

2025 Annual Report

Be the Light!



“In the same way, let your **light shine** before others,
that they may see your good deeds
and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:16





To Proclaim — To Glorify — To Equip — To Serve

Our Vision: A congregation...

- so grounded in scripture and sustained by prayer,
- so committed to spiritual growth and faithful discipleship,
- so inviting, welcoming and inclusive,
- so nurturing and healing,
- so mission-minded,
- so vibrant, energetic and open to opportunities to share the Gospel that lives are transformed by the love of Christ.

Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church is a safe place for all people to worship regardless of race, creed, age, cultural background or sexual orientation.

Our Mission: Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church is called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to live like Christ in a broken world.

- To Proclaim the Gospel
- To Glorify God in worship and deed
- To Equip our congregation for ministry
- To Serve others in Christ's name.

Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church is a member of the Peace River Presbytery, the Synod of South Atlantic, and the Presbyterian Church (USA).



Pastoral & Administrative Staff

- The Rev. Robert J. Marrow, Pastor/Head of Staff
 James Cochran, Director of Music
 Michele Byrd-Gerlach, Assistant to Administration & Music
 Heather Mikes, Director of Christian Education & Vanderbilt Learning Center
 John Healy, Finance Manager
 Barbara Bonavita, Office & Facility Coordinator/Membership Secretary
 Norman Barillas, Custodian
 Cesar Guzman, Custodian
 Pedro Feliciano, Custodian
 Julie Carver, Pianist
 Gordon Black, Handbell Director
 Viki Bonavita, Audio/Visual Technician

*"God is light."
 - 1 John 1:5*



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From our Pastor—The Rev. Robert J. Marrow



Dear Friends in Christ,

As we step into a new year of mission and ministry together, I am filled with gratitude for the ways God has been at work among us in 2025. Your commitment to being the Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church family shines through in the care you extend to one another and the joy with which you share Christ's love beyond our walls. We are truly a community that is sharing the Light of Christ with others!

This past year was rich with opportunities to grow in faith. We continued in our efforts to strengthen our growing sense of community, as well as discovered new ways of creating space for yet even deeper connection and spiritual growth. Your involvement in areas such as Wednesday Night Lights, adult education offerings, small group meals, the various music ministries, as well as the myriad of vital mission offerings that you support demonstrates your commitment to being the Light of Christ in our community.

Beyond the walls of our congregation, your generosity is making a difference in the lives of many people. Last year, in addition to the many volunteer hours spent on work sites, the Vanderbilt family provided, either directly to Habitat or via our mission fund, over \$285,000 to Habitat for Humanity of Collier County. You also welcomed families to new homes by providing complete furnishings for three new apartments with the Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance. Many of you provided funding and helped pack shopping bags with food for either the Weekend Power Pack, Mission Peniel, or Collier Harvest. Many additional meals were served to our neighbors at the Café of Life in Bonita Springs. In that same spirit, a team of our students participated in the Food Bowl Games, packaging food for Meals of Hope. I could go on and on about your generosity!

With our updated web site, online engagement remained strong throughout the year, with growing use of our worship and concert series live streams, sermon archives, and event updates among the most visited resources, helping us extend Christ's welcome far beyond our physical doors.

The past year also had its fair share of stress. However, the good news is that none of us were journeying on our own. One major obstacle that presented itself during VBS was the discovery of the damage to the trusses of Fellowship Hall. This space has been unusable since June. We are grateful that the repair work is FINALLY underway.

TOGETHER, we grew as a community serving God—the Session, Deacons, members, EVERYONE! I would like to provide a special word of appreciation for the commitment and dedication displayed by the staff of VPC. Each day, every member of the staff gave their best efforts to ensure that the Light of Christ was shining through the mission and ministry of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church. So, I give a big thank you to our valued staff members!

As we look ahead, we continue to unfold the Guideposts that shape our ministries and focus our mission. May we embrace this new year of being the Light of Christ in our community with hope and hospitality, deepening friendships and growing in our faith and service to our neighbors. I am excited for the year ahead and the many ways we will witness God's work in our midst. I also rejoice that you are part of the beloved community at Vanderbilt.

In Christ,

Pastor Rob





From our Director of Music — Dr. Jim Cochran

The goal of the music department at Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church is to glorify God through carefully prepared musical presentations both within the services of worship and in our concert series.

2025: The Chancel Choir prepared and presented meaningful weekly anthems for church services, and amazing and uplifting Easter and Christmas seasons for all of us. A highlight was the Christmas Concert, featuring Mary McDonald’s “Festival of Christmas” with a thirteen piece orchestra plus piano and organ. The concert also included the world premiere of McDonald’s “Tidings of Comfort and Joy,” an anthem for choir, orchestra, organ and piano written in celebration of James Cochran’s thirty-five years of service as Director of Music here at the church.



The Learning Center choir again presented the cutest Christmas concert ever, and also a beautiful Spring Concert in May. They rehearse each Monday through Thursday in Cochran Hall, learning songs and playing bells, boom whackers, and drums! Special thanks to all of the Learning Center teachers and director for helping with daily rehearsals and concert preparations.

The Alleluia Choir, though small, really enjoys singing in church services and did an amazing job with the “rehearsed” parts of our annual “Unrehearsed” Christmas Pageant!

Pianist Julie Carver continues to provide professional accompaniment for the Chancel Choir, stunning accompaniments to the congregational hymns,



mesmerizing improvisations as part of the weekly prelude, and super strong support for the Alleluia Choir. She is really enjoying our beautiful new Steinway B piano, which came to live at the church in January. All of the artists in the concert series have RAVED about the beauty of the new piano.

Choir “Angels” handle the administrative details of maintaining the library and robes. Thank you, Angels! And a special thanks to Joanne Lepore and Nancy Malecek for taking over upon the retirement of Andrea Daggett. Thank you, Andrea, for your years of dedicated service to the choir. Susie Hilton handles all of the electronic communications for the choir, and that is a big job. Thank you, Susie!

The Handbell program, under the direction of Gordon Black is booming, thriving, and growing! The Carillon Ringers group and the smaller Campanile Ringers group are fully subscribed, and Gordon maintains a list of excellent substitutes who can jump in at the last minute. The Bell groups provide anthems monthly and also participate in the Christmas and Spring concerts. Special thanks to Gordon, who is volunteering his time and talent in leading these two excellent ensembles!

The Concert Series is growing in popularity and is thriving! We have presented a more varied schedule of artists this year, but will continue to host the winners of the Cochran Organ Prize and one internationally recognized organ artist each year. You can look for chamber music, jazz, Broadway, and local, living composers in the coming seasons. Thank you, as always, for your very generous support of this community outreach program.

Sincerely, **James Cochran**







From our Director of Christian Education —Heather Mikes

It's always an amazing opportunity to be still for a moment of reflection over the year past and look forward with hope to the year ahead. I encourage everyone to take time to review this annual report - learning about how our church and school family has been serving, the love that has been poured in, the time, talent and treasure shared, and how we aspire to be a positive influence for good reflecting the light of Christ in this world.



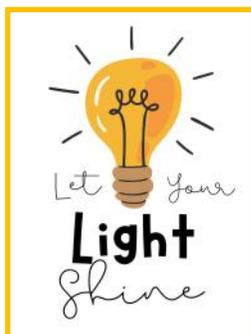
“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” — Matthew 5:16

How can we be a light in the darkness? What is God calling you to? Being the body of Christ in the world is an opportunity for all of us. Through these moments of reflection, we learn to discern and live into our calling. We are faithful and grateful for the unending love God has for us and we have a responsibility to share it.

Christian Education includes all of God's children from infants to adults. We are all growing in God's love. Many of our efforts are expressed in the Education and Family Ministry Report and the Vanderbilt Learning Center Report, but they don't start and end there. That's just a year-at-a-glance. Our lives are full and enriched daily by the many hands and hearts involved in our ministry, from learning Biblical literacy and establishing faith fluency to transforming lives.

