

2023 Annual Report





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Our Team



REV. JAMES SLEDGE

TRANSITIONAL PASTOR AND HEAD OF STAFF

Before entering seminary at age 35, Rev. James Sledge worked as a corporate pilot. After graduating from Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, he was ordained as the pastor of Western Boulevard Presbyterian in Raleigh, NC. He next served as pastor of Boulevard Presbyterian in Columbus, OH prior to becoming Falls Church Presbyterian Church's pastor in 2012. He recently completed a 10,000-mile motorcycle trip across the country as part of a sabbatical. He is an avid runner and is preparing for his sixth marathon. Originally from Charlotte, NC, he and his wife, Shawn, have two grown daughters, along with a son-in-law and two grandsons.



REV. KATHERINE STANFORD

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Rev. Stanford arrived at the Meeting House in 2014 after serving churches in Connecticut and New York. Following her first career in the theater, she returned to her Yale alma mater for Divinity School. In addition to congregational care and service and justice work, her passions include recent conflict mediation certification through the Dialogue for Peaceful Change, and doctoral work at the Virginia Theological Seminary in Christian Spirituality. In addition to loving God, and her two recent college grads from Vanderbilt and the Rhode Island School of Design, Katherine delights in being on or near water, taming her garden, and seeing some theater.



REV. ANN HERLIN

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Rev. Herlin came to the Meeting House in 2001 after receiving her Master of Divinity degree from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Prior to seminary, she taught first grade for two years in south Texas as part of Teach for America, then spent 16 months teaching English to elementary students in Costa Rica. She received her B.A. from Yale University in 1993.

Currently, Ann works part-time at the Meeting House. She and her husband, Terry Staley, are the parents of two children, so she also spends many hours attending, transporting, and volunteering with their activities.

Staff Directory

Rev. James Sledge

Transitional Pastor and Head of Staff

Rev. Katherine Stanford, **Associate Pastor**

Rev. Ann Herlin, **Associate Pastor**

Noelle Castin, **Director of Christian Education**

Mary Pratt Perry

Director of Youth Ministry

Dr. Steven Seigart

Director of Music and Organist

Aaron Siirila, **Business Administrator**

Ellen Haas, **Membership and Accounting**

Vicki Stones

Office Manager and Communications

Walter Elias, **Sexton**

Maria Elias, **Sexton**

Ministry Moderators

Ministry Moderators 2023-2024:

Administration

Bill Winslow

Education

Ruth Brightbill

Facilities

Ryan Murphy and Melissa Carl

Membership & Evangelism

Anne Fischer

Service & Justice

Larry Beam and Shannon Lisecki

Stewardship & Finance

Eli Peterson

Worship

Joe McCoy



Administration Ministry

The Administration Ministry is the managerial and spiritual support system for the day-to-day workings of Old Presbyterian Meeting House, providing input and guidance on a wide range of operational matters, including contracts, technology, personnel and organization.

In this time of pastoral transition at OPMH, we have been especially active. In the past year, we formed the transitional pastor search committee and prepared and finalized the church's contract with our transitional pastor for Session's approval. We have also assisted the pastor nominating committee in developing a list of pastoral duties and responsibilities for our new called pastor and head of staff and in responding to requests for supplemental information presented by candidates.

As part of our annual duties, we have reviewed and approved the church's insurance package, including the addition of cyber liability coverage. We have also conferred with Stewardship & Finance and the transitional pastor on staffing and compensation strategy as the church seeks to maintain a vibrant program and competitive compensation structure within the constraints of its budget. Our ministry will continue working to help ensure that compensation expense remains at both a sustainable and fair level consistent with the church's overall budget and program needs.

Highlights of the past year include:

- Updating of position descriptions for all church personnel, designed to help the congregation fulfill God's call, provide guidance in hiring and evaluation of staff and establish meaningful boundaries between roles;
- Moving toward formation of a corporation to hold title to church properties, as required by the Book of Order; and
- Assisting the staff as the church works to improve its communications capabilities and strategies, including launch of an updated website with enhanced functionality and security.



Church Staff packs food for ALIVE!

