

First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette 2020 Annual Report

Experience God. Grow Disciples. Transform Lives.



Dear Friends,

Last year, we gathered for our Annual Meeting on March 1, reviewing and giving thanks for the ministry God called us to do together in 2019. Little did we know it would be one of the last times we would gather in the Sanctuary for in-person worship in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic knocked us all off of our feet, causing dramatic shifts overnight to every aspect of our lives. The remote work and e-learning. The onerous sheltering in place. The lost jobs and incomes. The illness and death. The physical distancing and endless Zoom calls. The pain and suffering was widespread and scary.

At the end of 2020, we are now ten months into the pandemic and many of us hit the wall long ago. We have been through Elizabeth Kubler-Ross's so-called "Five Stages of Grief" many times. We are heartened by the vaccines slowly making their way through the U.S., but wary of variants now spreading.

As I reflect on the life and ministry of our church in the past year, I can use that omnipresent word without hesitation to capture it: unprecedented. It has been an unprecedented year here at *fpcw*. It has been unprecedented in its challenges, yes, but also in its calls for creativity and resilience. It has been unprecedented in the loneliness and exhaustion I've seen, yes, but also in the steady faithfulness I've seen. Beloved long-time church members have passed away and amazing little babies have been born. I could go on.

This unprecedented year has been, at times, really hard and, at times, really good. And God has been with us every step of the way.

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Two biblical images come to mind as I flip through the pages of this Annual Report: “daily bread” and “sufficient grace.” The first image comes from the “Lord’s Prayer” in which we ask God to give us this day our “daily bread.” Jesus is modeling for us that we don’t ask God for weekly or monthly installments of bread, but for enough bread for that day. That’s often been my prayer during the pandemic. One day at a time – praying for enough strength, enough wisdom, enough love, enough courage to make it through that day.

The second image is from the apostle Paul. It’s something Jesus said to him in a vision, after Paul had prayed for the “thorn in his flesh” (we don’t know what he’s referring to) to be removed from him. In the vision, Jesus assures him that God’s grace is sufficient for him and that God’s power is paradoxically “made perfect in weakness.” The image of “sufficient grace” rings true, doesn’t it? God’s loves still course through us, even when we are weak and tired and discouraged.

It’s the beginning of our fifth year of ministry together, and I’m hopeful about what’s to come in 2021. I’m leaning into prayers for us to receive “daily bread” and “sufficient grace,” as we follow the leading of the Spirit into a post-pandemic world.

Let me end by offering my deepest thanks to our staff and Session for helping us through a truly unprecedented year. They have been amazing. And thanks also to you, our dear members and friends, for all you are and for all you do to make *fpcw* a strong and vibrant witness to the love of God in our neighborhoods. You are making a difference. You are blessing the world. You are sharing God’s light and life and love. Thanks be to God.

With gratitude and lots of hope,



Rev. Jeff Lehn



My time with you in 2020 was just a month and a half, as I officially joined the staff on November 16th. I had already been getting to know you through the interview process and conversations with the Personnel Committee, Session, Pastor Jeff, and representatives from the Presbytery of Chicago.

As I have expressed in several venues since, I must tell you again, how appreciative I was and continue to be for your out-pouring of love and support after my Dad’s death at the end of November. Even though I had literally just started here, the Session allowed me to have bereavement time plus the flexibility to work remotely for a while so that I could continue to be with my family into December. My ability to work remotely was also, of course, a result of the ongoing restrictions of in-person gathering due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The increased spread in Chicago had necessarily paused the Church’s hopes to return to in-person worship the Sunday before my first day; and virtual worship, meetings, and programming continued. Despite the limitations from the pandemic and my own personal season of grief, I nevertheless began to get a strong sense of who you are starting with the immediate welcome and team mindset of your incredible staff and the outreach of welcome and support from Church officers and members – all largely through interactions in email, phone calls and Zoom meetings. Since I joined you in the Advent and Christmas season, I was also fortunate to meet a good number you in real time at the brief outdoor, in-person (socially distanced, masked) Christmas Eve services and two Zoom-live services for the Longest Night and First Sunday after Christmas. Altogether, this short time at the end of the year provided a great window into your community of faith - your clear love for one another and your commitment to children and youth, mission, peace and justice, learning, and growing spiritually.

