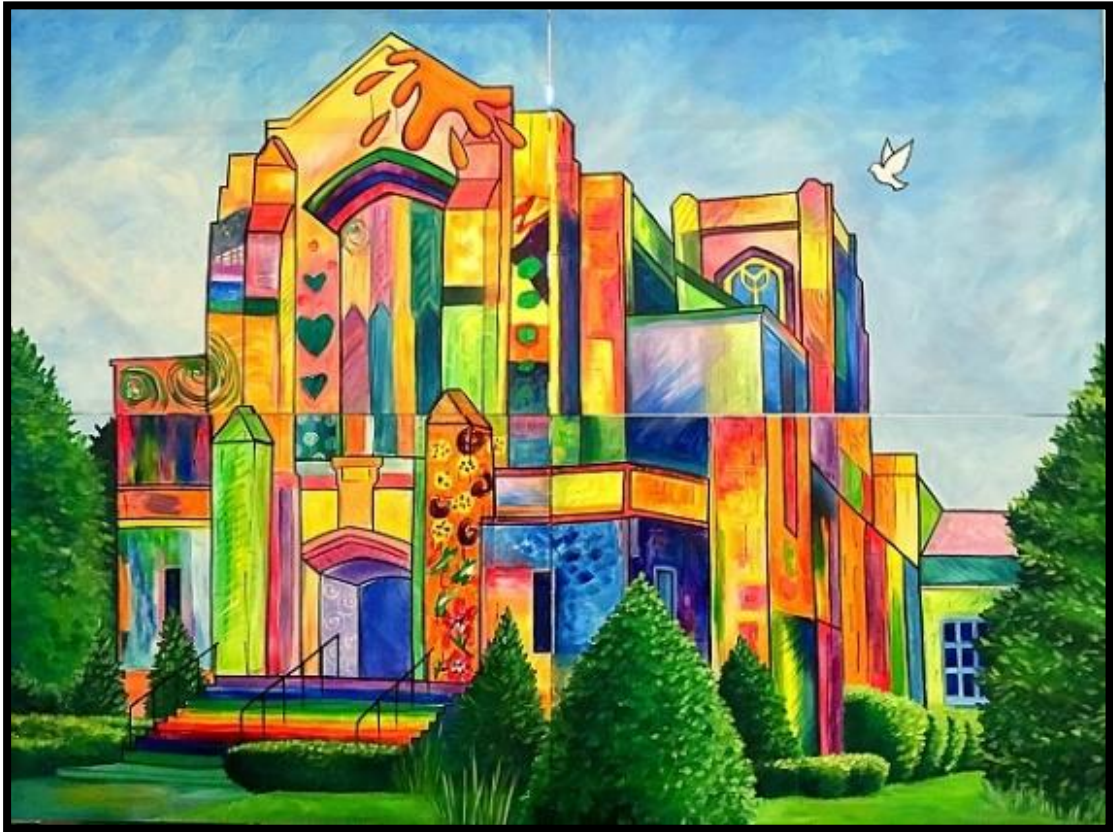


# First-Meridian Heights Presbyterian Church



## 2021 Annual Report



**"I promise you there is something worse out there than being sad, and that's being alone and being sad. Ain't no one in this room alone."** Ted Lasso

**"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."** Jesus (Matthew 18:20)

Dear Friends,

I began 2021 with COVID, including pneumonia – which I'd never had before. It was a lousy way to start the year. HOWEVER, you all blessed me with prayers, meals, flowers, cards, and several of you led virtual worship from home. You took care of everything (and me) and I was and am immensely grateful! Thank you!!

