

SOUTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

& the Acts of Faith Community



“Who do you say that I AM?”

~ Jesus

A REPORT OF OUR 2022 MINISTRY & MISSION

YEAR IN REVIEW



SOUTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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WELCOME TO OUR “YEARBOOK”

At different points in our lives – both our individual life and our collective life as a faith community – we find ourselves walking on the road with Jesus just as the disciples did in Matthew 16. We are walking along, going about our merry little way, and then Jesus turns to us and says, “But who you YOU say that I am?”



If you are anything like me, the answer varies depending on what I’m going through at that moment in time. Sometimes we see him as our brother. Other times, our first response is that he is our teacher or Rabbi. In moments of distress, perhaps, we cling to him as our Savior, the Rock of our Salvation. When, truth be told, he is all of those things and more to us – both individually and collectively.

This report – any report – is a snapshot in time. It chronicles what we have done and reminds us of what we have left undone. And by doing so, it points us to who we say that Jesus is through our ministry and mission.

We are the Body of Christ – his working hands and feet – his smile and hugs – his teachings and humor – and by being his enacted Presence, we (hopefully) bring his sense of Justice-Love to everything that we do ... every project we take on ... and every encounter that we have. We, at South, have long said that people “bump up against Jesus through us” even when we don’t talk about him or attempt to evangelize and share the Good News through our words.

But we *do* share the Good News.

We *do* evangelize with everything that we do and are, and we display a few of the many faces of Jesus – the infinite facets of God’s Spirit – through those ministries that we call our Acts of Faith.

At any given time and place, when Jesus asks, “Who do you say that I AM, South Presbyterian Church?” we answer with our Acts of Faith which include worship, service, study, and experiences of growing and enriching a sense of community – both in and out of what most people call “church.”

By leaving our building eight years ago and intentionally going to where people are who are thirsty and yearning for the sense of a non-judgmental and loving God, we have become modern missionaries in Monroe County, New York. We have become a 100% missional church where every dollar that we receive directly supports the mission and ministry – not land ownership or costly overhead – of God’s work. We are local missionaries who bring light, love, and acceptance that recognize human worth right where people are; we don’t expect people who are already hurting or lacking in energy or resources to come to us.

This Annual Report is a snapshot – a reflection of a moment in time – of how we answered Jesus’ question of who he is to us. As you’ll see throughout these pages, our fifteen Acts of Faith each answer the question in its own way. Some would say that our mere presence – the fact that we exist eight years after selling our building – is a miracle. We projected a seven-year lifetime when we walked out the doors of Ft. Hill Terrace, yet here we are, and this year, we are projecting for the first time in recent years, a balanced budget for 2023.

What will the future hold? Only God knows. Our job is just to keep walking on the road with Jesus and exploring all the ways to answer his question: **“Who do you say that I AM?”**

The Reverend Deborah Fae Swift, 01/14/23

¹³ Jesus went to the territory near the town of Caesarea Philippi, where he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Humanity is?”

¹⁴ “Some say John the Baptist,” they answered. “Others say Elijah, while others say Jeremiah or some other prophet.”

¹⁵ “What about you?” he asked them. “Who do you say I am?”

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

¹⁷ “Good for you, Simon son of John!” answered Jesus. “For this truth did not come to you from any human being, but it was given to you directly by my Parent in heaven.”

Matthew 16:13-17 (GNT – adapted for inclusivity)

OUR MINISTRY & MISSION



The Mission / Vision / Calling of South Presbyterian Church

It is the Mission / Vision / Calling of South Presbyterian Church to live out the command of Jesus: *Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in [my] way of life* (Mt. 29:18, *The Message*). We embody our commitment to being a missional church through the practice of our Acts of Faith Model of Ministry and fostering grass-roots programs that spread the love of the Risen Christ through worship, education, and the arts. We hold that all believers are the hands and heart, the embrace and healing presence of Christ's love, acceptance, justice, and joy in the world.

Adopted: February 5, 2016

Scripture tells us that we are to share the Good News.

Here are some questions we have been challenging ourselves with this year:

- What is the Good News that we can't stop talking about?
- What is the Good News for each of us in *our* life?
- How do we answer the Matthew 16 question?
- Some people have difficulty with the term "Christian" and how it has become associated with politics today. They are preferring to call themselves "a Jesus Follower." Does one speak to you more than the other? Why is that? What term will you claim for yourself in the year ahead?
- What is Jesus' "way of life" that we are called to share?
What does that look like in 2023?

How would you describe your own spiritual journey in 2022? Were there high points or times when you were most challenged? How did God speak to you in those times?

In-Person and Online – Here are the Numbers

As we emerge from COVID and respond to the needs of our neighbors, we now have **15 Acts of Faith**. Each is an opportunity for people to “bump up against Jesus” through us, or, in other words, for us to be an avenue for **JesUS** to touch the lives of people through our mission & ministry.

In 2022, here is how the Spirit has used us to share the Gospel in word and deed:

We are a small church of only **32 official members**, but our **15 Acts of Faith** reached at least **341 different people** in the course of the year. And while some people were involved in more than one AoF or may have attended something multiple times (at most 20% of any column), they all combine to give us **6,068 contact points** where people “bumped up against Jesus” through us in person or on zoom in this post-COVID world!


Group	# of Different People	Avg # of People x # of Meetings	Total Contacts (Avg*Mtgs + difference between Dif. People & Avg)
Cuppa the Bible	13	11*44	456
DVD Ministry	15	15*52	780
Evening Prayer	14	13*50	651
eWorship Leadership	18	16*5	82
Fellowship of Faith	65	35 * 50	1,780
Food for Thought	12	6*44	264
Living Bread Ministry	3	2*46 (2 bakers and recipients over 46 weeks)	92
Love-Joy Fellowship Farewell to Sonya Potluck with IPC	34 38	72	72
Matthew 25	1	1*12	12
MT25 Study Groups White Privilege Pop Quiz 2 sections (Winter & Fall)	33	25*9 5*9	270
New Life Food Cupboard Open mornings on the 2 nd , 4 th and the occasional 5 th Thursdays of the month.	52 (48 different people including 12 children and 8 seniors + 4 volunteers)	7*27	234 contacts accounting for 2600 meals provided in 2022, a 58% increase over 2021
Ring for Joy	10	10*40	400
Senior Spirituality	6	5*13	65
Sing for Joy	14	11*44	457
Water from the Well	13	10*45	453
TOTALS	341		6,068

Additionally, our online presence

Our YouTube Channel (South Church Rochester), registered **2,433 views in 2022** with **79 subscribers**. Now, we don't have the numbers for which were Worship Services and which were Prayerful Pause with the Pastor meditations, nor do we know how many people viewed each video, but still – when added to the in-person contact points, it means there are close to **8,500 opportunities** for the Spirit to work through us in touching the lives of others. Not bad for a church with 32 members!

THE ACTS OF FAITH


By the end of 2022, here is what our Acts of Faith Community looked like.















SOUTH PRESBYTERIAN
an Acts of Faith Community
- "The Church has Left the Building" -

In 2014, after 170 years on Mt. Hope Avenue in Rochester, New York, South Presbyterian Church discerned that they were called to take the energy and excitement of their Spirit-led congregation and move out into the community. Why expect people to come to one building for their needs to be met when Jesus went to the people; he didn't expect them to come to him. And so South created the Acts of Faith Model of Ministry® which, in many ways, is a 21st century embodiment of the first century Christian community.

An Act of Faith (AoF) is an organic grass-roots ministry growing out of the needs of the people. It may be overtly "religious" like a Bible Study, or not, such as a community choir. This model believes that we don't have to be talking about God all the time in order to be spreading the Good News; it believes that as we live out our faith and build community, people will "bump up against Jesus" through us. Therefore, if two people share a need or interest, we will sponsor their program for three months. How to determine whether, or not, to continue it after three months? Easy. Answer one question: **Does it create energy and excitement?** Believing that everything the Holy Spirit touches generates energy, excitement and holy presence that is felt by the people associated with it, South says that if an AoF does that, it continues; if it does not, they discontinue it immediately and await the movement of the Spirit to direct their next endeavor. And don't worry, **you don't have to get rid of your building to get out into the community and become more missional!** It just happened to be what South was called to do. The AoF Model, though, calls for us to **create communities based on shared faith experiences and question** and to do it where the people already are!



Updated: 12-16-22

 <p>Cuppa the Bible ONLINE BIBLE STUDY</p> <p>You supply the "cuppa" - the Spirit supplies the message</p> <p>Zoom MONDAY, 10:30 a.m.</p>	 <p>EVENING PRAYER</p> <p>Prayer Service in real time</p> <p>Zoom THURSDAY, 6 p.m.</p>	 <p>Uploaded services in advance of Sunday worship.</p> <p>Recorded at home and edited by our staff. "Script" is provided to you well in advance; 4-6 days to record your 5-minute piece. If you wish to join us,</p> <p style="color: purple;">Contact the Church Office</p>	 <p>Positive, Progressive, Prophetic & Pragmatic</p> <p>Weekly worship. Music—Prayer—Preaching Sacraments—Scripture</p> <p>SUNDAY, 1 p.m. St. John's Meadows </p>
 <p>Food for Thought Community Book Group</p> <p>Building community through our love of books, ideas, and each other. Group meets weekly (zoom) and once a month in person while zooming.</p> <p>Zoom HYBRID</p> <p style="color: purple;">Check Online Calendar</p>	 <p>Living Bread ministry</p> <p>Homemade bread as a reminder that "we are with you" and are nurtured by the Spirit of Christ, the Living Bread.</p> <p style="color: purple;">Contact the Church Office</p>	 <p>Time to socialize and be the church at rest.</p> <p>SEASONAL GATHERINGS AS POSSIBLE</p>	 <p>Monthly Volunteering with un-housed, hungry and poor at the local Catholic Worker ministry - St. Joseph's House of Hospitality.</p> <p style="color: purple;">Hands-on; Hearts engaged. Contact the Church Office</p>
 <p>Discussion Groups</p> <p>Periodic Justice-Oriented Serialized Classes</p>	<p>The Acts of Faith / Acts of Hope Community is open to any group that is forming community based on the basic precepts of the AoF Model. These can be found in the White Paper whose link is available at www.SouthPC.org/welcome.</p> <p>(Acts of Hope are generally hosted by non-religious organizations. Both can be done with or without owning one's own building.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> Acts of Hope</p> <p style="color: purple; text-align: center;">Contact Firebird Spirit (see reverse) to explore your place in this AoF/AoH Community.</p>		 <p>New Life Food Cupboard</p> <p>Emergency Food support for those who need it.</p> <p>2nd, 4th, and 5th THURSDAYS 9:30 a.m.— Noon Congregation Beth Shalom (1161 Monroe Avenue, 14620)</p>

Please check the **website calendar** (see reverse side) for up-to-date information. **ALL TIMES ARE EASTERN U.S.**
These are South's current Acts of Faith. Everyone is welcome, regardless of religious belief, faith tradition, or lack thereof.
Come on ... check us out!

Additional AoF's on Reverse



Adult Bell
Choir open
to all.
No prior
experience
or audition
required.

WEDNESDAY, 5:30 p.m.

St. John's Meadows
(1 Johnsarbor Drive, 14620)

WORSHIP WITH US IN REAL TIME/YOUR TIME

24/7 WORSHIP on YouTube: *South Church Rochester*

Daily meditations with the pastor and **Weekly worship** services — including sacraments, singing, prayer, reflection, and scripture

Thursday Evening Prayer Service: *Zoom*

Weekly Evening Prayer service online with zoom. Contact us for the Zoom link.

Sunday 1PM in person—
Fellowship of
Faith



Mid-week
opportunity
to sing
church- and
non-church songs. No Audition.

WEDNESDAY

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

St. John's Meadows
(1 Johnsarbor Drive, 14620)

Senior Spirituality



TUESDAY, 2PM

Brickstone Horizon Room
Limited enrollment per section
Contact the Church Office



Online Bible
Study for
Thinking &
Questioning
People.

