

# 2024 SPC ANNUAL MEETING of the CONGREGATION

Sunday, December 8, 2024, 9:45 a.m.

## Report of the Session

### AGENDA

### CLERK

Dave Smith

Opening Prayer

Report to be offered verbally.

Report of the Clerk

### PASTOR

Rev. Gusti Linnea Newquist

Report of the Pastor

2024 will always be special to me as the year we hit “The Five Year Mark.”

Report of the Deacons

Report of the  
Budget and Finance Committee

The Five Year Mark in Parish Ministry is considered to be a really big deal. By then, Pastor and People tend to have a fairly good understanding of who we are, how we mesh, what challenges - and opportunities! - lie ahead, and just generally feel a stronger sense of stability after a season of getting to know one another.

Report of  
the Nominating Committee

Election of Church Leadership  
(see supplemental materials)

*Stability* has been a long time coming for us, and 2024 has certainly carried nearly as many transitions as every other year of our ministry together:

Report of  
the Personnel Committee

2024 Pastor Terms of Call

Debbie Romano closed out decades of service to SPC in order to pursue full-time seminary studies and a Supervised Practice of Ministry at Tuscarora Presbyterian; Steve Grives returned to Nebraska after his contract at Shepherd expired; the Burns and the Rules and the Landolts moved into retirement communities; the Men’s Quartet offered its farewell performance on Reign of Love Sunday; and we graciously but somewhat regretfully decided to suspend the 5:00pm Christmas Eve Family Service due to declining attendance since the COVID pandemic.

Closing Prayer

In the meantime, Jen Jones stepped in to lead the Deacons through a time of visioning and capacity-building that will continue to bear fruit for years to come; Sheila Melendez stepped in to guide a choir that continues to delight and recruit new singers excited about her leadership; Christa Mastrangelo Joyce has expanded her role with Children and Youth to a half time “professional ministry” position; and new visitors continue to find SPC to be “the church of last resort” that loves them as they are and welcomes them into the fold.

Rather than saying we have achieved *stability*, perhaps we might say we are more faithfully *aligning with the flow*.

Moments of particular grace for me this year in alignment with the flow have been:

Gathering with the congregation and the wider community to celebrate the lives and mourn the deaths of beloved members and friends of SPC; Bible at the Bar; Participating in a Gender and Religion Panel on Reproductive Justice at Shepherd University; offering Spiritual Care and Counseling to individuals, couples, and groups within the congregation and beyond; The Church Picnic; The Shepherdstown Ministerial Association Week of Prayer and Worship around the election; and the Mutual Ministry Assessment Retreat offered by Shenandoah Presbytery for SPC Leaders.

The Mutual Ministry Assessment Retreat in October was an opportunity for the SPC Leaders to reflect on the effectiveness of our own ministries and to evaluate the effectiveness of one another’s ministries as we seek together to serve the congregation and the broader community. The main outcome of this retreat was the realization that we need far greater clarity among congregational leaders about mutually shared expectations of our roles and responsibilities. Guiding the Session, Deacons,

and Committee Leaders through this clarification of roles and expectations will be my highest priority in 2025.

## **ADULT EDUCATION AND FORMATION**

Anne Teresa, Chair

The purpose of SPC’s Adult Education and Formation Program is transformation through the renewal of hearts and minds. The program supports these goals by seeking to cover a balance of subjects, including theology, spirituality, history, Bible and the arts. Formats include discussion groups, book studies, classes, retreats, and other small group experiences, with leadership that is shared as broadly as possible. During this period Adult Education and Formation sponsored the following:

2024 Sunday Seminar group discussions:

- Spring 2024: study of the book *Know Justice, Know Peace* by Deborah Threadgill Egerton began January 21, 2024. This book develops a vision for using the Enneagram, a personality framework that has deep foundations in ancient religions and spiritual practices, as a tool for social justice and anti-racism.
- Fall 2024: study of American poverty, using Matthew Desmond’s *Poverty, By America*. Desmond seeks to answer the question: WHY is there so much poverty in the richest country in the world?