As we move together through 2021, I will focus on finding ways to facilitate meaningful reflection to help you imagine together the “what’s next” for this congregation so that you can begin that chapter with clarity of vision. This time of discernment and discovery will encompass the specifics of the Associate Pastor position, newly changed from full time to three-quarters time; how the staffing structure overall might best reflect the leadership needs moving forward; and the unique questions raised by the continuing effects of the pandemic on the church. I have had the privilege of serving as an Interim/ Transitional Pastor with many churches in a spectrum of roles (Solo, Senior and Associate) and have led discernment and reflection processes in a variety of ways, striving always for a process that fits the congregation and in which all voices are essential. I encourage everyone to participate in as many ways as possible and to reach out to me anytime to have one-on-one conversation and/or to send your thoughts and ideas. My Church email is: lsherwood@fpcw.org.

In Christ’s Peace and Joy,
Pastor Laura (“PL” for short)

SESSION REPORT by Carol Korak, Clerk of Session

The governance and spiritual oversight of every Presbyterian church rests with a board of officers known as the Session. Those officers, known as Ruling Elders, are nominated by a committee of the congregation, and are elected by the Congregation at an Annual Meeting held in the spring.

Our Session has sixteen ruling elders who serve terms of three years. These elders are divided into three classes, with one-third of the elders retiring every year. Our bylaws also provide for two youth elders, to serve for a term of one year, and who has the same authority and responsibility as his or her colleagues.

Every Session has two officers: The Moderator, who is the senior pastor of the church, and the Clerk, who is elected annually by the Session. The Clerk is responsible for keeping the minutes of Session and Congregational Meetings, church registers, and handles other administrative tasks on behalf of the Session.

Following is a list of Elders currently serving on Session, the committee on which they serve, and the year in which their current term of office expires:

- Bob Bobesink, Youth and Family, 2021
- Bill Bishop, Worship, Music & the Arts, 2021
- Brian Hughes, Personnel Support, 2021
- Iris Boaz, Adult Faith Formation, 2022
- Scott Morris, Finance, Budget & Operations, 2022
- Jim Lyman, Strategic Planning, 2021
- Jeff Miller, Buildings & Grounds, 2023
- Sal Karotki, Youth and Family, 2023
- John Hairston, Giving, 2023
- Jack Hairston, Youth and Family, 2021
- Betsy Crosswhite, Communications, 2021
- Jennifer Holt, Mission, 2022
- Rick Baer, Membership, 2022
- Jane Rankin, Personnel Support, 2023
- Susan Eby, Finance, Budget & Operations, 2022
- Stephanie Phelan, Fellowship, 2021
- Tammy Walker, Children's Ministry, 2022

We celebrated three baptisms:

- Charlie Bufton, 6/23/2020
- Leonardo Christian Guidarelli, 09/26/2020
- Oliver Mark Hartmann, 09/26/2020

Nine of our youth were Confirmed on June 23, 2020

- Vivien Johnson
- Maeve Scott
- Rose McGrath
- Sybil Evans
- Campbell Boaz
- Caroline Bender
- Layne Koury
- John Gemmel
- Charlie Bufton

We celebrated the lives of those who no longer walk among us:

- Dilys G. Warning, February 21, 2020
- Margaret Wiscomb, March 20, 2020
- William L. Campbell, May 2, 2020
- Jean Anderson, September 14, 2020
- Jean Betty Erickson, September 14, 2020
- Gwen K Luecker, November 29, 2020
- Donald C. Clark, November 28, 2020

ADULT FAITH FORMATION MINISTRY GROUP

The Adult Faith Formation Committee assists with developing programs, seminars and educational experiences that encourage and deepen our appreciation of the Bible, our Presbyterian beliefs and our life as followers of Christ. The Adult Faith Formation Committee supports weekly Adult studies, small groups and retreats throughout the church program year.

AFF Committee Members:

- David Bennett
- Irris Boaz (chair)
- Jeff Lehn (staff)
- Sharon Panzica
- Bill Sharp
- Sue Sklansky (staff)

2020 AFF

- In 2020 the theme of the January Women's Retreat was Sabbath led by Rev. Judy Watt (Fourth Presbyterian Church).
- The Men's Retreat was held in February. The theme was "Our Journey of Faith" led by Rev. Phil Blackwell.
- Some small groups resumed meeting via Zoom after the pandemic caused in-person meetings to cease.

