

Hilltop Church

Annual Report 2022

First Presbyterian Church of Mendham, New Jersey



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**Prepared for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation
February 26, 2023**

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Attached are the Annual Reports of the staff, boards, areas of ministry committees and organizations of the First Presbyterian Church of Mendham, New Jersey for the year 2022. The following is a docket for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation held on February 26, 2023 immediately following the 10:00 AM worship service.

DOCKET
Ecclesiastical Meeting

Call to Order – certification of a quorum

Report of the Nominating Committee

Proposal of Revisions to the Church By-Laws

Presentation of the Financial Report

Questions and Comments on the Annual Report

Approval of the Annual Report

Resolutions of Thanks:

Thank you for the dedicated service of the following officers:

Elders: Thank you to Laura Grzanka, Elisabeth MacDonald, Dev Morris, Chris Smith and Bob Willis who are leaving session after fulfilling their terms of faithful service. Thank you to Stefanie Fox, Fiona Stewart and Chris Waller for their continued service.

Deacons: Thank you Bill Maurer, Liz Siminoff, Hope Swarts, and Sue Kear who are leaving Deacons after faithful service.

Nominating Committee: Thank you to Marilyn Willett, Jeff Betz, Amy Beal and David Kerr for their years of service and Elder Fiona Stewart for tasks related to the Nominating Committee.

Audit Committee: Thank you to Mike Whiting, Lisa Lieb and David Kerr for serving on the Audit Committee in 2022.

Assistant Treasurers: Thank you to Dane Manchester and Walter Perkins for their service in 2022.

The Congregation thanks **all those who have given of their time, talent and finances** for the ministry of the church.

Corporation Meeting

Opening of the meeting of the Corporation with Prayer

Moderator: President of the Board of Trustees – Elder Elisabeth MacDonald

Meeting called to order.

Motion: The Corporation of the First Presbyterian Church meeting on Sunday,
 February 26, 2023, adopts all acts of the congregation as acts of the Corporation.

Adjourn the congregational meeting.

Closing Prayer.

STATISTICAL REPORT OF THE SESSION

The Church membership records indicate:	<u>2022</u>
Confirmands	3
Additions through Profession and Reaffirmation of Faith	4
Received by Certificate of Transfer	2
Loss through dismissal to another church	0
Removed at member's request	6
Loss through death	8
Total Active Membership	288
Friends of Hilltop	199
Associate Members	4
Average attendance	In-Person & Virtual 80
The Church School Report indicates:	
Total number of pupils to 8th grade	65
Average attendance	4

The Sacrament of Baptism was administered to 2 infants, 2 children and 1 adult. There were no member wedding performed. Four member funerals were conducted.

Preliminary Nominating Area of Ministry

The Nominating Committee is responsible for seeking members of the congregation to serve in the positions listed below and presenting those members for their respective offices to the congregation for its approval at the annual meeting. Questions regarding the Nominating Committee may be addressed to any member of the committee or to the Moderator of Session. Members are nominated for election at the Annual Meeting of the Congregation for the following roles.

Elders: Elders are elected for a term of three years.

Deacons: Deacons are elected to serve a three year term.

Nominating Committee: The Nominating Committee is chaired by a member of Session designated by the Moderator of Session and includes a second Elder, a member from the Board of Deacons, and “at large” members elected annually by the congregation.

Respectfully submitted, Designated Elder - Chair Fiona Stewart, Jeffrey Betz, Amy Beal, Dave Kerr and Marilyn Willett.

First Presbyterian Church of Mendham Officers 2023

THE SESSION* (three year term) start March 1

<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>
Marcia Koch	Brian Elliott	<u>Fiona Stewart (2)</u>
John Blumers	Dave Kerr (2)	<u>Chris Waller (2)</u>
Sharon Betz	Per Ralamb	<u>Doug Beal</u>
<u>Lissa Anderson</u>	<u>Stefanie Fox (2)</u>	<u>Wendy Whiting</u>