Your light matters. God works through you, as part of a faith community, to build each other up. Naturally, we are drawn to light. We want to be near it and experience its warmth and safety, so let's share it into the far corners and light up what can sometimes feel like encroaching darkness. I encourage you all to jump in to your calling. Not sure what it is? Just ask... “Lord, lead the way!” And pursue it. Take a Christian Education class or teach! Serve on a ministry team! Give to your church to support ministry or a mission. Ask for help.

Lately, when I am feeling uncertain, I play a song that speaks to me. It's called “Made For More” by Josh Baldwin and was inspired by Romans 8. I will share a little with you...



*I know who I am 'cause I know who You are
The cross of salvation was only the start
Now I am chosen, free and forgiven
I have a future and it's worth the living
'Cause I wasn't made to be tending a grave
I was called by name
Born and raised back to life again
I was made for more*

Whether you are two or 12 or 20 or 42 or 92, the world can sometimes feel overwhelming. Sometimes we struggle. We trust God to help us do the next right thing. We pray with childlike faith and we ask God for the strength to live in a broken world, to hope for a brighter tomorrow, to find joy and love without bounds expecting nothing in return, to overflow with grace and peace.

Christian Education comes in many forms with Christ at the center. Our faith journeys are all different. Morning or night, on any day of the week, there are many ways to spend time in the Word that immerse

you, inspire you and transform you. We're here to support and encourage you, to provide tools and resources, to teach and equip you to teach others. So, go light it up! Keep serving or take on something new, but invest in each other - making time to connect, to love one another and to deepen your relationship with God.

"This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine."

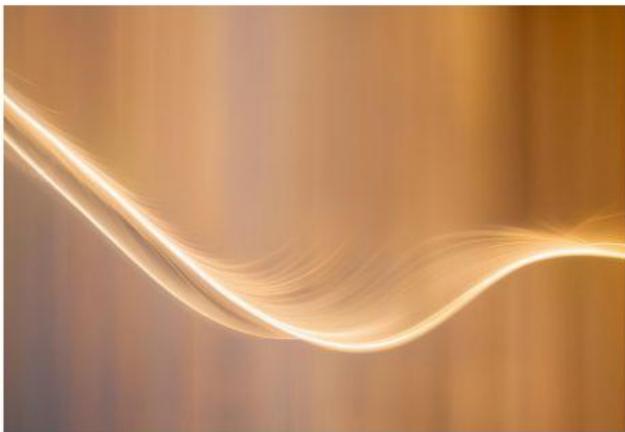
In Grace and Peace, Heather Mikes





From the Clerk of Session

It has been a pleasure, and also somewhat of a learning challenge, to assume the responsibilities of Clerk of Session of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church. I officially began this journey in October 2025 and I am especially grateful for the training and guidance I received from Dick Hilton, our former Clerk of Session for 10 years. Thank you, Dick! I also want to thank many members of our congregation and all of our church staff who have congratulated me and provided their support and confidence as I begin this journey. I appreciate this very much!



The year 2025 continued to be another year with steady progress – all our Ministry Teams were staffed with volunteer church members and continue to support our missions, education and family programs, finances, personnel, buildings and grounds, music programs and all other growth and social activities that make Vanderbilt a vibrant church. If you are interested in participating in any of our Ministry Teams, please let us know! We are grateful for everyone’s contributions, especially for the ongoing work done by our Elders, Deacons and, of course, our amazing and dedicated church staff.

Personally, I have also been active in helping my wife Karen set-up and provide the weekly Sunday Fellowship Hour refreshments, coordinating the mission of the Collier Harvest food packing dates with our church volunteers, and assisting with the Wednesday Night Lights programs for our youth. I plan to continue in these areas while also serving as Clerk of Session.

In the process of doing church business your Session held nine Stated Session meetings and two Congregational meetings during 2025. I will continue to do my best to prepare the Session meeting agendas and document accurate minutes of each Session meeting. To keep everyone informed I will also provide the congregation with a brief summary after each Session meeting in the VPC Week-At-A-Glance emails. If you have any questions, please let me know.

It is my honor to serve as your Clerk of Session as we continue to move forward into 2026.

Peace and Blessings,
Peter V. Rodino, Clerk of Session



CLASS ~ 2025

Greg Borden
Joe Doggett
Ann Foote
Ron Shaffer
Sue Van Fossen
Becky Wheat

CLASS ~ 2026

Arnold Alexander
Nena Beynon
Michael Bevilacqua
R. Max Gould
Eliza Nevin
Steve Woodring

CLASS—2027

Gordon Black
Jan Fern
Amber Grider
Price Lindsay
Penny O’Kelley
Bill Schouldice

CLASS—2028

Rebecca Acx
Greg Borden
Pete Rodino
Jack Tanner
Ruth Wade
Charles Whittington



Budget, Finance & Investment Oversight Team

Team Overview: 2025 was a good year from a financial perspective for the Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church. VPC revenues were approximately \$52K higher than budget, thanks to the membership giving. VPC expenses were almost \$10K over budget mainly due to building and grounds necessary costs. The net result was a \$42K gain for the VPC 2025 year versus a balanced budget, defined as no gain or loss. The Vanderbilt Learning Center also had a positive year from a financial position, as well as an enrollment that continues to grow.

Team Purpose: In 2025 the Budget, Finance and Investment Oversight Team carried out their purpose to ensure the “wise use of God’s gifts.” We guided the Session through recommendations for improvements, working with all the ministry teams through the 2025 budget process, and ensuring financial support for the church programs and projects while maintaining the financial integrity of all activities.

Description of Team’s Work:

- Coordinate the 2025 annual operating budget process, working closely with the ministry teams and Session.
- Monitor VPC and VLC financial operating performance vs. budget, reporting to Session monthly.
- Ensure the safety of the church’s financial assets and adherence to account policies and procedures.
- Continue to review and be aware of opportunities to enhance VPC’s financial position. Make recommendations when required.
- Work with the Building and Grounds Team to manage the disbursement of Capital Reserve funds.
- Stay aware of the long-range and short-range initiatives & goals to support them financially.

2025 Accomplishments:

- Worked monthly with the Building and Grounds Team to review the Capital Reserve cost report, that lists proposed projects for approval. Examples were the VLC new classroom, getting the Manse in resalable position and preparing for the Fellowship Hall structural requirements.
- Financial processes have been documented and are performing reconciliations as recommended by recent audits.
- Increased revenue significantly by moving funds to areas with advantageous interest rates, as recommended by our Financial Manager.
- Worked with the Vanderbilt Learning Center (VLC) to submit request to be accepted for state funded scholarship money.
- Monthly review of the Endowment program continues.
- 2023 Audit completed and the 2024 audit underway.
- Developed a 2026 balanced budget for submission to Session.

Looking Forward:

- Provide the funds necessary to ensure safety and required updates to the church structures and utilities including the modifications required for Fellowship Hall.
- Continue to support increased membership in the church.
- Ongoing process to look for alternatives and options to reduce costs.

Bob Bush, Moderator

Team Members:

Bob Bush—*Moderator*, Max Gould—*Treasurer*, Ann Parker Foote & Eliza Nevin—*Session Liaisons*, Debbie Dawley, Terry Mountford
Staff—John Healy, *Financial Manager*, Pastor Robert Marrow, *Ex-Officio*





Treasurer's Report

Summary: Both Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church (VPC) and the Vanderbilt Learning Center (VLC) had a good year financially in 2025. The combined organization had income of \$2,004K higher than 2024 by \$87K. Both VPC and VLC increased their income over last year. Combined expenses were \$1,945K over 2024's total expense by \$148K. The total entity had a net surplus for the year of \$59K, lower than 2024 by \$61K. Both VPC and VLC had surpluses for the year.