Team

George Bostick, Joe Cavender, Anna Davis, Jim Herring, Linda Lanam, Bill Winslow, Moderator

Board of Deacons

The Diaconate provides care and assistance to Members of the congregation. 2023 marked a return to normal following the many restrictions and avoidance of social connection & interaction that arose from the Covid-19 Pandemic that commenced in early 2020. Each Deacon has a “Net” (short for network) of 20-30 households and sends periodic communications to advise of seasonal activities, to offer assistance, and to generally be an ongoing point of contact with OPMH. Deacons arrange in-person visits to Net members living in care facilities, participate in monthly meetings (mostly in-person), host receptions following Memorial Services, coordinate Meal Trains for a variety of circumstances, manage a successful annual blood drive and make efforts to be personally involved in the life of the church.

I. Within the Diaconate

In addition to the training received by new members, Deacons received a lesson about the roles that emotional support animals can serve. Deacons sent personalized Advent and Lent postcards to their Net members, and generally kept in touch on at least a bi-monthly basis with calls, e-mail messages, letters/cards, and in-person visits to members living in care facilities. During the year Deacons received training and support to be more effective in the use of the Realm church communication application.

II. Within the Congregation

Deacons are involved in the life of the church through service as Duty Deacon each Sunday, delivering the flowers from Sunday services to

members of the congregation, hosting a Fellowship Hour each month, organizing Meal Trains for families in times of need, and hosting receptions following Memorial Services for members of the congregation. Deacons provided food and hosted meals between services on Easter and Christmas Eve for the choir and others. In February 2023 the Deacons hosted a special reception to celebrate the retirement of Senior Pastor, Dr. Robert Laha.

III. Within the Community

Each year the Deacons coordinate and host the Leslie Sherman Memorial Blood Drive, which in 2022 was named in honor of the daughter of Holly & Tony Sherman, who was a victim of the VA Tech shootings in 2007. Tony joined the Meeting House and as a Deacon started our tradition of hosting blood drives, which was a passion of Leslie's.

In 2023 many Deacons made additional contributions through the Diaconate in support of the Alexandria Holiday Sharing program, donating an additional \$1,400 in contributions and gift cards for the program.

Debra McKeown was the Moderator of this Ministry during the 2022-23 program year, and Ken Kanzawa and Tim Elmore served as Vice Moderators. Since June, Tim has served as Moderator, and Karen Waller as Vice-Moderator; she will be the moderator for 2024-2025. The Diaconate receives extraordinary support from the staff of the Meeting House, particularly Rev. Katherine Stanford as the Staff Liaison to the Diaconate, Vicki Stones and Aaron Siirila.

Team

Tim Elmore (Moderator), Karen Waller (Vice-moderator), Terri Beam, Jeremy Carl, Carol Christensen, Julie Church, Tim Elmore, Mike Farmer, Auggie Lisecki (youth), Jim Lovo, Debra McKeown, Jerry Stalun, Dara Surratt, Paul Anderson, Martha Beall, Ellen Beans, Meredith Check, Jan Herring, Rich Johnson, Jeff Mulvihill, Debra Thayer, Margo Williams, Dave Branding, Anne Browne, Babs Chase, Rob Dunn, Meghan Kanzawa, Patrick McNabb, Kent Myers, Jenn Smar, Paul Van Hook, Jill Waters

Education Ministry

Mission

The Education Ministry of the Old Presbyterian Meeting House has the privilege of coordinating faith formation opportunities for our congregation. This includes programming geared toward children, youth and adults, with the objective of allowing each member of our community to grow in their knowledge and practice of faith.

Children's Education Highlights:

- In 2023, Sunday School was fully reestablished for three age groups (3-year-olds through Kindergarteners, 1st & 2nd graders, and 3rd through 5th graders). A total of 25+ children participated in Sunday School, and 20 members of our congregation volunteered to teach and help. After many years with the same curriculum and in-depth review of alternatives, we shifted to a new curriculum called *Shine* in Fall 2023. One constant throughout the year was the gift of music provided by Claire Pratt and Rachel Bowe on Sunday mornings.

- Bridges to Worship returned as part of the 11:00 a.m. worship service, supported by a full team of volunteers. Children aged 4 through 3rd grade are invited to attend Bridges to Worship in Heaven (top floor, Education Building) following the Time with Children.
- We were thrilled to offer Vacation Bible School in June 2023 for the 2nd time after the pandemic, using the theme Changers Lab. A total of 17 children participated in VBS, including 5 new participants, and VBS was supported by 15+ volunteers.
- We offered a full Christmas Eve pageant and family service inside for the first time since the pandemic. The pageant was hugely popular, with packed pews and participation from all ages, including an infant as baby Jesus, children (angels, shepherds and animals!), youth (angels, prophetic voices, Mary, Joseph and the wisemen!) and college-aged helpers.
- Other efforts to support our children included the June presentation of the 3rd Grade Bibles, the all-church retreat, several activities for Club 3-4-5, and Good Deed Mangers for kindergarteners.