Sunday morning studies in 2020

- Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation from Bill Placher's book (January-February)
- Practice Resurrection: A Study of the Letter to the Ephesians from Eugene Peterson's book (April-May)
- Slow Church from C. Christopher Smith and John Pattison's book (June-August);
- Out of the Depths: The Psalms Speak for Us Today (September-November)

FPCW BOARD OF DEACONS

The 11 deacons serve a total of 50 members, primarily those who reside in a retirement community, may live alone, or have ongoing significant health concerns. Each deacon has up to 5 "care partners" who they are assigned to for the duration of their 3-year commitment, providing wonderful continuity and opportunities for deepening relationships.

fpcw Deacons

- Sue Sklansky, staff liaison
- Wendy Lundgren, moderator
- Jennifer Mullman
- Bob Brown
- Grainne Bailey
- Nancy Bennett
- Sam Bennett (youth)
- Ann Boyle
- Jane Brumitt
- Julie Fogarty
- Kara Hughes
- Greg Korak
- Amy Miller
- Nan Scott
- Bill Walter

2020 Accomplishments and projects in the works

At the early start of the pandemic deacons, elders, and staff checked in with members and visitors to ensure they were getting what was needed. We knew after a few months who was most vulnerable, and the deacons were able to manage that group.

The Deacon's job shifted from in-person to no contact with care partners. They shifted gears and created new ways to connect, meeting on front porches, or dropping off goodies, at their various retirement homes. The deacons miss the in-person visits but are careful for the health of their care partners

In addition, the deacon provided meals to those post-surgery or after a new baby was born. Cards are mailed out every week to those members who have been ill, had surgery or are grieving.

While the pandemic has hit our country very hard, our congregation has survived well. We have heard of only a few members who have gotten sick from COVID-19, most recovered quickly. We grieve with all members who have lost extended family members to this terrible pandemic, and continue to hold all of you in our prayers.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MINISTRY GROUP

The Buildings & Grounds Committee of Session provides oversight of all our church's physical facilities to ensure that we can support the programs that are critical to our church mission to Experience God, Grow Disciples, and Transform Lives. The Committee oversees all Church facilities including the Main Building and Sanctuary, Chapel Garden, Manse, Garages, Playground, Parking Areas, and all Grounds. In addition to maintenance and operation of all facilities the Committee is responsible for planning and executing long term capital improvement projects. Buildings and Grounds works closely with FBO, but also interfaces with other committees to support Worship, Fellowship, Education, and Mission.

Committee Members:

- Jeff Miller, Chair
- Greg Korak
- Joyce Knauff
- Carl Brown
- Dorothy Ballantyne
- Pete Holtermann
- Pastor Jeff Lehn

Accomplishments:

The pandemic dramatically reduced activity and use of FPCW's facilities in 2020, but presented many new challenges beyond typically required operation and maintenance.

- Completed HVAC systems assessment to address Covid19 concerns
- Installed weekly social distance markings for outdoor worship
- Installed PPE shields in Church office to protect staff
- Completed minor repairs and maintenance to Boiler, Elevator, and Roof
- Executed multi-year contracts for cleaning services, snow removal, and landscape maintenance
- Organized "Flower Patch Project" for FPCW families to plant flowers on Church grounds
- Painted Chapel Garden engraved lettering in limestone wall
- Installed outdoor Holiday lights for the Christmas season

Upcoming Projects and Initiatives:

- Prepare for return to in-person worship 2021
- Pursue roof parapet repair at back of Sanctuary
- Install security cameras at all entrances
- Replace office and classroom lighting with LED
- Replace carpeting on back stairs, narthex, and office

CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY GROUP

Children and Family Ministry members:

- Lindley Traynor (staff)
- Tammy Walker (elder)
- Rachel Brown
- Brandy Todd
- Mark SooHoo
- Bibles presented to 3rd graders in January during Worship, followed by "How to Use Your Bible" workshop for the kids and their parents.
- Beginning in March there was no in person Sunday School or children's activities. Lindley Traynor, created units of learning and used various visual media (illustrations, collage, wooden play people, etc) to tell stories from the Bible. Highlights included a series on the Lord's Prayer, on the life of Moses, and stories from the life and ministry of Jesus. There were occasional videos demonstrating creative prayer practices for children and their families. She also sent regular emails of encouragement, family discussion ideas, food for thought, etc to these families.
- Through the month of July, Lindley and Peggy Massello collaborated with Jason Okrzyński at FCCW to create weekly VBS videos based on the Illustrated Ministry "Compassion Camp" curriculum. Activity packets for each week were made available to pick up at the church.
- Singers & Ringers met in the spring via zoom for stories, games, and songs. They met outdoors in person during the fall to sing and shoot A movie of the Nativity story, entitled "Everything is Different." Lindley wrote the script, shot and edited the video. The pageant was presented as part of the recorded service on the 4th Sunday of Advent.
- Lindley created an "Advent at Home" for families. This included a weekly devotional linking each of the traditional Advent themes to one of the five senses and an activity to go with each.
- Lindley delivered Bible story books to our kindergarteners, with a personalized note, in January 2021. This is normally done in the fall, so this was for the 2020-21 kindergarteners.

Together with our young disciples we hear God's word, explore Bible stories, and respond to God creatively in prayer, song, art, games, and more! Join us as we grow and worship together, whether for virtual activities or in person when it is safe to do so! A special thank you to Peggy Massello for her musical expertise.

COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY GROUP

The Communications Committee of Session enhances communications with our dynamic congregation to grow in faith together. The committee develops and maintains mechanisms and systems to communicate with our congregation and the community at large to keep them informed and engaged in *fpcw* activities.

Committee Members:

- Betsy Crosswhite
- Madeline Weston
- Sue Sklansky

On-going projects and Communication systems management include:

- *fpcw* website
- *fpcw*/My Church app
- Weekly Daily Bread and twice monthly, Moving Forward in Faith, announcements via Constant Contact email
- Common Life section of the weekly church service bulletin
- Social Media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube & Twitter
- Outdoor lawn banners
- Welcome screens in Lobby and Lounge
- Indoor signage & bulletin boards
- Various program flyers (Singers & Ringers, Stock the Shelves, etc.)
- Editing, producing weekly online worship videos.
- Scope and procurement of video/camera system to “live feed” worship and other services to membership. Allows for the ability to live stream/closed circuit viewing of services (in addition to current audio ability)

Future Goals/Projects:

- Continually audit effectiveness and use of current communication vehicles
- Build a training manual and rotating team of church members trained on use of new video system.

FINANCE, BUDGET & OPERATIONS MINISTRY GROUP

Committee Description:

The Finance, Budget and Operations Committee of Session is charged with oversight of the financial and operational health through the faithful stewardship of our church’s financial assets including the endowment, the operating fund and restricted funds. This committee also assumes responsibility for audit, legal affairs, insurance, information technology, and recommendations on capital expenditures. In addition, FBO is responsible for considering and projecting the long-term financial and capital needs of the congregation.

Committee Members

- Susan Eby (co-chair)
- Scott Morris (co-chair)
- Rev. Jeff Lehn
- Marvin Behm (Treasurer)
- Bonnie Wehrenberg
- Bruce Lyon
- Donn Trautman
- Jeff Miller
- Joyce Knauff
- Stephanie Rupp
- Steve Reinhart
- Erich Kirr
- John Hariston

2020 accomplishments/future goals:

- Contingency planning for COVID-related financial impacts, securing a PPP (Small Business) loan for FPCW
- Building FPCW’s reserves to make sure we can maintain mission support, stable personnel levels and cover building maintenance throughout economic cycles

GIVING MINISTRY GROUP

The Giving Committee of Session is charged with ensuring that *fpcw*'s financial needs are met by inviting members and friends into the ministries of stewardship and giving. This ministry group works closely with the Senior Pastor and FBO. Together, the financial needs of the congregation are discerned, and strategies for meeting those needs are developed. The Giving Committee engages the congregation in the annual Stewardship Campaign, and develops and coordinates with other capital or endowment fund-raising as discerned and needed. The Giving Committee considers, celebrates, and appreciates all the ways God makes us into a giving people.