Church (VPC): VPC had full year income of \$1,332K, higher than last year by \$13K. Congregational giving was \$1,169K less than 2024 by \$9K. Other income of \$104K was higher than last year by \$23K. This was the result of increased investment income. Expenses for the year totaled \$1,290K higher than 2024 by \$49K. Building and Grounds exceeded 2024 by \$87K. Support activities were over last year by \$10K. Lower than 2024 were Personnel by \$24K and Ministry & Member Services by \$23K. Net was a \$42K surplus smaller than the prior year by \$36K

Learning Center (VLC): VLC added an additional classroom enabling it to add 22 more students. This significantly increased both its income and expenses. Income for the year was \$667K higher than last year by \$80K. This was comprised of Tuition and Fees being higher than 2024 by \$80K. Parent Team donations were lower by \$7K. Total VLC expenses were \$655K, \$99K higher than last year. The main reason for the increase was additional personnel expense of \$109K. Administration and Classroom expense were less than last year by \$5K each. Net was surplus of \$17K lower than 2024 by \$25K.

Balance Sheet Total: Assets increased by \$335K to \$16,947K. Most of the increase was driven by investment gains. In the operating accounts, we moved \$500K from our low-yielding checking accounts to money market and equity accounts at the Presbyterian Foundation. The Endowment accounts increased by \$175K.

Missions: In addition to the VPC operating budget, many members donate money to 16 different missions. These funds are kept in Restricted Accounts. In 2025, \$110,102 was donated to Missions and \$102,816 was disbursed. The remaining balance will be used in 2026.

R. Max Gould, *Treasurer*



**Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church and Learning Center
2025 Financial Report**

Account	2025 Full Year Actual	2024 Full Year Actual	2025 B/(W) 2024
Vanderbilt Church (VPC)			
VPC Income			
Congregational Gifts	\$1,169,441	\$1,178,078	(\$8,637)
Other Income	\$103,933	\$80,629	\$23,304
Program Income	\$10,442	\$11,963	(\$1,521)
VLC Service Fee	\$48,000	\$48,000	\$0
VPC Total Income	\$1,331,816	\$1,318,670	\$13,146
Expenses			
Personnel	\$805,094	\$829,135	\$24,041
Building & Grounds	\$309,890	\$222,941	(\$86,949)
Ministry & Member Services	\$51,095	\$74,182	\$23,087
Support Services	\$113,735	\$104,107	(\$9,628)
Presbytery Support	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0
VPC Total Expense	\$1,289,814	\$1,240,365	(\$49,449)
VPC Net	\$42,002	\$78,305	(\$36,303)
Learning Center (VLC)			
VLC Income			
Tuition Fees	\$667,264	\$587,142	\$80,122
Parent Team & Other	\$5,404	\$11,938	(\$6,534)
VLC Total Income	\$672,668	\$599,080	\$73,588
VLC Expense			
Personnel	\$553,433	\$444,291	(\$109,142)
Administration	\$43,203	\$48,681	\$5,478
Classroom Expenses	\$10,754	\$15,818	\$5,064
VPC Service Fee	\$48,000	\$48,000	\$0
VLC Total Expense	\$655,390	\$556,790	(\$98,600)
VLC Net	\$17,278	\$42,290	(\$25,012)
VPC/VLC Results			
Total Income	\$2,004,484	\$1,917,750	\$86,734
Total Expense	\$1,945,204	\$1,797,155	(\$148,049)
Combined Net	\$59,280	\$120,595	(\$61,315)



Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church and Learning Center
Limited Balance Sheet Comparison
December 31, 2025

	2025	2024	2025 B/(W) 2024
Assets			
Current Assets			
Checking Accounts	\$394,795	\$869,207	(\$474,412)
Other Current Accounts	\$76,055	\$400	\$75,655
Investment Accounts	\$658,782	\$129,441	\$529,341
Total	\$1,129,632	\$999,048	\$130,584
Restricted Accounts			
Memorial Garden	\$97,728	\$81,809	\$15,919
Capital Fund	\$128,988	\$158,632	(\$29,644)
Endowment Accounts	\$1,387,756	\$1,198,755	\$189,001
Total Restricted Accounts	\$1,614,472	\$1,439,196	\$175,276
Total Current Assets	\$2,744,104	\$2,438,244	\$305,860
Fixed Assets			
Building & Improvements	\$4,539,595	\$4,539,595	\$0
Land and Parking Lot	\$477,702	\$477,702	\$0
Furniture and Equipment	\$6,632,559	\$6,632,559	\$0
Piper House	\$266,930	\$266,930	\$0
Organ and Piano	\$2,257,724	\$2,257,724	\$0
Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	\$28,876	\$0	\$28,876
Total Fixed Assets	\$14,203,386	\$14,174,510	\$28,876
Total Assets	\$16,947,490	\$16,612,754	\$334,736
Liabilities & Net Assets			
Total Liabilities	\$4,323	\$0	\$4,323
Net without Donor Restrictions	\$15,081,081	\$15,004,018	\$77,063
Net with Donor Restrictions	\$1,862,088	\$1,608,735	\$253,353
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$16,947,492	\$16,612,753	\$334,739



**Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church and Learning Center
2025 Mission Gifts**

Mission	Beginning Balance	Donations	Disbursements	Ending Balance
Souper Bowl	\$0	\$2,193	\$2,193	\$0
Christmas Joy	\$100	\$925	\$1,025	\$0
Habitat for Humanity	\$0	\$47,545	\$47,545	\$0
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$0	\$330	\$330	\$0
Special Missions	\$10,372	\$2,160	\$8,000	\$4,532
Heifer Fund	\$0	\$802	\$802	\$0
Grace Place	\$0	\$51	\$51	\$0
Presby. Disaster Assist	\$0	\$2,636	\$2,636	\$0
Collier Harvest	\$0	\$1,550	\$1,550	\$0
Cuba Mission	\$1,156	\$0	\$0	\$1,156
Immokalee Fair Housing	\$0	\$15,875	\$15,875	\$0
Café of Life	\$0	\$2,130	\$2,130	\$0
New Horizons	\$0	\$510	\$510	\$0
Mision Peniel	\$0	\$5,854	\$5,854	\$0
Salvation Army	\$0	\$852	\$852	\$0
Weekend Power Pack	(\$487)	\$26,689	\$13,463	\$12,739
Total	\$11,140	\$110,102	\$102,816	\$18,426

But do not forget this one thing dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:8-9



Buildings & Grounds Team

The Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church Buildings and Grounds Team oversees the maintenance and care of the church facility, property, and furnishings. This includes the church campus grounds, parking lots, and the residential house (manse) located next door at 1301 Piper Blvd. The team is also involved with developing the annual operational budget, determining capital replacement needs and recommending an annual capital budget allocation.

Highlights of projects completed in 2025:

- Manse: Repaired, reconditioned, marketed and leased. This was a process, and activities occurred throughout the year from January through the end of December.
- Fellowship Hall trusses: Discovered, investigated, reported status to Session, received corrective bids and selected contractor. Work to be done early in 2026.
- Sanctuary A/C: Determined technical/capacity needs, replaced two units
- Other A/C: Repaired/replaced other units
- Replaced street side backflow valve
- Replaced playground surface for VLC
- Repaired/replaced components of fire alarm system
- Repaired A/V components, i.e, Harp Hall screen, some sound board components
- Renewed all lines insurance with coverage for wind/hurricane. Obtained updated valuation
- Chancel step repairs
- Memorial Garden Administration, landscaping
- Screening for fence for VLC, added new lighting
- Replacement of some administrative computers
- Reviewed service contracts, sanitation, lawn service, fire service, tech
- Electrical repairs, East wing
- Completed numerous inspections, County, fire, VLC, etc.
- Staff custodians did exceptional work including: painting and cleaning throughout year, especially June for VLC, repairs to parking lot walkway, daily work



Those projects completed using Capital Funding:

- Sanctuary A/C replacement, backflow valve, VLC playground surface, Fellowship Hall assessment/Engineering Consultant, some Manse repairs

Plans and considerations for 2026:

- Fellowship Hall repair, Schock Chapel, restore fire suppression system in kitchen and use of cooktop, Chapel and East wing modifications, lightning protection assessment, parking lot sealcoat, technology assessment.
- Continue to work on Norman's list; prioritize a list of Capital Improvements

Team Members: Rebecca Acx—*Elder Liaison*, Nena Beynon—*Elder Liaison*, Dave Curtiss, Peter DeBaun, Doug Dunn, Price Lindsay—*Elder Liaison*, Jerry Warnken, Becky Wheat.

