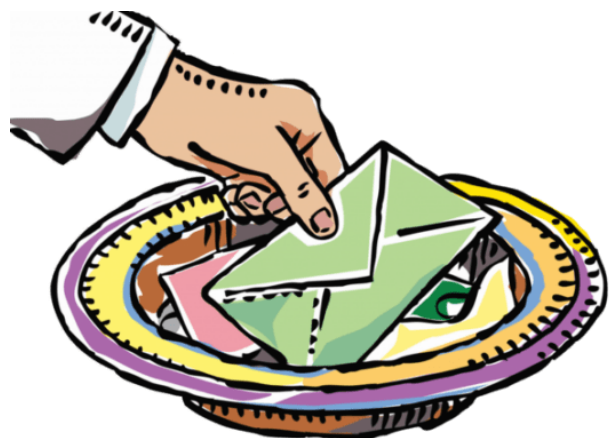


Liz Dietz

My deepest, heartfelt thanks to each of you who called, emailed, texted, and tucked notes into your offering envelopes, of encouragement and offers to help. I want to give special thanks to Brother Brett, Laura Glatz, Mary Scout, and Pauline Ahern for answering the many questions I had; to Allison Shingleton for counting and depositing on Sundays when I was away; and to Mary Hansen, who is a remarkably quick study and who gave her best efforts to learn the financial secretarial duties before we were shut down by Covid. I thank God for every one of you at Prince of Peace.

Humbly,
Liz Dietz

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S MONTHLY REPORT	AUG Month	2020 YTD	AUG Month	2019 YTD
CURRENT FUND	32313.00	229852.22	22235.50	227698.93
Regular envelopes	0.00	896.84	241.75	3488.61
Plate	0.00	2002.00	7.00	2930.25
Lent	0.00	2040.00	0.00	5033.00
Easter	0.00	0.00	0.00	95.00
Thanksgiving	0.00	50.00	0.00	188.00
Christmas	0.00	156.90	0.00	0.00
Initial	5.00	305.00	0.00	590.00
Fuel	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Air conditioning	0.00	131.00	0.00	390.00
Lutheran magazine	0.00	0.00	380.00	1590.00
Misc.	0.00	110.00	0.00	6370.00
Wedding donations	40.00	3640.00	730.00	623.97
Donations	155.00	179.86	80.11	248997.76
Building use	0.38	239963.82	23674.36	
Interest	32533.38			
Total Current	400.00	3338.00	575.00	4679.00
BENEVOLENCE	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00
World hunger	5.00	423.00	0.00	477.00
Social services	405.00	3761.00	575.00	5166.00
Disaster relief	0.00	9.00	0.00	5.05
Total Benevolence	0.00	1273.65	0.00	1313.45
OTHER	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
S.S. Benevolence	0.00	35725.41	0.00	0.00
Memorials	2385.00	17131.30	8569.37	26010.98
Endowments	1538.89	61155.48	1353.00	36382.79
Food Pantry*	3082.04	100.00	100.00	1594.00
Sustain Campaign	0.00	423.00	5.00	125.00
Reimburse/Contrib*	0.00	560.00	381.00	1130.00
Flowers	345.00	116377.64	10408.37	78401.27
Candles	7150.93	359502.46	24857.75	332565.03
Emergency Fund	40089.31			
Total Other				
Grand Total				
Actual Curr.	32533.38	33382.44	-859.06	-8882.14
Budget Curr.	239363.82	267139.52	-27775.70	-11454.24
Month-Current Fund				
YTD-Current Fund				
WEEKLY AVERAGE ATTENDANCE	Month/20	YTD '20	Month/Au '19	YTD Au '19
Church:	0	991	99	128
Adults	0	71	5	12
Children				



NOTE: *As of May 2020, Food Pantry income is shown in its own line item. Food Pantry income is no longer shown as part of Reimbursements. Reimbursements are high due to payment received from the federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) payment.

PROPERTY MINISTRY

2020 Accomplishments

Church members approved the “Sustain Campaign” at a special congregational meeting in June 2019 to raise funds to repair and/or upgrade existing church building facilities and grounds. The campaign has met its \$96,000 goal, with \$71,000 dedicated to six capital improvement projects and \$25,000 reserved for reducing the continuing operating deficit. The six projects to be completed under the campaign were as follows:



Robert Herb

Sustain Campaign Summary

<u>Project</u>	<u>Projected Cost</u>	<u>Actual Cost</u>	<u>Difference</u>
1. Sanctuary/Office Rooftop HVAC Unit replacement (2)	\$20,000	\$20,941	-(\$941)
2. Seal & Restripe Parking Lot	\$9,000	\$8,200	+\$800
3. Replace Windows in original church	\$15,500	\$21,041	-(\$5,541)
4. Replace Wood Siding	\$11,500	\$12,700	-(\$1,200)
5. Painting Trim, Parking Lot Poles & Church Steeple	\$12,500	\$7,915	+\$4,585
6. Luther Hall Floor Repair	\$2,500	N/A	
Total	\$71,000	\$70,797	+\$203