An average of 16 persons attended each Sunday, via Zoom and Fellowship Hall.

Committee: Larry Neumark, Joyce Neumark, Missy Wheeler

## **BUDGET AND FINANCE**

Bob Tucker, Chair  
John Gonano, Stewardship  
Pete Spreen, Administrator

Report to be offered verbally

## **CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

Lonce Bailey, Mary Anne Hitt, Chairs

The SPC Children and Youth Program had another successful year in 2024. The highlight was the promotion of Christa Joyce to Director of Children and Youth Formation, which will bring more capacity to these programs and enhance our offerings for children and families.

The Sunday Studio program serves approximately 20 children in grades K - 5. We are grateful for the volunteers who teach the kids on Sunday mornings, and we're always in need of more help. Please consider joining us as a volunteer if you haven't done so already - the kids are a delight. Topics we covered this year included the themes of "Care for Creation" and, currently, the theme of "Do Not Fear."

The youth group has approximately 12 participants who had regular youth group meetings throughout the year. They completed several retreats including an April trip to Rolling Ridge, where we did volunteer service projects and worshiped with Pastor Joel Blunk, and a November trip to Baltimore where youth visited the community garden project we have supported for many years. In 2025, we are planning a confirmation retreat for those youth who have reached confirmation age, which will take place at Rolling Ridge in January. Finally, the nursery has been supported by staff who provide much-loved care and programs for infants and preschool aged children. Staffing the nursery is always a challenge, and this year we were lucky to have steady support from a regular team.

Looking ahead to 2025, Christa is planning to host an intergenerational "retreat" day at SPC where youth and elder church members can learn from one another, as well as an OxFam banquet with youth participation and the guidance of Barbara Hartman. There are also hopes for a second annual church lock-in with the youth group and a return trip to Baltimore to our garden partners.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Pat Hamilton and Carolee Youngblood,  
Co-Chairs

The Communications Team was formed in December, 2022. The Mission of the team is to: *Improve communications and messaging among SPC members, friends and community to assure the mission and goals of SPC are met.* The Communications Team strives to reach all of SPC's internal and external audiences in a manner that meets those constituencies where they live.

The Team met a number of their goals and is working on many more. Accomplishments in 2024 include: creating an SPC bookmark with highlights of our church, distributed throughout the community and pews; updating the 2024 SPC Directory and the member database for more accuracy, production of a Welcome Bag for new members, specifically including a Welcome Brochure which provides information on all SPC activities (these were distributed more widely as well); setting up a Google Drive to store important SPC content (pictures, presentations, promotional literature, videos and more); enhancing the Facebook Organizational and Group pages to encourage more interaction; taking over production and design of *The Messenger* newsletter; research and groundwork for a new website and support for the E-News.

The Team also participated in editing, design and promotional activities to support other

committees and groups: Guns2Gardens, Deacon Brochure, Eastern Panhandle Youth Alliance, Martinsburg Pride, Social Justice history project and Immigrant and Refugee Support social media.

Focus for 2025 will center on all activities that increase outreach within and beyond the church walls, specifically the identification of individuals who are not being fully included in church activities and messaging: a flexible and representative website, enhanced online experience and interface with viewers, social media and smart messaging.

### DEACONS

Jen Jones, Moderator

The SPC Deacon Team had a year of spiritual development, formative planning, and collaboration.

In March, the deacons met to plan a more collaborative approach to care for the SPC congregation. We met monthly throughout the year to deepen our collaboration and live into our goal to ensure that flock members could identify their Deacon Shepherds and feel encouraged to reach out.

Each monthly meeting included spiritual development led by Pastor Gusti. The development was Scripturally rooted in support of the team's goals. Much of this year's development included praying with each other and our flocks and the power of a team to care for others.