Ex-Officio Members: Norman Barillas, John Healy—*Business Administrator* and Rev. Rob Marrow.

Respectfully submitted, **Peter DeBaun**, *Moderator*



Education & Family Ministry Team

We are all God’s children, growing together in Christ and answering God’s call to love each other and share God’s love with the world. The Education Ministry Team is constantly creating, implementing and evaluating programs based on the needs of our congregation and our community. We are a family — all of us together — young and old, near and far, in-person or live streaming!

Our team includes of a number of dedicated volunteers who strive to support, encourage and equip all people to be faith leaders and a positive influence everywhere we go — church, school, office, neighborhood, car, sports field, gym, studio...anywhere! We encourage corporate worship on Sundays and we also recognize that ministry happens 24 hours-a-day and seven days each week. It is a job for ALL and not the few. We are called to shine a light! Matthew 5:16 says, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."



We shine brighter, together!

- Grew our education team with the addition of Ellen Crown.
- Fostered small group study through Friends In Faith, Pastor Rob’s Bible Study, Books Clubs, Family Led Bible Study and online offerings.
- Facilitated Adult Education classes with Tom Grundstrom on an array of topics including Revelations, Echoes of Wisdom: Ancient Truths for Modern Souls, and “All About Me.”
- Gathered with friends around tables for breakfast, lunch and dinner including Dine with Nine, Vanderbilt Ladies Who Lunch, Femme Foodies, Family Dinners and socials, and Lunch Bunch.
- Continued Family Led Worship opportunities monthly. Facilitated Acolyte and Usher Training with our youth.
- Hosted our neighbors’ for meetings and gatherings in our facility.
- VPC Children and Youth rallied for the Annual Souper Bowl of Caring and VPC delivered a check to the Grace Place Food Pantry in the amount of \$1,692.97, plus non-perishable food to help tackle hunger and homelessness in our community.
- Joyfully hosted our community Vacation Bible School for children ages three through fifth grade during “True North.” One of the most inspiring things about VBS is watching God work among us and through us! With the support of our amazing staff, adult and youth volunteers, we hosted more than 115 campers July 14-18 and then celebrated on VBS Sunday with song and testimony. Thank you all for sharing God’s love, for



your prayers and donations, for encouraging one another and building each other up!

- Celebrated ministry, fellowship and community outreach opportunities for God’s glory through Graduation Sunday, Blessing of the School Year and Teacher Commissioning, Fall Education Kick Off, Trunk or Treat, the Ladies Christmas Cookie Exchange, Magi Processional, Palm Sunday Processional, Flowering of the Cross, Holy Week and Easter activities, and more.
- Taught Chapel weekly in our Student Center with Mrs. Mikes and our VLC students and staff. Worked closely with our preschool ministry at the Vanderbilt Learning Center.
- Kicked off another successful year of Sunday school for children, youth and nursery ministry. Implemented new curriculum for Middle and High School students (LIVE by Group), including digital access to daily prayer and scripture.
- Created opportunities for intergenerational ministry and fellowship.
- Served missions of our church with time, talent and treasure including the LEGO Build Challenge for Habitat for Humanity, the American Cancer Society Relay for Life, SNIP Collier, Mision Peniel, Grace Place, Beach Cleanup, The Shelter for Abused Women & Children, and the Food Bowl Games for Meals of Hope.
- Encouraged spiritual growth and fellowship, together with the Endowment Ministry Team through the Birthday Club, sent five, 6th and 7th grade girls to camp at Cedarkirk June 22-29. Invited youth to share their experiences during Sunday worship.
- Lent activities included distribution of devotionals for adults, children and families.
- Advent activities included distribution of a VPC devotional, family Advent calendars, family Advent readings and the beloved Unrehearsed Christmas Pageant. The Family Gingerbread House building contest is an annual favorite for everyone!
- Shared ministry resources through social media.
- Welcomed children, youth and families with children ages two through high school to “Wednesday Night Lights.”
- Collaborated with other ministry teams and staff members to accomplish our goals together.



We are blessed by the many hands and hearts that serve — staff, friends, family, volunteers and community. Thank you for all the ways you support and encourage this very special ministry.

Team Members:

- Rob Marrow—*Pastor*,
- Amber Grider—*Session Liaison*,
- Heather Mikes—*Director of Christian Education*,
- Becca Acx, Ellen Crown,
- Jason Mikes, Brooke Vayda and Caitlin Whittington



Congregational Nominating Committee

The Congregational Nominating Committee is charged with choosing members of our congregation to fulfill the responsibilities of the Session, the Board of Deacons and the congregational members-at-large of this committee. It meets on a monthly basis, sometimes twice a month, until this important work is completed. The result of this work is shared with the congregation during the annual meeting in March when the formal nomination, vote and approval process of the individuals chosen takes place.

Purpose: In accordance with the Book of Order, the committee serves as the official nominating committee of the congregation, to provide nominees for all vacancies, either annually or when vacancies occur, on the Session, the Board of Deacons and the Nominating Committee itself (“At-Large” members only). It is the committee’s responsibility to prayerfully consider those individuals who possess those “Gifts of the Spirit” that are essential to the mission and the ministry of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church.

Accomplishments: The Congregational Nominating Committee presented the list of nominees for the Session, the Board of Deacons and the congregational members-at-large of the Nominating Committee at the annual congregation meeting in March.

Committee Members:

Susie Hilton—*Moderator*

Jan Fern & Price Lindsay—*Session Liaisons*

Jane Repp—*Deacon Liaison*

Steve Blad, Karen Chappler & Pricilla Kutler—*At-Large Representatives*

Pastor Robert Marrow—*Ex-Officio*



Frank T. Mohr, Jr. Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden was created as a place of peace and repose in which to inter the “cremains” of those who have expressed their desire to do so, either under the pavers or scattered. The Garden was dedicated 27 years ago to the glory of God and in honor of former Associate Pastor Frank T. Mohr, Jr.

The Memorial Garden committee’s purpose is to manage the Garden, the interments, ordering and installing name plates for the Garden wall, maintaining the Book of Remembrance in the Library, landscaping and maintenance. In 2025 there were seven interments of “cremains” — one was scattered and six were interred. We also received one reservation of space.



The Memorial Garden, with its bench, flowers, and trees may be used by anyone for Meditation and Remembrance. The Garden is located in front of the church facing Piper Blvd. Access to the Memorial Garden is through the Church Library.

Thank you to Barbara Bonavita for office assistance and to Norman and Cesar for their assistance in the Garden. If you need information or a brochure about the Memorial Garden, contact the church office or pick one up in the Narthex.



Membership & Involvement Team

AIM (Adventures in Membership): Meetings held with prospective members, Elders and Team members. We meet in the Sanctuary front pews after the Sunday service, the first Sunday of every month. New members were welcomed into the congregation on the following Sunday. Nineteen new active members joined our congregation during 2025.

Greeting and Attendance: Two members of our team are positioned at the front doors of the church on Sunday mornings with a smile and cheerful "Welcome to Vanderbilt!" Greeters assist the ushers



with the collection, distribution of flowers, and a warm wish to parishioners as they leave the church. They then collect the attendance sheets. During the week, members take note of first time visitors and those who fill out the blue information cards. Those folks are then contacted. A team member checks the pews monthly to make sure all important information is available in the pew racks.