FRIDAY, Noon to 1 p.m.

Contact the Church Office
for the Zoom Link



By harnessing the Firebird Spirit, South resources and supports other transforming churches & institutions.

Professional experts from multiple disciplines and denominations provide insight from the Firebird team that works across the country sharing lessons learned and solutions pioneered by South Church.

Firebird Spirit provides consulting and coaching services to individuals, churches, and judicatories.

Contact Kevin Fuller,
Director of Operations
(kfuller@firebirdspirit.org)
to schedule a visit or
plan a workshop
in your area.
(585) 476 - HOPE (4673)



Weekly, we produce DVD's of our COMPLETE worship services for those without internet connection. eWorship Leaders record elements of the service on their phones or other devices and email them to our staff who compiles and edits for upload to our YouTube Channel: **South Church Rochester**. That video is burned to a DVD and delivered or mailed to those who cannot attend in person.

Other churches and/or pastors are invited to arrange with us which portions of worship you would like to record for your people. Together, this "modular approach" to worship videos can be timely and personally tailored to your community.

Contact us if you would like to purchase DVD's or want to explore creating videos either by yourself or using our modular model.

So ... when someone asks "Where's your church?" we can *literally* say: "Where would you like us to be?" because we are currently in 8 neighborhoods in Rochester, Brighton, and Henrietta, at 6 different locations and ONLINE. And isn't that what it means to be the Body of the Risen Christ? Our pre-COVID numbers of participants (5,926 different people involved through over 25,000 documented contacts in 2019) have shifted post-COVID to approx. 300 in-person individuals, but just shy of 3,000 views of our online YouTube services and meditations. South Presbyterian has just over 30 "official" members, but the Acts of Faith Community thrives because we go where the people are and where the Spirit leads us.



We proudly say, "**The Church has Left the Building**" and we are quick to pray:
"Put us where you want us, and show us what to do!"



For updates, to learn more, or to contact us, please visit the website. **www.SOUTHPC.org/welcome**

(585) 271.5078 P.O. Box 22782 | Rochester, NY 14692

Cuppa the Bible



*You supply the "cuppa" -
the Spirit supplies the message*

Cuppa the Bible, an Act of Faith of South Presbyterian Church, met weekly on Monday mornings at 10:30 - noon, to explore God's Word. Each week began with a time of check-in fellowship followed by discussion led by Pastor Deb. The Scripture texts were read to preview upcoming week's Lectionary emailed to participants by Pastor Deb prior to our meeting time.

This past year's gatherings were held on Zoom. Typically nine women participated in challenging and lively discussion as historical context was explored and applications to today's faith journeys were shared. Discerning a common thread or theme amongst the four lectionary readings was pursued each week.

Cuppa the Bible provided new perspectives to our understanding of God's Word for us today through the Spirit's guidance.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Durfee on behalf of fellow participants





Because of the pandemic, we learned of a group of our people who were unable to connect with us online. Several do not have internet access and therefore could not watch our weekly services or meditative Prayerful Pause episodes.

At the same time, we became aware that many of our seniors possess and are familiar with using DVD players.

The solution?

Create the same services on a DVD which could be delivered to them weekly, and if they didn't have a DVD player (which most did possess) provide them with a portable one of those, as well.

With the help of a grant from the Presbytery of Genesee Valley, we were able to purchase a machine that makes multiple copies of DVD's at the same time, and the result is that weekly, our church office becomes a DVD production studio.

DVD copies are burned and individually distributed to five locations – one of which is Cobbs Hill Manor where ten individuals gather on Saturday mornings to worship with us in the Wellness Room where New Life on Monroe met prior to the pandemic.

The other copies are delivered to individuals who either watch alone by themselves or with others who come to visit them. These are proving to be an important link for some of our "at home members" who can no longer come to weekly worship to remain a part of us in the comfort of their own homes.

We estimate that between 14 and 17 people worship through the DVD Ministry every week.

Looking ahead, we would love to expand this ministry so that other churches could record portions of their service (sermon, announcement and prayers, for instance) so we could drop them into those places in our recorded worship service. The DVD's would then be available for their members as well. We are continuing to explore this possibility as another area where South might assist other churches through our Firebird Office outreach opportunities.





Evening Prayer gathered from 6-7 p.m. on Zoom each Thursday evening with Pastor Deb Swift. Guided by the emailed prayer service prepared by Pastor Deb, seven to nine participants engaged interactively in a weekly check-in focused on a leading question, opening prayer, selected Scripture and reflection questions, sharing of joys and concerns to be lifted up in prayer, a communal reciting of The Lord's Prayer and a benediction. The benediction sometimes included a musical offering screen shared on YouTube.

The weekly experience provided a forum for sharing our individual stories as well as reflecting our responses to our local, national and global concerns as we offered support to one another along our faith journeys.

We each acknowledge the importance of coming together in Evening Prayer as we look forward with prayer-filled hope.

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Durfee on behalf of fellow participants





With the advent of COVID in March, 2020, came the development of our YouTube channel online worship. We have been blessed with fifteen faithful individuals who record various portions of the service each week..

Generally, our leaders are asked to record one reading per month, although this year we provided special services for Easter, Reformation Sunday, and Christmas Eve. Assignments are emailed mid-week; our eWorship Leaders hail from Arizona, North Carolina, parts of New York, and Utah. On their own schedule, they record them on their phone, iPad, laptop, of other device and send their video to Kevin by noon on

Monday. It is he who edits and uploads the completed worship service in time for it to be viewed the following weekend.

If you would like to try your hand as a leader, please let the office know. You can join anytime; our schedule is set quarterly, but we are happy to work new people in as the Spirit moves them. No prior experience is needed, though you do need to have a device that allows you to record videos (most use their smartphones).

Thanks to this year's participants – both Presbyterian and non-Presbyterian – some of whom are pictured below: Andy Pratt, Annie Marie LeBarbour, Barb Sixbey, Barbara Durfee, Carly Logan, Carol Santos, Eileen Smith, Holly Powell, Karen Thomas, Martha Moler, Mary Lee Miller, Nancy Rice, Rheanolte LeBarbour, Sonya Kennedy, Susan Riblett



Fellowship of



Our New Worshipping Community that meets at St. John's Meadows on Sunday at 1PM is Fellowship of Faith. Between thirty and fifty people have formed a faith community that reaches beyond the bounds of the Meadows, with some members living in Henrietta, Penfield, Marketview Heights, and beyond.

Worshipping at 1 PM has its advantages and its drawbacks. The later start time speaks to those who move slowly in the morning, but the one o'clock hour sometimes interferes with meals and/or the Buffalo Bills.

Still, this year, we have had several highlights:

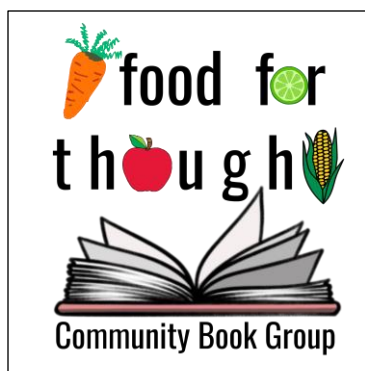
- A robust Easter celebration
- Guest preachers Mary Lee Miller, Darryl Powell, and Susan Riblett
- Guest speaker Sister Chris Wagner from St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center
- Reformation Sunday service that was a tour through our history
- Advent services with special emphases of communion, our Advent Healing Service, and more
- Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

With the joint leadership of Sing for Joy! and Ring for Joy! we were treated to special music and also welcomed the hammer dulcimers of Holly Powell and Barbara Durfee.

With the use of our communion table and various seasonal banners (thank you, John Hust for placing and rotating them), we are able to create a worshipful atmosphere, even in the social room of a senior living community. Our thanks to the St. John's Meadows staff for setting up and taking down the room with each worship service.

There is a strong sense of community in this Act of Faith. Residents of the Meadows/Brickstone, along with neighbors beyond the senior community gather weekly in support of each other and living out the teachings of Jesus.





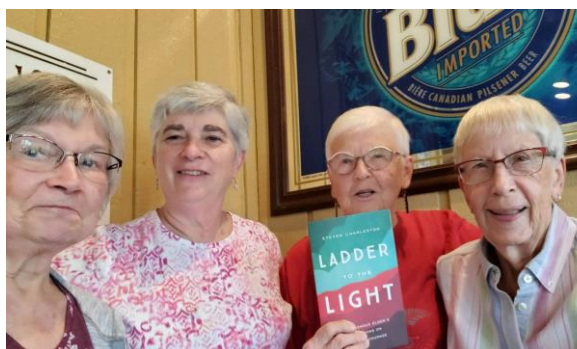
Our faithful group of readers who like to discuss everything, continued our table chats via Zoom throughout the year. After summer, it was thought that meeting in person once a month would satisfy the yearning to be together yet keep those who cannot be at the table within the fellowship circle. Since our friends at the Mt Hope Diner don't stay open in the afternoon at this time, we moved our gathering location to the Elmwood Inn on Mt. Hope Avenue. We have seen each other through some difficult times and have often stopped to pray when it seems just right. We recently prayed for Amy to remember to join us, and she popped up on the screen seconds later!

Our discussion began with the last few chapters of Madeleine L'Engle's book BRIGHT EVENING STAR as she brings the incarnation into modern reality.

In February, another book of long essays carried us into family memories as we read and discussed KITCHEN TABLE WISDOM by Rachel Naomi Remen, MD, whose perspective as a patient, as a physician and as a daughter allowed us to share memories of our own grandparents, parents and experiences with those we love facing the dying process.

Recommended by Mary Lee Miller, we embarked in the fall on a journey into the heart of Native American (and Episcopal priest) Steven Charleston as he shares the wisdom of his ancestors in the LADDER TO THE LIGHT. We learned the metaphor that a *kiva*, once a dark underground safe space, the womb of the earth, where we all began together. The only outlet is a small opening towards which we climb to the light. The rungs of the ladder represent the lessons that must be learned along the way and that everyone moves up the ladder (or not) at a separate pace. His imagery of Native American dances where they share a rhythm yet believe in different manifestations of the holy, brings to mind the Acts of Faith model where we share much together and allow for God to be received differently by each.

These powerful thoughts have carried us through Advent and into the new year. We are still planning to meet mainly by Zoom, possibly changing the afternoon time slot to Thursday from the Friday slot we have been using.



If this fits into your schedule and you want to meet from the comfort of home or once a month together, please consider Food For Thought in 2023.

The table has plenty of room.

Amy, Barb, Carol, David, Deb, Jan, Judy, Marian, Mary Beth, Mary Lee, Nancy and Nita.



The Living Bread ministry bakes bread regularly and offers a variety of loaves wrapped in new dish towels at Fellowship of Faith worship services to anyone who may be in need of encouragement or special prayers.

This ministry has given one to two loaves of bread nearly every week throughout 2022 and the recipients may keep the dish towels as a lasting reminder that our congregation is holding them close in our thoughts and prayers.

My heart is filled with gratitude for my fellow bakers, Eileen Smith and Wayne Martin. If you would like to participate in this ministry by baking

or offering baking supplies and dish towels, please let us know!

We look forward to a new year of offering loaves to satisfy many stomachs and bless dear hearts in the name of Jesus, who is our Living Bread.

In Christ's Love, Holly Powell, Living Bread Co-Facilitator



With so many Acts of Faith in so many different locations, getting together to socialize (as many churches do every Sunday following worship) becomes its own form of ministry.

Love-Joy Fellowships are those times when we meet up for no purpose other than enjoy each other's company. This year, we had two such gatherings. Each drew dozens to enjoy each other.



Farewell to Sonya, our Clerk of Session as she relocated to North Carolina in her retirement. Away, though she is, she continues to serve as our Clerk and to appear in worship whenever she is in town. Thirty-two people came together at the Elmwood Inn for our farewell. **Harvest Potluck** was our fall gathering with members of Irondequoit Presbyterian Church in order to meet, greet, and get to know each other around table fellowship at the Carmen Clark Lodge in Henrietta. Thirty-eight of us shared singing, praying and eating and we are all looking forward to the Winter Potluck in February to continue our conversations.