THE BOARD OF DEACONS* (three year term) start March 1

<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>
<u>Beth Smith</u>	Wade Carter (2)	<u>Kathy Claxton</u>
Marcia Chalker (2)	Megan Nervi (2)	<u>Jackie Spurr</u>
<u>Marilyn Willett (2)</u>	Mary Ann Fox	<u>Paula Raimondo (2)</u>
Brian Haumersen	Kathy Stoakes	<u>Sue DiSabato</u>
Ruth DeNatale	Ashley Antonello	<u>Amy Beal</u>
Cassandra Tarantino	Jill Bracco	<u>Keith Gladhill</u>

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE*: For 2023 (3 Members at large required)

Fiona Stewart	Designated Elder- 2 nd year
David Kerr	Designated Elder – (Chair in 2024)
Marilyn Willett	Designated Deacon – 2 nd year
Jeffrey Betz	Elected Member at large – 2 nd year
Amy Beal	Elected Member at Large – 2 nd year
<u>Britany Gladhill</u>	Elected Member at Large – 1 st year

*Underscore indicates nominated individual

**THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MENDHAM, NEW JERSEY**

Financial Report

**THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MENDHAM, NEW JERSEY
Six Year Financial Summary
Fiscal Year > July 1st to June 30th**

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Contributions						
Pledge Income	\$ 366,000	\$ 374,440	\$ 435,645	\$ 409,944	\$ 456,485	\$ 449,215
Other Income						
Non-Pledge Income	500	11,040	17,684	21,711	46,144	52,961
Plate Income	5	835	4,181	8,030	5,928	7,301
HCNS Donation	35,004	20,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Miscellaneous	1,300	325	1,720	3,617	14,449	27,026
Total Other Income	36,809	32,200	53,585	63,357	96,520	117,288
Total Contributions	\$ 402,809	\$ 406,640	\$ 489,230	\$ 473,301	\$ 553,006	\$ 566,503
Expenditures						
Expenditures	394,929	434,577	454,416	500,964	621,738	601,621
Less Depreciation	0	53,059	50,179	45,538	47,150	45,651
Expenditures	\$ 394,929	\$ 381,518	\$ 404,237	\$ 455,426	\$ 574,588	\$ 555,970
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$ 7,880	\$ 25,122	\$ 84,993	\$ 17,875	\$ (21,582)	\$ 10,533

Six Year Results: Presented in the above table are the financial results for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, and for the past five fiscal years. As a reminder, our fiscal year begins July 1st and ends June 30th in the following calendar year.

In the broadest terms, these results continue to show a general contraction in the financial position of our church. From a high point in 2017, Total Contributions have declined by \$164k, from \$567k to \$403k over a five-year period. This 29% decrease reflects a decline in all Contribution line items, except for the Hilltop Christian Nursery School (HCNS) Donation. Pledge Income dropped \$83k and Non-Pledge Income dropped \$52k over the same period. The number of pledging units has dropped as well, from a high point of 121 units in 2017, to 98 in 2020 to approximately 60 this year.

Turning to Expenditures, Expenditures over the past four years have declined from a high point of \$575k in 2018 to \$395K in 2022, a decrease of \$180k or 31%. Our largest expense categories are “Personnel” and “Buildings & Grounds”. Personnel expenses have shifted as we moved from a two-pastor model to a one-pastor model several years ago, resulting in a decline in expense. More recently and as expected, Personnel expenses have increased with the hiring of our new permanent pastor. The Buildings & Grounds Committee should be commended for carefully managing expenses related to the upkeep of our beautiful buildings and property. The church staff should also be praised for controlling expenses to help offset a decline in Total Contributions. However, the impact of a reduction in Contributions means that the church has fewer funds available to spend. In many cases, Committee budgets have been cut substantially and we have not been able to grow or even maintain programming and outreach in the community.

Interim Results Through December 31, 2022: Although not presented in this report, the six-month results for the fiscal year which started July 1, 2022 show a loss of \$(2K) as compared to a gain of \$68k as of December 31, 2021. Total Contributions increased \$9k to \$247k as compared to the same period last year. This increase was not driven by Pledge Income; rather, the increase was a result of a very generous

bequest received by the church upon the passing of a long-time congregant. On the Expense front, Expenses exceeded prior year (\$249K versus \$169K, an increase of \$80k) because of expected increases in Personnel Expense related to the installation of our permanent pastor as well as unusual expenses for the maintenance of the church's steeple. In summary, for the six months ending December 31, 2022, the Church recorded a YTD Net Loss of \$(2k).