None of us expected 2021 to be harder than 2020. I'm not exactly sure how we even measure that anymore. What makes one year harder than another year when we're talking about a global pandemic that has changed everything? Well, almost everything. What hasn't changed is your commitment to serving, loving, and growing in ever-widening circles of Christ's grace! Also, God hasn't changed, although there have been plenty of days in the past couple years when it seemed God was on vacation. But God's love for us is sure. God's grace poured out through Jesus Christ is certain and eternal. We can count on God's presence with us through the Holy Spirit. We can also count on God's desire to transform and challenge us while also loving and nurturing us. So, God doesn't change, but God is committed to changing/transforming us – and changing the world through us!

So, it's a good thing we have each other! We aren't alone! We aren't alone, not just because God is with us, but because God has given us each other. I confess I'm sometimes hesitant to tell people they aren't alone, because when you feel truly alone, it's annoying – and maybe even hurtful - to have someone tell you you're wrong. But big picture, "ain't no one in this room [church/congregation] alone." That's good news whether we're simply trying to make it through the day or trying to learn how to be anti-racist, respond to the "justice deficit" that continues to grow in our world (see the Stewardship section), or figure out how to be the Church in the middle of a pandemic.

The following reports try to convey what we as a congregation did TOGETHER in 2021 to love God and our neighbors, to let each other – and our neighbors – know we/they aren't alone. I hope you see that God has been working through our congregation in new and creative ways. I hope you also see that God is preparing us for the future – a faithful future in which we continue to serve, love, and grow together – trusting that Jesus Christ is in our midst.

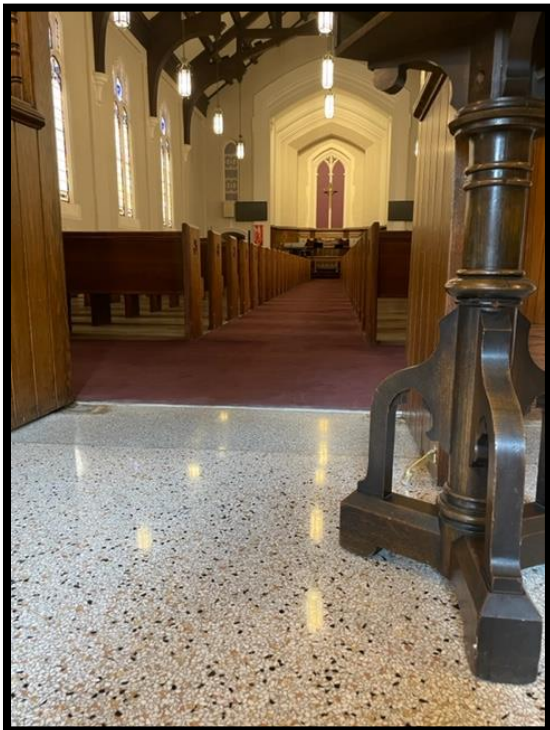
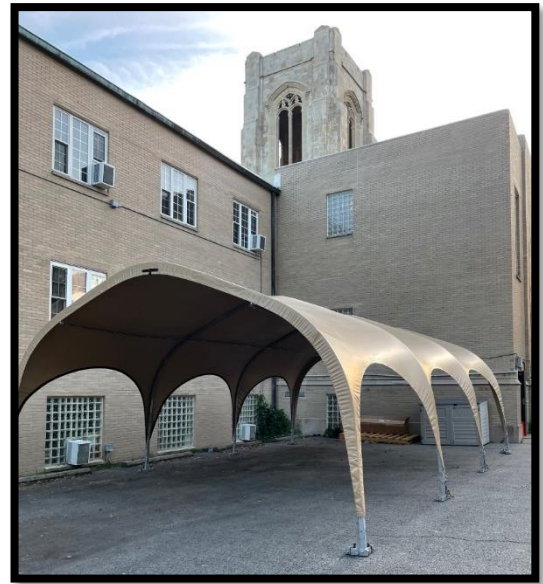
Hang in there, friends. Breathe in God's grace and remember you're not alone!!!