As a designated Matthew 25 Congregation, we are part of a national initiative of the PC(USA), dedicated to focus on:

- **Building congregational vitality** by challenging people and congregations to deepen their faith and get actively and joyfully engaged with their community and the world.
- **Dismantling structural racism** by advocating and acting to break down the systems, practices and thinking that underlie discrimination, bias, prejudice and oppression of people of color.
- **Eradicating systemic poverty** by working to change laws, policies, plans and structures in our society that perpetuate economic exploitation of people who are poor.

That is, embodying the teaching of Jesus from Mt. 25:40 - *Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.*

On a monthly basement, Judy Wandtke faithfully participates in feeding the homeless at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality. She writes:



It has been a pleasure to be able to serve meals on one Sunday a month at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality for the homeless or those living in poverty. The volunteers are a wonderful group of caring folks to work with.

The folks that are in need of these meals are so appreciative. They often wait outside on the worst of days. One man comes in a wheelchair even when it is pouring rain and he has no raincoat or umbrella. One of the volunteers found some plastic bags to help cover him. On a special Sunday a Mom and her daughter who once were in need of those meals came to volunteer with us. They wanted to give back.

A special thank you to all who were able to donate during our special collections at Fellowship of Faith.

If you want to join this Act of Faith once a month, please let the office know.

Another way that we claim our MT25 commitment is through online zoom discussion groups. This year, we offered two sections of online groups (spring and fall), both focusing on Molly Secours' book *White Privilege Pop-Quiz* which invites us all to look at our lives and societal norms in a non-threatening way.

A total of thirty-two individuals participated in the groups led by Pastor Deb and Clerk of Session, Sonya Kennedy.

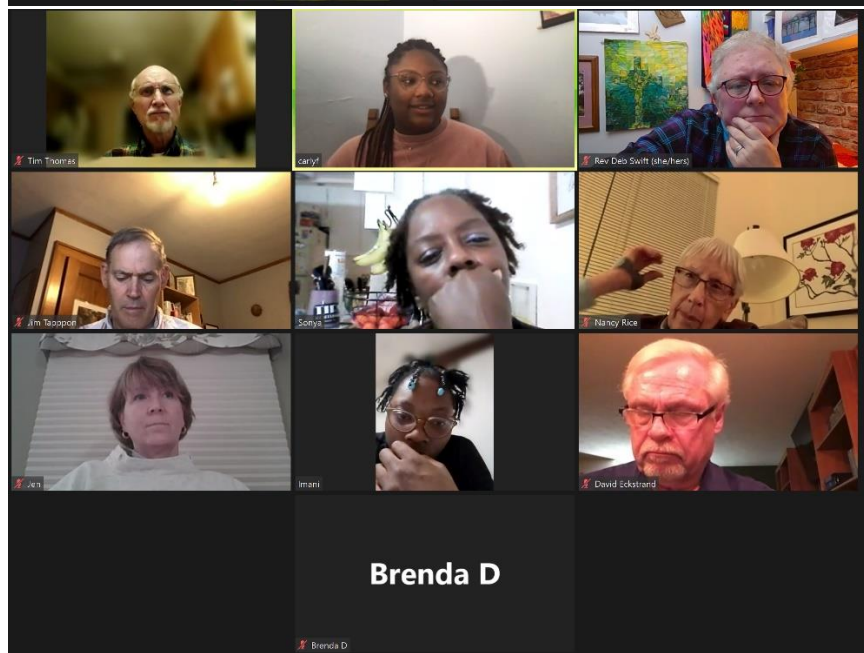
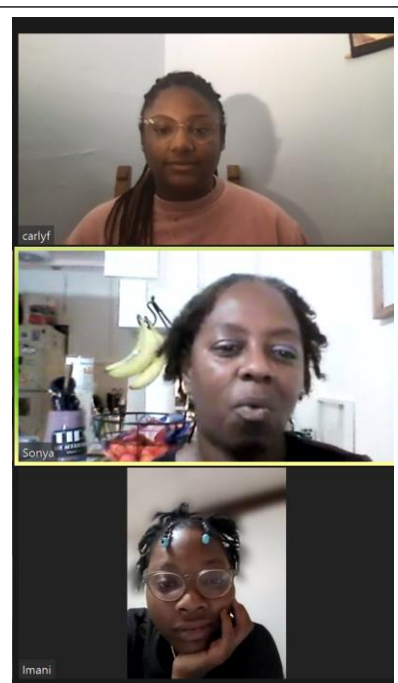


In both sections of the class, three of our women-of-color members (Carly, Concetta, and Imani) joined Sonya in offering a discrete and personal conversation about their own experiences with racism and

prejudice. Everyone who attended was greatly moved by their journeys and thankful for their willingness to engage in this vulnerable sharing.

Participants included individuals from New Jersey, North Carolina, Binghamton and Ithaca, NY, and represented members of four different Presbyterian Churches, a UCC, American Baptist, and a United Methodist congregation.

Already we are making plans for our next MT25 Discussion Group in the spring of 2023 when we will focus on Lecia Michelle's *The White Allies Handbook*.





This South Presbyterian Church Act of Faith serves those in need of food; living in the 14620, 14610 and 14607 zip codes, or more upon request, usually open the 2nd, 4th, and 5th Thursdays 9:30 to noon.

Our service made a dramatic improvement in early spring, when Congregation Beth Sholom offered us a former apartment in the same building. This space includes a refrigerator, separate entrance and consolidated space so that we can offer a shopping experience to our clients and all food stored in cupboards, not on open shelves. It is also more efficient reducing our volunteer needs from 3 to 2 people each time.

Our Foodlink inspector approved and gave us an A rating. The economic downturn increased the need and our numbers served.

We served 48 different people including 12 children and 8 seniors. Once we could offer shopping, each household could choose the number of fruits, vegetables, proteins, and grains according to quantities established by Foodlink by household size. We also offer choices of beverages, soups, miscellaneous food items and personal care items beyond Foodlink's recommendations. Each household is eligible to come once a month. We averaged 5 visitors and 2 volunteers each of the 27 times we were open. With repeat visits for 3 meals a day, 3-day supplies, and holiday dinners wish list items, this accumulated to 2600 meals provided in 2022, a 58% increase over 2021!

Our visitors included: many who experienced surgeries and hospitalizations, a victim of identity and major financial theft, three homeless young men, several with disabilities, a recovering alcoholic, and an Afghan family who we supported at Christmas with a Burlington gift card.

Our food comes from three main sources: our Foodlink membership (which includes food covered by USDA grants, NYS HPNAP grants, federal stimulus funds, and the United Way), from our New Life Food Cupboard Fund, and from our generous members and friends of South Presbyterian Church and Congregation Beth Sholom. Many thanks to our Deacons for rounding up more supplies this holiday season, and taking up a collection to help our Afghan family. We welcome non-perishable donations from other sources, as well.



Our work force came from our two steadfast volunteers: Janis Castrogiovanni and John Hust with Char Schuth and Connie Izzo substituting occasionally. Others have offered to volunteer including someone from Congregation Beth Sholom. An additional collaboration with the temple was Nechie's Food cupboard, a posted cupboard in the front yard for those to take or donate canned items. We provided some canned goods and they passed along donations to us not appropriate for an outdoor box. It was short lived when it was run over by a stolen car, but will hopefully return in better weather.

A pleasant surprise that we discovered is that being a small food cupboard means we have the luxury of actually exceeding Foodlink's quantity guidelines and providing personal customized contact which feels more like sharing God's love.

Respectfully submitted by Janis Castrogiovanni





The Ring for Joy Handbell Choir had another wonderful year of ringing together! We played for Fellowship of Faith worship services on average once every two months, sharing music in a variety of styles with our beautiful three octave handbell set.

Great fellowship and a commitment to making beautiful music together were enjoyed during our weekly rehearsals on Wednesday evenings.

I am so grateful to our devoted ringers and wish to thank them for their inspiring faith, commitment and fine musicianship.

We are ten strong with the following ringing servants: Mary Taglieri, Sandi Thomas, Amy Doty, Carole Knight, MaryLee Miller, Nancy Rice,

Rachel McGuire, John Hust and Richard Taglieri. Currently, we are seeking two new ringers as we have more bells than we have hands to ring!

Ring for Joy looks forward to a new year of worshipping God and having fun together through bell ringing!

In Christ's Love, Holly Powell, Ring for Joy Director





This spring, at the initiative of Pastor Deborah Swift, a group of "Women of a Certain Age" gathered to explore what the dimensions of spirituality may be at an older age. We used the book, *The Gift of Years*, by Joan Chittister, as a jumping off point.

The discussions were very fruitful, so the group decided to continue in the fall. We have been discussing ideas and experiences generated by the book, *Happiness Is a Choice You Make*, by John Leland. It is based on a series of interviews he conducted with a group of "the oldest old" whom he found in the New York City area. His learnings offer a lovely and lively jumping off place for our own experiences and thoughts.

We plan to resume our meetings after the New Year, continuing with the same book.

Nancy Rice





As 2022 draws to a close, it is almost hard to remember that one year ago we were still firmly in the midst of pandemic-related alterations to our “normal” routine! After resuming in-person fellowship during the Fall of 2021, we were once again meeting via Zoom as the calendar changed to 2022.

Fortunately, that was short-lived interruption, and soon enough we were back in-person, and have remained that way for the duration of the year. It was also during this past Spring that we were able to “officially” move on from masking. On occasion, when circumstances (usually

scheduling) demand, we have the option of once again using Zoom for an informal hymn-sing, but these instances have been blessedly rare!

Sing For Joy! continued to meet from 6:30-7:30 pm on Wednesday evenings in the Parks Room at Chestnut Court through June. After taking our customary summer vacation, we resumed with a new time in September, swapping slots with Ring For Joy! Choir now rehearses from 5:30-6:30 pm, with Bell Choir rehearsing immediately following. We typically begin rehearsal with 15-20 minutes of a hymn-sing, and then we fill the rest of our hour with work on our four-part choral repertoire for presentation during Sunday worship services. We also meet about 30 minutes prior to Sunday afternoon’s Fellowship of Faith for a quick review of our music for the day. The Choir typically presents a Choral Anthem, as well as a short Introit and Choral Response as musical bookends to the Sunday service.



During 2022, the South Church choral music library was relocated to Gates Presbyterian Church, where I continue to serve as accompanist. Having this easy, weekly access to our library—not to mention the Gates choral repertoire—has been a true blessing, making the process of selecting and transporting sheet music much simpler. As a result, in addition to programming popular favorites from the library, we are able to work and present pieces that are new to our group without spending any budget money purchasing new octavos.



Sing For Joy! currently comprises thirteen members: Sue Bovay, Carol Curtiss, Amy Doty, John Hust, Carole Knight, Mary Lee Miller, Holly Powell, Andy Pratt, Fran Ratcliffe, Nancy Rice, Gordon Rickner, Stena Rickner, and Mary Taglieri. St. John’s residents often drop in to listen to our in-person rehearsals, and sometimes even join in the singing! New members are always welcome (no audition required), and, when necessary, our Zoom hymn-sings are available to anyone with the link and password.

-Andy Pratt, Director of Music



For a year-and-a-half we have hosted an online Bible Study on Friday at noon called Water from the Well. After beginning with *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time* by Marcus Borg, the group launched into an in-depth study of the Book of Acts, intentionally reading it through the eyes of justice issues.

Each week we integrate personal questions and life experience with the Biblical text and a study guide prepared by Pastor Deb that includes commentaries from famous scholars, maps and in-depth questions for reflection and sharing.

From this experience have grown deep friendships among members who don't even live near each other (one member from New Jersey drove to Rochester in order to take another member who no longer drives out to Michigan for a family reunion). Some members are able to be with us throughout the year while others come and go as their schedules allow. Everyone is welcome at the table in our zoom room.