The HVAC unit replacement and parking lot sealing and striping were completed in December 2019. The HVAC unit replacement was completed under PSE&G’s Energy Saver Program which pays for 70% of the total project cost if it is shown that there is a reduction in energy usage upon completion of the upgrades. Since the HVAC upgrade alone would not meet the energy reduction requirements, Tri-State Light & Energy (PSE&G’s certified contractor) conducted an energy audit of the building to evaluate where lighting could be replaced with energy-efficient bulbs to lower energy usage. High-usage areas were identified, and existing incandescent and florescent bulbs were replaced with energy-efficient LED bulbs. The lighting upgrades combined with the newly installed high-efficiency HVAC units resulted in an immediate cost savings reflected in reduced energy usage in the first 2 months of the year, prior to the coronavirus-imposed church closure. Our electric and gas bills in January and February were 30% lower than in the same period in 2019. Further energy savings were realized throughout the year with restricted access and use of the church, resulting in a total reduction of approximately \$5,000 (22%) from last year. The temperate climate over the past winter also saw no significant snow accumulation which benefitted our snow removal budget. However, what Mother Nature giveth, She taketh away. A strong windstorm blew through the area in June resulting in several downed trees and large broken limbs, thereby necessitating hiring a tree service to clean up the damage and eliminating our snow removal savings.

2020 saw almost all of the remaining Sustain Campaign projects completed with little or no disruption to church activities, owing largely to the church closure. The window replacement and stucco work occurred coincidentally in the summer by separate contractors. The final cost for the window replacement came in 33% higher than the original quote due to material price increases related to coronavirus supply chain issues and the fact that the original estimate was several years old. Once started, the upgrades went largely as planned with the exception of unforeseen siding and wall support repairs due to water damage. The stucco contractor

discovered multiple areas where the existing siding was deteriorated beyond repair which coincided with downspout locations and where irrigation sprinkler heads are adjacent to the building. Over time, both rainwater spillover from clogged and undersized gutters or sprinkler spray resulted in water intrusion into the siding. This was only evident when the contractor attempted to better secure the siding with additional nailing into studs before applying stucco, only to realize that the nails would not hold. The contractor removed the siding and replaced with new plywood. Property Ministry disconnected the sprinkler heads adjacent to the building and initiated corrective action with the undersized gutters (described below) to preclude this occurring again.

The original Sustain Campaign intended to strip and paint all of the exposed wood trim surfaces and parking lot light poles. However, once it was discovered that the gutters were undersized, the painting project was recalibrated to vinyl capping of wood trim to avoid future painting, and gutter replacement. This work did not include painting the parking lot poles and church steeple in an effort to scale down the project and offset the cost overage for the window replacements. The entire original church building wood trim was capped and then new larger gutters and downspouts installed. Property Ministry took note that most of the existing removed gutters and downspouts were made of copper which has a high recycling value; accordingly, the copper and aluminum materials were redeemed at a metal recycling facility for \$400. The conclusion of the trim capping project also brought an end to the Sustain Campaign, as the total expenditures for the first five completed projects amounted to \$70,797, leaving only \$203 to undertake the Luther Hall epoxy floor repair, estimated at \$2,500. The floor repair will be accomplished either with Reserve for Contingency funds or included in a future Property Ministry budget if donated revenues allow.

In addition to the Sustain Campaign projects, Property Ministry undertook numerous smaller, less visible projects in the past year to upkeep the church building and grounds. This work is a year-round effort, starting with spreading 8 cubic yards of mulch in the Spring, and continuing with installing epoxy sand between front walkway pavers to prevent weed growth, installing protective conduit for the bell tower outdoor speaker wire to prevent squirrel gnawing, repairing the front walkway gutter leak, reinstalling outdoor lights after stucco work was completed, and replacing faded traffic signs in the parking lot. In early Fall, Rob Herb spearheaded setting up several temporary tents to enable outdoor services to be held into November to mitigate the spread of virus due to social gatherings. Our annual fire inspection necessitated a few corrective maintenance measures including replacing 'Exit' light batteries and coordinating the kitchen stove and exhaust vent steam cleaning by an outside contractor (many thanks to Guy Kirk for the contractor connection and discount on cost). These projects were completed in addition to the ongoing building and grounds maintenance which includes cutting grass on a weekly basis during the summer growing season, planting seasonal flowers in foundation beds, performing repairs on lawn maintenance equipment, preparing for Memorial Garden internments and installing memorial leaves, removing dead and diseased trees, painting, light bulb replacement, winterizing the irrigation system and readying snow removal equipment for the season. Additionally, we were fortunate to have Tyler Hoilien lead the construction of several vegetable planting boxes for his Eagle Scout project. This will allow us to provide fresh vegetables to patrons of the food pantry.