2023 Budget: For the 2023 fiscal year which ends June 30, 2023, Session approved a budget with a slight loss of \$(27k). This net loss was based on Contributions of \$436k and Expenses of \$463k. For this budget to be achieved, we need our 2023 pledges to come in above \$367k and preferably above \$400k to deliver more robust programming levels.

Please let us know if you have not yet responded with your pledge card for 2023 so that we can adjust our spending plans accordingly.

Line of Credit: It should be noted that as of December 31, 2022 there were no outstanding cash advances / withdrawals under the Peapack-Gladstone line of credit.

Closing: While our financial picture is not as robust as we might like it to be, we remain thankful for the gifts of both time and treasure that so many members share with the church. Many of our members are generous and gracious pledgers, and we thank them for their faithful contributions. We acknowledge God's presence in the life of Hilltop and we know that our church family is filled with so many of his blessings.

Finance Committee

Elisabeth MacDonald, Chair and Session Contact

Brian Elliott, Treasurer

Dane Manchester, Assistant Treasurer

Walter Perkins, Assistant Treasurer

Mitzi Fox

Bill Lowe

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee conducts a comprehensive financial review of the church and nursery school on an annual basis. The committee is composed of (3) experienced members and is supported by the accounting firm Caristia, Kulsar, and Wade, LLC. In 2022, the committee presented their review of the 2021 fiscal year to Session, with no issues found. The committee is currently at work on their review of the 2022 fiscal year and will report to Session in 2023.

Respectfully submitted by the Audit Committee

David Kerr

Lisa Lieb

Michael Whiting

Report of the Endowment Committee

The Endowment Fund was established in 2002 by the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Mendham. The Mission Statement of the Endowment Fund states that the main purpose of the Fund is to make the First Presbyterian Church of Mendham stronger and more responsive to the needs of future generations of the Church. The Fund was dedicated for the following purposes:

- 1.To preserve and maintain the physical facilities of the Church, the manse, Hilltop House, and the grounds.
- 2.To support and nourish specific ministries of the Church.

The monies in the Fund will be used for items outside the annual budget. Resources of the Endowment Fund will not be used to provide any shortfalls in operating funds in any given year.

The Bylaws of the Fund state that the Fund shall have primary responsibility for the encouragement and management of deferred and special gifts to the Church. Also, that the use of the Funds is restricted to Capital expenditures for the facilities of the first Presbyterian Church of Mendham, New Jersey; new ministries of the Church, not ongoing programs; any use specified by the donor; and the expenses of the Endowment Fund. Day to day operation and maintenance of the Church, its building(s) grounds, and personal property shall remain the responsibility of the Session and not be the responsibility of the Fund.

The Endowment Fund is presently invested in three different mutual funds, the Vanguard FTSE Social Index Equity Fund, the Vanguard Intermediate Investment Grade Bond Fund, and the New Covenant Balanced Income Fund. The New Covenant Balanced Income Fund is a socially responsible Fund that invests in both equities and fixed income. A portion of this Fund, \$130,000, is pledged to The Peapack and Gladstone Bank as collateral against the ongoing short term Hilltop Church Cash Equity Loan from the Bank that helps the Church in covering its operating expenses in times of need. The total market value of the Funds at the end of 2022 was over \$835,000. This represents a decline in value of -15.6% v 2021. Although this performance is disappointing, our investment strategy yielded a more favorable return than the -19.4% performance of the S&P 500. It should also be noted that the Endowment Fund has grown over 80% in the past 7 years. **This significant accomplishment would not have occurred without the steady and determined guidance of Mitzi Fox and the vision and investment strategy provided by Bob Caldwell.**

The Endowment Fund awarded educational scholarships from the Fischer Fund totaling \$3,500 to Carolyn Malman, Caroline Buchanan and Grace Lombardi in recognition of their devotion to the church. Additionally, Endowment has worked hand in hand with Buildings and Grounds on capital investments into the church.