Members throughout this year have included: Amy (logging in from Rochester, Syracuse and California at various times), Eileen, JoMae, Susan (Rochester), Beth (joining us from Rochester, Florida and Texas as she traveled), Darlene (Rochester and Nevada), Diane (New Jersey), Marcia (Dansville), Martha (Utah), and Peg (Florida).

We deviated from our Acts study to accommodate Easter and Advent and hope to finish our Acts study during the winter. Next on our list will be the Old Testament books of Esther and Ruth. New members are always welcome. Please contact the church office or Pastor Deb to get the zoom link. Whether you're working and this is your lunch hour, or you are just looking for a nice way to start your weekend, the well is always here to refresh us with the living waters of God's Word.



COORDINATING THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

The Session



SPC Session

SPC's Session started 2022 with a unique situation: current clerk Sonya Kennedy moved to North Carolina, and Elder (Karen Thomas) lives in Arizona! Who better to pave THAT new road and navigate those decisions than South! Since the pandemic, we have continued to meet via Zoom so having out of town session members has had very little effect on our decision making or enacting our programs, though having local "boots on the ground" was sometimes a challenge.

We meet monthly at least 10 times per year. The annual reading of the minutes by the Presbytery – required of all churches to ensure that we are compliant with the practices of being a Presbyterian Church – was a bit of a challenge, but as we all continue to care for each other even that task seemed a bit more streamlined this year.

Much Session time was spent discerning where God wants us to go and positioning the church so that we can be responsive to the Spirit's leading. We decided, for instance, that it would be wisest to move our office space to the Irondequoit Presbyterian Church's campus considering the very generous terms they were giving us. (Rent for 2 large rooms – office and storage – at IPC is \$200/month with Firebird Spirit contributing \$50 of that.) We continue to be intentionally praying, discerning and discussing how to be the best navigators and trustees of our beloved church. I have worked closely with Pastor Deb and Kevin Fuller to maintain good record keeping as well as great relationships with the Presbytery. I look forward to seeing what God has in store for the future of SPC and thank our current Session members: John Hust, Mary Lee Miller, Nancy Rice & Karen Thomas.

Respectfully submitted, Sonya Kennedy, Clerk of Session

The Deacons



SPC Deacons

Over this past year, the Board of Deacons has been active in outreach to our church family and community neighbors through in-person and phone visits, the card ministry (birthdays, get well, holidays, new births, new home and graduation blessings) and an offering of transportation to medical appointments when a specific need arose.

In March the Deacons facilitated a personal hygiene items drive for St. Joseph's House of Hospitality, and at Thanksgiving time organized a food drive for the Food Cupboard. In addition, Christmas gifts were collected for Cameron

Community Ministries and monetary donations were collected as a Christmas gift to a refugee family using the Food Cupboard.

In addition to these mission opportunities, the Deacons coordinated a reception following Jane Watkin's memorial service and have prepared the communion elements monthly for Fellowship of Faith worship services. The Board meets monthly to plan outreach ministries, share devotionals and share prayer needs in our church family and community. I am deeply grateful and honored to serve currently with Barbara Durfee (Co-Convener), Ruth Dempsey, Sue Bovay, Jan Holbrook and Judy Wandtke. With joy and excitement I look forward to seeing where God will lead us in the coming year and what new ministries await!

In Christ's Love, Holly Powell, Co-Convener

Office Operations

2022 turned out to be a year of many changes for South Church operations. After two years of pandemic protocols, everyone became accustomed to Zoom meetings and other forms of work and communication. The church leadership determined the current office structure was unnecessary and increasingly unsustainable. In February, I was asked to begin the search for new office space and to liquidate all unnecessary furniture and equipment. The move was to be completed by April 30th.

All efforts were used to keep the cost of moving to a minimum. However, there were multiple setbacks in negotiations that required us to pivot to a different solution. As the Pastor's role with Irondequoit Presbyterian expanded, it became clear that renting more space and moving SPC office operations to the IPC building was our best option. Unfortunately, it was also the most expensive option because we ended up moving everything. The move was finished Memorial Day week.

The generosity and kind consideration of Irondequoit Presbyterian has provided a very affordable cost to the SPC office operation and overall budget. SPC is saving money by sharing expenses for Internet service, thanks to IPC's extremely fast connection. The cost for SPC's use of two rooms in the building is also quite low. Firebird Spirit continues to share a portion of that expense.

I spent the summer unpacking and reorganizing the new space, while maintaining the production schedule for bulletins and videos. In September and October, more time was centered around a Worker's Comp insurance audit as well as the SPC financial audit led by Karen Thomas. Both audits ended in December... just in time for Advent!

In October, the IPC Office Secretary accepted a new position and resigned her role, with 2 weeks' notice. I was asked to fill that role until the end of the year, which I did. At that time, the office schedule was split between the two offices. In December, I was asked to continue the IPC role for 2023, which made the new weekly schedule permanent.

SPC enters 2023 with much leaner operations than previous years. We continue to tweak responsibilities and prioritize tasks to optimize reduced work schedules. The result should be a balanced budget for 2023.

Special thanks to Janis Castrogiovanni and John Hust for the many ways they support the needs of the office coordination and transportation of items to the Meadows for worship as well as to Brighton for our potlucks.

Kevin Fuller, *Director of Operations*



Our Staff

In addition to the pastor, there are two individuals who touch our lives every week: Kevin Fuller, our Director of Operations, and Andy Pratt, our Minister of Music.



While most churches have a Church Secretary, South decided several years ago that we needed to have someone capable of being an internet/tech guru, with advertising/marketing experience, and the personality and skills to deal with our non-traditional model of being a church. Enter the need for a Director of Operations – someone who coordinates all aspects of our church life except for those spiritual ones assigned to the Pastor. It is Kevin who shoulders the bulk of the work for our DVD Ministry and who interfaces with us to the Presbytery, Irondequoit Presbyterian Church, as well as our attorney, payroll, and insurance people.

How fortunate we are to have had him with us all these years. Reading his report (above) it's clear why we need someone with his creativity and insight to keep us afloat, to resource the various committees, teams, and Acts of Faith, and to partner with the Pastor in meeting the needs of our congregation.



As Minister of Music, and an ordained Elder, Andy is not only the choir director and accompanist of Sing for Joy and Fellowship of Faith, leading weekly worship and providing the music for all of our eWorship services, but he also works with Holly in scheduling special music (hammered dulcimer programs, piano duets with Carole Knight, and Ring for Joy as well as guest musicians as needed).

It is through the work of Andy and Kevin that we were able to relocate our choral library to Gates Presbyterian Church this year, and it is through him that we look forward to some combined choral activity with Irondequoit Presbyterian Church in the year ahead.

I am often asked what it is that makes South able to try these new, innovative programs; what is it that allows us to think outside the box and yet stay so connected. One of the answers has to be these two men. They are creative, brilliant, and caring. They let me know when our ideas have merit, and when they might be sound but the timing isn't right. What a winning combination! They bring their vast experience and insight to us through their innovative ideas and vast professional experience.

Without a building to support, our largest expense is our staff, but I can honestly say that they give us far more than what we are able to pay them. They are my colleagues in ministry and we are blessed to have them as part of our faith community, ministering to the community and the world. These are two of our main missionaries in this missional church.

Deb Swift
Pastor

Nominating Committee (NomCom)

This year's committee was elected in December of 2021 will carry thru to SPC's Annual Meeting on February 6th of 2023 when the next NomCom will be elected. This is an effort to make the December Advent and Christmas season a little less busy for all of us, rather than trying to come up with a slate of officers and a congregational vote during the end of 2022.

This committee is elected directly by the congregation bypassing the Session and reporting back to the membership, as a whole. It's required to have at least one member of Session, one member of the Board of Deacons and three members at-large from the congregation.

As it stands now, Session members who have fulfilled their first term are willing to continue, including Sonya Kennedy who will come back as a voting member, along with being Clerk of the Session. This will be our slate of Session members for 2023. We are grateful for their commitment and service!

We have a Board of Deacons with 6 members who have been very active and again as a congregation we are most appreciative and thankful for all the work they do. One member will be stepping down, so the Nominating Committee's only task is to find a replacement to keep the Deacons strong and have enough hands to continue doing their work as Partners in Ministry with the Pastor!

The slate of officers will be presented at the Annual Meeting on February 6th 2023. Other nominations will be welcome from the floor, should any be forthcoming.

Many thanks to these Nominating Committee members for their prayerful thought in completing this important work for SPC: Amy Doty, Marylee Miller, Holly Powell and Stena Rickner!

John Hust, *NomCom chair*



2023 Leadership of South Presbyterian Church

SLATE OF OFFICERS

(x) is the number of their term – first or second three-year term. Each may serve a maximum of 6 consecutive years. Class denotes the final year of their term. Newly elected officers begin their terms at their Service of Ordination and Installation following their election and examination by the sitting Session. Those in **bold-red-underlined** are the slate to be voted on at the February 6, 2023 Annual Meeting.

Session

Sonya Kennedy, *Clerk of Session*

<u>Class of 2023</u>	<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>
	Karen Thomas (1)	<u>Mary Lee Miller (2)</u>
	John Hust (2) (5 years total)	<u>Nancy Rice (2)</u>
		<u>Sonya Kennedy (1)</u>

Deacons & Partners in Ministry

Barbara Durfee and Holly Powell, *Co-Convenors of the Deacons*

<u>Class of 2023</u>	<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>
Jan Holbrook (1)	Sue Bovay (1)	<u>Judy Wandtke (2)</u>
<u>Mary Taglieri (1)</u> (1 year term)		<u>Barbara Durfee (2)</u>

Partners in Ministry are those who serve but, for one reason or another, are not PC(USA) members of South and therefore not eligible for Deacon ordination: **Rev. Holly Powell**

Each of these people has been previously ordained.

Corporation Officers

President **John Hust** (annually renewable)
Secretary Sonya Kennedy
Treasurer Nancy Rice

The Session elects the Clerk of Session and Treasurer who serve as the Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, of the Corporation. The Congregation elects the President at the Annual Meeting.

2023 Nominating Committee (1 representative each of Session and Deacons and 3 at-large members of the congregation)

(Session) **John Hust** (Deacons) _____

(At-Large Members) **Mary Lee Miller,** _____, _____

Pastor

Reverend Deborah Fae Swift, *Moderator of Session*

FINANCES & TREASURER'S REPORT

A Message from the Treasurer



Another year has turned over at South Presbyterian Church! A significant blessing of this year, for our local scene, was the diminution of the COVID plague, and the increasing return of more usual life. We give thanks for that!

This year saw some falling off in two of our projected income lines. Per Capita Contributions from members, which reimburse our church for our mandatory payments to our higher judicatories (Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly), were only 55% of the total we hoped for. Also, Pledgers' Additional Giving, which last year was especially good, decreased to only \$582.75 instead of the

\$15,000 which we had projected. This projection was based on our experience last year so at the time, it seemed a reasonable guess.

In our expense lines, we saw some unanticipated increases. Payroll taxes were around \$5300 instead of the \$3500 which we had projected. Our line for Computers/Technology expense increased by \$463 over our estimate. Expenses for the Acts of Faith and Bank fees were around \$900 above our estimates. These were off-set by some expenses which were lower than expected, so that our total expenses were \$20,815 less than we projected, which is always nice to see!

The net result of these and other minor differences were that our actual operating deficit was \$54,015 for the year, about \$4,000 less than we anticipated!

Sadly, our operating deficit was further increased by a \$6,177 loss on our investments as a result of the economic turbulence this year. Based on this unfortunate experience, we sold our investments during the year to prevent other unhappy changes, and added the remainder to our checking account, which as of December 31 was \$34,168.25.

For 2023 we have created and approved a new budget which assumes a total income of \$143,967.13. The increase from 2022 is based on an expected increase in clergy time reimbursement from Irondequoit Presbyterian Church (which our pastor also serves) and reimbursement from IPC for a portion of the time of our Director of Operations. We also project a decrease in expenses of approximately \$30,000, based on staff salary/time changes and other lines that were higher this year than we expect for next year.