In support of flock members' ability to identify their deacons, we published a deacon handout. The handout includes the deacon mantra *We Share the Care*. Sharing the care means no deacon is alone while supporting the SPC congregation. If a deacon needs to take a break, one of the team will support their flock, etc. It

also indicates that any congregation member or friend may call on *any* deacon for support.

Deacon Shepherds for 2024 were: Yvonne Fisher, Jennifer Jones, Patti McCarthy, Derek Smith, Paul Denchy, Chris Morehouse, Mica Martin, Diana Wesley, Susan Lovell, Donna Dettling, Sherry Sykes, and Carol Wood, commissioned Deacon Shepherd for Animals.

### MATTHEW 25 INITIATIVE

Anne Teresa, Chair

The PC(USA) Matthew 25 Initiative invites Presbyterian congregations and other organizations to actively engage in the world around them – to tackle structural racism and systemic poverty, climate change, and to build relationships between congregations. SPC became a Matthew 25 congregation in the fall of 2023, and is focusing on three areas:

- Support for the Community Cup in Martinsburg
- Food Insecurity
- Clean Water

**Community Cup** - Members of SPC are invited to visit and support this coffee shop in Martinsburg that reaches out to local residents, providing friendship, worship services, and good coffee. The SPC Presbyterian Women helped provide food and servers for the Thanksgiving dinner at the Community Cup on November 24, 2024, where they fed more than 60 persons. There are many upcoming events planned at the Community Cup – information is on their Facebook page.

**Food Insecurity** - the Reverend Rebecca Barnes, Coordinator of the Presbyterian Hunger Program, visited SPC the weekend of November 17. She facilitated a workshop on Saturday, provided an overview on PCUSA's hunger work at the Sunday Seminar, and

preached both services. At our workshop, *Ending Hunger in Our Community: Food Pantries, Local Farms and Food Justice*, we had 12 representatives from local food pantries, community markets, the farming community, and others who began to dive deeper into the problem of hunger in our area, and brainstorm ideas beyond food pantries to address the increasing numbers of those who are food insecure in our community. We plan to host another gathering in January to continue the discussion and identify areas in which SPC can participate further.

**Clean Water** - We are hoping to provide 2 sessions in January during the Adult Education Sunday Seminar slot that will focus on water issues in our area, specifically the Town Run and threats to our rivers.

#### **MISSION COMMITTEE**

Stephanie Jamieson, Chair

The mission committee continued to support all of the projects from previous years with the addition of budget items for Community Meals and the Equal Justice Initiative. Lee Doty took over the Community Meals coordination from the Pattersons to continue their excellent work. SPC participated in the Cold Weather Shelter Program in March. Since then, JCCM has received a grant to expand it to a year-round program and has taken over scheduling volunteers directly. Our partners in Nicaragua have experienced a difficult period of governmental limitations on their financial activities but SPC was able to team up with other volunteer organizations to ensure that our donations to Bluefields/VERBO were properly received and Maynor, the student we have been sponsoring, was able to continue his studies in agronomy in Managua. Finally, the committee helped to sponsor a fundraising effort to provide food for victims and refugees in Gaza through the World Central Kitchen. The SPC

congregation generously donated an outstanding sum of more than \$7,000 to this special effort. Thank you to everyone who made this a signal year for SPC missions!

#### **PARISH CARE**

Paul Denchy, Chair

The Parish Care Committee serves and nourishes the congregation. Through the caring and sharing of many members, we are able to supply short-term meal preparation and/or transportation for members of SPC. The monthly newsletter article serves as a source of relevant medical information.

We continue to thank the Session and the congregation for your loyalty and support of our mission. We are open to new ideas and welcome your feedback and input as we strive to go forward with our goal of ministering to the parish.

#### **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Lois Spreen, Chair

The Personnel Committee is responsible for attending to SPC staff and staffing needs.