Team

Noelle Castin (Staff), Mary Pratt Perry (Staff), Rob Brewer (Elder), Ruth Brightbill (Elder/Moderator), Chris Pommerer (Elder) and Martha Gibson (member at large).

Education Ministry cont'd

Youth Education Highlights:

- Youth began meeting during the Sunday School hour as a new offering in Fall 2023 and continued to meet as Youth Groups on Sunday evenings. Sunday morning programming has included Bible study, art activities and cooking. On Sunday evenings, our two youth groups – Middle School (6th-8th grades) and High School (9th-12th grades) – enjoy dinner together, and spend time in Bible study, individual reflection and community building.
- Through our Confirmation program, we welcomed 5 youth as members of OPMH on Confirmation Sunday (April 23, 2023). The new Confirmation session started in October 2023, with a robust class of 9 confirmands. They were joined by a dozen other youth at the November Massanetta all-church retreat where their participation adds so much to the weekend.

A wide array of engaging and fun activities were organized in 2023 to allow Youth to enjoy time together and apply their faith, including:

- Winter retreats to build fellowship and start the planning for Youth Sunday.
- Youth Sunday on May 7, a worship service led entirely by our Youth.
- Summertime conferences, including the Massanetta Middle School Conference and Montreat Senior High Conference.
- Senior High Lock-In, and Middle School Christmas Party both in December. During the lock-in, the HS youth made and delivered cookies and cards for OPMH members on the prayer list.
- High School/College Christmas Party
- Throughout the year, our Youth exemplified caring and a strong sense of service to others. The Youth organized the Souper Bowl of Caring to benefit ALIVE! and Rise Against Hunger and the Chili Cook-Off (an annual favorite for the whole congregation).

- Valentine care packages were made for college students and cards also sent to those on the prayer list. The Youth coordinated with the Service & Justice Ministry to hold a Diaper Drive in October collecting 3,700 diapers, and in November, to package over 10,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger.

Adult Education Highlights:

- Adult Education delivered a variety of programs throughout 2023, including classes taught by members and paid guest speakers.
- Sunday School programming for adults continued in an in-person format in Heritage Hall, with recordings available on-line. New adult education offerings were also introduced in Fall 2023 like small groups for parents of all aged children and a Connections Café.

Additional in-person and virtual programs, including Bible studies, book discussions and a class on centering prayer, were scheduled on various days and times throughout the week to maximize opportunities for OPMH members to engage.

Intergenerational Highlights:

In August, 20+ people of all ages gathered in the courtyard for Bingo and Brownies. They enjoyed bingo, prizes, and all types of brownies!

In November over 20 families enjoyed making Advent wreaths in Fellowship Hall along with wonderful Advent activities.

Additionally, thanks to all who volunteered to set-up and take down the bags and candles for the Luminary Walk, which provided a beautiful luminary-lit churchyard between December 24-26.

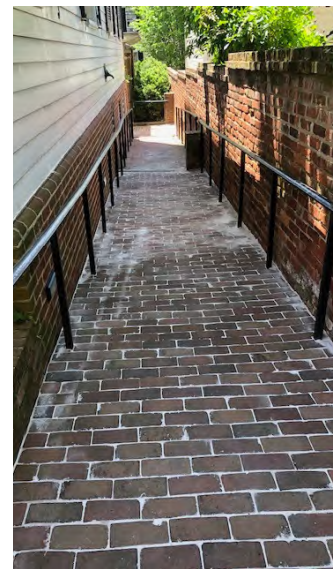


Facilities Ministry

Building on the momentum from 2022, the Facilities Ministry continued to tackle large capital projects, strategic planning initiatives, and volunteer-based efforts to keep the church facilities functioning at their best. While many of the capital projects were highly visible, the planning initiatives and volunteer efforts that often happen behind the scenes were a big part of making 2023 a successful year for the Facilities Ministry. Looking forward to 2024, the Facilities Ministry is leading an update of the Miller Dodson replacement reserve report and piloting a general upkeep fund for ongoing maintenance, supporting the long-term stewardship of the OPMH buildings and grounds. In addition to the regular efforts of the ministry members, volunteers contributed tremendously to the ministry's mission with their talents helping with spot repairs and their time invested in quarterly grounds cleanup days.