The result is an **anticipated deficit of only about \$2500**, a wonderful change from 2022! (And frankly, we believe that we have built in enough expense "padding" that we may well end up with small surplus.)

However, ***this means that we lean even more on your contributions than ever before!***

You have faithfully supported us last year, and we know you will do so again!

In gratitude for your support for our ministry, Nancy Rice, *Treasurer*

South Presbyterian Church

Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2022

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
1110 Checking, CNB	34,162.25
1120 Petty Cash	6.00
Total Bank Accounts	\$34,168.25
Other Current Assets	
1310 New Covenant Fund-Balanced Income	0.00
1320 New Covenant Fund-Balanced Growth	0.00
1330 New Covenant Income Fund	0.00
1340 New Covenant Hermes Treasury Obligations	0.00
Total Other Current Assets	\$0.00
Total Current Assets	\$34,168.25
TOTAL ASSETS	\$34,168.25
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
2110 Payroll Taxes Payable	
2120 Federal Withholding	0.00
2130 Social Security	0.00
2140 Medicare	0.00
2150 State/Local Income Tax Payable	0.00
Total 2110 Payroll Taxes Payable	0.00
2400 Pass Through Funds	-1,521.54
2420 Firebird Spirit	1,521.54
Total 2400 Pass Through Funds	0.00
2500 Pass Through Offerings	
2510 One Great Hour of Sharing	0.00
2520 Peacemaking	0.00
2530 Christmas Joy	0.00
2540 Disaster Relief	0.00
2560 Special Misc. Offerings	0.00
Total 2500 Pass Through Offerings	0.00
2600 Prepaid Pledges	0.00
2700 Employee Retained Cash	
2710 Pastor Accrued Benefit	0.00
2720 HRA - Deb Swift	327.23
Total 2700 Employee Retained Cash	327.23
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$327.23
Total Current Liabilities	\$327.23
Long-Term Liabilities	

Cash Basis Thursday, January 19, 2023 04:02 PM GMT-05:00

1/2

	TOTAL
2800 Grants, General	
2810 Genesee Valley Presbytery Grant Fund	478.48
Total 2800 Grants, General	478.48
2850 Acts of Faith Funds	
2870 New Life Food Cupboard Fund	5,851.43
Total 2850 Acts of Faith Funds	5,851.43
2960 Hope Fund	2,587.41
Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$8,917.32
Total Liabilities	\$9,244.55
Equity	
3100 Opening Balance Equity	159,472.43
3200 Retained Earnings	-74,356.50
Net Income	-60,192.23
Total Equity	\$24,923.70
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$34,168.25





South Presbyterian Church

Budget vs. Actuals: 2022 Approved Budget - FY22 P&L

January - December 2022

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	REMAINING	% OF BUDGET
Income				
4100 Per Capita Contributions	496.00	900.00	404.00	55.11 %
4200 Worship Collections				
4210 Pledge Income	67,282.34	68,504.00	1,221.66	98.22 %
4220 Pledgers' Additional Giving	582.75	15,000.00	14,417.25	3.89 %
4230 Non-Pledgers & Misc	11,874.96	10,000.00	-1,874.96	118.75 %
Total 4200 Worship Collections	79,740.05	93,504.00	13,763.95	85.28 %
4300 Earned Income				
4310 Office Services	219.00		-219.00	
4360 Publications	20.00		-20.00	
4380 Clergy Time Reimbursements	42,964.90	42,964.90	0.00	100.00 %
Total 4300 Earned Income	43,203.90	42,964.90	-239.00	100.56 %
4400 Support				
4430 Mission Support		3,000.00	3,000.00	
Total 4400 Support		3,000.00	3,000.00	
Total Income	\$123,439.95	\$140,368.90	\$16,928.95	87.94 %
GROSS PROFIT	\$123,439.95	\$140,368.90	\$16,928.95	87.94 %
Expenses				
5100 Pastor				
5110 Cash Salary, Pastor	36,262.44	39,987.00	3,724.56	90.69 %
5120 Housing, Pastor	22,085.31	22,000.00	-85.31	100.39 %
5140 SECA, Pastor	4,462.68	4,474.00	11.32	99.75 %
5150 Board of Pensions, Pastor	16,587.99	22,780.00	6,192.01	72.82 %
5160 Professional & Travel Expenses, Pastor	2,404.09	3,500.00	1,095.91	68.69 %
5170 Continuing Education, Pastor	-860.64	1,000.00	1,860.64	-86.06 %
Total 5100 Pastor	80,941.87	93,741.00	12,799.13	86.35 %
5300 Employees				
5310 Wages, Minister of Music	14,923.22	15,000.00	76.78	99.49 %
5320 Wages, Administration	52,601.86	54,000.00	1,398.14	97.41 %
Total 5300 Employees	67,525.08	69,000.00	1,474.92	97.86 %
5400 Employer Expenses				
5410 Payroll Taxes	5,310.24	3,500.00	-1,810.24	151.72 %
5420 Worker's Compensation/Disability	1,616.46	1,600.00	-16.46	101.03 %
5430 Staff/Volunteer/Leadership Appreciation	157.20	300.00	142.80	52.40 %
Total 5400 Employer Expenses	7,083.90	5,400.00	-1,683.90	131.18 %
5500 Professional Services				
5520 Music Supply	375.00	600.00	225.00	62.50 %
5540 Legal Fees	1,530.00	11,500.00	9,970.00	13.30 %
5560 Contracted Services	939.00	1,200.00	261.00	78.25 %

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	REMAINING	% OF BUDGET
Total 5500 Professional Services	2,844.00	13,300.00	10,456.00	21.38 %
5600 PCUSA & Mission				
5610 Per Capita	1,602.00	1,600.00	-2.00	100.13 %
5620 PCUSA Mission Pledge	700.00	700.00	0.00	100.00 %
Total 5600 PCUSA & Mission	2,302.00	2,300.00	-2.00	100.09 %
5700 Facilities				
5710 Insurance	1,057.00	950.00	-107.00	111.26 %
5720 Office Rent	1,825.00	3,900.00	2,075.00	46.79 %
5730 Telephone/VOIP	32.08	100.00	67.92	32.08 %
5740 Venue Rentals/Donations		500.00	500.00	
Total 5700 Facilities	2,914.08	5,450.00	2,535.92	53.47 %
5800 General Church Expenses				
5802 Office Supplies	103.13	700.00	596.87	14.73 %
5804 Copier Lease	3,341.23	2,150.00	-1,191.23	155.41 %
5806 Copier Usage	823.53	1,000.00	176.47	82.35 %
5808 Postage	389.09	550.00	160.91	70.74 %
5810 Computers/Technology	1,462.93	1,000.00	-462.93	146.29 %
5812 Internet Service	886.10	1,080.00	193.90	82.05 %
5814 Web Presence	237.30	400.00	162.70	59.33 %
5822 Music Supplies		100.00	100.00	
5824 Worship Supplies	181.76	400.00	218.24	45.44 %
5826 Hospitality	200.00		-200.00	
5844 Other Acts of Faith Expense	1,466.54	1,000.00	-466.54	146.65 %
5848 Bank/Monetary Fees	663.13	200.00	-463.13	331.57 %
5850 Miscellaneous Expense	1,540.00	500.00	-1,040.00	308.00 %
Total 5800 General Church Expenses	11,294.74	9,080.00	-2,214.74	124.39 %
Unapplied Cash Bill Payment Expense	2,549.47		-2,549.47	
Total Expenses	\$177,455.14	\$198,271.00	\$20,815.86	89.50 %
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$ -54,015.19	\$ -57,902.10	\$ -3,886.91	93.29 %
Other Income				
4500 Other Income				
4520 Gain (Loss) on Investments	-6,177.04		6,177.04	
Total 4500 Other Income	-6,177.04		6,177.04	
Total Other Income	\$ -6,177.04	\$0.00	\$6,177.04	0.00%
NET OTHER INCOME	\$ -6,177.04	\$0.00	\$6,177.04	0.00%
NET INCOME	\$ -60,192.23	\$ -57,902.10	\$2,290.13	103.96 %



South Presbyterian Church 2023 Approved Budget

Approved: 01/24/2023

	Total		
	Actual 2022	2022 Budget	2023 Proposed
Income			
4100 Per Capita Contributions	496.00	900.00	500.00
4200 Worship Collections			
4210 Pledge Income	67,282.34	68,504.00	72,000.00
4220 Pledgers' Additional Giving	582.75	15,000.00	600.00
4230 Non-Pledgers & Misc	11,874.96	10,000.00	8,000.00
Total 4200 Worship Collections	\$ 80,236.05	\$ 93,504.00	\$ 81,100.00
4300 Earned Income			
4380 Clergy Time Reimbursements	42,964.90	42,965.00	50,267.13
xxx Dir Ops Reimbursement			12,000.00
4310 Office Services	219.00		0.00
4360 Publications	20.00		
Firebird Reimbursement			600
Total 4300 Earned Income	\$ 43,203.90	\$ 42,965.00	\$ 62,867.13
4400 Support			
4430 Mission Support		3,000.00	0.00
Total 4400 Support	\$ 0.00	\$ 3,000.00	
Total Income	\$ 123,439.95	\$ 140,369.00	\$ 143,967.13
Expenses			
5100 Pastor			
5110 Cash Salary, Pastor	36,262.44	39,987.00	25,413.52
5120 Housing, Pastor	22,085.31	22,000.00	22,000.00
5140 SECA, Pastor	4,462.68	4,474.00	3,927.60
5150 Board of Pensions, Pastor	16,587.99	22,780.00	19,067.12
5160 Professional & Travel Expenses, Pastor	2,404.09	3,500.00	3,500.00
5170 Continuing Education, Pastor	-860.64	1,000.00	1,500.00
Total 5100 Pastor	\$ 80,941.87	\$ 93,741.00	\$ 75,408.24
5300 Employees			
5310 Wages, Minister of Music	14,923.22	15,000.00	15,500.00
5320 Wages, Administration	52,601.86	54,000.00	36,000.00
Total 5300 Employees	\$ 67,525.08	\$ 69,000.00	\$ 51,500.00
5400 Employer Expenses			
5410 Payroll Taxes	5,310.24	3,500.00	3,000.00
5420 Worker's Compensation/Disability	1,616.46	1,600.00	1,200.00
5430 Staff/Volunteer/Leadership Appreciation	157.20	300.00	300.00
Total 5400 Employer Expenses	\$ 7,083.90	\$ 5,400.00	\$ 4,500.00

5500 Professional Services			
5520 Music Supply	375.00	600.00	600.00
5540 Legal Fees	1,530.00	11,500.00	0.00
5560 Contracted Services	939.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
Total 5500 Professional Services	\$ 2,844.00	\$ 13,300.00	\$ 1,800.00
5600 PCUSA & Mission			
5610 Per Capita	1,602.00	1,600.00	1,530.00
5620 PCUSA Mission Pledge	700.00	700.00	700.00
Total 5600 PCUSA & Mission	\$ 2,302.00	\$ 2,300.00	\$ 2,230.00
5700 Facilities			
5710 Insurance	1,057.00	950.00	950.00
5720 Office Rent	1,825.00	3,900.00	2,400.00
5730 Telephone/VOIP	32.08	100.00	100.00
5740 Venue Rentals/Donations		500.00	250.00
Total 5700 Facilities	\$ 2,914.08	\$ 5,450.00	\$ 3,700.00
5800 General Church Expenses			
5802 Office Supplies	103.13	700.00	500.00
5804 Copier Lease	3,341.23	2,150.00	0.00
5806 Copier Usage	823.53	1,000.00	600.00
5808 Postage	389.09	550.00	500.00
5810 Computers/Technology	1,462.93	1,000.00	750.00
5812 Internet Service	886.10	1,080.00	600.00
5814 Web Presence	237.30	400.00	400.00
5822 Music Supplies		100.00	100.00
5824 Worship Supplies	181.76	400.00	400.00
5826 Hospitality	200.00		200.00
5844 Other Acts of Faith Expense	1,466.54	1,000.00	1,000.00
5848 Bank/Monetary Fees	663.13	200.00	500.00
5850 Miscellaneous Expense	1,540.00	500.00	2,000.00
5856 Credit Card Holding	0.00		
Total 5800 General Church Expenses	\$ 11,294.74	\$ 9,080.00	\$ 7,350.00
Unapplied Cash Bill Payment Expense	2,549.47		
Total Expenses	\$ 177,455.14	\$ 198,271.00	\$ 146,488.24
Net Operating Income	-\$ 54,015.19	-\$ 57,902.00	\$ (2,521.11)
Other Income			
4500 Other Income			
4520 Gain (Loss) on Investments	-6,177.04		
Total 4500 Other Income	-\$ 6,177.04	\$ 0.00	
Total Other Income	-\$ 6,177.04	\$ 0.00	
Net Other Income	-\$ 6,177.04	\$ 0.00	
Net Income	-\$ 60,192.23	-\$ 57,902.00	

REVISIONS TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL (I.E. CHURCH BY-LAWS)

As these proposed changes come by recommendation from the Session, no second is needed to their motion to Amend. Two-thirds of the members assembled must agree to each of the changes in order for them to be adopted.