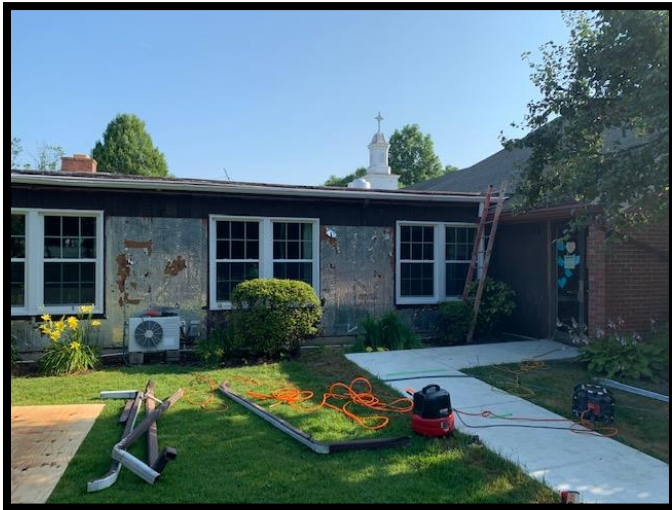
Property Ministry is called upon to perform diverse painting, plumbing, electrical, carpentry, and landscaping tasks within the church building and its property. We do our best, but help is needed, either with physical labor or monetary donations. The Property Ministry faces the obvious need to draw upon our congregation and fellow ministries for support. We welcome anyone's help at one of our three (3) designated Work Days throughout the year.

Acknowledgements

Property Ministry Chairperson Bruce Easterly, and Council Representative Rob Herb would like to extend their sincere appreciation to the Thursday Morning Men's Group volunteers Ron Fink, Eric Malmberg, Perry Peloubet, Jill Porter, Tom Rose, Greg Tzap, and Len West, and everyone else who volunteered their services during the

Property Work Days. Property Ministry wishes to especially acknowledge and thank Jill Porter for her devotion to maintaining the church cleanliness during days when the cleaning company is not scheduled to work and helping the environment by encouraging recycling, Sharon Anthony for weeding the prayer labyrinth, honorary member Laura Glatz for painting the church office, Narthex bathrooms and Nursery, and master gardener Tom Rose for his dedicated care of the church grounds (especially the Memorial Garden) and for growing prized tomatoes each year.

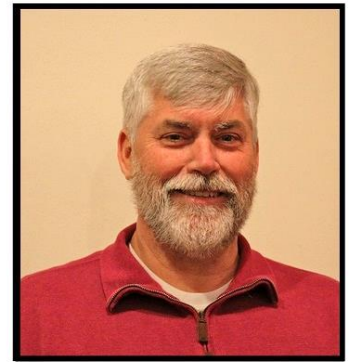
Faithfully submitted, *Property Ministry*



SOCIAL MISSIONS MINISTRY

The pandemic presents a host of challenges to the Social Missions Ministry, but we flexed and adapted to continue our service the community, as we always have. We continue to be blessed with generous donations from our congregation, our local faith partners, and the community.

Food Pantry – The pandemic brought with it economic challenges that increased food insecurity in our community. We developed a non-contact process for giving out food and implemented safety measures for handling donations, stocking the pantry shelves, and packing bags for distribution. Over the course of the year, we served over 1,000 families, which included over 4,000 people. We were supported by over \$48,000 in monetary donations as well as food donations from our congregation, St. Joan's, Beth Tikvah, Nafshenu, and Evesham Township. Our thanks also go out to Rastelli's, who made a sizable donation of chicken breasts, and NJTouch, who supplied us with produce and dairy donations several times during the year. Early on in the pandemic, we were even featured in a story on Fox News (<https://www.fox29.com/news/nj-food-pantry-sees-spike-in-demand-amid-coronavirus-pandemic>)! With spikes in demand of 200 families per week, we are now seeing a pretty steady demand of almost 100 families per week. As of this writing, the trend is increasing as the pandemic, and the economic hardships it has caused, wears on.



Scott Rush
Social Missions

Easter Giving Project – We were able to give twenty-five \$25 Walmart gift cards to Bridge of Peace in Camden for the needs of their youth. Twenty-six additional gift cards were distributed to children in need in our own community, including food pantry clients and children referred by the local school district or area social workers.



Bombas Donation Sock Program - Bombas works with shelters, nonprofits, and organizations dedicated to helping homeless, in-need, and at-risk communities. Penny Jaffe saw this opportunity and thought it would be great to see if POP could participate. After applying in 2019 we were accepted and in 2020 we received our first shipment of SOCKS! We received 1000 pairs of donated socks! We gladly handed them out to those in need and will continue to distribute them through our Pantry and send some to Bridge of Peace. Each year we will need to reapply and hopefully this opportunity will continue! We're grateful that something as small as socks could keep our collective missions, communities, and spirit of hope afloat.

Summer Meals Program – The reach of our Summer Meals program continued its year-on-year increase. We served about 60 children per week and ended the summer having served over 7,000 meals, an increase of more than 40% over last year! Congregants from St. Joan's and Beth Tikvah helped with packing, although the social distancing safety measures we implemented limited our ability to engage them in the numbers we had in previous years. Our thanks also go to Wegmans, who supports this program every year. The success of this program in meeting the needs of children facing food insecurity enabled us to win another grant (our third) from the Synod for \$10,000.

