

## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, Sunday, November 21 2021, 10 a.m.

### Nominees for Ruling Elder and Nominating Committee

We asked our slate of nominees for church officers these questions:

1. When (approximately) did you first attend a service at SPC? Who or what prompted you? What was your first impression?
2. Previous church(es), if any.
3. Considering that many people in America don't, why do you participate in the life of a church?
4. One thing SPC does well.
5. One thing SPC should do, or could do, better.
6. Anything about you or your family you'd like the congregation to know.

### RULING ELDERS

#### MARY ANNE HITT (ONE YEAR TERM)

1. When we were expecting our daughter Hazel, we decided we wanted to visit SPC because Than had grown up in the Presbyterian church in Morgantown, and my mother-in-law was a Presbyterian minister in Scranton at the time. We felt welcome from the moment we walked in the door, and when I heard the inclusive and inspiring messages from the pulpit from Randy, Ethel, and others, I knew I wanted to be part of this community.
2. None.
3. As a long-time climate justice and clean energy activist, I need a spiritual tradition and community to give me the resilience and strength to continue my work for the long haul. I also love the values of justice, equity, and inclusion that my daughter Hazel is learning at SPC, first in Sunday Studio and now as a member of the youth group.
4. I deeply appreciate our commitment to justice, welcome, and open minded spirituality. I love being part of a local spiritual community that shares these values, does its part to walk the walk, and is always stretching itself to keep learning, evolving, and doing more.
5. The kids always need more support from members who are not parents, so that the parents can nourish themselves at the service on Sunday mornings too, and so that the kids can benefit from the all the wisdom in this community. Please consider volunteering once in a while if you can!
6. Nothing more to add - thanks!

#### EMILY GROSS (TWO YEAR TERM)

1. Back in 2010 when first moving to the area a former student of mine connected me to her grandparents who attended SPC at the time. Seeing the church from the outside initially reminded me of my church growing up and felt I had "returned home" after stepping inside the sanctuary.
2. First Baptist Church - Rockville, MD. First Baptist Church, West Hartford CT
3. Church has always been a part of my upbringing but I was always a part of progressive American Baptist Churches. When my career took me south of the Mason Dixon it was harder to find a church fit. After struggling to not find a church home in North Carolina or Virginia I

was so relieved to find one in the town I would be working full time in. I participate because it feeds my soul.

4. We put God's teachings of love into real action
5. Offer more activities and connection opportunities for singles and/or those 30-50's year old persons
6. I am a committed gardener and I enjoy being a part of the choir.

#### BOB TUCKER (TWO YEAR TERM)

1. Mid 2014! Dena Hill asked us if we would attend her church. We did it basically as a favor for Dena. However, driving home from that service Julie and I were "blown away" with all the things SPC was doing and advocating for! We both had been away from religion for a while, but immediately wanted to get involved!
2. I was a member of Winchester First Presbyterian church, but had stopped going after 6 years on Session and being involved in many aspects of the church. They were not a "giving and doing church", they were into how big they were and the 3 1/2 million dollars they had in the bank!
3. Church and my faith are my "compass", not just oral but every day! I love helping people and giving in any way I can to give that help!
4. We are totally involved, maybe in some areas not as much as I might like, in the life of Shepherdstown, the community and the college, and the surrounding area!
5. I believe our "local" mission support could and should be much bolder. Poverty, homeless people, drug overdoses, hungry people are all prominent around us. We need to use our time and talents in a bolder way!
6. I spent roughly 30 years of my life giving as much energy as it took to do my best to keep my patients that I operated on doing as well as they possibly could! Then, when I was ill the energy from this congregation kept me going at times! I also have a keen ability with depression and suicide, I am a good listener!

#### LONCE BAILEY (THREE YEAR TERM) \*

1. August of 2015 -- friends recommended it. I felt very at home, felt rested and right for the week after each Sunday.
2. I was raised Catholic and in graduate school I was a member of an Episcopal student community.
3. I like the way it makes me think about the world, how it helps me think through the questions of why we exist and what we are supposed to do with our lives.
4. The music
5. HmMMM
6. I love all the interesting people I meet in the SPC community and the fact that my daughters get a chance to see all of you as role models and as adults they can look up to.