These changes are to eliminate sections that no longer apply, for example: references to an Associate Pastor and shared pastoral leadership, directions for an AoF Council which no longer exists, the expansion of our on-line presence for worship and meetings, expanding the period for the Annual Meeting so it can be held on a weekday, etc. We will discuss all changes and, if the way be clear, make one vote following questions and discussions. All proposed changes are in red.



South Presbyterian Church ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL 2023 EDITION

Adopted February 7, 2016 by unanimous vote of the Congregation following the recommendation of the Session.
Amendments presented for approval at the 2019 Annual Meeting of the Corporation & Congregation.
Session and Deacon Amendments approved in Special Meeting of the Congregation on 12/1/2019, 03/07/2021

PREAMBLE

South Presbyterian Church (also known as South Church or SPC) of Rochester, NY is a member of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley of the Synod of the Northeast and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The policies and organizational structures in this document shall be effective upon final enactment by the Congregation in accordance with existing procedures. It is the intent of SPC that this material replace and supplant any and all previously enacted policies, procedures, guidelines, or by-laws.

South Presbyterian Church is governed by the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)*, hereafter referred to as “the Constitution.” For procedural purposes the church uses the most recent edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order*. In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the policies in this *Administrative Manual* and the *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA)* or applicable New York State law, the provisions of the Constitution or State law shall control. Specific instances of possible conflict or inconsistencies of previously-enacted policies, procedures, guidelines, or by-laws not expressly addressed in this Manual should be brought to the attention of the Session. The Session shall report any such occurrences to the congregation, together with its recommendation as to any action.

All amendments to this document shall be made according to the procedures described in Section G.

The Pastor(s) and Session members are encouraged to remind church members from time-to-time of the policies and guidelines contained herein and of the principles which lie behind them, so that all may better understand the policies and values by which SPC regulates itself.

DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

This Administrative Manual is a collection of documents meant to be ever-changing and ever-evolving. It currently exists in four sections:

- I. Manual of Organization
 - a. Vision & Implementation
 - i. Vision / Mission / Calling Statement
 - ii. Process of Program Administration
 - b. Officers
 - c. Governing Boards
 - d. Membership
 - e. Congregational Meetings
 - f. Committees, Teams, and Task Forces
 - i. Session Committees, Teams, and Task Forces
 - ii. The Pastors' Role
 - iii. The Nominating Committee
 - g. Changes to this Document
- II. Financial Policies & Procedures
 - a. Treasurer's Manual Table of Contents
 - b. General Treasurer Information
 - c. Calendar of SPC Financial Reminders
 - d. Scanning, Printing & Copying Hints
 - e. Income Procedures
 - f. Counter Procedures & Forms
 - g. Expense Procedures
 - h. Sample Remittance Forms
 - i. Special Offering Information
 - j. SPC Deposit/Expense Form
 - k. Tax Exempt Certificate
 - l. Credit Card Inventory
 - m. Guidelines for Scheduling and Paying Guest Preachers
 - n. Chart of Accounts
 - o. Employment Verification Forms
 - p. Current Annual Financial Forecast
 - q. Current Act of Faith Narrative Budget

This section will be under review by the Finance Team and Session during 2023.

III. Staffing

- ~~a. Organizational Chart~~
- b. Job Descriptions (both employee and volunteer)
 - i. Pastor's Terms of Call
 - ~~ii. Associate Pastor's Terms of Call~~
 - iii. Director of Operations
 - ~~iv. Acts of Faith Coordinator~~
 - v. Minister of Music
 - ~~vi. Volunteer Visitor (a.k.a. Deacon Auxilliary)~~
 - vii. Office Volunteer

IV. Non-Financial Policies & Procedures

- a. Office Policies & Practices
- b. Acts of Faith
- c. Sexual Misconduct Policy
- d. Child Protection Policy
- e. Personnel Policy

A. VISION & IMPLEMENTATION

Preamble

South Church is a progressive urban congregation dating to the 1840's in southeast Rochester. Following the example of our Presbytery, we lift up the faithfulness of those who have preceded us and who conveyed the Good News of God's unfailing love in a way that had meaning for their time and place.

Today, our vision emerges in a context of turbulence and rapid change in church and society, but our collective vision grows in the hearts of our diverse people as we commit to serve the Risen Christ together.

Vision / Mission / Calling Statement

It is the Vision / Mission / Calling of South Presbyterian Church to live out the command of Jesus: *Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in [my] way of life* (Mt. 28:18, *The Message*). We embody our commitment to being a missional church through the practice of our *Acts of Faith Model of Ministry* and fostering grass-roots programs that spread the love of the Risen Christ through worship, education, and the arts. We hold that all believers are the hands and heart, the embrace and healing presence of Christ's love, acceptance, justice, and joy in the world.

What this Vision / Mission / Calling will look like

The successful embodiment of the *Acts of Faith Model of Ministry* will produce a series of Acts of Faith – some overtly “religious” such as Bible studies, worship services, etc. and others less so such as community gatherings to sing, study, or read together, for example – which together comprise the church. This multi-faceted entity will comprise South Presbyterian Church and be known as the South Church Network of Ministries.

No longer dependent upon a centralized location (i.e. a church building), SPC's Acts of Faith (AoF's) will meet in community institutions such as diners, housing complexes, parks, etc.

Periodically throughout the year, efforts will be made for AoF's to join together for social activities and/or worship.

In every age, the church has expressed its witness in words and deeds as the need of the time required (Constitution 9.02). Because of the rapidly changing nature of society, culture, our neighborhoods, the church, and the world our Vision for our Acts of Faith Model of Ministry will also be constantly revising itself to meet the needs of the world around us.

The Process of Program Administration

South Presbyterian Church
Rochester, New York
March 10, 2018

Program activity at South Presbyterian Church occurs within the context of our **Acts of Faith**, per the Mission / Vision / Calling statement adopted by the congregation in 2016.

Following the adaptation of the New Form of Government by the PC(USA), South recognizes its **Session** as the Church Council. ~~and the Acts of Faith Council as a conduit for information transfer between the Session and individual Acts of Faith (AoF's).~~

The Session creates a few, strategic **committees** as needed (ex. Nominating ~~and Personnel~~). On occasion, **Task Forces** are called into being for a specific time-limited purpose. Occasionally, supportive **Teams** rise and fall as needed for advisory purposes or to coordinate a specific response or service (ex. Visioning and Resource Development). However, the basic unit or grouping of individuals for our church is the Act of Faith. Hereafter, all of these designations will be referred to as "Groups."

Underscoring everything written here is the fact that South defines itself as a **Missional Church**, no longer focused on attracting individuals to come through its doors, but committed to meeting the needs of the community through grass-roots, organic ministries that take place in the community.

1. ACCOUNTABILITY

All groups and all of their individual members are accountable to Jesus Christ through the Session, which has the power to form new ones and to assign responsibility. The Session reviews the church's offering, including all AoF's, in order to further the Mission / Vision / Calling of the church.

2. GOALS & AGENDAS

Within sixty (60) days of the Annual Meeting, all groups will establish their goals and deadlines for the year. The Goals & Agendas of Task Forces and Teams are articulated as part of their creation. Annually, within sixty (60) days of the Annual Meeting, each group will map out its agenda for the year. Each Acts of Faith's Goals & Agendas for the year should be conveyed to the ~~AoF Coordinator (and hence, to the Session)~~ within the first quarter of the year.

3. LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

The person who chairs, leads, or facilitates a group is responsible for calling the group together, for prodding it to keep on the track, for preparing reports for the Session, and for consulting with the pastors. However, responsibility for setting goals, preparing the group's plans, and doing the group's work is shared by all members.

As one of the precepts of the Acts of Faith Model of Ministry favors member-led programming so that little or nothing is Pastor-driven, a large emphasis is placed on Leadership Development through classes and in-service training opportunities.

4. CHURCH STAFF INTERACTION WITH GROUPS

The pastors ~~s-are is~~ available for consultation with all groups. Occasionally, the pastors will attend all groups in order to assist with the direct administration of each group. However, the primary responsibility for the working of each group rests within the group itself. The pastors ~~s-are is~~ to be kept apprised of the internal workings of each group through minutes, reports, or informal conversation.

The Director of Operations should be informed of the date, time, and location of all group meetings. S/He will facilitate the duplication and dissemination of any group materials and room reservation(s) as needed.

5. RESOURCE PEOPLE

South's Mission / Vision / Calling is carried out by people. Our people are our greatest assets. Asking folks to assist with tasks acknowledges their leadership in ways that underscore their value. Face-to-face interactions are the primary means of connection. Congregational (and AoF) leaders should negotiate with individuals to explore and develop their individual skills.

Following an event, leadership should be acknowledged. For many leadership tasks, a letter of appreciation is more appropriate.

We're all in this together. Treat people the way(s) you'd like to be treated. Say *please* and *Thank you*.

6. COMMUNICATION & PROMOTION

The 21st century Church is called to adapt its communication and promotional style to the current environment and time. Communication and promotion are important to both the internal workings of the church (groups and staff) as well as the external workings that touch other congregations, the community-at-large, and the larger bodies of the PC(USA).

The SPC website – <http://www.southpc.org> – is the primary portal to all things related to South and the Acts of Faith Community. Calendar, contact, announcements, etc. are all found through the website. In addition, <http://www.firebirdspirit.org> – is a repository for all things related to Acts of Faith around the country.

Our worship services and other videos are accessible through our YouTube channel – South Church Rochester – which is accessible from the SPC website's home page.

Email and other digital communication are the normative means of contacting staff and other groups.

As a result of the COVID-19 shut-downs and quarantines, South Presbyterian Church has developed the practice of online gathering both through ZOOM videoconferencing and the use our YouTube Channel: **South Church Rochester**
(<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCtJ2XBNiJQxuVMrVq97SMg?>)

B. OFFICERS

Corporate

The officers of the South Presbyterian Church corporate entity shall be the President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

The **President** of the Corporation shall be elected to a one-year term at the Annual Meeting of the Corporation. The Nominating Committee will present a possible candidate and/or multiple candidates) as part of the slate of proposed officers. Nominations will be accepted from the floor. As with all congregational leaders, the President may serve a maximum of six consecutive years in the position and must then be out of office for a period of at least one year before being eligible to serve in this capacity again.

The **Secretary** of the Corporation shall be the SPC Clerk (or Co-Clerks) of Session and shall be responsible for the accurate reporting and minutes of all Congregational Meetings. If the Secretary is not available for a meeting, a Clerk Pro Tem will be elected at the meeting by all voting members.