This year's activities included facilitating year-in-review meetings for staff, developing ministerial and staff compensation recommendations, putting together job descriptions, organizing candidate interviews, negotiating offer terms, presenting proposals to Session regarding hiring, salaries, and staff actions, and providing advice and counsel to the Pastor and staff as needed. The Personnel Committee also has responsibility for setting up benefits each year, processing the bi-weekly payroll, and ensuring the year-end W-2 and 1099 statements are correct.

Since our last meeting, SPC has hired the following individuals as employees: Natalya

Rushizky as Nursery Attendant, Mark Nutwell as AV Production Specialist, and Sheila Melendez as Choir Director. In addition, Christa Mastrangelo Joyce's role as Director, Children and Youth Formation was significantly expanded.

### **PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN**

Donna Dettling & Diana Eldridge  
Co-Moderators

The Presbyterian Women of SPC meet at 10 AM on the first Thursdays of each month September through June, for book or Bible study discussion, prayer, and fellowship. This year the group is using the books, *Always with Us? What Jesus Really Said about the Poor*, by Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis and *Poverty, By America*, by Matthew Desmond, for a study about poverty. The group participates in missions with the international fellowship of Presbyterian Women, by giving to the national Thank Offering and Birthday Offering. These gifts help fund grants awarded to a mix of domestic and international projects in areas of health, education and economic development and the needs of women, children and families. In addition, as a local mission, we provide financial and material support to Bethany House, a shelter for women and children in Martinsburg. We also participate with The Community Cup Coffee and More, and other SPC and local initiatives addressing food and home insecurity. Presbyterian Women has an active prayer shawl ministry to give prayer shawls, lap robes and baby blankets to SPC members and friends. All women of the church and community are welcome to join the meetings for lively discussion and caring fellowship.

### **PROPERTY**

Daryl Kuster, Chair

The Property Committee has been busy this past year repairing damages throughout the building and revamping the outside of the building as well. A major roof replacement and then repair due to a leak and then a tree falling on it. The HVAC unit on both library level and the lower level had to be replaced and was successful. The library area floor was completely redone, taking up the carpet and replacing it with flooring. The sofa in the library was also dry cleaned. Harry Daniel and Christopher Beckley placed over 200 bulbs around the Church for a burst of color when spring arrives. The committee continues to replace burned out light bulbs; move furniture; fix broken toilets; and respond to other property incidents and issues as necessary. The committee would like to thank all of the church members and outside volunteers for their commitment to give their time and talents and the necessary funds to continue to take care of our building.

### **SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

Lynn Coddington, Chair

IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE SUPPORT,  
EASTERN PANHANDLE YOUTH  
ALLIANCE, GUNS TO GARDENS, MORE  
LIGHT PRESBYTERIANS

Mission Statement: To inform and educate on key social justice issues in our church, community and the world leading to deeper engagement and expanded capacity to advocate for meaningful change, resulting in a world of increasing justice, wholeness and peace.

### **RACIAL JUSTICE**

Through the lens of 19<sup>th</sup> Century SPC Session meeting minutes, a 5-part Lenten Sunday seminar series this year examined the complicated history of SPC and the national

Presbyterian church with slavery. Also discussed with the help of local historians are links between SPC and the American Colonization Society's efforts to help enslaved persons emigrate to Liberia.

The transcribed minutes span the period from 1814 up to the Civil War and reveal a great deal about the role of church leaders at SPC and in the community. Exploring our records, what's included and what's missing, "enriches our understanding of historical events and helps us to interrogate the present in similar ways," according to the executive director of the Presbyterian Historical Society. PHS, a key contributor to our undertaking, retains the historical minute booklets in their Philadelphia headquarters.

A report summarizing our work was shared with PHS and the Shenandoah Presbytery.

The link to recordings of each of the five sessions, the transcribed minutes, and other research is:  
[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WCm7H9Dkc9Ak6NoYP-UppdPv01bQZ3s6?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WCm7H9Dkc9Ak6NoYP-UppdPv01bQZ3s6?usp=share_link)

Looking ahead to 2025, we'll continue to explore how to tell the stories of those mostly erased from history, and whether and how to create internal and external exhibits arising from the examination of SPC and local history.