Yours in Christ,  
Rev. Kim Olson  
Pastor

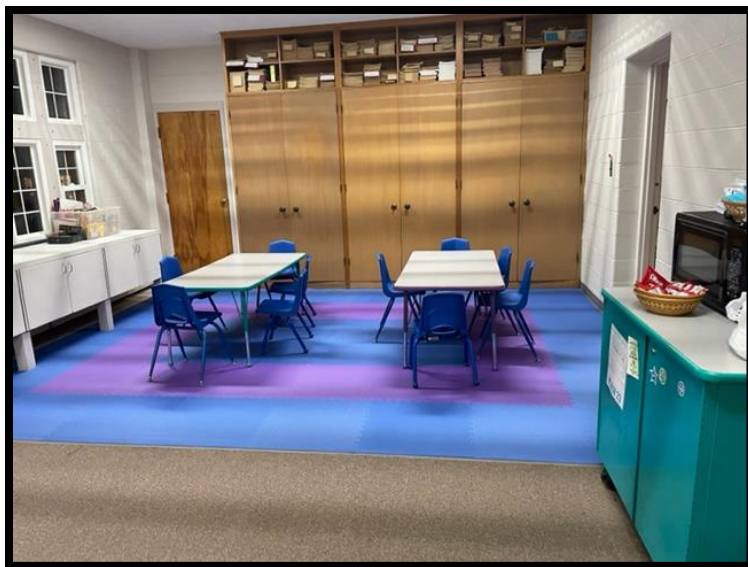
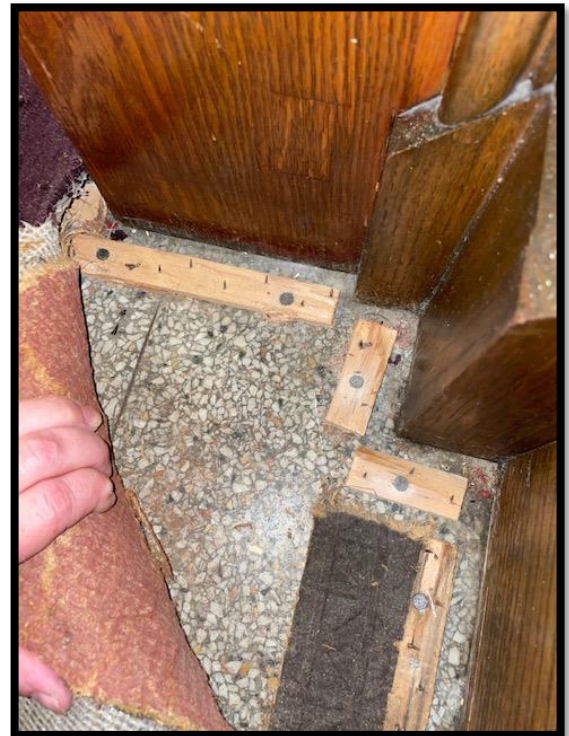
# BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

## Projects Completed in 2021:

- New Roof and Gutters installed over the Education wing.
- New wall paint, lighting, ceiling fans, and floor installed in the entrance from 47<sup>th</sup> Street and in the office hallway.
- New flooring, ceiling fans, and wall paint in the Chapel.
- Central Ave. entrance (Narthex) terrazzo floor refinished
- Memorial Prayer Garden pathways were installed.
- Community room electrical service was updated.
- Nursery Renovation was completed
- Tent was erected in the northeast parking lot for outdoor Sunday school.
- Foam floor installed in Sunday School room







The terrazzo floor in the Narthex looked so good, we got curious about what was hiding under the carpet in the Sanctuary . . .  
**Look! It's more terrazzo!**  
**Project for 2022!**

# DEACONS

This Deacons annual report begins with a warm thanks to your Spirit-led servants: Annie Chamness, Jenny Melind, Adam Halsmer, Jim Halsmer, Lyndsay Moy Bernhardt, Katie England, Terry Bateman, Anna Dehnke, Karen Swarts and Leslie Crist. We sincerely want to thank Jim Halsmer for his dedication and contributions to the Deacons as he takes a well-deserved break from being the Moderator of the Deacons. Jim served with kindness, patience, and a giving heart.