Birthday Cards: Members of the team take turns sending out birthday cards to members on their special day. We have found it is a good way to keep in touch with those we have not seen for a while. We feel this endeavor is appreciated by all members.

Tours of the Church: We continued these during the Season. They are especially appreciated by the newer members and some older ones too!

All Church Pot Luck was held in January. It was a mixer format where people chose their table out of a hat. This ever-popular event is a great way to start the high season social events. Tom Grundstrom used this time to introduce another social mixer: Dine with Nine, where groups of nine were formed to dine

together either for lunch or dinner. Forty people gathered in four groups for dining and fellowship during January through April.

Vanderbilt Ladies Who Lunch: Under the leadership of Barbara Hebert, this group of 16 ladies continue to enjoy lunch and fellowship monthly throughout the year. This group has been so successful that the married ladies are forming their own group under the leadership of team member, Jane Higdon, to begin lunching as the **Femme Foodies** in January.

We could not have our annual Christmas Tea due to the closing of Fellowship Hall. That did not stop the team from organizing a holiday event. Thanks to member, Jan

Fern, and volunteer help from all Vanderbilt ladies, we enjoyed a very successful **Christmas Cookie Exchange**. Jackie Woodring led a group that transformed Harp Hall into a magical Christmas decorated salon. It was a big hit, not only the day of, but with the help of Jan and Michele Byrd, they produced a festive recipe booklet to share with the congregation.

Realm App: Tom Grundstrom helped our team and other church members, use the new app to access the church membership directory. They spent two Sundays taking photos to add to and replace old ones for the directory. Our team assisted in making sure all the information was correct.

Priscilla Kutler, Moderator

Team Members:

Joan Butler, Jan Fern, Pat Gagliano, Ann Grundstrom, Tom Grundstrom, Barbara Hebert, Joyce Hickmon, Jane Higdon, Susie Hilton, Priscilla Kutler, Beth Lee, Carol Lindsay, Geri Payne, Jack Tanner, Dianne Townsend, Ruth Wade, CC Waskey, Pastor Rob Marrow & Heather Mikes.



Mission Team

The goal of the Mission Team is to lead and support the congregation in serving the needs of our community. Each group we serve has a “point person” to guide us in fulfilling our duties with our missions.

Café of Life is a Mission located in Bonita Springs. We provide a hot meal, which we cook and serve, to between 100-120 people on the last Friday of the month.



Collier Harvest is dedicated to providing healthy food to our hungry neighbors. Collier Harvest has a monthly packing event.

We are still connected with our fellow church in Cuba through the **Cuban Mission Partnership**. We keep up with **Grace Place** through our members who are on the board and support their many projects. Our children and youth collect non-perishable food items to benefit their food pantry through the **Souper Bowl of Caring**.

Habitat for Humanity of Collier County is part of a worldwide non-profit organization. We highlight Habitat in March during Habitat month and send workers to help build homes in Collier County regularly. Including the funding sent directly to Habitat, Vanderbilt people provided \$237,494.30.

The Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance is an alliance that works to eliminate overcrowded substandard and rental housing for farm workers and other resident families with low income. Pastor Rob and Julie Borden serve on their Board of Directors.

Through **Misión Peniel**, VPC participants help migrant workers in Immokalee by supporting them spiritually and with material care. We have members who regularly volunteer in person as well.

New Horizons is a faith based mission to help children and first generation Americans by providing tutoring and helping mentor them.

We work with the **Salvation Army’s** summer camp by sponsoring children who can’t afford to attend and also through the Toys for Tots program.

Weekend Power Pack has volunteers who pack approximately 1600 bags of meals for 40 children who are at or below the poverty level at Sabal Palm Elementary in Collier County.

2025 Mission Giving

Café of Life	\$1,880.00
Cedarkirk Camp	\$3,843.00
Christmas Joy	\$1,025.00
Collier Harvest	\$1,550.00
Grace Place	\$2,243.97
Habitat for Humanity of Collier County	\$47,545.40
Heifer International	\$802.40
Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance, Inc.	\$18,625.00
Misión Peniel	\$5,769.00
New Horizons of SW FL	\$510.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$330.00
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance	\$3,941.00
Salvation Army	\$4,852.00
Special Missions	\$3,563.00
Weekend Power Pack Program	\$13,462.59
TOTAL	\$102,816.36

Team Members:

Toni Keefer & Becky Wheat—*Co-Chairs*, Penny O’Kelley—*Session Liaison*, Karen Chappler, Greg Minck, Eliza Nevin, Pete Rodino, Sarah Smith, Pastor Rob Marrow & Heather Mikes—*Staff*





Parish Life Ministry Team

Mission: The mission of the Parish Life Ministry Team is to organize and facilitate events that bring our church together in food, fellowship, and fun.



“Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”

- Romans 12:13

Goals:

- Provide ongoing coordination of our weekly Sunday fellowship
- Maintain kitchen organization, making sure the kitchen is adequately supplied with needed items
- Maintain table coverings and decorations for Fellowship Hall
- Assist other ministry teams throughout the calendar year to provide fellowship events that meet the needs of our congregation

Challenges:

- Getting new members for the team
- Getting church members and/or teams to sponsor Sunday Fellowship



Accomplishments:

- Provided Sunday fellowship for the congregation
- Executed the Maundy Thursday Dinner with catering from Boston Beer Garden
- Planned monthly table/room decor, maintained for the different holiday/seasons
- Facilitated Christmas and New Year fellowship with the congregation providing the treats
- Ordered and maintained kitchen supplies



Members:

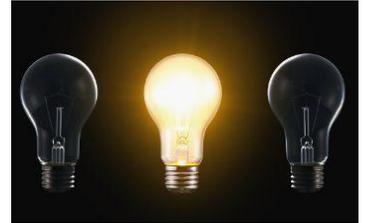
Karen Rodino—*Chair*, Carol Jorgensen, Pat Rose, Bill VanFossen & Sue VanFossen



Personnel Oversight Team

This report summarizes the activities and discussions of the Personnel Oversight Team (POT) of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church (VPC) for the year 2025.

The POT is responsible for overseeing the church's personnel matters—including budgets, staffing, and policies—to ensure a professional, compliant, and supportive environment for all church staff.



Key Areas of Focus:

Modernization of Personnel Records:

A major multi-month initiative was completed to audit and digitize all church employee files. Paper records were scanned, classified, and uploaded to Paylocity to ensure digital security and compliance with state and federal guidelines.

Performance Management Framework:

The team prioritized the establishment of a formal professional development structure this year. The Head of Staff introduced a new goal-setting framework to the staff in late 2025. This serves as the initial step in a broader initiative to finalize updated job descriptions and establish a consistent, staff-wide cycle for goals and performance feedback.

Budgeting and Compensation:

The POT carefully managed the personnel budget in relation to the percentage of revenue and successfully guided it to finish the year under budget. Looking ahead, the team finalized a 2026 personnel budget with an optimistic outlook, reflecting a commitment to supporting our staff while accounting for evolving benefit costs and expected cost of living increases.

Vanderbilt Learning Center (VLC) and Children's Ministry:

The POT continues to monitor the operational needs of the VLC and Children's Ministry through leadership reports. Key accomplishments this year included the approval of competitive pay structures and updated Paid Time Off (PTO) plans to ensure staff retention in a challenging local market. Additionally, the team successfully navigated several staffing vacancies.

Policy and Governance:

The team implemented several procedural improvements to the committee's governance model. These updates were designed to enhance meeting efficiency and ensure a robust, professional structure for reviewing sensitive personnel matters in alignment with best practices.

Staffing Transitions:

The committee acknowledged significant long-term service anniversaries within the staff during the year. Late in the year, the team received formal notice of a planned senior staff retirement for June 2026 and began preliminary discussions regarding the search process for a replacement.