Family Promise (formerly IHN) – We were scheduled to host for 8 weeks but the pandemic reduced us to just 1 week, when we provided shelter to 1 family consisting of 1 adult and 2 children. We continued to support the organization financially and both Prince of Peace and our hosting partner, St. Joan of Arc, were represented on their Board of Trustees. In October, our congregant Scott Rush replaced Pat Lasusky as Executive Director. Over the course of the year, Family Promise provided shelter to 12 families, consisting of 15 adults and 29 children, primarily at area motels. We look forward to being able to actively re-engage with this ministry in 2021. *(The POP Christmas Dedications raised \$562.86 during December and donated to Family Promise.)*

Bridge of Peace Church (Camden) – We continue to make regular transfers of food to their pantry.

Backpacks for back to school – Due to safety concerns, we didn't conduct our usual backpack drive. However, due to the generosity of congregation, we were able to distribute sixty \$10 gift cards to pantry clients and made a \$750 donation to UrbanPromise for the needs of their students.

God's Precious Children – We sponsored approximately 150 students this year with donations of almost \$15,000.



Thanksgiving/Christmas Giving – We were prepared to distribute 100 food baskets at both Thanksgiving and Christmas because we added our food pantry clients to our usual list of recipients from the Evesham school district, Pemberton school district, and Burlington County social services. We distributed 76 food baskets at Thanksgiving and over 80 at Christmas. The numbers are not exact because well, Covid. Thanks to ShopRite of Marlton, who donated \$500 dollars to the effort, and ShopRite of Medford, who donated 25 turkeys.

We were also able to provide Christmas joy for over 100 area children, some with gift cards and some with actual gifts. Our thanks to the many congregants that donated money to purchase gift cards or purchased and wrapped gifts for distribution.

Submitted by Scott Rush

The Social Missions Ministry team wishes to thank our volunteers, supporters, and donors, who were generous with their time, talents, and "treasure". Despite a year filled with challenges, our mission to serve our neighbors in need continued unabated and, in several notable cases, increased over previous years. Thanks be to God!



WORSHIP & MUSIC

At best, this has been an unusual year in the life of the church. Though the closing of our church building was a blow to all of us, we have done our best to continue as a church family, and remember, as our Pastor often reminds us, that the church is not a building. Our ministry meetings have continued, via Zoom of course, and so has our worship. Here is a review of our year in Worship.



Lent

Lent began with our Ash Wednesday luncheon and evening worship. Our ministry had made a decision to suspend soup suppers and go back to a traditional midweek services on Wednesday for this season. We added a midday as well as an evening service, with a theme of "Spiritual Practices". During Sunday worship, spaces of silence were added, and questions to be contemplated before confession, as well as a "bidding prayer" during prayers of intercession. However, two weeks into Lent, indoor services were suspended due to covid -19. Pastor Brett continued our midweek worship through email and began zoom room worship with two services on Sunday as well as a Saturday evening service, always preceded by a Friday email with Sunday's sermon. A time for discussion was added to the service, and Guy always provided wonderful music in the emails, including a Prelude and Postlude. Holy Week zoom services were also offered, but without the discussion time. And so, we continued.



Michael Parker

Easter

In preparation for Easter, we provided some decoration for the sanctuary, where the Easter Sunday sermon was recorded. Guy provided special music, and the Hallelujah Chorus was played at the end, so those of us who wished could mute ourselves and sing along. Though it could not be the same as our usual celebration, it was still joyous.

Pentecost

The season proceeded with zoom room worship. In an effort to make the experience more traditional, we began adding more liturgy (confession, prayers of intercession) and hymns sung by Guy, which we could sing along with (muted, of course). A printed service, including the lessons and Gospel reading, was added to the Friday email. We also mailed "hard copies" of the service to those who had no computer, or simply preferred worship without computers.

By June, the COVID virus was well enough under control that outdoor gathering were allowed once more in NJ. We began planning an outdoor service for July. Tents and a sound system were purchased to be set up behind



the church, safety protocols were carefully discussed and decided upon, as well as a safe way to add communion and the experience of singing through sign language, assisted by Guy. We were ready to go and very excited.



Though our July outdoor service was cancelled due to a rise in COVID cases, as well as the one we had planned for August, we finally had our first outdoor service on September 6. Everyone seemed happy to be back together. We had about 70 in attendance, with joyful participation in Communion and “singing”. We continued our outdoor worship through October, celebrating Reformation Sunday with Red flags in front of the church and in the worship area. In November, we celebrated All Saints Sunday with small wooden crosses, upon which people were invited to write the names of loved ones lost in the last year.

They were displayed in front of the altar. We also had a lovely floral cross to commemorate the one we usually fill with flowers on that special day. People began bringing blankets and wearing heavy coats as the weather grew colder, but they kept coming, and we were prepared to keep meeting into December, even planning a Christmas Eve service.

Advent

We ended up back in zoom room before the end of November, as COVID cases rose. We kept our Advent worship as traditional as possible, lighting the Advent wreaths each week and singing traditional hymns.

Christmas

We planned three Christmas Eve zoom room services, 5:00, 7:00 and 9:00, each offering a different atmosphere. We decorated the Sanctuary with poinsettias, the Nativity scene, and a banner, which could be seen as Guy led us in the hymns. A video of our congregation singing “Silent Night” on another Christmas Eve provided a traditional ending to the experience.