2021 had plenty of opportunities for your Deacons to provide Care and Concern for our membership. Even though many of the traditional activities and events we support and/or coordinate were canceled, we continued to meet (virtually) to tune into God's direction helping us identify where we can help. We also relied on Kim and other members to bring information forward about FMHPC members in need. We encourage everyone reading this report to feel free to do the same.

Focusing on neighborhood groups was a top-priority for Deacons this year. We were able to pin-point needs of the congregation through this platform and also to arrange gatherings at some of the Deacons' homes. This was a great way to connect and provide fellowship and support for our church members.

As our environment becomes less of a risk, we will start to organize more group fun events. Please contact your color group Deacon with ideas for your group. We would love to help implement anything you have in mind! Stay tuned for information about a retirement celebration for Ron as we are hopeful to re-schedule this postponed event in 2022.

Your Deacons provided Care and Concern all year long with visits, phone calls, funding, prayers, and cards for the following:

High School Graduates

College Students

Pastor Appreciation

Financial support for members/families/newborns & some church neighbors.

The Deacons have managed their own account within the FMPHC annual budget that is funded primarily by a payment each quarter from the Irving Williams Trust. The use of these funds is carefully reviewed by this board to remain consistent with the donor's intentions.

Please help us stay connected with prayers and open communication with the Deacons so we can stay focused on doing God's work here at First Meridian Heights.

In Christ,  
Jenny Melind, Moderator



# MISSION & OUTREACH

FMHPC is a congregation of faithful, generous, and servant-hearted people. A special shout out to Mission & Outreach Committee members Cynn timer Halsmer, Dan Tomson, Cindy Madrick, Jenny Melind, Katie Mathews, Rebecca Zirnheld and Kim Olson, whose creativity, passion for service, hard work and commitment to encouraging and helping our congregation continue to serve our neighbors in need and to be in relationship with the community around us were key to our ability to accomplish so much of our 2021 mission and outreach plan.

## 2021 FMHPC mission and outreach activities included:

- Realizing a successful season in the **Community Garden**, during which we safely produced a banner crop of produce for the Northwood Food Pantry, added 3-4 new neighborhood gardeners to our garden crew (including new plot-tenders from Parkview Preschool), enhanced the garden shed with window repair and lovely art (thanks, Annie Chamness and Jim Halsmer!) and involved more volunteers in garden maintenance (thanks, our growing garden team and Parkview!)
- Continuing to serve our neighbors with food insecurity at the **Northwood Food Pantry** by packing and distributing food to our drive-thru and walk-up pantry friends each week (thanks to the Hacker and the Muyumba/Sipe families for coordinating our twice monthly Saturdays!)



- Hosting a highly successful **Diaper Daypalooza** diaper-bundling event at the church for the Indiana Diaper Bank as a service follow-up to our initial financial support of IDB in 2020. More than 50 adults and children, including neighbors, packed nearly 10,000 diapers into 400 bundles, enough diapers for 400 children.
- Enabling several FMH members to provide apartment furnishings to **Family Promise's** new apartment housing model.
- Collecting shoes to provide **footwear for displaced Afghan families** being housed at Camp Atterbury.
- Volunteering to landscape a **Habitat for Humanity** home with plans to provide build sponsorship in 2022.



- Acquiring a large **canvas labyrinth** for use in 2022 and beyond to help church members, friends and neighbors find some peace, calm and grace, especially during this time of anxiety, stress, grief, loss and disruption.