The Endowment Fund is thankful to George Johnson and the Eleanore Dorland families for their generous bequest to our church. Whether funds are dedicated to the Endowment Fund or used as a restricted fund contribution, these generous gifts are critical to the success of the Fund and our church.

The goal of the Endowment Committee is to encourage additional contributions that would ultimately grow the Fund to a point of being self-sustaining, able to meet all requests of funds from annual income. The members and friend of the Hilltop congregation are encouraged to consider a gift to the Endowment Fund and to also consider a bequest to the Fund as part of their Estate Planning.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Lowe, Chair
Mitzi Fox, Church Financial Secretary
Dane Manchester: Financial Administrator
Wendy Whiting
Brian Elliott

2022 Pastoral Nominating Committee (PNC) Report

June 2020. The PNC's first task was to develop the Minister Information Form (MIF), which is used to help match pastors searching for a new call with the key criteria that our church is looking for. Once that was completed, we began reviewing Pastor Information Forms (PIFs) that matched our MIF. We evaluated the PIFs using the qualities outlined in the Discernment Report and leveraged the guidance from Sherry Guthrie, our presbytery liaison, who was an integral part of our group. Meeting on a weekly basis (every Saturday morning), we read and discussed close to 250 PIFs, viewed over 40 delivered sermons via various platforms, sent letters of interest to 26 pastors, and had over 20 conversations with 12 potential candidates. Our work was rewarding and fulfilling as well as frustrating and challenging. Two of the initial members resigned from the PNC for personal reasons including Lin Perkins who was instrumental in the initial stages of the PNC. Lawrence Morris joined the team in January 2022, and shortly thereafter we began discussions with the Reverend Scot McCachren. After several Zoom meetings we invited Reverend McCachren to visit Hilltop in early March. The PNC Team spent an evening and majority of a Saturday with face-to-face discussions and a tour of our facilities with Reverend Scot McCachren and his wife Linda. The PNC with the assistance of the Finance Committee and Session then proceeded forward with crafting the Terms of Call that were approved by the Committee on Ministry of the Highlands Presbytery. On the weekend of April 30th -May 1st a meet and great weekend was held with the Congregational meeting held after Pastor McCachren's worship service and sermon. The congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Mendham elected Pastor Scot McCachren as the 28th Pastor of our church with a unanimous ballot. After the election, the PNC was dissolved by the congregation with appreciation for their work. Pastor Scot began his service to Hilltop in late June and the Installation Service for the Reverend Scot A. McCachren was celebrated in our sanctuary on October 2nd.

We appreciate all the support and prayers from the congregation during our quest for our new Pastor.

Jeffrey Betz, Stefanie Fox, Lawrence Morris, Per Ralamb, Cassandra Tarentino, Bob Willett

Report of the Pastor



Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” (John 20:21-22)

In this passage from John, the risen Christ directs the disciples to continue his ministry after he has been removed from them and gives them the gift of the Holy Spirit to empower them to start the church and spread the good news. Since my arrival in Mendham in June, I have been overjoyed to see how active the Holy Spirit continues to be among you saints of Hilltop Church. You care for one another, you love your community, and you always seek to do God’s will.

The past year has been one of transition and challenge for this church. As Covid-19 restrictions finally ebbed, Hilltop has endeavored to turn the corner and return to “business as usual.” It’s been harder than any of us had imagined it would be. The pandemic took its toll on so many, both in and out of the church, that reengaging social connections has been difficult. We continue to face obstacles that must be overcome before regaining the level of membership and engagement that we had prior to 2020. Amid those challenges, however, there have been so very many encouraging developments. The multi-year pastoral transition came to an end thanks to the dedicated work of your Pastoral Nominating Committee. I hope that my presence here will provide stability. We also brought on board Britany Gladhill as our new Director of Family and Youth Ministries. She has already had a big impact, with more and more new families getting involved and even joining.