2023 Highlights

- Reconstruction of the Sanctuary Bell Tower woodwork, including handrails and the north and south stairs
- Established a general upkeep fund allocating \$20,000 per year over the next two years to tackle the collective of smaller maintenance tasks across the buildings and grounds
- Installed a drainage system for the Flounder House courtyard to protect the adjacent buildings from flooding during larger rain events
- Repaired the walls and reset the bricks along the Elliot House walkway
- Performed an energy audit of all buildings to identify recommendations for energy-efficient upgrades and programmatic changes to energy use
- Replaced five aging HVAC compressors on the roof of the Elliot House



Team

Jim Beall, Melissa Carl (Elder, Moderator), Deborah Farmer (Elder), Anne Irving, Monika Klinkman (Elder), Jim Lovo, Mitch Michener, Tom Moser, Kait Murphy, Ryan Murphy (Elder, Moderator), Jenny Parker, and Baird Smith.

History & Archives

The Meeting House was open for tours in conjunction with the city's George Washington's Birthday Celebration and Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend, as well as for private groups throughout the year. Congregation members joined people throughout the nation in ringing our church bell following worship service on Sunday, 26 September 2023 in celebration of Constitution Day. Ceremonies were conducted at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier of the American Revolution in conjunction with George Washington's Birthday Celebration, with the Scottish Christmas Walk, and on Memorial Day. The congregation's Geneva Bible, printed in 1640 and brought to Alexandria by the Rev. James Muir and his family during the 1780s, was used to read scripture in parallel with text from the New Revised Standard Version in worship service on Reformation Sunday, 29 October 2023. We responded to numerous inquiries concerning information about former congregation members and the congregation's engagement in historic events throughout the year.

On 4 July 2026, the nation will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Members of the congregation were deeply involved in events that led the Continental Congress to declare independence from Britain, including signing the revolutionary Fairfax Resolves in 1774 (founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/02-10-02-0080). During 2022, John Carlyle (1720-1780) was honored as a signer of the Fairfax Resolves with a ceremony and placement of a plaque at his grave in the churchyard burial ground led by the Fairfax Resolves Chapter, Sons of the American

Revolution (see photo by Baird Smith, 2022). On 16 March 2024, Robert Adam (1731-1789) will also be honored as another signer of the Fairfax Resolves at the Adam family plot in the Presbyterian Cemetery – all are invited to attend. More information on this event and others that will occur over the next two years will be forthcoming.

Archive – Items received during the year include printed materials and colonial-era costumes from the docent program, a watercolor of the Meeting House by “M. Stubbs” (1969), a print of a charcoal drawing from above the churchyard entrance on Royal Street that includes Flounder House, Meeting House, and Education Building (circa 1958) by Caroline van Hook Bean (1879-1980), decorative plates depicting the Meeting House (1963 and unknown), and a five-drawer file cabinet donated by Mitch and Olivia Michener.

City of Alexandria's Historic Alexandria Resources Commission (HARC) – Carol Black, who represents our congregation on the commission, reports that it worked with non-profit groups and neighborhood associations urging the city to consider the impacts of its “zoning for housing/housing for all” initiative on the city's two historic overlay zones, and that it prepared a list of names of historic Alexandrians for the city's consideration with its street re-naming project, among other projects this past year.



Team

Deborah Farmer, Ann Timberlake, Tobin Tracey, and Donald Dahmann (chair)

Meeting House Cooperative Preschool

MHCP is a mission of OPMH. The Preschool is a cooperative school in which parents are an integral part of the school. Parents are offered many opportunities to co-op in their child's classroom. Co-oping days are arranged between the teacher and the parent and are based on the parent's preference. In addition to parents helping in the classroom, parents are asked to select one volunteer committee each year. The preschool served 61 students during the 2023-2024 school year. The preschool is licensed to operate through the Department of Education and the state of Virginia. MHCP was visited on January 3rd for their unannounced licensing visit. The preschool passed the licensing inspection in all categories. In addition to the Board of Directors overseeing the budget and the operation of the preschool, the MHCP Board committed resources to various outreach projects in the City of Alexandria during the 2023-2024 school year. MHCP continued to exercise safe measures to maintain a healthy environment for our students and staff.