- Providing Reggie's cinnamon rolls to **School #70, IA and Parkview teachers**;

- Delivering **600 goody bags to our neighbors**, sharing a neighborly "hang in there during this crazy time" message;
- Providing input (and picnic table funding) to the team creating a **Memorial Prayer Garden** in front of the Community Garden;
- Supporting the **AA community** that meets in our building by funding childcare for their meetings;
- Executing a very successful **Day of Caring** in which more than 70 adults and a dozen kids served Eskenazi Hospital (puppy pillows), Indiana Diaper Bank (bundled 13,500 diapers for more than 500 babies and toddlers), FreeWheelin' Bikes (disassembled donated bikes), SAWs (built a ramp for a wheelchair-bound woman), Dayspring Center for Homeless families (painted/organized shed, painted table, cleaned playground area, planted mums), and packed meals for Wheeler Mission;



- Repeating the church's amazing **Giving Tree** effort during Advent. Our congregation, other church friends and Parkview Preschool generously provided gifts cards and Christmas gifts to 124 adults and children at Coburn Place for victims of domestic violence, 91 Place, Dayspring Center for Homeless Families, Northwood Food Pantry; Family Promise and two additional families;

- Making **What Can't Wait contributions** from our Community Fund to match gifts of up to \$250/family from our congregation to organizations addressing urgent community human-service needs. Eighteen giving families supported 23 organizations;

- Connecting with our neighbors through our **prayer chime project**.
- Hosting a **Pet Blessing** for members and neighbors;
- Seeking to support organizations that are doing truly essential work to address pressing needs in our community **with financial contributions from our church's Community and Operating funds:**



- ❖ **Community Fund**

- Monthly food pantry contributions
- Exodus Refugee Project
- Freewheeling' Bikes
- SAWs (ramp building supplies)
- IPS School #70 Globalfest sponsorship (with event food vouchers for food pantry clients)
- Dayspring Center's Walking for Dreams sponsorship (with subsidies of church member registration fees)

- **Operating Budget**

- Gennesaret Free Clinics
- Pink 4-Ever, Ending Disparities
- Shortridge athletics (golf scramble sponsorship)
- Shortridge music program
- Family Promise table sponsorship and auction
- IA golf sponsorship
- IA gala sponsorship
- Diaper Bank diaper purchase
- Camp Pyoca

Your Mission & Outreach Committee is committed to our congregation's continued engagement with our neighbors and those in need in 2022. We look forward to working together as a faith community to serve, love and grow in ever-widening circles of Christ's Grace.

Respectfully,  
Katie Marlowe, committee moderator



# PERSONNEL

Personnel committee: Karin Ogden, Chair, Muuka Muyumba, and Dan Tomson

**Chuck Teague** continued as our Maintenance Manager and had a busy year coordinating Buildings and Grounds special projects in addition to his usual duties.

**Shelia Raines**, continues to do an excellent job cleaning the church!

**Julie Bolyard** has continued to work with our Children's Ministry and has been an important link between the kids and the church as she delivers at home Sunday School materials, crafts, and other surprises! She has also been invaluable in our transition to the Second Course.

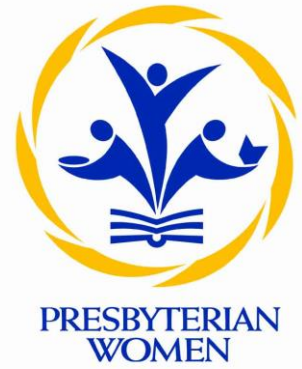
**Alexis Gonzales** took a new job in the summer of 2021 and left big shoes to fill! The Finance Committee and Session decided to outsource our accounting needs, so rather than hire another Business Administrator, we hired an Office and Communication Manager: **Teresa Turner**.

Teresa began work at the end of September and has worked hard to get new systems in place for the new accounting process while also updating the website and supporting church communications.

**Mary Elizabeth Elkins** is our new Childcare Provider in the Church Nursery. She had just started when we took a break from worship for the floor restoration. We're looking forward to getting to know her better!