Team Members:

Greg Borden—*Moderator*
Steve Blad, Ellen Crown, Debbie Dawley,
Max Gould, Carol Lindsay, Jim Muir, Tim Riggers
Pastor Robert Marrow—*Ex-Officio*





Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry at VPC has enjoyed a long and successful history offering quality Christian care to our congregation. It began here 26 years ago under the direction and active participation of Rev. Dr. Thomas P. Harp when VPC signed a Covenant with Stephen Ministries in 1998 in which it agreed to follow all the policies and procedures required to become a Stephen Ministry Congregation. Rev. Dr. Tom Harp, Jean Tindall and Carolyn Magarro then attended a week's-long Stephen Ministry Leadership Training program held in Orlando, then returned home to implement the program at VPC. This formal program requires the following time commitments:

- Stephen Leader
Formerly in person for 7-days at an outside location such as Orlando, but can now be attended on-line, both at significant cost to the church;
- Stephen Minister
(1) Attendance at a Training Class conducted by members of the Leadership Team for 50-hours over a 3-month period; (2) one hour per week with an assigned Care Receiver, and 3) Peer Group Supervision and Continuing Education meetings led by Stephen Leaders one day each month, each for 2 hours.

Over the following years, 97 VPC members have been trained and commissioned to serve as Stephen Ministers, as well as 29 Stephen Leaders.

2025 Stephen Leaders

Our Stephen Leaders and their respective responsibilities are as follows:

Karen Chappler—*Coordinator, Referrals;*

Carolyn Magarro—*Coordinator, Administration* (retired 12/31/25) and *“Journeying through Grief” booklet distribution;*

Jody Nowry—*Coordinator, Awareness Building* (retired 11/25);

Jill Peterson—*Coordinator, Continuing Education and Training* (retired 12/31/25),

Mike Swain—*Coordinator, Supervision*

2025 Stephen Ministers

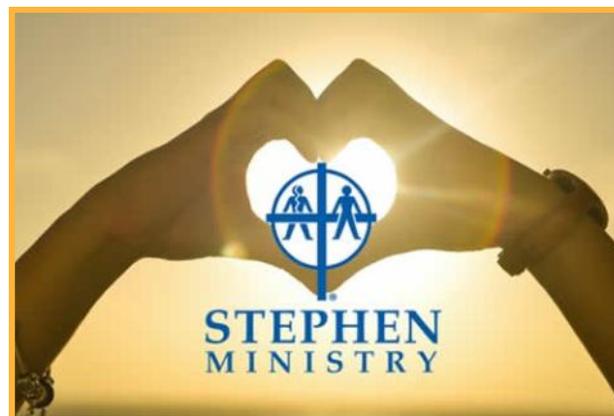
Joan Butler (Leave of Absence 3/25),

Barbara Green (retired 12/25),

Judy Jacobs (retired 2/25),
Karen Negri (retired 7/25),
Eliza Nevin, Geri Payne, James Hofert,
and Pete Schwiers.

Journeying through Grief booklets

Stephen Ministry offers a series of four booklets in this series to those who have recently lost loved ones. These wonderful booklets are mailed on a timely basis by *Carolyn Magarro*, together with a hand-written note over an eleven-month period. They are written by *Kenneth Haugk*, the founder of Stephen Ministry. *Carolyn* has agreed to continue their distribution on an as-needed basis in 2026.



Future of Stephen Ministry at VPC

At its most recent Stephen Ministry Leadership meeting held on November 11, 2025, it was the consensus of the attendees that after 26 years, the Stephen Ministry program is now perceived as too formal and requires a time commitment that people in today's world are unwilling to make.

The discussion focused on the present lack of support for the Stephen Ministry program at VPC, as evidenced by lack of potential care-receiver referrals from both the Pastor and members of the congregation and, especially, by the unwillingness of VPC's members to commit to the program by accepting the invitation to become a Stephen Minister. All the members of the Leadership Team present at the meeting expressed their disheartening and disappointing feelings at the response in the Fall of 2024 to our enthusiastic Recruitment Campaign: *Jody's* excellent “Minute for Mission”; our in-person

participation in the Ministry Fair with a table full of materials to help draw interest; and personal contact by members of the Leadership Team reaching out to nine selected individuals the Team had identified as possible candidates. Only two accepted the invitation, *Pete Schwiers* and *Jim Hofert*, who is here on a seasonal basis. The rest declined for various reasons.

All present Stephen Ministers' care-giving relationships have, over time, evolved into a role of friendship care giving, which no longer requires formal Supervision. Without the required Supervision and Continuing Education component, the caring relationship is no longer a *Stephen Ministry* relationship; however, a relationship may continue on for as long as both parties want to meet together as friends.

Without referrals and congregational members' willingness to become a Stephen Minister

or Stephen Leader, the program at VPC cannot survive. Therefore, the Leadership Team has decided not to continue the formal program in the new year.

Respectfully submitted, **Carolyn Magarro**



Stewardship Team

From the Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church's Session Handbook:

*The mission of the Stewardship Ministry Team is to equip and motivate the members of our congregation with the desire to be good stewards of the gifts God has provided... **Time, Talents, and Financial Resources.***



During 2025, the Stewardship Ministry Team conducted VPC's annual stewardship campaign with the theme: **God Can Do It: We Can Help**. We continue to be blessed by the generosity this congregation provides. Out of a total of 181 pledges received, there were 87 who increased their pledge amounts from last year, 22 new pledges received, and an increase in the average pledge overall of almost \$355 a year.

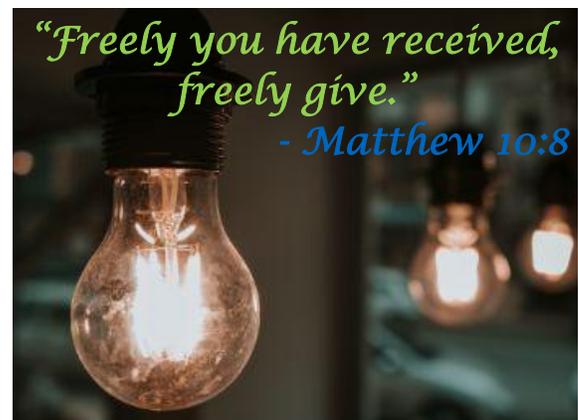
As of January 2026, the pledges received for the VPC operating budget amounted to over \$964,500.

While this reflects a continued generous outpouring and an increase of \$37,000 over last year, we did miss our goal of \$1,200,000.

We invite you to consider serving on this Ministry Team that is so vital to our congregation.

Stewardship is a ministry that depends on everyone's time, talent, and treasure.

Steve Woodring, Moderator
Michael Bevilacqua, Session Liaison





Worship, Music & Liturgical Arts Team

A major project of the WMLA team this year was the search for, and purchase of a 1988 Steinway B Grand Piano for the Sanctuary. It was decided that, since our concert series is attracting such a high level of

national and international artists, we should have a piano comparable in excellence to our Lively-Fulcher Pipe Organ. All guest pianists have praised the piano, and the work of our piano curator, Prospero Rodriquez. The project is a great success.



Our Concert Series continues to attract mostly guests of Vanderbilt church, and that is really the mission of the series. We are an outreach and welcoming voice to the entire community. Attendance is finally making an upswing after suffering horribly in the Covid 19 years. We are not alone. All arts organizations nationwide have reported similar attendance drops and gradual growth, especially in the last year. We are hoping for full houses in the future.

Family Led Worship Sundays continues to be a very popular addition to our service schedule. From the Learning Center Students to our Middle and High School Students, the youth enjoy serving as greeters, readers, acolytes and special music providers.

The Hand Bell choir continues to attract ringers and Gordon Black continues to volunteer his expertise in leading both the Carillon Ringers and the Campanile Ringers. We thank him for all of his help.

*Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.*

Near the end of last year, the team began to discuss the possibility of reinstating the monthly Taize services here at Vanderbilt. To that end, Jim and Rob researched many different Taize offerings around the country, and we will have our first Taize Service of Light and Healing on February 22, 2026.