On a personal note, I am thankful to the members of the PNC whose many months of work are responsible for my being among you today. I also praise God for the presence of Rev. Dr. Merideth Mueller among you during the interim period. I see her hand in the gentle and grace-filled welcome you continue to extend to Linda and me, and to our family.

I am very thankful for how you all have embraced me, welcomed my ideas, and worked side-by-side with me to discern where the Holy Spirit is leading us together. 2023 promises to be another exciting year and there is nowhere that I’d rather be for it than here, with you, on our Hilltop in Mendham!

Respectfully submitted by Rev. Scot McCachren, Pastor

Children's and Family Educational Ministries



The Christian Education Committee continued to provide opportunities both in person, online and through special events for Hilltop's children, families and adults.

The "coming out of covid challenges" were very real and have hindered what we wished to do and accomplish, but we continue to strive to provide meaningful ways for children, families and adults to nurture their faith, deepen fellowship connections and serve God through our Mission projects.

CE hosted Sunday School both in person and through Zoom from January - December. (Jan -June in the choir room during services and September-December the hours before services at Hilltop House.) Jan-June children learned about "The People Jesus Met" and the influence He had on their lives and on ours. Children also learned about Mission and specifically were updated on our Zimbabwe Mission sponsored children, Nomias and Oti. Sept-December children's lessons were from the Old Testament.

CE sponsored the following classes and events throughout 2022:

- 1) Souper Bowl of Caring-food and monies collected and donated to IFPN
- 2) Valentines to church youth and HCNS students
- 3) Movement as Prayer led by Veronica Poylangada and Megan Turner
- 4) Communion, Bible Worship Class w 4 children. Confirmands assisted teaching
- 5) Confirmands attended Confirmation Day at Camp Johnsonburg
- 6) CBW Brunch for students and families. CBW children took Communion as a group together with their parents.
- 7) Youth Sunday-Youth led service. 3 Confirmands were Confirmed and received Bibles and 4 CBW children received Bibles
- 8) Bunny Bags assembled and donated to the IFPN to be distributed to their clients
- 9) Easter goodies distributed to children at Church Palm Sunday Brunch
- 10) Mothers Day Plant Sale w proceeds going to support our Light for Zimbabwe Children
- 11) IFPN Work Day-Families volunteered their Sunday mornings sorting, bagging rice, etc.
- 12) Pentecost Sunday Celebration w lots of crafts and games.
- 13) Rally Day-Patriotic theme to honor 9/11
- 14) Lights for Zimbabwe- fund for tuition, uniforms, books and food were provided for Nomias and Oti
- 15) Storybook Bible given to our church 4 year old
- 16) Quest begins! After school program led by Britany Gladhill, with Jim Wynne leading the music portion
- 17) Quest children sing at church service
- 18) Reformation/Halloween Sunday-party w Scottish History and Bagpiper demo
- 19) CE assembled and gave Halloween treat bags to HCNS
- 20) Sunday School Mission Day-children made hats for donation to Nourishnj
- 21) Confirmation Class begins w 3 Students
- 22) Britany Gladhill hired as new DCE!
- 23) Holly Trail-Hilltop Church stop on Mendham Boro December event.
- 24) Happy Birthday Jesus Party with short rehearsal for Pageant
- 25) No Stress/No Tears Christmas Pageant on Dec 18 with 20 children participating including Quest children. Thank you to Veronica Poylangada for serving as Director and Costume Manager.

Special thanks to our CE Committee who give so much of their talents, time, creativity, energy and faith to bring valued faith formation to our children, their families, adults and to me. I wish to especially thank Stefanie Fox for her wonderful leadership as Chair of our Committee. Thank you to our members: Loren Darzano, Kate Coffey, Veronica Poylangada, Fiona Stewart, and Cathy Malman for their assistance in 2022.

We hope we have continued to provide a solid foundation and a deepening in Christian faith this past year. It is both a privilege and sacred responsibility to give our families every opportunity we can.

Britany Gladhill and Cathy Inglis Malman

Director of Music Ministries



2022 provided an opportunity for the music program at Hilltop to regain some of what had been lost during the previous two years, due to COVID. Unfortunately, some of these goals are still in a rebuilding process, but others are gaining strength and momentum.