On Christmas Day, a 10:00am service was offered.



Epiphany

We celebrated a Sunday observance of the day of Epiphany on January 3. The decorations we had put in the Sanctuary for the Christmas season were appreciated, so we decided to continue with traditional decorations, starting with a banner for Baptism of Our Lord on Jan 10.

So, here we are, preparing for another congregational meeting. The goals our ministry had set to accomplish this year were replaced by the goal of keeping worship meaningful as we struggle to get through this difficult time. It is only possible through the efforts of our wonderful Pastor, our Church council, our financial staff, our extraordinary church Secretary, Laura Glatz, our Health ministry’s guidance, and our dedicated Worship ministry members, Sharon Elliot, Guy Kirk, Michael Parker (Council Representative) and your humble Chairperson, **Beth Kerr**.

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

***You, Lord, are my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in you,
and I have been helped; so my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to you. Psalm 28:7***

It goes without saying that this year was unprecedented in our lifetimes, however, the continued uncertainty of how to proceed, what is safe, what is deemed unsafe, and honestly, genuine fear and worry for the safety of our Music Ministry members, my loved ones and myself have stymied most possibilities this year. The very idea that music was a dangerous activity was understandable yet the many limitations and restrictions suddenly placed on our musical endeavors were difficult to accept. Fellowship is an equal component with music in all our musical activities and due to the electronic limitations of sound on Zoom, it eliminated all but our ukulele activities and that requires that all be muted but me.

2020 began as a typical year when choirs started again in January. I had a schedule completed before the end of January covering January to June of 2020. Little did I know that was all to go by the wayside. However, in just the first few weeks of 2020, we did have several choirs take part in worship:

-1/5, our Jubilation Choir (grades 2 to 6) sang and rang at worship

-1/12, our Sounds of Glory rang with Florance Kerber accompanying on her flute

-1/26, our Peals of Praise shared their ringing

-2/2 and 2/16, our YAH's Ringers rang their songs; they also rang for worship on Saturday, 1/4 under the direction of Jo Ann Cubberley

-2/9, our Chorale members sang an anthem with all 4 parts together as well as a separate anthem by women and a separate anthem by men

-2/16, both our Gospel Choir and Faithful Flutes shared their music

Then, we began to be affected by COVID-19 and we stopped having our choirs rehearse or take part in worship. We shared our final in-person worship on March 15.

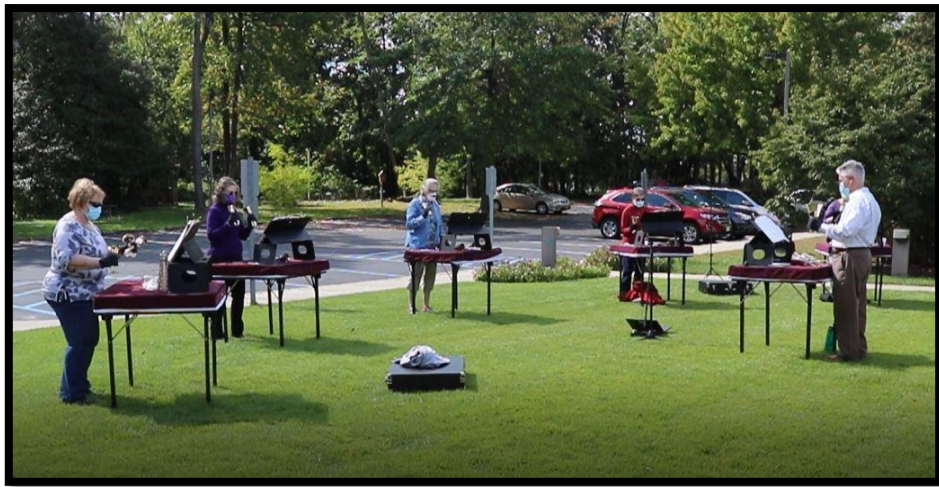
Beginning March 22, I began to provide music selections from YouTube that went out in a weekly email including a prelude, hymns with lyrics, an anthem, a meditation and a postlude. Music selections were also included in our weekly Monday and Wednesday emails. For Easter Sunday, the Duffy family provided a lovely anthem "Alleluia, Sing to Jesus". Also, selections for children were added to the list of weekly music selections. Soon after Easter, we were also treated to a virtual rendition of Lutkin's "Benediction" by Suzanne and Michael Chadwick.

On Pentecost Sunday, May 31, in addition to the email music selections, I started providing live music via Zoom from the sanctuary. This continued throughout the summer.

On September 6, we held our first outdoor worship. These services presented several challenges which we met to the best of our abilities. Technical aspects of hooking the keyboard into the sound system, then Bluetooth connections with my phone once the temperatures became too cold to play outside; recording preludes, postludes, musical offerings and hymns ahead of time all became a part of the weeks we had our outdoor services. Because singing was deemed a dangerous activity, I found hymns that were relevant to the scripture but that allowed us to use American Sign Language. I was truly surprised and pleased with how well our congregation responded to signing the hymns. Many commented how much they enjoyed this new-found

worship expression. Outdoor worship continued from 9/20 to 11/8 after which we returned to Zoom at the recommendation of the Synod due to rising COVID-19 infection numbers.