Tania Ryan is the Director of the preschool and has been at MHCP for 24 years. The Assistant to the Director is Allyson Hazzard, who is a former parent and currently a member of OPMH. There are 4 lead teachers and 7 assistant teachers. MHCP offers weekly science classes, yoga and movement classes, and music classes. The preschool hosts various assemblies every other month beginning in October. Every child is screened by a private Occupational Therapist, and Speech and Language Therapist. The results of both screenings are given directly to the parents.

Admission

The admission season begins in October with individual interviews and tours with perspective parents. Applications are accepted the entire school year. Applications received by January 31st are given priority. Returning families are given their first choice in class placements for the following year. The application fee is \$75 for all new and returning students.

School Calendar

The school year begins in September and ends in May. The preschool hosts a 4 day camp following Memorial Day. During the summer the office is closed with the exception of periodic visits by the Director and the Assistant to the Director. Classroom repairs are conducted during the summer months.

PAC (Parent Advisory Committee)

The PAC is comprised of parents who chair various preschool committees. The PAC chair represents the parents at Board of Directors meetings and meets weekly with the Director. The PAC chair oversees all parent activities during the school year.



Team

Hannah Williams, President; Brent Perry, Treasurer; Jen Brennan, Accountant; Tania Ryan, MHCP Director; Megan Beerbower, PAC Chair; Cyd Henry, MHCP Staff; Noelle Castin, OPMH Rep; Elisabeth Pearson, Community Rep; Heather Orenstein, Educational Consultant; James Sledge, OPMH Pastor

Membership & Evangelism Ministry

Membership & Evangelism (M&E) focuses on encouraging visitors and drawing them in to membership, and nurturing members to deepen their faith through connecting with their OPMH family in big and small ways.

Name Tags: After many years of discussion, we received Session approval to purchase engraved plastic name tags for our members in time for Rally Day.

Welcome Table: M&E continued to coordinate volunteers to welcome guests, answer questions, and provide information after Sunday services.

Let's Break Bread: We started a new event this year. M&E "hosted" small group dinners at local restaurants February/March, July/August, and in October.

Inquirer's Classes: We hosted two series of classes in May and October for those interested in joining the church. We assisted in pairing the new members with sponsors.

Church Picnic: In June, we hosted this annual OPMH event at Fort Hunt Park and provided sub sandwiches, chips, lemonade, fruit and cookies.

Church Retreat: In November, this annual event was coordinated by a subcommittee of M&E.

Noonday Noëls: M&E and Worship provided a light lunch following the concerts in December.

Other events included the Palm Sunday Brunch, National Night Out Bingo and Brownies and the Scottish Walk Parade.



Team

Anne Fischer (Moderator), Laura Campbell (Elder), Jenny Parker (Elder), Karen and Dave Branding, Ellen Klavan, Andy Mickley, Meghan Kanzawa, Leslie Lautenslager, Kiban McNabb, Mary Myers, Jill Waters, Ann and John Whaley, Vicki and Rich Stones, Gina Agee and Tom Lubnow, Rev. Katherine Stanford

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Presbyterian Cemetery and Columbarium

The Presbyterian Cemetery and Columbarium, located at 600 Hamilton Lane in Alexandria, VA, is directed by the PC & C Board within the guidelines of the Session of the Old Presbyterian Meeting House. Established in 1809, this active cemetery is a historical burial site for prominent Alexandrians, with over 1000 burial plots and 140 columbarium niches available for purchase. This seven-acre historic cemetery is consecrated for current and future burials and interments.

The Board ensures that cemetery operations comply with state laws and regulations and is responsible for the financial management of its independent budget and investments. It employs the Superintendent to oversee daily cemetery operations and funerals and maintain all essential documents and records.

Key 2023 activities involved evaluating financial reports, assessing and improving landscaping options, investigating a possible historic designation, supervising nine funerals, organizing a community cleanup event, and participating in on-site safety training. Superintendent David Heiby increased the cemetery's visibility by organizing weekly walking tours. The Board also honored the service of Mark Beerthuis and former president Robert Sennewald.

For more information, tours, or to purchase a plot or niche, contact Superintendent David Heiby at 703-869-0872, email cemetery@opmh.org, or leave a message at the church office.