Our two hallmark ensembles – the Sanctuary Choir and the Joyful Ringers – are still in need of new members. The Sanctuary Choir ended their long-time traditional Thursday evening rehearsal to move to a more convenient Sunday morning rehearsal prior to the Service – but even this has only increased the membership by a few – but talented – voices. The Joyful Ringers continue to rehearse on

Thursday evenings, but they, too, are greatly diminished – both in numbers and in the scope of what they are able to ring.

Even so ... in September we introduced a new program to the church – Hilltop Quest. This new program was designed to fill a void – the lack of children’s choirs at Hilltop. The program has steadily grown from that first session, where only one child attended, to over 18 as of this writing. We can now field two choirs – one for grades K-2 and the other for grades 3-6. The choir has already sung at two Sunday Services, and more are planned for the future. Many thanks to Britany Gladhill for taking on the task of being the liaison to the school system and the principal facilitator for Quest. I have great hope that this will continue to develop during 2023.

Also successful in 2022 was the return of a full-blown Christmas Concert by the Hilltop Oratorio Choir. Our December 18 concert featured the return of orchestral accompaniment, a large enthusiastic audience, and a well-performed, beautiful performance. The Oratorio Choir is also the lynchpin of a larger project: The Hilltop Concert Series. The Oratorio Choir is about to begin rehearsals for their first Spring Concert. The concert series also hosted another Silent Film night in October, this time showing “The Hunchback of Notre Dame.” Other concerts coming up in 2023 include: An Organ Transcription Concert, The Jersey Jubilation Handbell Choir, and The New Jersey Youth Chorus.

The musical instruments of the church are in good shape. Many thanks to Bob Willis for his faithful and skilled curation of the pipe organ. But a recent conversation has revealed that the church budget does not contain separate lines for annual maintenance of the organ, pianos, handbells, etc., and these expenses most often are paid by individual members, instead of the budget. It would be my suggestion that this be changed in the foreseeable future. The musical instruments of the church represent an extremely large investment and must be continually tuned, repaired, renovated and treated with loving care. The church owns over \$60,000 in handbells – a Steinway Grand Piano valued at over \$100,000 – and a pipe organ that is worth about a million dollars in replacement costs. In addition to these items, the music library is almost priceless.

I am now in my twelfth year as Organist and Director of Music at Hilltop. It has been a pleasure serving this congregation.

Respectfully submitted,

James A. Wynne
Organist and Director of Music

Hilltop Christian Nursery School



This is the 28th year of operation for HCNS, which was founded in 1994. Enrollment for this year is 61 students and a staff of 10 teachers, 6 teacher's assistants, 1 office assistant, 3 music teachers, 1 speech pathologist and two consistent classroom substitutes. In addition we have 22 Toddler Time families who join us in Fellowship Hall on Fridays in the fall and spring. All preschool classes for 2 ½ - 5 year-olds meet in the morning from 9 - 11:30. Two year olds attend two mornings. Three year olds attend 3 mornings and four year olds attend four mornings. Optional lunch and play is offered an additional hour from 11:30-12:30, 5 days a week. Afternoon enrichment is offered for our 3 and 4 year old students 5 days a week from 12:30-3:00.



It speaks volumes for our school that most of our teachers are veterans here coming back year after year to guide our students with degrees way beyond the state requirements. We were happy to welcome two former assistants to become lead teachers this past year. Mrs. Heidi Nicholson is currently teaching one of the two-year old morning classes and one of our three year old afternoon enrichment classes and Mrs. Jen Walsh is teaching our Toddler Time program on Friday mornings. Many thanks to the following HCNS veteran teachers: Patty Barnes, Liz Daley, Betsy Drew, Eileen Lupo, Cindy Masucci, Nicole Schoenbrodt and Amanda Valenta. I would also like to thank our dedicated office staff Maura Schupack and Danielle Doyle for helping the school to run smoothly. Also, our morning and afternoon teacher's assistants: Anne Bergeron, Cheryl Brown, Deb Buchanan, Vanessa Cerchio, Mandy Culbertson, Karen Fusco and Heidi Nicholson.