Members of Peals of Praise, on the afternoons of Saturday, October 3 and Sunday, October 4, gathered safely outside behind the church to record some bell anthems. Carol Herb was there for each recording session and put the videos together with photos of POP's interior. Plus, she cleaned up the recordings to help diminish sound interference from lawnmowers, barking dogs, planes flying overhead and traffic noise from Route 70! She did a remarkable job. My sincere thanks to our bell ringers who came out to put these recordings together. We did our best to be safe and respectful of people's concerns and apprehensions. Thankfully, everyone remained healthy afterward. Some of these videos were put together for a little Christmas Cantata and shared in December while others will be shared in 2021.



One aspect of our Music Ministry that was able to continue in Zoom form was our Ukulele Group. And unlike a regular year where we would have stopped in June, we continued to meet throughout the summer, into the fall right up to Christmas. Special thanks to Jennifer Zellers who led the sessions the two weeks I was away on vacation. Besides the music selections we played, we shared laughter, fun and support for one another.

Music Ministry Prayer Emails were sent as the needs arose through illnesses, family losses and celebrations that impacted our Music family. These helped to keep us connected and gave us the ability to offer support and concern for one another when COVID-19 restricted other interactions.

I made some Vacation Bible School videos and conducted songs and movement via Zoom as part of our VBS week. This had its challenges but I think we met the challenges well and, overall, we felt it was a successful experience. Many thanks to Kim Syvertsen and Florance Kerber for all their preparation work as well as Pastor Brett and Dylan Taylor. It was quite an undertaking but successful overall.

Our handbells were due to be refurbished in 2020. Arrangements had been made before the pandemic to have them worked on following our last scheduled bell choir worship service in May. Once the pandemic hit, it seemed wise to go ahead and have the work done since we did not know when we would be able to begin ringing again plus we had signed up early and got a 5% discount. Bob and Jo Ann Cubberley kindly offered to drive our bells to Plumsteadville, PA. They dropped them off and returned weeks later to pick them up. Their kind act saved us hundreds of dollars in shipping costs. We are very grateful.

Another improvement to our Music Ministry and our worship was the purchase of a new recorder for the organ thanks to the generosity of Melinda Ota who donated this new device with funds from the memorial set up in memory of her mother, Elizabeth Orth. The former device made use of floppy disks whereas this new device has its own hard drive. It has been an invaluable addition especially for our Zoom worship and during preparations for our outdoor worship in the fall. My thanks to Melinda for this generous support of our Music Ministry.

Our staff met weekly on Zoom and our meetings helped me to feel connected, informed and supported through some challenging weeks. It has been difficult to spend so much time away from our Music Ministry Family and my Church Family. To have music ripped away so suddenly and completely was difficult but it does not begin to compare to what so many have suffered.

There were many goals and ideas left unrealized in 2020 that will be added to 2021 once we can return to some form of normalcy with God's help and the wonders of modern medicine. However, I feel proud of the fact that we did everything in our power to keep people safe by erring on the side of caution.

It must be noted that our ever faithful Music Patron has continued their faithful support with kind words of reflection on each week's musical selections and through their financial support. I am sincerely grateful.

I am also grateful for and blessed by the continued support and kind words of appreciation from members of our congregation for what we have done in light of the many restrictions COVID-19 placed on us. With several vaccines now possible, I look forward to the time we can gather and share the joys of harmony, both musically and socially.

Hope! We need to be hopeful and trust that God will guide us and continue to bless our mission.

Respectfully submitted,

Guy W. Kirk

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

Wow. What a year. I don't even know how to begin this report. You all know what this year has been like and we are all still experiencing trials and tribulations. I've learned a lot about myself this year. Not making plans is extremely difficult for me, my job is all about planning and following through. When things do not go as planned, it is confusing and unsettling for me. I have learned to be more flexible, to relax a little bit more, not to plan and try to go with the flow. I believe it was in the tenth month of this pandemic that I actually slept. And then, my son came home in December with a positive test result for Covid, once again, my world was rocked. Thankfully, he has recovered, and the rest of the family did not get infected.



The highlight of 2020 was the trip to Israel that many of us from POP and the Congregation Beth Tikvah went on last February. I think of the trip often and I absolutely love remembering sailing on the Sea of Galilee and praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. When we walked on the roads in Jerusalem it was surreal, and of course taking a ride on a camel, by the Dead Sea, was quite remarkable. These memories became even more important to me once we were 'locked down' a month later.