The Personnel Committee continues to work on effective support and evaluation of our staff. We are grateful for the gifts and blessings all of our staff members – those listed above and our musicians, sound technicians, etc. - share to help us be the church God is calling us to be.

# PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN ' S ORGANIZATION



## **The Presbyterian Women's Purpose:**

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves:

- to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study
- to support the mission of the church worldwide
- to work for justice and peace, and
- to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian church (U.S.A.) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

This is our second year of the pandemic. We didn't hold monthly meetings; however throughout the year, a small group of women have met to work on our puppy pillow project. There was also a group who attended a puppy pillow work session on the Day of Caring. Lydia Ellis from Eskenazi was unable to take any of our pillows to Eskenazi this year due to COVID restrictions. We were fortunate to have our own Karin Ogden take some pillows to share at the Ronald McDonald House.

Congregational members were very generous in giving to both the Birthday Offering in June and the Thank Offering in November. As we did not ask for pledges this year, our only sources of income were from shoppers at Kroger with the Kroger Rewards program and proceeds from the Williams Trust. We were able to give \$50 scholarships to our congregation's college students in December and \$400 each to three local missions: Joy's House, Westminster Neighborhood Services, and HVAF (Helping Veterans and Families).

Our only in-person meeting was our December celebration held in the home of Karen Licht. We had a delicious lunch and held our traditional White Elephant sale. It was a wonderful way to end our year in fellowship and laughter.

This past May we lost our beloved Jennie Moy. We are so glad we were one of her collections. In 2014 she received the first ever PWO Honorary Life Membership for her faithful years as editor of SonLight, our monthly newsletter. This honor recognizes a woman's extraordinary service to her church locally and globally. We are also grateful for the years she organized and distributed our membership booklets.

Thanking all the Presbyterian Women for their support, and especially the PWO board (Janet C, Carol F, Carol H and Karen Licht). Our goal for 2022 is to continue to do good works in the name of Jesus Christ.

Carol Rader, PWO Moderator

## Presbyterian Women's Organization Year-End Financial Report 2021

Carol Foulke, Treasurer

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget 2021</u>	<u>Budget 2022</u>
Pledges	\$ 20.00	800.00	500.00
Projects	\$ 0.00	1,500.00	500.00
Commissary	\$ 0.00	300.00	200.00
Endowments	\$ 2,737.52	2,600.00	2,600.00
Memorials	\$ 100.00	100.00	100.00
Special Offerings	\$ 1,290.00	1,600.00	1,600.00
Interest, Misc.	\$ .98	50.00	20.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 4,148.50</b>	<b>6,950.00</b>	<b>5,520.00</b>

### DISBURSEMENTS

Commissary	\$ 48.00	300.00	200.00
Projects	\$ 0.00	125.00	100.00
Wms Trust Cust/Food Prep salarie	\$ 684.00	700.00	700.00
Special Offerings	\$ 1,115.00	1,600.00	1,600.00
Scholarships	\$ 300.00	500.00	400.00
Presbytery – Missions	\$ 1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
Local/Int'l Missions	\$ 1,200.00	2,000.00	1,200.00
Operating, Programs, Maintenance	\$ 59.85	350.00	150.00
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>\$ 4,606.85</b>	<b>6,775.00</b>	<b>5,550.00</b>