The **Treasurer** of the Corporation shall be the Treasurer of the Congregation as elected by the Session. S/He will be responsible for monthly reports of the finances to the Session, for

appearing at Session meetings as requested by the Session, for overseeing all audits related to the church (ex. Workers' Comp, annual Financial Audit, etc.), for receiving reports on the church's investment portfolio and sharing investment information with the Session, and for overseeing the work of the Bookkeeper. The Treasurer shall be an active member of the Finance Committee.

Congregational

The officers of the South Presbyterian Church congregation shall be those Ruling Elders and Deacons currently serving on the Session and the Board of Deacons, the Clerk of Session who may, or may not, be a voting member of the Session, and the church Treasurer.

C. GOVERNING BOARDS

All currently seated Ruling Elders comprising **the Session of South Presbyterian Church** who are eligible under the civil law shall, by reason of their office, be the trustees of the corporation.

When ordained and installed per the Constitution, the Session and Board of Deacons shall establish their regular meeting times.

The size of the Session shall be up to four elders organized in two classes (two elders each).¹

Each term shall be two years long and a person may serve at most six consecutive years. Following six consecutive years of service, the individual must be off Session for a period of at least one year. If an elder is unable to discharge her/his duties for a period of three consecutive months, the Session may call for a Congregational Meeting to elect a replacement elder to complete the remaining term of service.

A **quorum for Session meetings** shall equal 51% of its current membership, **remembering that the Moderator is considered part of the Session. If the SPC Pastor (or Associate Pastor, if one is currently serving) have been installed and serve(s) as the Moderator (or Co-Moderator) of the Session, s/he may count toward the quorum threshold, per the Constitution. However, if the Pastor is in a temporary pastoral relationship with SPC, the s/he is not eligible to be counted toward the quorum threshold even if s/he is the Moderator of the Session.**

The size of **the Board of Deacons** shall be **at least** four deacons organized in two classes. Each term shall be two years long and a person may serve at most six consecutive years. Following six consecutive years of service, the individual must be off the Board of Deacons for a period of at least one year. If a deacon is unable to discharge her/his duties for a period of three consecutive months, the Session may call for a Congregational Meeting to elect a replacement deacon to complete the remaining term of service.

A group of **Partners in Ministry (PIM)** may be suggested by the Deacons and approved by

¹ This number was established by vote of the congregation on 03-07-2021.

the Session in order to adequately serve the needs of the Acts of Faith community. ~~These Partners in Ministry will constitute the Deacon Auxiliary and will assist the Deacons per the Job Description included in the Administrative Manual.~~ Partners in Ministry are approved by a vote of the Session and serve for a term of one year which may be renewed for a maximum of six consecutive years. Partners in Ministry do not need to be members of South Presbyterian Church.

A **quorum for Deacon/PIM meetings** shall equal 51% of its current membership and may include the presence of the Convener(s). ~~(whether it be the Pastor, a Parish Associate or other designated person).~~

D. MEMBERSHIP

All membership shall be governed by the *Constitution of the PC(USA)* and overseen by the Session of the South Presbyterian Church. There are three kinds of members, but only Active Members are reported in the annual census. The three classifications of members are:

ACTIVE MEMBERS are those who join, according to the Constitution, by profession of faith or a letter of transfer. They are eligible for member benefits as outlined in the Constitution.

AFFILIATE MEMBERS are those who retain their membership in another Christian Church but who align with South as their faith community. This is especially useful for those, like college students, interns, or seniors who are temporarily located in our area or who have difficulty traveling to their home churches. Their involvement is regulated by the Constitution.

CONSTITUENT MEMBERS are those who have aligned with South Church through one or more of our Acts of Faith. They are not considered members of the PC(USA) and the level of their participation is determined by the Session.

Those who have been Active, Affiliate, or Constituent Members and who no longer wish to maintain that level of membership may be moved to the **FRIENDS OF THE CONGREGATION** category at any time. Once they are no longer Active Members, they will no longer be reported in the annual census.

E. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Types of Meetings

In addition to casual, informational gatherings known as Congregational Forums, at which there are no minutes taken and at which no official decisions are made, there are two types of congregational meetings:

The **ANNUAL MEETING** which shall ordinarily be called for the **period around the first Sunday of February** and which shall be for receiving annual reports and updates on the

State of the Church, for laying out the work of the church in the year ahead, and for celebrating the accomplishments of the year passed. The Annual Meetings of the Congregation and the Corporation may be held concurrently and both will be presided over by the Pastor who is the Moderator of the Session unless s/he has asked someone else to assume that duty.

SPECIAL MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION may be called by the Session at their discretion, or when directed by the Presbytery. All such meetings shall be called for a specific purpose(s) and no other matter, save that specified in the meeting call, may be considered at the meeting.

All meetings of the congregation are to be moderated by the Pastor or another Teaching Elder chosen by the Pastor unless the meeting has been called by the Presbytery, in which case the Constitution guidelines shall be employed.

ACTS OF FAITH MEETINGS may occur at any time providing sufficient notification is given to participants. This notice shall usually be two weeks in advance and every effort shall be made to notify all who have participated in that AoF during the past three months. These non-binding AoF meetings are in addition to congregational meetings, and each Act of Faith is permitted and encouraged to have meetings of their participants whenever they wish. Decisions made at an AoF meeting are to be conveyed to the Session. The Session holds all authority over the Acts of Faith.

~~The **ACTS OF FAITH COUNCIL** is made up of representatives from each Act of Faith, and meets regularly throughout the year with the purpose of conveying information to and from the pastoral staff and providing in-service training for AoF Leaders.~~

~~All meetings of Acts of Faith are to be moderated by the Pastor or his/her designee if s/he is not able to be present.~~

Notice of Meetings

Public notice of congregational meetings shall be given during worship on two successive Sundays. The meeting may be convened following the notice given on the second Sunday. Additionally, notice shall usually be given through electronic communication, social networking, and similar methods as deemed appropriate by the Session.

Quorum for Congregational Meetings

A quorum for every meeting of the congregation shall be at least 10% of the Active Membership, to be determined by the Clerk of Session.

F. COMMITTEES, TEAMS, AND TASK FORCES

Session Committees, Teams and Task Forces

The Session shall create all committees, teams, and task forces that it deems necessary to do its work.

Pastor's Participation

The Pastor(s) is an ex-officio member of all committees, teams and task forces although active attendance and participation in all (except the Session) is up to the Pastors' discretion.

Nominating Committee

As dictated by the Constitution, the congregation shall elect its Nominating Committee at the Annual Meeting or a Special Meeting of the Congregation called for that purpose. The committee is to be comprised of:

- One elder currently on Session who shall chair the Nominating Committee,
- One representative of Deacons, and
- At least three Active Members.

Care should be given to insure that the make-up of the Nominating Committee reflects the demographics of the congregation, including representatives from various Acts of Faith.

The procedure for the Nominating Committee to follow in its deliberations is outlined herein.

Following its careful deliberations, questioning of potential officers and prayerful discernment, the Nominating Committee will present to the congregation its Proposed Slate of Officers in advance of a Meeting of the Congregation when the election will occur.

The Nominating Committee is commissioned to serve from the time of their election to the election of the next Nominating Committee the following calendar year. Any vacancies occurring in congregational leadership during the course of the year shall cause the Nominating Committee to reconvene and seek an appropriate person who will stand for election at a Special Meeting of the Congregation, called for that purpose.

The **ELECTION PROCESS AT SPC** is the process followed by our church, based on the *Book of Order*, our governing constitution.

Ordinarily, about two months before the election of officers, the Session and Pastor(s) start to encourage prayerful discernment among our members to see who might be feeling called to serve.

- a) We don't ever want to just "fill the slots" and have no vacancies in our leadership. We want only those who feel called/led by God to serve at this time and in this place. We've learned that people who are called all work well together while those serving out of obligation often see and prioritize things differently.
- b) Any Active Member of South Church is eligible to serve in a leadership capacity.

The Committee meets once to set out its course of action, contacting those who have either expressed an interest in serving or who the NomCom members feel might be called.

NomCom members agree to contact those individuals and see if they are, indeed, interested in serving at this time.

Once the slate of officers has been developed, the Session calls for a second Meeting of the Congregation to vote on the new leaders.

The materials provided to the NomCom at the time of their election will outline the process through the **ELECTION PROCESS SHEET** and the following steps:

Step 1: Familiarize yourself with the Nominating Process

Step 2: Take a look at those who feel called and assess them in terms of being Members in Good Standing (see accompanying sheet).

Step 3: At a NomCom meeting, OR through online communications, figure out who among you will call and speak with each of those volunteering to serve. (Contacting individuals should be done in person or on the phone but digital connection is not good enough. You need to “get a feel” for their call – human-to-human.)

Step 4: Come back and meet again as the Nominating Committee to share your impressions about the candidates, pray about it, and finalize the Slate of Officers to be presented at the Special Congregational Meeting to be called by the Session.

As of 2020, the practice is to collect names of those feeling called to serve in January. Elect officers at the Annual Meeting in February, so that they will begin their terms of service in March or April, making sure there has been adequate time for the examination of those elected by the Session.

Examination by the Session members will take place following the election with a Service of Ordination and Installation to follow quickly upon the successful examinations.

NEW members of the Session and Deacons may not vote at their respective meetings until they have been duly ordained and installed. Ordination is for life. Once ordained, always ordained. However, there are separate ordinations for Deacons and Elders; ordination as one is not the same as ordination for the other. Individuals may be dually ordained as both an Elder and a Deacon. All ordinations are recorded by the Clerk of Session.

Since the sale of our building (2014) and the development of multiple faith communities often makes it impossible for candidates to attend just one worship service with everyone present, we have developed the practice of a separate worship service specifically focused on the Ordination & Installation of our Leadership. All Acts of Faith participants are invited to attend, and the results are celebrated at each of the subsequent worship services following the ordination and installation of the individuals.

G. CHANGES TO THIS DOCUMENT

Changes to this document may be made by a two-thirds majority of members present at a duly called congregational meeting.

PASTOR'S STATE-OF-THE-CHURCH MESSAGE

Usually, as I approach compiling the Annual Report and pray for an understanding about where we might be headed, I seek God's direction for what I should say. I am led to certain images or Bible passages and a direction becomes clear. Fear not, that has happened once again this year, too, but the "direction" is quite a bit different from where we have been heading for the last decade or more.



Our "wee kirk" is standing on the brink of three anniversary dates worth noting. The first (and by far the least important of the three) is that May 1st will be **my fifteenth anniversary as your pastor**.

The second, is that **on August 1st, we will complete our first decade of being a "church without walls."** (We left the building in 2014 so the ten years are completed in 2023.)

And in 2024, we will celebrate **the 175th anniversary of South Presbyterian Church**. It was 1849 when the first Sunday School was established that eventually became the West Brighton Chapel and later, South Presbyterian.

Most of the time we are too busy *being* the church to think about such things, but all three of these are really significant in terms of our life together as the People of God.

In the context of this report where we are reflecting on Jesus' question "*Who do you say that I AM?*", these three events evoke three other words in my heart and mind:

Celebration	Legacy	Resurrection
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These celebrations all call to mind the journey of a lifetime that we have all been privileged to be a part of – the journey of embracing our call to be the people of God in this time and place ... to *be* the Body of Christ in today's world. And it is at moments such as these that we are invited to reflect on how we got here as well as to pray about where we are being led next.

Fifteen years ago, who could have imagined that we would be here now? Who could have imagined how our relationship with God would be deepened by leaving the security of our church building? Who could have imagined that even in a pandemic we would be reaching people who otherwise would never have come through our doors on Ft. Hill Terrace? Who could have imagined? Well ... God! And we were smart enough to pay attention and listen to God's whispers.

When we set the date for the congregational meeting where we voted to sell the building and continue as an Acts of Faith Community, you chose Easter Sunday because you wanted it to be a statement of Resurrection. And now, ten years later, we can see that the intention you set – that we be a resurrection community in the world for all to see – has been fulfilled.