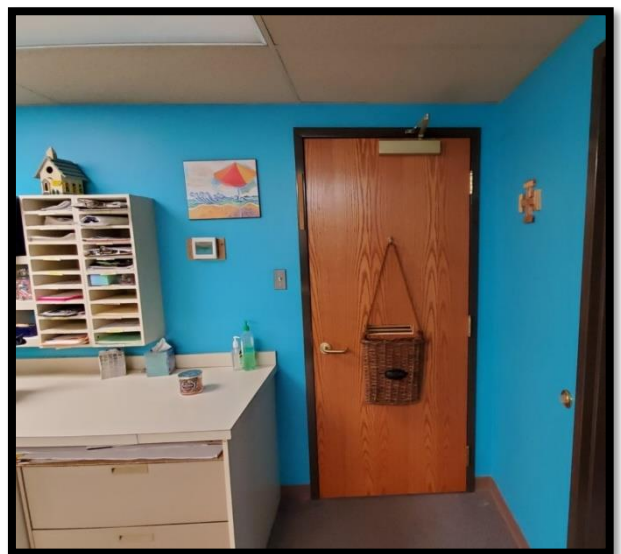
When we had the Council meeting in March, to decide if we were going to close the church building, I was numb and confused. Telling the community groups that they could not meet here was difficult. This building is a sanctuary for many people and not having the doors open seemed drastic at the time, but necessary. We soon learned we did the best thing possible for us and for the community groups.

We quickly adjusted our plans and thankfully, because we had already been accustomed to our electronic emails, we began our 'online' presence. We started with three times a week and then after Easter, we went to twice weekly emails.

ZOOM became a common word and tool to connect. However, not everyone likes ZOOM or has the 'know how' or tools to use the platform. We adjusted again and started sending 'At Home' Service packets to those who needed them for worship and prayers.

Because I like to be busy, I started painting in my house, every day and every room. I continued painting once the 'lock down' was lifted and I started painting in the church building. The church office was first. In preparation of masks and separation, I rearranged the office so that the computer is facing the narthex windows, 'fairy lights' were added around the narthex window, indicating when I am in the office. Ron Fink added a slotted mailbox on the front door of the office, for people to drop off vouchers and other items without accessing the office area. I am hoping this helps once we are back open to maintain safety protocols.

I then moved into the nursery and got to work again. I updated the walls with bright colors and uplifting signs. I also painted the nursery bathroom and added a mirror. I hope this rooms brings joy to anyone who uses it. Thank you to Jo Ann Cubberley, who sewed the new curtains.



Office Door Mail Slot

After the nursery, I painted and redecorated the women's bathroom in the narthex. Bruce Easterly helped replace some of the ceiling tiles and the room looks clean and refreshing. I cannot wait until everyone is back and can see the updated décor and paint.

I asked for help for organizing and cleaning the nursery, the Klos Library, the side office and the church office. Thank you to Sharon Elliott, Catherine Salender, Ida Miller (Ayala), Jill Porter and Bruce Easterly. Many historic documents have been scanned and preserved, books are being updated, toys and other items are being donated, tossed, or fixed. We have been remarkably busy, taking advantage of the empty building. My hope is to continue cleaning and organizing and perhaps painting more rooms as we move through this year.

In October, my father suffered a heart attack. As many of you know, my mom suffers with Alzheimer's disease and lives at home with my father. They do have in-home care, but not at night. COVID-19 or not, I had to go home to help my dad. He needed care and so did my mom. I stayed for a week and was able to work remotely from Harrisburg. I have not been home to see them since. This is extremely difficult.

We, as a staff, continue to work from various locations and have met in a safe and ventilated area when necessary. Our weekly staff meetings have been extremely helpful and continue to keep us informed and unified. We will continue to pray for all of you and we are extremely thankful to each one of you. You are the reason we are here.

So far this year I have continued to do as much as possible to keep things going, keeping you informed and connected. I will continue to do what I can for the church, the building, and the community, preparing it for when you are able to come back. If you have any questions or need me at any time, please call or email me. I am always available and will get back to you as soon as possible. Thank you for your love and patience. I cannot wait to see all of you again soon!

(Side note: I also adopted two new kittens in August – Finn and Henry, they keep us (and Honey) on our toes and bring happiness to our house (and chaos).)

Laura Glatz - Office Administrator

BROTHER BRETT'S 2021 PASTORAL LETTER

Greetings Good People,

WOW! What a year!

At last year's Annual Meeting I am certain that none of us envisioned what was ahead for the rest of the 2020. The pandemic created challenges, large and small, in abundance for each person, family, community, school, business, and nation the world over. We have had to face changes and challenges in many aspects of how we live our everyday lives. Many have had the additional burden of dealing with the financial stress that this time has created. All have had to cope, sometimes well and other times not so well, with the emotional strain of fear, uncertainty, frustration, anger, change and isolation. In addition, we have had to grapple with the myriad injustices still thriving in our culture as well as endure the toxic political rancor that continues to spread. This has been a year like none other in recent times.

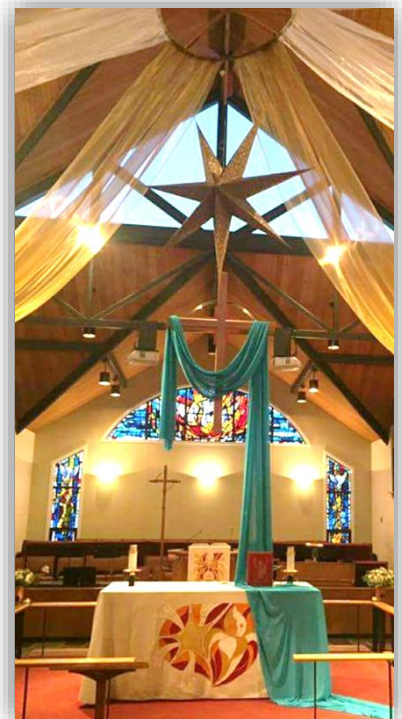
At the beginning of the pandemic one of the first things the congregation Council did was to summarize the theological and ethical principles of our Sovereign Jesus as our guiding touchstone during this time. You may recall I shared this with you in a video message. Our love for our neighbor and ourselves is the primary guiding principle for our entire response to living our life as a congregation during this pandemic.