### ASSETS – as of 12/31/20

#### Bank Accounts

Checking (BMO)	\$ 5,113.52
Savings	\$ 5,002.04

#### Endowments & Reserve Funds

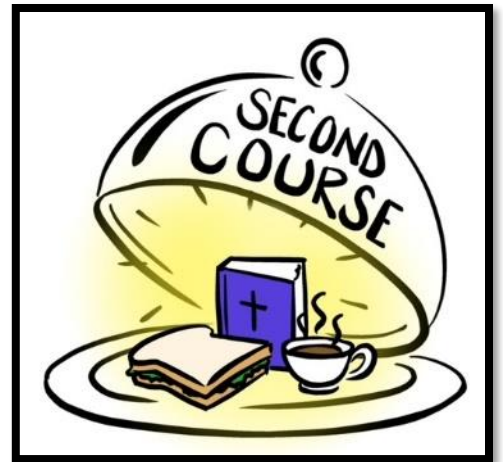
		<u>Maturity Date</u>
Scholarship Fund (cash)	\$ 1,000.00	
Finch/Habbe/Schol Funds/CD (BMO)	\$ 6,250.35	3/28/22
Williams Trust (Chase)	\$ 6,268.01	1/12/23
Westcott (Huntington)	\$ 2,605.83	4/28/22
Kandrac Memorial (Huntington)	\$ 2,710.07	4/28/22

<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 28,949.82</b>
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# SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT & CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

We started 2021 with the pandemic still keeping us physically away from our Church building so for the first part of the year, Rev. Kim and Miss Julie continued to develop and deliver curriculum packets to families featuring educational materials and activities with various themes. As we have been able to return to in-person worship, Session approved plans in the Fall to begin a revised Sunday morning schedule, feature a second hour of church school, education, and fellowship. We continued to offer childcare and children's church during the worship hour, but, beginning last fall, we have expanded programming for this second hour which we called "Second Course".



An important feature of Second Course is that it affords Rev. Olson the freedom to lead Sunday school for our children and youth. We have also offered an hour of adult study and fellowship focusing on various topics and we have offered a light lunch to all attendees. Parents of school age children staying for Sunday School are most welcome to participate in the adult fellowship, but we have emphasized that they need not feel obliged to stay and should use the time as an hour of Sabbath to meet their own immediate needs. This new structure has been relatively well accepted. Both youth Sunday school and the adult fellowship have been relatively well attended. We encourage everyone to make Second Course a regular part of your worship life and Sunday plans.

Also in the Fall the Church purchased and erected a 20 x 30' tent located in the back parking lot. This allows us to hold church school outside as long as it is not too cold, which in turn allows students to attend without having to wear masks if they do not wish to do so, while COVID remains an issue. The tent also provides extra creative space for youth education activities.



Unfortunately, this Winter the “Omicron” variant of COVID and the floor renovation in the Sanctuary have led us back to “remote” Sunday mornings for the time being. We hope this break will be brief and we can all get back to being together on Sunday mornings. Our plans are to continue the Second Course structure and we encourage everyone to participate. (Adults, please offer suggestions for topics and volunteer to lead a discussion or activity!)

We have regular supervisory staff in the nursery (Mary Elizabeth Elkins) and children’s room (Julie Bolyard) and our Sunday morning staffing will continue to be supplemented by sitters from the “College Nannies” service to ensure we have enough care givers. With Rev. Olson supervising Sunday school, our longer-term objective remains to separate our kids into age-appropriate groups with an educator and additional

supervisor for each group plus the newly redecorated nursery/toddler (“Li'l Sprouts”) room. We expect to be able to utilize some of our unused education space as our number of participating youth increases.

Women of Grace continued to meet two Wednesdays a month (mostly via Zoom). They studied a book by Rachel Held Evans and also watched and discussed the video series, The Chosen. All women are welcome to participate!

Coffee and Conversation continued to meet on Tuesday evenings at 5 pm to discuss the scripture passage for the upcoming Sunday. Everyone is welcome to participate!

Eric Moy, Paul Hanson, and Ruth Padgett





# STEWARDSHIP



The Stewardship Team administers and communicates the annual Stewardship Campaign and Pledge Drive.

The members serving on the committee in 2021 were Cynn timer, Leslie Crist, Katie Marlowe, and Rev. Kim Olson.