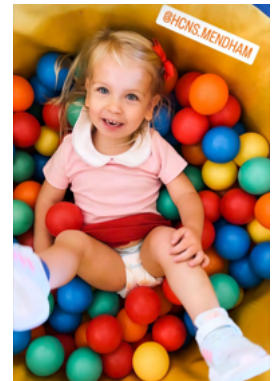


The 2022-2023 school year gave HCNS the chance to apply for multiple state grants. With the grants received, alongside our parent fundraising- we were able to make some well needed upgrades to our school. The first floor classrooms were painted over the summer which brightened the whole school. The mini kitchen was removed and replaced and air conditioning systems were put into each of the classrooms. This will allow for Hilltop Church to run bible school moving forward in the summers. A new security and key fob system was purchased for all of Hilltop House and the front ramp walkway was repaired. Teachers were also given retention bonus grants from the state for returning to work post- covid. In addition, the school was able to give a \$10,000 gift to the church on top of our regular rent prices.



I would like to express my utmost gratitude to the church volunteers and staff that supported our school with a smile. A special thank you to John Andrews and Dave Kerr who put in endless hours helping us with school setups and troubleshooting. Also, thank you to Bob Willis for guiding us through technical support and the Buildings and Grounds Committee for keeping our school grounds safe and clean. Finally, thank you to Danielle Doyle for overseeing our school finances and Reverend Scot McCachren for coming into your new position ready to guide and support Hilltop Christian Nursery School to continue to flourish.

Warm Regards,
Victoria Legacki, Director



Board of Deacons

This year, we were pleased to continue hosting a number of our annual events including the Deacon Picnic, Garage Sale, Pancake Supper, and Lunch with Friends. Paula Raimondo also began auctioning off her beautiful hand-made quilts to add to the fun and fellowship during our Lunch with Friends meetings throughout the year. The Deacons continued to care for our congregation by providing meals, sunshine baskets, prayer shawls, funeral receptions, gifts for baptisms, holiday cards and recognition for our seniors. It was notable that 4 of our 8 graduating seniors this year were also members of the Hilltop Christian Nursery School graduating class as toddlers. We were delighted to be able to continue our support for Family Intervention Services (FIS) throughout the year. We even brought back our Angel Giving Tree during the holidays to help provide much appreciated Christmas gifts to our friends at FIS. We had a terrific 2022 and look forward to the year ahead. We would like to thank those who served as Deacons during this year: Ginny Higley, Ashley Antoniello, Stephen Sauerma, Jackie Spurr, Wade Carter, Marcia Chalker, Kathy Claxton, Ruth DeNatale, Mary Ann Fox, Ginny Gilman, Brian Haumersen, Jill Bracco, Sue Kear, Bill Maurer, Megan Nervi, Paula Raimondo, Liz Siminoff, Kathy Stoakes, Hope Swarts, Cassandra Tarantino, and Marilyn Willett.

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Nervi and Marilyn Willet,
Co-Moderators



Building and Grounds Committee Report

Hello from B&G

The B&G committee works to keep the church buildings and properties running smoothly and safely. We cherish our historical character and natural beauty and work hard to preserve and enhance them. But we also look for new ways to improve safety, save energy, and meet the growing needs of Hilltop.

Our members include:

Bob Willis
Wade Carter

Marilyn Willett
Lin Perkins

Don Eberhart
Pam Elliot

David Kerr
John Andrews

B&G welcomes volunteers, whether as members, or just to help for a couple of hours. It's fun to work with friends on projects! Gardening, moving, fixing, painting, computers... learn a new skill, or teach us yours.

Here are some of our stories from 2022:



Look – up in the sky – it's a Steeplejack

Roy Nailor hails from Pennsylvania and is a skilled craftsman committed to the care of church steeples, aptly called a steeplejack. He hangs from a rope and works his way down the steeple, carefully scraping old paint and rust, restoring, and making repairs before applying fresh coats of paint. This takes weeks of meticulous work, but keeps our historic steeple strong and secure and as glorious as ever.