Iconic view of the Cazenove family gravesite in the Presbyterian Cemetery

Team

President Olivia Michener, Treasurer, Art Leigh, Richard Dorrier, Debbie Farmer, Jim Herring, Jenny Parker, Martha Gibson, Kate Theisen, and the late Mark Beerthuis.

Scholarship Committee

The Committee administers four activities relating to scholarship. The first, using funds provided through the operating budget of the Church, supports theological education and training for individuals related to OPMH.

There were no funds allocated in the budget, nor recipients of such funds in 2023. The second requires monitoring the Sengel Scholar programs established with Yale Divinity School and Union Theological Seminary, in support of post-graduate studies for individuals from emerging countries. These programs were established in honor of William and Marian Sengel, long-time pastor and wife, at OPMH.

The current Sengel Scholars at Yale Divinity are: Thi Kim Uyen Do is a second year M.Div. student from Vietnam. Her academic interests include theology and education. After graduating from YDS, Uyen hopes to return to Vietnam and be a professor of theology to support the educational system.

Qing-Jun Luo is a first-year S.T.M. student interested in historical and systematic theologies. Qing-Jun is originally from Beijing, China, where he hopes to eventually return to continue his academic research. He holds a Ph.D. in Computer Vision and Artificial Intelligence from Peking University in Beijing, and he has previously worked as a research fellow in a laboratory. Qing-Jun is a Reformed Christian with theological interests in the Protestant Reformation, early modernity, and Reformed piety.

There were no Sengel Scholars awarded at Union Seminary in 2023.

The third activity involves scholarship grants to members of the "Meeting House family" for a variety of educational experiences, using earnings from the Garrett-Claxton Fund. There were four awards in 2023 to support college expenses for Meeting House students.

The Edna Banes Scholarship Fund invites proposals from individuals seeking "seed" funding as "change agents" undertaking innovative mission and service, research, or educational ventures. Banes Funds were combined with Garrett-Claxton Funds for educational purposes in 2023.

Team

Members: Mary Hill, Frances Killpatrick, James S. Roberts, Chair

Service & Justice

2023 was an active year for the Service and Justice ministry. We worked towards refining our mission to create a community in Christ through service by supporting programs that promote inclusivity, diversity, equity, and justice, thereby creating a more just world by providing service opportunities for OPMH members within our community and beyond.

Mission

- **Service:** Helping those most vulnerable to hunger, housing, and educational challenges.
- **Justice:** Promoting education and awareness to call out and reverse systemic discrimination and injustice.

Financial Impact: In early 2023, the ministry distributed a total of \$83,900 to 11 different organizations through the grant process initiated in 2022. The Alternative Giving Market, held both in person and online in December, raised over \$14,000 for 20 diverse missions. OPMH also received \$69,000 in grants that were used to support our Family to Family and Open Table missions.

Highlights of the Year

- Open Table commemorated its 10th anniversary of service, transitioning back indoors in November after adapting to outdoor operations during the COVID pandemic.
- Session authorized a \$10,000 donation from the Capital Campaign to the Alexandria Community Remembrance Project to support the memorial scholarships for Benjamin Thomas and Joseph McCoy, two lynching victims in the city of Alexandria.
- OPMH members demonstrated outstanding support for the City of Alexandria's Holiday Sharing program by sponsoring 50 families, assembling large goody bags for 45 foster teens, and providing gift cards to seniors and foster teens. Additionally, members donated several thousand dollars of grocery gift cards and cash.
- Rise Against Hunger held a volunteer event in November with OPMH members of all ages working to pack 10,000 meals.
- OPMH participated with a team in the ALIVE! walkathon in October.
- The Dismantling Racism Team organized two successful diaper drives and led two adult education classes during the fall.



Team

Jeff Beans, Paul Browne, Karis Cavender, Alan Matney, Will Olson, Billy Vazquez, Shannon Lisecki (Co-moderator), Larry Beam (Co-moderator), Rev. Katherine Stanford

Stephen Ministries

The Meeting House has been a part of the Stephen Ministry since 1995, aligning with the national mission initiated in St. Louis in 1975. Our dedicated Stephen Ministers offer confidential support to adults in our congregation and community facing life's challenges.