Thank you for your ongoing generosity to the life and ministry of *fpcw*! Every gift of every size matters. We could not do it without you.

Outcomes:

- Engaged and committed members and friends of *fpcw* who give generously
- Annual giving campaigns resulting in pledge commitments meeting the budget goals for the year
- Annual collections of pledges consistent with budget expectations
- Other ad hoc campaigns or programs throughout the year to secure funding for targeted programs or capital needs

Members: John Hairston, Dan Johnson, Rev. Jeff Lehn, (along with ad hoc participation of Finance Manager, Marvin Behm, and FBO)

2020 Accomplishments/2021 Plans:

- *fpcw* continues to be remarkably faithful and generous in its support of the ministries to which we believe God has called us. In 2020, we received 130 pledges for a total of \$833,722 (average pledge of \$6,413).
- We ended 2020 achieving nearly 95% of our budgeted donations, a heartening amount, even with the pandemic's economic impact on our pledging members and our non-pledge giving dropping due the lack of in-person services. Combined with our savings on expenses, this allowed us to post a \$36,866 budget surplus for the year.
- The 2021 stewardship campaign ended with 112 pledges received for a total of \$798,093 (average pledge of \$7,125).

MEMBERSHIP MINISTRY GROUP

The Membership Committee of Session is charged with developing the membership of *fpcw* by reaching out to non-members and supporting them as they make the transition to participation and full membership in *fpcw*. Guided by our vision/mission statement to Experience God, Grow Disciples, Transform Lives, the committee seeks to support the engagement of all our visitors and members in worship, faith formation, mission and care. The committee works closely with Senior Pastor Jeff Lehn and staff on new member hospitality, and with several other committees on member engagement. Success is measured by the care given to visitors, potential members, and new members and their subsequent involvement in and support of our common mission.

ORGANIZATION

The committee is composed of one or more Session members, Director of Congregational Care & Engagement Sue Sklansky as the staff liaison, as well as a number of other church members. The Session member appointed as Chair by Senior Pastor Jeff Lehn for the 2020-2021 program year is Rick Baer, who can be reached at rickbaer2112@gmail.com or by calling the church office at 847-256-3010.

ACTIVITIES

Develops the membership of *fpcw* by:

- Welcoming visitors during worship and provide further outreach
- Hosting classes for prospective members
- Integrating new members into our common life
Celebrating membership anniversaries.

The Membership Committee met a few times in early 2020 but has not met since the onset of the COVID pandemic in March 2020 since the church has not been meeting in person and the church's priorities were focused on existing members. As the world returns to 'normal', and hopefully *fpcw* reopens for in-person services, we will reconvene membership committee meetings. Currently, the church is determining the size of its actual membership. Pastor Lehn has sent emails to inactive members to determine if they should be removed or kept on the membership rolls. This information will be valuable in obtaining a current membership for *fpcw*.

MISSION MINISTRY GROUP

The Mission Committee actively engages the congregation in joining God's work of love, justice, healing, and reconciliation in the world. As Christians, we are called to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world which invites us to "be mission" rather than "do mission," with the first being transformational and relational and the second being transactional. Responsibilities include directing our church's financial contributions to mission partners and developing opportunities for church member involvement in mission activities.

Current member

- Mary Watt
- Jenni Holt
- Amy Miller
- Anita Thies
- Beth Bishop
- Bob Bobesink
- Kara Hughes
- Nancy Freeman
- Rick Drake
- Greg Korak
- Jennifer Christensen

Due to the pandemic in 2020, the mission committee showed great nimbleness and adapted the committee's efforts and budget allocation to focus on mission partners who work to relieve Poverty, Homelessness & Hunger locally and worldwide amongst different populations.

Poverty & Homelessness & Hunger Mission Partners:

- Connections for the Homeless
- Family Promise
- Interfaith Action
- The Boulevard
- Sarah's Circle
- New Life Baptist
- Family Matters
- C24/7
- Curt's Café

Worldwide Mission

- Malawi
- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

Refugee

- Stock the Shelves
- Refugee Relief

Highlights of 2020 activities include:

- **Providing meals** to homeless residents at Connections for the Homeless shelters in Evanston that adhered to COVID 19 protocols and allowed congregation to safely serve this population.