The **Community Remembrance Project** is a collaboration of Social Justice with the Martinsburg-Berkeley Co. NAACP chapter with the goal of telling a more complete story of John Toliver, a victim of lynching in the Martinsburg area. The location of Mr. Toliver's death is known with some certainty; efforts to locate relatives who could illuminate his life have proven more difficult. As with the first victim, Joe Burns, the goal is to commemorate

Mr. Toliver with a West Virginia historical highway marker. The Remembrance Project is a nationwide effort inspired by Bryan Stevenson's Equal Justice Initiative that seeks to memorialize local victims of racial terrorism.

## LGBTQ JUSTICE

The Eastern Panhandle Youth Alliance (EPYA) supports gay and trans youth and friends with gatherings held twice a month on Monday evenings at two locations in Shepherdstown and Martinsburg. Because of the growth of the group, a larger and more accessible meeting location was secured in Shepherdstown this year.

EPYA leadership also revised the online training module for new volunteers. Volunteers support the youth by their presence and are not expected to lead the group in activities. Contact [panhandleyouth@gmail.com](mailto:panhandleyouth@gmail.com) to get involved. EPYA was again an important participant at this year's Pride celebration in Martinsburg, hosting its ever-popular face painting and giving away Pride-themed gifts. EPYA's presence makes known that it is a safe and welcoming space for youth who may not feel supported.

The documentary **Momma Bears**, co-sponsored by SPC and Shepherd University's Program Board and Multicultural Student Affairs, was shown on campus in October. It's a story of mothers of primarily Christian conservative backgrounds who fully accept their LGBTQ children and fiercely advocate for them. EPYA leadership participated in a panel discussion following the screening.

As rhetoric against queer and trans folks ratchets up, we will continue providing a welcoming space for those under attack.

## IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE SUPPORT

While the aim of IRSC is to help stem our immigration crisis at the root, basic needs continue for those immigrants in our community as well as those at the border who will be coping with mounting legal challenges, and in finding work and housing. Most efforts were undertaken locally this year which remains our primary focus.

Earlier this year, team members responded to requests from Jefferson County Community Ministries and other organizations serving immigrant clients with local resources for legal advice and other support. In 2025, securing legal help will be a critical need.

The committee organized a backpack and school supplies drive in the fall. Students, especially those of new immigrant families, benefitted. The school faculty advisor of the Hispanic/Latino Student Association was delighted to receive 21 fully packed backpacks.

And late this year, two families in Jefferson county schools who are facing significant financial and medical needs and well as immigration-related hurdles will be the recipients of gifts collected in the committee's 3rd annual holiday gift drive.

With the generous support of the congregation, the committee's efforts to support our immigrant neighbors have been successful – thank you!

## GUNS TO GARDENS

This SPC peacemaking program is supported by Social Justice volunteers and through its budget. The October surrender event nearly doubled last year's number of guns surrendered; those guns are now being converted into gardening tools.

G2G team leader Leslie Williams is one of 10 volunteers nationwide to be invited by Presbyterian Peace Fellowship to join PPF's national team of trainers/facilitators training program. As an Action Circle leader, these trained volunteers work with churches that want to learn how to hold Guns to Gardens events.

## WORSHIP

Mica Martin, Chair

Our year of worship activities include participants from children, youth, and adults in our Sunday morning worship services, and special worship services during Lent, Easter and Advent. We participated with all the Shepherdstown's churches to hold prayer and reflection each evening during the week of voting. Our sanctuary doors were open on voting day from 6:30 to 7:00 for prayer and reflection and there were prayer warriors there if the people that came wanted to pray with someone. Teams are in place for Ushering, Sanctuary and Communion Guilds, and Liturgical Art. We gathered for celebrations of life, welcomed guest preachers, provided online worship each Sunday and held a Blessings of the Animals at Morgan Grove Park this past year. Many thanks to the amazing SPC staff and the faithful volunteers who make this weekly blessing possible.