One-on-One Support

Throughout 2023, our Stephen Ministers continued their commitment to individualized care, engaging in meaningful one-on-one relationships to provide support, empathy, and spiritual guidance.

Funeral and Memorial Service Assistance

This year, our ministers played a pivotal role in assisting with memorial and funeral services. They offered comfort and a warm welcome to families, helped with logistical arrangements, and provided guidance throughout the services, receptions, and interment processes.

Taizé Services

Our ministers facilitated serene Taizé services in the sanctuary, inviting attendees to experience peace and reflection through candle lighting and prayer.

Support for the Grieving

Our ongoing commitment to those grieving remained strong. We reached out with thoughtful notes and a series of "Journeying Through Grief" booklets, offering solace and understanding throughout the year.

Prayer Support

Our ministers fervently prayed for individuals on the Meeting House prayer list and others who sought spiritual support, demonstrating our community's dedication to collective and individual prayer needs.

Networking and Education

In 2023, our team actively participated in the Northern Virginia Stephen Leader Network. Through Zoom meetings, we exchanged ideas, provided mutual support, and engaged in valuable continuing education opportunities.

Get Involved

We warmly invite you to join our mission of compassion and care. For more information or to become part of our ministry, contact our Stephen Leaders, Olivia Michener and Susan Grandy or our Stephen Ministers, Jerry Stalun and Christine Heiby.

Contact Us for Support

For those seeking individual and confidential support from a Stephen Minister, please get in touch with our pastoral team for guidance and connection.

Team

Stephen Leaders: Olivia Michener, Susan Grandy
Stephen Ministers: Jerry Stalun, Christine Heiby.

Worship Ministry

The ministry continued its mission to support regular and special ministry offerings by assisting clergy and church staff to create opportunities for church members to develop their personal faith and relationship with God through engaging and meaningful worship. Ministry members volunteered to support traditional programs while also thinking creatively about opportunities for expanding access to and participation in worship for all.

New 8:30 Service

A significant focus was the reintroduction of a regular Sunday worship service at 8:30am, which includes a more informal and intimate setting with less liturgy, a focus on singing, and a weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Special Project—The Chancel

Modifications to the chancel area were realized with the removal of four, center section pews. The expanded, flexible floor area was incorporated into regular and special worship services, music offerings and concerts and will continue to inspire new and creative expansions of worship and education programs.

Music Ministry

The Music Ministry at the Meeting House remains strong, committed to presenting

a diverse array of music as an integral component of worship. The Adult Choir, led by Music Director and Organist Dr. Steven Seigart, helps to lead Sunday worship. Our Childrens Choir sings regularly in worship. The music ministry also supports special events, like our biannual Taizé services, Concerts with a Cause, a special Jazz Worship Sunday and Silent Movie with Organ accompaniment in October, and Noonday Noels and the Messiah Concert in December. The expanded Festival Choir and professional Festival Orchestra support our Concerts.

Worship Ministry supported the following functions:

- Decorations for special seasonal services
- Coordination for Advent candle lighters
- Coordination for special seasonal flowers
- Set for special seasonal services
- Sanctuary clean-up
- Flowers for Sunday services
- Sanctuary set-up and ushers for memorial services
- Maintain instructions for ushers and duty officers and provide periodic training

Planning Guidelines:

- Serve only gluten-free bread and also offer an option of pre-packaged elements for celebration of the Lord's Supper
- Stream and record worship services and meetings.
- Collaborate with the Membership & Evangelism Ministry for Noonday Noel receptions
- Regular inventory and care of stored materials
- Explore ways to reflect our church's commitment to responsible environmental stewardship
- Explore ways to be welcoming and inclusive to all



Team

Joseph McCoy (Moderator/Edler); Lenore Marema (Past Moderator/Elder); Nolan Welle (future moderator/Elder); Members at Large: Judi Elmore, Neil Hammerstrom, Debra McKeown, Priscilla Andre-Colton, Judson Peverall; Communion Coordinators: Jerry and Carol Stalun; Flower Subcommittee: Ellen McCleskey; Wedding Coordinator: Caitlin Jarecki; Seasonal Flowers: Bonnie and Art Leigh; Seasonal Greenery: Jamie and Morgan Jones; and Seasonal Outdoor Decorations: Bob Phillips; The staff and many volunteers also support the work of the ministry.
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Stewardship & Finance



2023: We ended the year with a \$63,000 deficit. This deficit was better than anticipated by the Session, which had planned for a deficit of \$198,000. We received nearly \$65,000 more in donations than we budgeted. We also had additional income from higher interest rates and building use. For expenses, we had savings in several areas, including personnel (with the pastoral transition), general administration savings, and ministries.