Team Members:

Pastor Rob Marrow, James Cochran, Heather Mikes, and Michele Byrd—*Staff*

Arnold Alexander—*Session Liaison*

Janie Ballurio, Gordon Black, Peggy Free, Jerry Grandey, Steve Kutler, Bob Martin, and Sue VanFossen

*Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all praise we would render, O help us to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee.*





From the Board of Deacons

"Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you." — 1 Timothy 4:14

Deacons embody the spirit of Timothy 4:14. And our deacons serve as living examples of Paul's charge: men and women who recognize that their calling is not merely a task, but a God-given grace meant to



strengthen the church. Their ministry of tending needs of the congregation, flows from a spiritual gift entrusted to them for the building up of Christ's body. They remind the whole church that every member has a gift worth using, and that God's work flourishes when His people steward those gifts with humility, diligence, and joy. Our specific ministries are: Assisted Living Visitations, Bereavement Receptions, Blood Drives, Communion Preparation, Communion Serving, Home Communion Serving, Flower Delivery, Sunday Letters of Joys and Concerns, and



Deacon of the Week.

- Our Assisted Living team visited **27** members at **12** different assisted living facilities in the area each month.
- The volunteers signed up to be Deacon of the Week and reached out through visits, telephone calls and card ministries to numerous individuals who were hospitalized or needed our support.
- The Sunday Letters team prepared **177** letters which were sent to those on our prayer list.
- The Monthly Communion team members prepared the elements for **12** monthly services and when specially requested. These were served in person at church, as well as in the homes of our members who could not attend worship service.
- Easter Lilies and Christmas flowers were personally delivered to many members after our special services.
- Our Blood Drive team hosted **4** Blood Drives which were once again successful and helped fill a need in our community, with **58** successful pints of blood being collected which impacted **135** lives.
- The Bereavement Receptions team served **4** receptions following memorial services.
- Our Vanderbilt Presbyterian Deacons sponsored **8** children to attend summer camp at Salvation Army's Camp Keystone.



As the deacons reflect on their ministry, they express deep gratitude for God's continued blessings and look forward to furthering their mission in the coming year. There is a spirit of readiness to build upon the successes of their various ministries, while remaining open to new opportunities to serve and strengthen the church community.



Respectfully submitted, **Ann Grundstrom**, *Deacon Moderator*

Class of 2025

Karen Chappler
Sharon Doggett
Jill Dunn
Jerry Grandey
Carol Lindsay
Price Lindsay
Barbara McElwaine

Class of 2026

Jeff Berger
Joan Butler
Tom Hauschild
Barbara Hebert
Dave Hinkler
Stacia Hinkler
Jane Repp

Class of 2027

Janie Ballurio
Martha Gates
Ann Grundstrom
Tim Riggers
Harriet Shouldice
Anne Smith
Ellen Tanner

Class of 2028

David Aufderhaar
Annette Dietrich
Peggy Free
Joe Hodgson
Carline Lobban
Karen Negri
Karen Rodino



From the Endowment Ministry Team

Purpose: The Endowment Fund was established on March 26, 2007, when Session approved the Original Declaration and Operations. The 2012 Annual Report listed 29 members of the "Legacy Society Members" at that time. In 2015, the Endowment Trust concept was authorized by the Session and the Trust was incorporated in Florida. The Endowment Fund Ministry is designed to provide funds outside of the operating budget to further the ministry of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church. Ordinarily, to conserve the purchasing power of the trust assets, annual distributions cannot exceed 5% of the average total assets for the last three years (trailing 12 quarters). Five of the six funds have donor guidelines about how the distributions can be utilized. Distribution requests are submitted to the Session and the Endowment Ministry Team for approval.



Portfolio Management: All six endowment funds are managed by the New Covenant Trust Company, a subsidiary of the Presbyterian Foundation. We saw continued strength in financial markets in 2025 with the endowment funds

returning 15.1%. The value of our endowment funds as of 12/31/25 was \$1,388,077. Our investments, aided by new contributions, increased approximately 15.8%. Since its inception (12/1/2016), all endowment funds have returned 8.0% on an annualized basis net of all fees and portfolio costs. The team continues to regularly meet with our portfolio manager to evaluate investment strategies and key economic trends. Legacy gifts minus administrative expenses, gains, losses, and fees, totaled \$188,970 in net additions for the calendar year.

Distributions: During 2025, the Endowment Ministry Team, with Session approval, distributed funds from the Craig Lecture Series, the General Fund, the Birthday and Anniversary Club, and Fors Habitat for Humanity Fund. The Endowment Ministry Team was delighted to provide distributions for several ministry opportunities including enabling a group of middle school youth to attend Cedarkirk, continuing our annual donation to Habitat for Humanity, presenting the annual James Craig Lecture Series, and contributing a portion to spark a matching gift with our missions team for Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance to build housing for low income workers in Immokalee.

Our goals for 2026 are to again distribute up to 4% of the total trailing three years' average to ministry efforts and be more actively involved in educating the congregation about the fund and how to contribute gifts to the Endowment Funds. The Endowment received generous legacy gifts from estate settlements in 2025. We have met with church members who have questions about their gifts and are helping to educate them on how the endowment fund works. It is a personal and confidential process and we take that responsibility very seriously.

If anyone has an interest in contributing to one of the endowment funds, either now or through their will or other arrangements, please contact John Healy at JHealy@vpcnaples.org.

Endowment Fund Market Values as of 12/31/2025

James Craig Lecture Fund	\$ 136,953.73
Cindy Craig Theological Education Fund	\$ 33,285.77
Fors Habitat for Humanity Fund	\$ 92,274.37
Sound Board and Music Fund	\$ 19,126.30
Birthday and Anniversary Club	\$ 288,285.71
General Endowment Fund	\$ 817,830.36
Total	\$1,387,756.24

Team Members:

Julie Borden, *Chair*; Steve Blad, Debbie Dawley, Doug Dunn, Don Fern, Charles Whittington, Jackie Woodring, Max Gould, John Healy, Pastor Robert Marrow—*Ex-Officio* Pat Rose, Steve Woodring—*Session Liaisons*



The Vanderbilt Learning Center

The Vanderbilt Learning Center (VLC) is a lively mission and ministry of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church (VPC). The Learning Center Team works closely with church staff and operates under the watchful eye and loving heart of our Director of Christian Education, Heather Mikes. The team consists of families, teachers and staff working together to support school operations, generate opportunities for student enrichment, raise funds for educational initiatives and create a nurturing environment for both the enrolled students and their families. There is great joy in the daily work of building strong academic foundations and positive attitudes toward God, self, friends, family and learning.



Vision Statement

The Vanderbilt Learning Center provides young children ages two through six with meaningful opportunities to grow and develop with their peers in a high-quality, nurturing, faith-based environment. Its small group instruction, artistic enrichments and family-oriented programming ensure every child and family a joyful learning experience.

Mission Statement

The students, families and staff of the Vanderbilt Learning Center are committed to becoming more thoughtful, caring and intelligent as we delight in our educational journey. We are getting to know God in our lives and working toward creating a more compassionate world. The Learning Center is a program for the whole child — providing a service to the community through the highest early childhood education to meet the physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs of each individual child in a loving, Christian environment.



The 2025 VPC Annual Report encompasses two consecutive school years at VLC: 2024-25 (January to July) and 2025-2026 (August to December).

VLC Team Efforts and Accomplishments:

- Instructed, loved, supported and encouraged 116 amazing hearts and minds in our student body.
- Graduated 12 bright, shining kindergarten students and 31 pre-kindergarten students.
- Hosted a graduation walk through the school hallways with VLC alumni graduating from high school.
- Welcomed new teachers and assistants to the team - Ms. Sydney Carver (Art), Ms. Hadley Crawford (PK4), Mrs. Alison Delaney (Administrative Assistant), Ms. Mirsa Fortune, Mrs. Betty Hernandez (PK3), Ms. Jessica Hernandez, Ms. Emmy Miranda (PK3), Ms. Haley Nash (PK3), Mrs. Heather Neugent and Mrs. Courtney Trittler (PK3).