“A Future with Hope” was the theme for our 2021 stewardship season as we continued to live in uncertain times, tried to make sense of the past year and a half, and wondered about what the future would hold. The theme (materials provided by The Salt Project) allowed us to celebrate how God has worked through our congregation to share hope and peace during these difficult times. The theme also called us to embrace the promise that the future belongs to God. It was exciting and encouraging to think about what dreams God has for our congregation and to consider how each of us can contribute to making those dreams a reality.

Just as we were beginning our Stewardship season, Bryan Stevenson, founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative, spoke at Clowes Hall as part of the CTS Faith and Action Project. He admonished the Church that the only faithful path forward – as the pandemic continued to create a “justice deficit” - requires working to eliminate poverty, reduce the prison population, welcome the refugee, and ensure justice for the outsiders and outcast.

He outlined 4 steps for congregations to follow to create a just future:

1. Proximity: Get proximate to those who are suffering.
2. Truth: Challenge and change existing narratives.
3. Discomfort: Be willing to do things that are uncomfortable and inconvenient.
4. Hope: For people of faith, hope is our superpower.

Bryan Stevenson’s words “I can’t get to higher ground if she can’t get to higher ground” and “What will the Church do for the poor, neglected, and condemned?” influenced our Stewardship theme as we asked the questions: “Can we have a future with hope if they can’t have a future with hope?” and “What does God *want* our church to do for the poor, neglected, and condemned?”

So our stewardship theme evolved a bit to include that conversation and we spent four Sundays (during the Second Course) watching and discussing the documentary “True Justice.” We wove Stevenson’s four steps into our theme “A Future With Hope” and wrestled together with what it looks like for our church to be invested in a hopeful future, not just for ourselves, but for all of God’s children.



We had a wonderful IN PERSON Gratitude Sunday Brunch (with Karen Licht back in the kitchen!!!!!!). We are grateful for everyone who so generously supports the ministry of First Meridian Heights!

In Christ, Cynn timer, Katie M., Leslie, and Rev. Kim



# WORSHIP & MUSIC

Although COVID continued to leave its mark on our church, our community, and our world in 2021, worship at FMH was inspired, Christ-centered and meaningful. We celebrated weekly Sabbath together both in person and online and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Our body of faith on Sunday mornings has expanded to include new and former FMH members, those who have difficulty leaving their homes, and others who 'virtually' connect from near and far. Led by our faithful and creative Pastor Kim, we continue to share Joys and Concerns with one another and are inspired by beautiful music and life lessons from God's Word each week.

Sermon themes this year included:



Advent/Christmas highlights included our Children's Pageant in the Sanctuary and a lovely Christmas Eve candlelight service.



We are fortunate to have many talented musicians who shared their gifts with us all year long. Special thanks go to Art Cantrell, Benjamin Meadows, Chic Brown, Jonathan Green, Dan Tomson, Eric Moy, Lyndsay Moy Bernhardt and Carol Foulke for sharing their time and talents each week. And we've been blessed with many guest musicians this year, including Organist Gayle Sarber, Marilyn Melind, Jon and Cindy Bernhardt, and Gregg Bacon.

*All praise to God for song God gives,  
For music and a hope that lives;  
God's sacred word is so profound,  
We sing and let the truth resound.  
God gave us music, gave us voice;  
Sing alleluia and rejoice!  
We lift in faith secure and strong  
The sacred word through sacred song.*

Hymn #328, 'All Praise to God for Song God Gives'

We have continued Morning Prayer on Facebook at 8 a.m. Monday through Friday. It has proven to be a meaningful time of meditative music, sharing joys and concerns, and prayer for regular and occasional "attendees."

We look forward to worshipping with you in our beautiful Sanctuary which is currently undergoing updates to facilitate flexibility and community for Sunday mornings and beyond. May God continue to bless our church family as we seek to Serve Others, Grow in Faith, and Love one another.

Worship/Music Committee members include Art Cantrell, Benji Moy, Lyndsay Moy Bernhardt, Carol Foulke, Cynn timer, Brooke Kyle, Judy Sordean, and Pastor Kim Olson.