Mission Ministry continued

- **November hosting of Family Promise families** by providing temporary shelter and meals in a safe, non-contact method while still utilizing our church property to serve.
- **Holiday Giving Tree** where members of FPCW provide gifts for children and adults who are served by some of our mission partners. This year this was accomplished with virtual engagement, where members signed up digitally and sent gifts directly to organizations from ecommerce sites.
- **October Mission Month** provided opportunities for our congregation to participate in something "Together, While Apart" while respecting social distance guidelines.
- Continued growth in our relationship with the Katawa congregation of the **Central Church of Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) in Malawi** and support in the expansion of their school. Additionally, a special Christmas video featuring greeting from congregation members and musical performances provided our sister church with a connection and support.



Sarah's Circle
Helping Women Rebuild Their Lives



The Boulevard



connections
FOR THE HOMELESS

C24/7
FATHER'S ARMS MINISTRIES



PERSONNEL SUPPORT MINISTRY GROUP

The Committee is charged with ensuring that fpcw's staff and staffing structure adequately support our ministry and operational needs. It works with the Senior Pastor/Head of Staff and is guided by our congregation's mission and vision statements. The committee provides oversight for annual performance reviews and any interim feedback for staff, develops and implements personnel policies, develops and oversees the annual personnel budget and the hiring of non-clergy staff.

Committee Members

- Brian Hughes (co-chair)
- Carolyn Holtermann,
- Dan Johnson
- Emily Karottki
- Jane Rankin (co-chair)
- Rev. Jeff Lehn (staff liaison)

2020 Committee Accomplishments

- Wrote staff annual reviews and met with staff to go over their reviews (Rev. Jeff Lehn, assisted by committee members)
- Adjusted staff activities and compensation to reflect the suspension of in-person worship and meetings, and building restrictions due to Covid-19
- Wrote an addendum to the Personnel Policy Manual that outlined for staff members *fpcw's* Covid-19-related policies, protections, and benefits
- Extended parental leave for benefits-eligible staff from six weeks to eight weeks for a birth or adoption
- Made arrangements to dissolve the call of Associate Pastor Erin Raska and reassigned her workload
- Hired interim Associate Pastor Laura Sherwood and participated in her onboarding

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Strategic Planning Committee of Session is charged with encouraging and supporting church leaders in their efforts to discern and plan for future activities. This committee helps the staff and committees to identify opportunities and to incorporate our church's vision, goals, and objectives in their planning. The committee works closely with Senior Pastor Jeff Lehn, staff, and all committees to ensure that our church has a comprehensive and planful approach to carrying out our stated mission and vision as a congregation.

During the year, the committee membership includes

- Rick Baer*
- Jenni Holt
- Jennifer Christensen*
- Craig Hutson*
- Sal Karottki
- Kevin McJoynt
- Frank Panzica*
- Paul Traynor
- Pastor Jeff Lehn*
- Jim Lyman* (chair).
- Sue Sklansky (staff member)

"*" indicates members who are continuing into 2021.

During most of 2020, the committee's work has been dominated by efforts to deal with the challenges posed by the pandemic, which is expected to continue through much of 2021. In keeping with its overall planning role, the committee has planned, supported, and/or assisted with the following efforts during the past year:

- Vision/Mission interpretation and implementation
- Music Meditations via email
- Congregational survey on the pandemic response and future plans of our church
- Rules and procedures for outdoor worship services
- Rules and procedures for indoor worship services
- Exploration of issues affecting the longer range future of our church
- Update of committee descriptions

During the coming year, the committee will continue its ongoing efforts to support the church's Vision and Mission Statements. In particular, the committee will look for opportunities to assist in planning needed to emerge from the pandemic and to support the year's focus as determined by the Session.

WORSHIP, MUSIC AND THE ARTS MINISTRY GROUP

The Worship, Music & the Arts Committee (WMA) of Session has a major role in how our congregation experiences God by supporting and enhancing the worship life of our church. As the heart of our life together, we seek to engage in inspiring worship that is guided by the Reformed Tradition while incorporating a variety of musical and liturgical elements that create a vibrant and engaging worship experience. The committee works closely with Pastor Jeff Lehn and Director of Music & Worship Peggy Massello and other committees as needed. WMA's success is measured by the smooth operation of worship services, the quality of the worship experience, and the number of worship attendees, particularly at the special services.