Because we received two large US Government pandemic grants in 2021 and 2022, we have cash available to cover this deficit. We ended the year with \$503,000 in unrestricted cash available, which is 3.8 months of expenses. We exceeded our target of 3 months available.

2024: On January 22, 2024, the session passed a budget that anticipates \$1.52m in revenue in \$1.62m in expenses, for an expected deficit of \$100,000. As in 2023, we have cash available to cover this deficit. The session felt it was important to maintain programming and ministry momentum during the church's pastoral transition period. However, in order to keep the deficit manageable, the budget incorporates several budget cuts, including 5% reductions to most program ministry budgets. If we end the 2024 year on budget, we will have about \$400,000 of cash available, or 3 months

of expenses, which is our target and is a best practice for churches. We cannot sustain budget deficits forever; in future years this gap will need to be addressed through increased giving and/or decreased expenses to create a sustainable budget.

Capital Campaign: We are grateful for the tremendous congregational support for the 250th anniversary Capital Campaign, which greatly enhances our long-term sustainability. We have already received \$2.7m in contributions and we are on track to receive all \$5m in pledged contributions by the end of 2026. The campaign supports the Historic Church Preservation Fund for capital replacement projects (60%), support for programs and ministries (20%), and facilities renovations and upgrades (20%).

Capital Campaign Receipts:

Donations Received	\$ 2,678,000
Anticipated 2024-2026	\$ 2,520,000
Total Anticipated	\$ 5,198,000

Team

Eli Peterson (Moderator), Brent Perry, Dan Bradfield, Tack Richardson, Eric Johnson, Cary Cuccinelli, Aaron Siirila (Business Administrator), James Sledge (Pastor).

Financial Snapshot



	2024 Budget	2023 Actual	2023 Budget
Revenues			
Contributions	1,455,000	1,422,451	1,358,000
Interest income	24,000	25,660	12,000
Building use	27,000	28,908	21,950
Endowment withdraw	9,000	7,777	9,000
Other	5,000	8,179	5,000
Releases from restrictions *		233,571	
Total Revenues	1,520,000	1,726,546	1,405,950
Expenses			
Facilities	98,000	92,150	98,000
Service & Justice †	81,700	256,454	86,000
Education †	21,850	38,630	23,000
Worship †	52,820	71,010	55,600
Administration	1,298,180	1,242,531	1,269,409
Membership & Evangelism †	2,050	22,068	2,040
Stewardship	64,500	66,940	68,543
Board of Deacons	1,000	120	1,020
Total Expenses	1,620,100	1,789,903	1,603,612
(Deficit)	(100,100)	(63,357)	(197,662)

Notes:

* In 2023, major sources of released funds included a grant of \$140,000 for Family to Family from ACT for Alexandria foundation; \$25,000 in Open Table gifts and a small grant from ACT for Alexandria; \$15,000 for Music; \$30,000 for retreats from payments and endowment funds; \$11,000 in gifts to Family to Family; and \$4,000 for Rise Against Hunger. "Releases from restrictions" is the standard terminology used by nonprofits to show when the organization spends money from restricted gifts. When a donor makes a restricted gift (such as to specific church fund), we keep the money in a separate accounting fund. Once the money is spent in accordance with the donor's intention, it is recorded as income "released from restriction." In some cases, income may be received in one year but spent in a subsequent year. In that case, the "release" will occur in the year of expenditure.

† 2023 actual expenses includes some releases from restrictions (per standard nonprofit accounting procedures). We do not include releases in the 2024 budget, as the session-approved budget covers only unrestricted, general funds.

Contact Us



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Wherever you are on your journey of faith,
you are welcome here!

We are an inclusive, justice-seeking congregation in the heart of Old Town Alexandria. We exist in response to God's grace, comforted and challenged by the Gospel of Christ. We are led by the fresh insights of the Holy Spirit to glorify God by recruiting new disciples, renewing the faith of existing disciples, and reaching out in love and service to the world God so loves.

Old Presbyterian Meeting House
A l e x a n d r i a ■ V i r g i n i a ■ 1 7 7 2

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