God's Presence

At the center of the sanctuary is the cross, THE symbol of our life as followers of Jesus. At the center of our life, the center of this time, is the cross of Christ. On the night before Jesus' death, he gathered with the disciples at the Last Supper and gave them the New Commandment,

"I give you a new commandment: love one another. And you want to love one another the way I have loved you. This is how all will know that you are my disciples: that you truly love one another." John 13:34-35

This commandment has surely been our guiding star this past year. For us the cross is transformed from a symbol of death to the emblem of "*God with us*" in all circumstances, even the most challenging and horrific. Even in the bleakness of our experiences, God is present, beginning a new thing. *Our ministry this past year during the pandemic has been marked by the continuous self-giving love of Jesus' disciples here at Prince of Peace.* Each of you have extended the love of Christ in your hearts to friends and strangers alike through thousands of loving actions, mostly small and regular, and some large and heroic. We have continued to band together virtually and sometimes in person, six feet apart, to collectively show forth Christ's love in our ministry to those experiencing their own suffering during this time. God's love has moved through us in spite of our shortcomings and sin, and created life giving impact for us and our neighbors. We have compiled glimpses of living Jesus' New Commandment in the booklet entitled, **POP Ministry Impact 2020**. Please take time to read this inspiring snapshot of our ministry presented through factoids, stories and pictures.



Gifts

Throughout this year we have often spoke of to one another of the gifts that have arisen from this time; Here are some of those gifts: 1) a refining of what it means to be church, the body of Christ living and loving our neighbors, 2) gaining a clarity of those things that are most important in life, 3) learning the importance of the congregation taking time to share more deeply with one another about the scriptures, 4) encountering the power of people sharing with others their experiences of God's love in their lives, 5) understanding that we can we can praise God by singing anew by using our minds and bodies alone, 6) renewing our acknowledgement that the love of Christ is alive in our neighbors in the community; seen in their generosity which facilitated some of our social missions work (especially the Pantry), 7) utilizing technology can help us connect with one another in safe manner, 8) many more. What gifts have you realized during this time? I invite you to share them with me and others.

Thanks

I want to give a special thank you to the Safety Team, an Ad Hoc Committee of the Council charged with sifting through the guidance provided by scientists, the government, the Bishop's Office, and insurance providers to offer recommendations to the Congregation Council concerning next steps in navigating the congregation's ministry safely through the pandemic.

The Council has approved the team's safety protocol with regard to, if when and how we gather in person. According to the experts we are approaching the pinnacle of the pandemic's scourge and hopefully no additional unseen events will complicate our emergence from this time. Therefore, it is my hope that the safety benchmarks will be reached by Palm Sunday permitting us to gather in person outdoors for worship together with hopes of continued progress to be able to gather indoors by the fall.

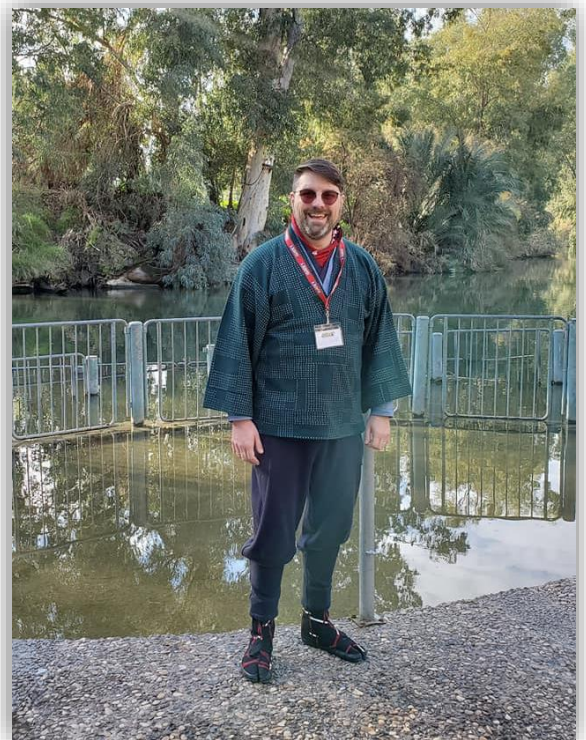
Thank you to all of you who have continued to be so faithful in your stewardship of our ministries.

I am so grateful to all of you who continued to hold me in prayer and offer your support of me personally during this time. Thank you! There have been a few periods that were a true challenge for me emotionally and your prayers and support made all the difference. I give thanks to God for you.

Serving Christ with you,

Br. Brett

Pastor



*Pastor Brett at the Jordan River
also known as Nahr Al Sharieat.*