## 2024 SESSION MEMBERS

*Class of 2025:* \*Lonce Bailey, \*Lynn Coddington, Adam Ware, Carolee Youngblood

*Class of 2026:* \*Emily Gross, Keri Mahoney, \*Dave Smith, \*Bob Tucker

*Class of 2027:* John Gonano, \*Mary Anne Hitt, Stephanie Jamieson, Wanda Stewart

(\* indicates second term;  
Classes end in January of the given year)



# Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church

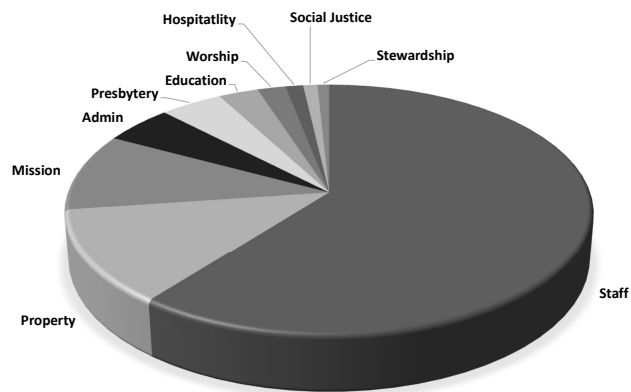
## YTD Actuals vs Full Year Budget

January - October, 2024

	TOTAL	
	ACTUAL	BUDGET
<b>Revenue</b>		
100 OPERATING INCOME	255,227.11	315,920.00
160 PASS-THRU MISSION INCOME	15,109.97	15,109.97
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$270,337.08</b>	<b>\$331,029.97</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>		
	<b>\$270,337.08</b>	<b>\$331,029.97</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
200M MINISTER	100,319.65	120,667.84
200P PERSONNEL	84,689.67	102,418.00
300 ADMINISTRATION	18,692.01	18,092.00
300P PER-CAPITA (SHEN PRESBY)	12,240.50	16,320.50
400H SPC HOSPITALITY	1,732.29	4,550.00
400S STEWARDSHIP	1,692.91	3,000.00
400SJ SOCIAL JUSTICE	1,993.41	3,700.00
500 WORSHIP	3,838.26	7,355.00
600 MISSION	31,268.86	36,733.32
700 EDUCATION	4,338.73	10,320.00
800 PROPERTY	39,873.31	45,250.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$300,679.60</b>	<b>\$368,406.66</b>
<b>NET OPERATING REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ -30,342.52</b>	<b>\$ -37,376.69</b>
<b>Other Revenue</b>		
995 Pass Thru Mission activity	-776.65	-776.65
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>\$ -776.65</b>	<b>\$ -776.65</b>
<b>Other Expenditures</b>		
Other Miscellaneous Expense	2,500.00	
<b>Total Other Expenditures</b>	<b>\$2,500.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>NET OTHER REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ -3,276.65</b>	<b>\$ -776.65</b>
<b>NET REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ -33,619.17</b>	<b>\$ -38,153.34</b>

## Expense Breakdown

(per Adjusted Budget as of Oct 31, 2024)



<b>SPC Balance Statement Summary</b>	
(as of 10/31/2024)	
<b>Cash &amp; Investments</b>	
Total Bank Accounts	272,113.51
Total Other Investments	28,940.35
<b>Total Cash &amp; Investments</b>	<b>\$ 301,053.86</b>
<b>Restricted Use Funds</b>	
B410 Building Fund Liability	15,367.77
Building Fund	-
Accounts Payable	-
Payroll Liabilities	2,188.35
Memorials & Tributes	3,276.60
Mission	2,180.77
Special Accounts	45,062.81
Advanced Giving	-
Endowments	28,940.35
<b>Total Restricted Use Funds</b>	<b>97,016.65</b>
<b>Operating / Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>\$ 204,037.21</b>

Balance Statement Summary 2024-10-31 v1 brief