2020 was a challenging year for everyone. The celebratory events of the past year were greatly curtailed in the interests of the health and well-being of our church family. However, together with staff and other committees, the WMA led in providing outdoor worship and communion services in the summer and fall. Also, the WMA and the Hospitality Committees sponsored the first outdoor was-sail party in *fpcw* history. (We hope it is the last.) Finally, to bring a difficult year to a close while celebrating the light and hope of the future, the staff and WMA provided two outdoor Christmas Eve services that were enjoyed by many families.

The WMA Committee supports and enhances our worship life by:

- Recruiting, training, and managing the teams of ushers, liturgists, and communion servers as needed for every service
- Decorating the sanctuary and the church during each liturgical season
- Assisting in the development of special worship services to engage the congregation
- Planning and leading the First Festival kick-off event for each new church year
- Supporting Lenten season worship with soup suppers in conjunction with the evening services on Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday.
- Providing flowers for special services and various other occasions

Typically, the committee meets monthly during the church year immediately following Sunday worship. The committee is composed of Pastor Jeff Lehn, Director of Music and Worship, Peggy Massello as the staff liaisons for the committee, one or more Session members, and other church members. The Session member appointed as Chair for the 2020-2021 program year is Bill Bishop, who can be reached at wdb1500@gmail.com or by calling the church office at 847-256-3010.

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY GROUP

Like most groups, the pandemic completely threw us for a loop last year, that being said, here are a couple of things to highlight:

- Prior to the pandemic, we went on a Winter Ski Retreat with 10 students. It was a great time to bond with God and each other.
- The Benefit dinner was canceled last minute in a wise decision to keep everybody safe.
- Confirmation Sunday was delayed, but we were able to meet in-person, outdoors for a very special gathering for everyone involved.
- We coordinated our own Work Trip to Wagner farms in Glenview, IL, from August 3 through 7. The "trip" included working on the farm Tuesday through Friday and meeting at *fpcw* for devotions and games Monday through Friday. With students able to join in as they were available, we averaged about 15 students every day, but had about 20 different students attend.
- Tower hosted Youth Sunday on August 9, including the outdoor service and the online service.
- Tower and confirmation have continued to gather weekly, outdoors in-person when possible, online via Zoom when the weather is bad, throughout the year.
- Tower has tried to meet once a month for in-person activities, including:
 - Packing Halloween boxes
 - Surprising Pastor Jeff for pastor appreciation month by decorating his lawn
 - Christmas party
- Tower held a fundraiser in November for the Work Trip next summer and managed to raise over \$1300
- We created a new group for post college to mid thirties Tower alumni to share their faith experiences in a pandemic landscape. We found this to be a difficult time for anyone, especially those who would normally thrive off interactions with their peers but are no longer able to do so. So we created a group for them to reconnect with each other and the church.
- Club 56 is continuing to meet and while their numbers are small, their hearts are big. It is coming together as a tight knit group.
- The Tower Advisory Group (TAG) really got off its feet and began meeting every month. We would like to add more students to the mix when we can begin meeting in person again, but for now we are happy with the group we have.

Demographic Report
January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020
Submitted by the Clerk of Session

<u>Active Members 1/1/2020</u>	549	<u>Christian Education Enrollment by Age</u>	
<u>Membership Gains</u>		Birth -3	10
Profession or Reaffirmation of Faith		Age 4	5
17 and under	9	Kindergarten	7
18 and over	0	Grade 1	6
Certificate of Transfer	0	Grade 2	2
Total Gains	9	Grade 3	6
<u>Membership Losses</u>		Grade 4	6
Certificate of transfer	8	Grade 5	1
Deaths	8	Grade 6	6
Deleted (any reason)	0	Grade 7	2
Active Membership 12/31/2020	537	Grade 8	10
<u>Baptisms</u>		Grade 9	10
Presented by others	2	Grade 10	6
At Confirmation	1	Grade 11	5
Other	0	Grade 12	6
Total	3	Total Christian Education	88
		<u>Average Weekly Attendance</u>	
		Indoor	94
		Video Worship	184
		Outdoor	26