### **LYNN CODDINGTON (THREE YEAR TERM) \***

1. A Christmas Eve candlelight service in the early 2000s is my first memory of attending SPC. It was with my parents who were visiting. Christmas Eve service is a special time that I wanted to share with them in the only Presbyterian Church I knew in the area. The choir and candlelit pews reminded me of my childhood church, and I felt welcomed.

2. I was born into a Presbyterian church-going family, baptized and confirmed in Grosse Pointe Memorial Church in Michigan, then transferred my membership for a brief period to Madison Ave. Presbyterian in New York City before joining SPC.

3. I chose not to attend any church for years for numerous reasons, but primarily because church didn't nurture me. With SPC when I began attending, I felt the familiar rhythms that I'd been missing.

4. Whether or not we do it well, SPC strives to keep informing and transforming.

5. In all of our apparent abundance let's not forget the least among us, especially those who are marginalized but often not seen.

6. Pat and I have been fortunate to become more intimately involved with social justice work because of SPC.

### **ADAM WARE (THREE YEAR TERM)**

1. I was drawn to Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church after attending a wedding of a college friend of mine (Rachel Hutchinson Morgenstern) in October 2016. I was immediately enchanted with the vibe. Upon attending a service after that, JB and I felt a strong sense of welcome.

2. I grew up attending St. Joseph's Catholic Church and then Our Lady of Fatima in Huntington, WV, but I stopped attending when I went to college. When my husband and I were dating, we would go to Charles Town Presbyterian Church with his family when we were visiting from Morgantown, but I was never a member there.

3. I crave purpose, community, structure, and faith in my life which I get here. Our community is a terrific place to continue growing knowledge and understanding of the Word and the world.

4. We welcome anyone who walks through the door, and we give an opportunity to be part of something bigger than ourselves. I am particularly proud to be a member of a church that makes an effort to practice inclusion. With our Social Justice Committee and adult education, we are continuing to grow our understanding of others and take a step towards improving this world.

5. I think it would be terrific to start some kind of bible study. I know we have "Teach the Preacher," to discuss the week's upcoming sermon, but it would also be cool to have something else on an ongoing informal basis. In a perfect world, I would love to see a discussion over coffee assuming if we could find a safe way to do that.

6. I enjoy playing with my dog Clinton, drinking strong coffee, eating great food, being outside, reading, and travelling. My husband JB and I enjoy soaking in the vibes of

the Eastern Panhandle and have lots of fun with family.

### **CAROLEE YOUNGBLOOD**

1. About 5 years ago I moved to the Shepherdstown area and decided to look for a church in order to get to know more people in the community. I visited various church websites and saw that SPC had hosted a meeting of the ACLU. I immediately attended a service at SPC and was impressed with the service and the friendliness of the members.

2. First Baptist Church, Austin, Texas

3. Being a part of SPC has added to my life. I have made friends and enjoy volunteering and being a participant.

4. Choosing Gusti to be our pastor is a magnificent choice! I appreciate that SPC reaches out to the LGBTQ community.

5. I look forward to more activities being held at the church.

6. I am originally from Texas. I now live in Sharpsburg. I have been in marketing and public relations for 30 years. I am currently the Program Coordinator for SAIL, a non-profit organization in Shepherdstown.

### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

#### **LESLIE WILLIAMS (TWO YEAR TERM)**

1. I first attended a service at SPC in 2006, when I was carrying a burden that I knew I couldn't carry alone. My first impression of SPC was that it was place to which I could bring all of my humanity.

2. No previous Churches.

3. It has been a place of continued spiritual and personal growth for me, and given me a sense of community I've never had.

4. It shows up mightily when the chips are down.

5. Confront differences / conflict more directly and compassionately.

#### **FRANCES MARSHALL (THREE YEAR TERM)**

1. I was baptized as a baby; as a child in the church, I remember sitting with Floyd and Mildred Miller since Mom sang in the choir. Mom says--about me being baptized--that I didn't like the water on my head.

2. It's always been SPC.

3. I have very fond memories of this church and my family has always been involved somehow in the church--in choir, as readers of liturgy, participants in festivals, in church governance (mom), as assistants with services in as many ways as possible. I like sharing in that history and that work.

4. Provides opportunities for growth and self-expression

5. Uncertain, need time to think.

6. My favorite season of the church year is Advent.

**\*INDICATES SECOND TERM**