- Commissioned and prayed over 29 staff members during our Back to School Blessing.
- Nurtured our relationship with God in Chapel with Heather Mikes and Music with Dr. James Cochran.
- Expanded the Judy Schwierts Library with a listening station for audiobooks and a cozy reading table for teachers and students. Introduced the Sunshine State Readers book challenge for Pk4 and Kindergarten students. Celebrated Read Across America/Dr. Seuss Week and International Dot Day - bringing literacy to life!
- Continued multi-sensory opportunities in the Learning Lab, together with the Parent Team. The Learning Lab hosts monthly Science visits by Parent Team volunteers and Art classes with Ms. Carver. It also is available to teachers and students throughout the week for continued exploration. The Learning Lab is a multipurpose, creative classroom space designed to encourage children to explore and investigate through sensory experiences including science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM). It's also a great space for rainy day activities and a positive place to promote self-calming strategies when needed. Thank you Parent Team for this incredible enrichment opportunity. Amazing things truly happen here!



- Attended the Florida Association for the Education of Young Children annual professional development conference in Orlando, FL to support the continued growth of our teaching team and program.
- Honored our dedicated teachers and staff during Teacher Appreciation Week.
- Partnered with outside service providers, including occupational therapy, to support students and teachers in the classrooms.
- Introduced extracurricular opportunities including Soccer Shots, which occurs on Mondays and Thursdays.
- Produced and performed two concerts for students and families — Christmas and Spring/Graduation.
- Presented the Spring Fling Dance and Fundraiser for students and families in Fellowship Hall.
- Learned about the importance of community connections with visits from CCSO, NNFD, Dr. Lastres (Fantasea Pediatric Dentistry), SNIP Collier and others throughout the year.
- Enhanced our educational journeys with fellowship through Parent Team activities like Family Movie Night, Spirit Dinners, playdates and more!
- Joyfully participated in Worship, Vacation Bible School, Wednesday Night Lights, Alleluia Choir, Trunk or Treat, the Unrehearsed Christmas Pageant and so many more exciting events in the life of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church and Vanderbilt Learning Center!
- Led by example in charitable giving to missions of VPC including the Souper Bowl of Caring, the Salvation Army and Mision Peniel Christmas Toy Drive, and the Grace Place Food Pantry. VLC families collected supplies for SNIP following instructional visits to the school in January and “Coins For A Cause” to benefit Habitat for Humanity. We are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this world and want our students to understand that they are connected to a much larger community. We see God’s light and love through them and encourage them to share it with others!

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” -Ephesians 2:10





Additional Ministry Groups

VPC Book Club

The VPC Monday Afternoon Book Club is a group of women who enjoy reading and discussing together what they have read. We meet at 1:30pm on the third Monday of the month, October through April. The meetings are usually at the church. However, luncheons are scheduled at a local restaurant in December and April in lieu of the regular meeting. The group decides on the books to read each season. Most choices are recent fiction. Occasionally, we read nonfiction or a classic. The group welcomes all interested readers to join them for discussion and camaraderie.



- Peggy Landon

The Comfort Quilters of VPC



The Comfort Quilters of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church continued their good works in 2025. Quilts were distributed to Habitat for Humanity, Warrior Homes of Collier and VPC members living in assisted living. We have everything needed to make a quilt at the church, including working machines. We are welcoming and we teach. People with all levels of sewing skills have the ability to make a quilt. If you are daunted by the quilting and only want to piece quilt tops, we have willing sewers to complete your projects. We welcome new sewers to join our prayer and sewing circle. Check the bulletin and emails for the schedule.

- Ellen Tanner

Handcrafting Group

The Handcrafting Group has been busy with our projects. We have from about six members in the summer and up to 14 in season, including some new additions from the Senior Center. We work on individual projects and this year some of our members were inspired to take up a new craft or return to crafting. We meet on Thursday afternoons from 3-6pm. All are welcome to come and have conversation and crafting.



- Karen Chappler

Mah Jongg Club



We are a fun-loving group of 16 Mah Jongg players who enjoy the game every Thursday, 1-3pm, in Harp Hall at VPC. Since beginning in 2022, we have grown to a Mah Jongg group who enjoy not only the game, but also the Christian fellowship and friendships that have developed. All Mah Jongg players are welcome to join us!

- Geri Payne

Recycled Card Ministry

Sonja Cookson comes to the church regularly to make and display all the beautifully recycled cards found in the office. She is looking for new people that are creative and want to help. We also accept donations of cards. You can pick up a recycled card in the office for almost any occasion.



VandeReaders



VandeReaders is a readers theater group which means we do not memorize but read. In 2025, our participation has been at the church, serving as liturgists. Members: Janie Ballurio, Karen Chappler, Judy Davis, Jerry Grandey, Susie Hilton, Jim Muir, Ellen Tanner and Sue Van Fossen.

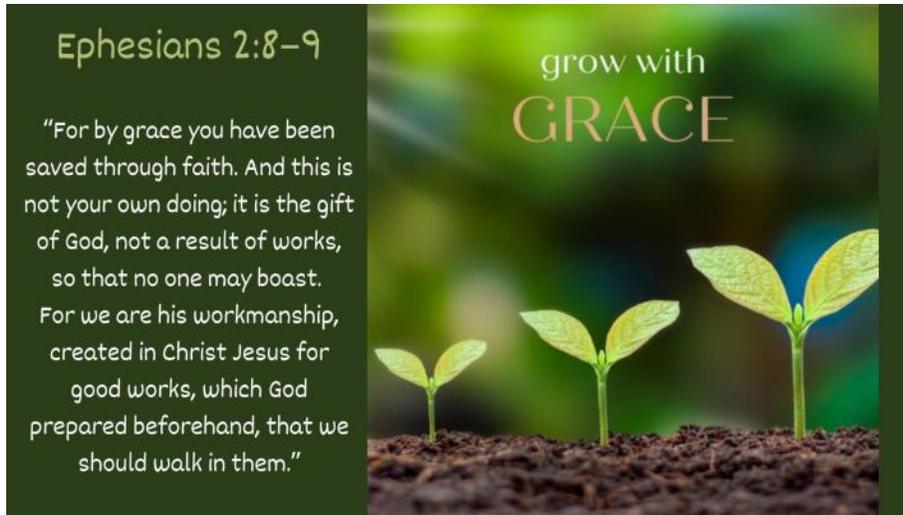
- Sue Van Fossen



New Members

We give thanks to God for those members who joined Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church in 2025.

- ◆ Sagar & Jennifer Bankar
- ◆ Margie Berend
- ◆ Janey & Max Borden
- ◆ Catherine Brown
- ◆ Sue Brown
- ◆ Ben & Nancy Buchanan
- ◆ Louise Coront
- ◆ Darren, Lauren, Alyssa & Wyatt Gersch
- ◆ Marijane Glantz
- ◆ Joyce Hickmon
- ◆ Sarah Martyniak
- ◆ Andrea & Chris Paciello
- ◆ Suzanne Sullivan



In Memoriam

We grieve the loss of church members who died in 2025.

- † Hal Wendler
- † Karen Schulz
- † Sonia McDonald
- † Joan Mountford
- † Bruce Stryker
- † Al Fletcher
- † Don Neer
- † Chuck Henry
- † Barbara Hurst
- † Al Teti
- † Louise Eliot



Merciful and loving God, may Your perpetual light shine upon us this day. In darkness, enlighten us; in hunger, sustain us; in temptation, rescue us; and from sin, death, and evil, save us. Free us from all that holds us back, and bind us to Your eternal Word. May Christ be seen in us, may Christ's name be upon our lips, and may Christ be made known in all we seek to accomplish, to Your eternal Glory. Amen.

Rev. Dr. Conrad C. Sharps



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