Church Operating Budget	2020 Actual	2020 Annual Budget	Percent of 2020 Budget
Available for Expenditure:			
Pledge and Other Contribution Receipts	\$848,732	\$898,452	94.5%
Other Income	4,297	3,180	135.1%
Endowment Support	83,868	83,868	100.0%
	\$936,897	\$985,500	95.1%
Expenses:			
Personnel	\$588,699	\$635,556	92.6%
General (incl per-capita expense of \$19,944)	27,655	31,044	89.1%
Christian Education	5,791	11,100	52.2%
Worship & Music	7,958	12,900	61.7%
Membership	343	4,080	8.4%
Communications	3,002	4,600	65.3%
Stewardship/Online Giving Fees	6,704	6,800	98.6%
Office & Insurance	50,756	51,870	97.9%
Buildings & Grounds	92,239	111,000	83.1%
Mission	98,884	98,550	100.3%
Endowment Loan Repayment	18,000	18,000	100.0%
	\$900,031	\$985,550	91.33%
Difference:	+\$36,866	\$0	

2020 Endowment Fund Report

On March 5, 1979, the endowment fund was created by the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette after receiving a gift from the estate of longtime member couple, Thelma and Alma Cook. The endowment fund was set up to “encourage gifts and bequest from members and friends to be used by the church for its work in the name of Christ, both in Wilmette and wherever need exists...” Over the years, additional gifts were received and the balance gradually rose as market returns outpaced spending. From the outset, though, the endowment was set up to fund the ongoing ministry of the church in a sustainable way. The current spending policy is set at 5.5% of a rolling average of the previous 12 quarters of the fund’s value.

In 2020, the investment return for the endowment fund was nearly 17%, consistent with the overall financial markets. The total support toward the church’s ministry in 2020 was \$87,638. The endowment is made up of several sub-funds that support various aspects of the church’s ministry: the Cook, Rutherford, Pell, and Hugh-ey gifts direct support to the general church operations and mission partners; the Turner, Leck, Gillum and Neuhaus gifts direct support to musical areas; and the James and Ann Steiner gifts direct support to youth ministry efforts. In 2020, we are grateful to have received a \$42,000 bequest from the estate of James Lusk which was added to the endowment fund.

If you are interested in making a gift to the endowment now or in your estate plans, please reach out to Marvin Behm, our financial manager.

Total Endowment Fund balance as of December 31, 2019	\$ 1,792,591.22
Bequests and Gifts Received	\$ 42,000
Interest and Dividends	\$ 32,791.54
Mark-to-Market Investment Returns	\$ 239,417.75
Support to Church Budget	\$ (87,638.00)
Support to Emily Hicks (via Louisville Seminary)	\$ (2,000)
Total Endowment Fund balance as of December 31, 2020	\$ 2,017,162.51

fpcw Session

Class of 2021

Bill Bishop
Betsy Crosswhite
Brian Hughes
Jim Lyman
Stephanie Phelan
Bob Bobesink
Jack Hariston

Worship, Music & the Arts Ministry Group
Communications Ministry Group
Personnel Support Ministry Group
Strategic Planning
Fellowship Ministry Group
Youth & Family Ministry Group
Youth & Family Ministry Group

Class of 2022

Rick Baer
Irris Boaz
Susan Eby
Jenni Holt
Scott Morris
Tammy Walker

Membership Ministry Group
Adult Faith Formation Ministry Group
Finance Budget & Operations
Mission Ministry Group
Finance Budget & Operations
Children and Family Ministry Group

Class of 2023

Jeff Miller
Sal Karotki
John Hariston
Jane Rankin

Buildings & Grounds Ministry Group
Youth & Family Ministry Group
Giving Ministry Group
Personnel Support Ministry Group

Rev. Jeff Lehn
Rev. Laura Sherwood
Carol Korak

Moderator
Interim Associate Pastor
Clerk of Session

INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT



Gathered by the grace of Jesus Christ, we are a vibrant and supportive Christian family whose welcoming spirit reflects God's love for all people. We invite participation in all aspects of our church life by persons of every race, language, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental ability, economic or marital status, or faith background. *fpcw* is a member of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians, a broad-based, national group of clergy and lay leaders working for a church that is simultaneously faithful, just, and whole.