In terms of our actual numbers, we are pretty much where we were on the day we sold the building – in the mid-30's. And among those 30 members, we pretty much fit the mold of most Presbyterian Churches in the country today where the average member across the denomination is a 70-year-old, well-educated white woman. The thing that's interesting about the Acts of Faith model is that we are

“church” without requiring people to join and become Presbyterian. Consequently, we have participants and leaders who are American Baptist, Episcopal, Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Unitarian, United Church of Christ, United Methodist, unaffiliated, Baha’i, as well as members of other Presbyterian Churches. Each AoF creates its own membership of those drawn to that particular ministry and expression of God’s love.

We say that we are a missional church (as opposed to an attractional one), but what does that really mean? Here’s an easy-to-understand primer. Think about any of our AoF’s as an example of the Missional category.

Attractional	Missional
Church is place	Church is people
Seeker-targeted	Seeker-mindful
Evangelism inside	Evangelism outside
Program-driven	Improvisational
Mission as program	Mission as purpose
Growth measured in Number	Growth measured in Health
Focus on Stats	Focus on Stories
Complex	Simple
Firm, established	Flexible, organic
Preserve the organization	Organization is expendable
Institution	Organism
Worship as Attraction	Worship as Reflection
Preaching as Application	Preaching as Proclamation

When we say that South is 100% Missional Church, we are saying that all of our assets are directly related to sharing our message; as a Missional Church, nothing is spent to make us permanent. Everything is devoted to sharing the love of Christ – there is no overhead that we support beyond direct programing, staff, and what we need to do our work (like photocopier and computers).

Over the fifteen years (almost) that I’ve been privileged to be your pastor, God has led us to try some very new and different ways of being church. Well ... maybe not *that* new. We were, after all, reclaiming some of the practices of the first-century church by not having a building, going where people are and recognizing that as a faith community, we are “church” to each other and the world 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The 24/7 church is not what most of us grew up with. We have acted on *faith* through our Acts of Faith. And we have proven that such a model still works today – witness the fact that our 32-member church reached **10 TIMES that many different individuals (over 300) in person this year alone**. More than 300 people “bumped up against Jesus” and his liberating message that God loves us just the way we are – no exceptions! – even in this post-COVID-shut-down world as folks are just beginning to reemerge and reconnect with others in real time. And on top of that, we had **6,000-plus contacts with people and almost 2,500 online connections through our YouTube Channel**. That’s 250 TIMES our membership being touched by God’s message through us.



That’s a LOT of sharing the Good News.
That’s a lot of evangelism!
That’s a lot to **celebrate!**

When it comes to living out our Mission of Matthew 28:19 (“Go out and train everyone you meet far and near, in [my] way of life”) I think we are definitely faithful Jesus-followers.

But at this time when we are at the nexus of all these significant anniversaries, other words come to mind, too:

Legacy and Witness!

We have been blessed to be witnesses to the Glory of God for 175 (almost) years. Starting as a Sunday School in a one-room schoolhouse on Mt. Hope Avenue when that wasn’t even part of the city of Rochester yet, in 1847 (about 20 years *after* New Life started as a Sunday School on the Erie Canal on Monroe Avenue), and expanding into church buildings (twice) on land donated by Mrs. Emmaline Bell Barker in the 1800’s.

Our legacy was one of witness through meeting the needs of the people where we were.

So ten years ago, as we embraced that legacy, we were again ready to step out in faith and bear witness again to God’s love by *leaving* that space and creating Acts of Faith wherever they were needed.

Now, we find ourselves on the threshold of another chapter in our collective life together: beginning a second decade as a “church without walls” and making our way to the bicentennial of South Presbyterian Church (This is all happening during the decade that would have been the bicentennial of New Life Presbyterian Church).ⁱ

What does the next decade hold for us? What might this next chapter look like in the epic story of this “merry little band of believers?”

These are some of the questions we need to explore in the year ahead:

- What are some of the **themes** that have marked our last decade together? How might they be a compass for the decade ahead?
- What might some future chapter(s) of South Church look like in the future when we, as individuals, are no longer here?
- What do we want our legacy to be for the next generation of believers? **When they look back on us at the 200th anniversary, what do we want them to see as our legacy to them?**
- 175 years ago – fifteen years ago – or even a decade ago – who could have imagined what our collective spirit would be like today? What does that tell us for what we can’t imagine in our own future fifteen years from now?
- How did we make the transitions that we did at those pivotal points?
With that in mind, how can we prepare ourselves for this next round of transformation?

As your pastor, I am acutely aware of how we seem to have two extremes in our membership right now – young adults and seniors. Of our 32 members (now, remember – this is *not* counting those who are fully participating in our AoF’s but who have NOT joined South as a PC(USA) member for various reasons):

- 3 (9%) are in their 20's, but their involvement is limited
- 2 (6%) are in their 40's, but 1 rarely attends
- 5 (16%) are in their 50's, but 1 has limited mobility, 1 lives out of state, and 1 rarely attends
- 9 (28%) are in their 60's, but 1 has limited mobility, 2 rarely attend, and 1 lives out of state
- 3 (9%) are in their 70's (and are all active)
- 9 (28%) are in their 80's, but 2 rarely attend
- 3 (9%) are in their 90's, but 1 has limited mobility

Think about that for a minute.

Out of our official PC(USA) members, almost two-fifths (38%) are not able regularly to be involved in the work that we do.

In fact, if we look at just those who *are* able to be **actively involved every week** to do the nuts-and-bolts internal work of the church, it's this:

- 0 in their 20's
- 0 in their 30's
- 1 in their 40's
- 2 in their 50's
- 5 in their 60's
- 3 in their 70's
- 7 in their 80's
- 2 in their 90's



20 people. And those 20 include those who are serving on the Session, the Deacons, and helping with set-up for in-person events like worship and/or potluck dinners. This is the pool of volunteers we have to draw upon where in a traditional church like the ones that most of us grew up in, it would be people in their 30's, 40's and 50's who would do most of the work that needed to be done (volunteering, setting up chairs, chairing committees, etc.). We have 3 people in those age brackets and one of them is our Minister of Music. He's already busy!

Thank goodness that we have Acts of Faith leaders and participants who are NOT PC(USA) members of South Presbyterian Church! They are faithful and are *being* the church with us, taking over many of the roles that we, ourselves, can no longer do. It's one of the blessings of this model of ministry that God has led us to create and witness to something "beyond church."

But all of this also tells me that God is calling us to be attentive to meeting the needs of our 32 members and to recognize that every church, every ministry, every mission has a time for handing over the reins.

We need to be doing the same – preparing others to continue our ministries ... inviting people to join us with the hope and expectation that we will hand control over to them.

We never wants to be a church that closes or dies because we have not trained the next generation of leaders to continue our work.

I believe that in 2023, we are being led to explore and solidify ways for us to find and engage those leaders who will be able to carry on our work when we no longer can, i.e. to have a succession plan. Whether we are to find people of similar values and commitment to mission and invite them to help us,

or we are to lift up each other as a means of encouraging leadership from among current participants, we need to talk about it, and we need to do it.

If we don't plan ahead, then our ministries will die. And maybe some are meant to. After all, no church that Paul started has remained open continuously since the first century. We discontinue Acts of Faith all the time if there is no longer energy & excitement for having them. But that's different. We are talking here about having to close up shop and discontinue *all* Acts of Faith because we didn't plan well for new leadership.

Turning over leadership might be hard for some of us ... but we can do this. We have already started it in some of the Acts of Faith where non-members are AoF Leaders and where leadership is *shared* among all members (Ring for Joy, Living Bread, Food for Thought, for examples.)

We are being called to be faithful stewards of what God has given us and insure that our ministries are able to continue beyond our personal involvement.

- **Have you listed South Presbyterian in your estate planning?**
- **Have you had conversations in your Acts of Faith regarding ongoing leadership succession?**



So I wonder:

- If God has led us to this place, who is God preparing to raise up as the next generation of leaders?
- Should one or two of us be exploring the interests of our 20-somethings to see what might work for them and their friends? Or have we just decided we're uncomfortable with that so we're not going to train them up to be the next generation of leaders?

These conversations have to come from YOU ... from participants and members. Not from your pastor. (Nothing can be pastor-dependent. Remember?) 😊

If we are to take seriously that which we say we practice in the Acts of Faith model, then in creating community and "being church" we always have to look at the make-up of the people we're ministering with in order to build community with them.

We carry the word and example of Christ and Jesus' values ... we try to embody the unconditional love and acceptance of our Creator God ... we seek to be led by the Spirit ... and go to where the people are, as opposed to expecting them to come to us in a building that may or may not be conveniently located in their neighborhood. Right?

The way we conveyed the message of God's love in the psych center for 12 years is different from how we convey it while handing out meals at St. Joe's House of Hospitality, which is different from how we convey it at Food for Thought. Each of our ministries is tailored to the people and place where it meets. The message of Redemptive Grace is the same, but the method of delivery is tailored to each individual group.

And just as Paul had to create successors in order for the communities he formed to continue ... so do we. We do not have the stamina nor the energy or calling to do what we did, in the way that we did it, ten or fifteen years ago.

We are not the same as we were when we started this journey and we need to honor those changes in ourselves as well as the changes in those who are members of our ministries, and honor that the world has changed greatly in the last 10, 15, and 175 years. (I doubt that our founders in the 19th century would be able to grasp what ministry has become in the 21st century.)

As we move into 2023, I invite us to think seriously about this question:

**When people look back on us when we are no longer active here,
what do we want our legacy to be?**

Over a decade ago we began the journey to redefine church and once we became comfortable with it, we had the luxury of living with that for a few years. COVID challenged us and we rose to that occasion, staying connected and being close throughout it. But *now* we have to take the next step.

We crossed the Jordan.

We have rested.

Now, it's time to resume the journey.

We are a Resurrection People, so it's time to ask: ***How is God Resurrecting and Recreating us for the future?***

2023 and 2024 promise to be exciting years for South Church as we lead up to our 175th anniversary.

Once again, we are being put in the position of showing others how to move into the unknown with faith ... with prayerful discernment ... and trusting that God really *is* Emmanuel – God with us ... JesUS, helping us to create new, vibrant and practical means of ministry for the 21st century.

What this intentional movement toward providing for our ongoing leadership might look like remains to be seen. We know from our own experience of the last decade that it all starts with an openness, an inquisitiveness on our part, that is anchored in prayer.

Then we have to *invite people* to join us in our vision.

I will be proposing to the Session that we launch a series of conversations throughout the year – among ourselves, with colleagues and friends from other churches, AND with our 20-somethings – to explore possibilities for addressing the future leadership and direction of South Presbyterian Church.

God *will* provide the people and the vision we need. And some of *you* who are reading these words *are* those people.

In the midst of those discussions we have to be open for the church looking very different than it does now – just as our ancestors were open to that in the 1840's and just as we were open to it 10 years ago.

We need to reaffirm what our sisters and brothers in the denomination say about the expansive work of sharing the Good News:



- We are to be **change agents** both in the church and in the world.
- We are to be **engaging in ministries of reconciliation, justice, healing and grace**. Living the Good News of Jesus Christ in community.
- We are invited to undertake this calling **even at the risk of losing our life, trusting in God alone as the author and giver of life, sharing the gospel**.

We'll be talking a *lot* about our identity and how to position ourselves for the next five to ten years in the year ahead. I invite us all to picture ourselves walking the Way with Jesus, and to remain open to those that he might be calling as leaders and which we might be oblivious to.

This is the way that we can answer with integrity the question he poses to us:

"Who do you say that I AM?"

As I have said for the last 14 years: I am so proud and humbled to be your pastor and sister sojourner on this path with you, and I am really looking forward to what lies ahead for us at South Presbyterian Church.

Pastor Deb

Rev. Deborah Fae Swift, *Pastor*



ⁱ New Life Presbyterian Church members dissolved their congregation in 2018 and moved their membership to South as they embraced the Acts of Faith Model for the continuation of their ministry and witness as the people of God.