(Thanks to Hilltop member Mike Kear and his skills at aerial photography – now we can appreciate our beautiful steeple from a new perspective!)



Preparing the manse for the Pastor's family

Spring cleaning took on a new meaning as we got the manse ready for our new pastor and his family. The manse was in active use the last few years – church groups used it for meetings or kitchen prep, Deacons used it to store furniture donations, and the garage was used for everything from youth activities to luminary assembly. Now it was time to move out!



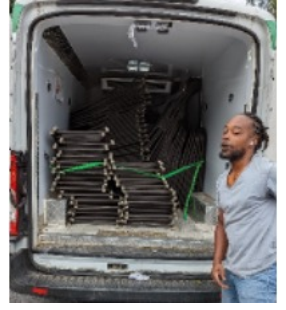
With the help of the Deacons, we found good homes for the furniture, and then got to work with a deep clean from top to bottom, repainted the kitchen, installed new plumbing and light fixtures, made household repairs, and even added a few homey touches to welcome Pastor Scot and Linda.



Musical Chairs



With the help of the Sisters at St. John the Baptist, B&G was able to obtain a large set of conference chairs from the closed Daytop School. (Our tushy-testers found them more comfortable.) We were able to pay it forward by donating our large set of folding chairs to Table of Hope in Morristown.



Nursery School Upgrades

B&G also worked with the Hilltop Christian Nursery School to manage several of their projects last summer. This is a fruitful partnership, as many of their improvements benefit the church and community groups that use Hilltop House. These included a new sound system and projector in Fellowship Hall, resurfacing the entry ramp, a kitchenette remodel, and a water bottle dispenser. (Thank you HCNS and families!)

Stage Crew and A/V Club

B&G's responsibilities stretch from 19th century preservation to 21st century technology. This year we expanded our online capability with a "media switch" to show the liturgy and lyrics along with the video. A more powerful WiFi was installed at Hilltop House to get through those heavy 18th century brick walls. The "smart" thermostats and boiler heat the sanctuary faster, keep the organ at the proper temperature, and save money. With all this high-tech working together... let's enjoy a silent movie (with Jim Wynne's lively organ.)



Interested in joining us for a day in the sun? We can use your help to get the flowers, beds, and grounds ready for spring. Just drop a note at the office or send me an email.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Kerr, Chair

dskerr@verizon.net

Fellowship Area of Ministry

The Fellowship Area of Ministry was busy nearly every month this year, blessed with a return to social gatherings for our church family in 2022. We re-introduced some of our long-held and favorite traditions, started new ones, and welcomed our new Pastor!

7TH ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF: February 26th 10 chili contest entries!



PALM SUNDAY BRUNCH April 10th



SUMMER 2022:

Every other Sunday from Memorial Day to Labor Day, Ice Cream on the lawn after worship!



SOMERSET PATRIOTS WELCOMES HILLTOP CHURCH!

Friday, July 22nd

Over 50 of us enjoyed a summer evening ballgame, in our own reserved with discounted tickets + a special welcome on the marquee! The fireworks at the end of the game were spectacular!



WELCOME BACK SUNDAY

September 11, 2022

The rain did not dampen our spirit as we kicked off the new church year. The food truck was a big hit!



INSTALLATION DINNER FOR REV. SCOT MCCACHREN

Sunday October 4, 2023

We officially welcomed Pastor Scot with over 75 fellow church members and guests.



PUMPKIN PICKING

October 16, 2022

Sunny and picturesque, we enjoyed hayrides, hot cider and donuts under the tent at Middle Valley Farms in Mendham!



CHRISTMAS CONCERT REFRESHMENTS

December 18, 2022

Fellowship arranged light refreshments to the singers and musicians, during their break between rehearsal and performance. This year we had a beautiful spread of homemade Christmas cookies, fruit, cheese, crackers, various dips and spread, and fresh vegetables for dipping.

Thank you to everyone on our wonderful Fellowship team who helped make all these events a success. We do not have regular meetings but did meet several times over the course of the year particularly when planning for special events. In the past, we considered our preparation time together for various events to be our meeting time. We also utilize email communication when a group consensus is required.

Current active members in the Fellowship area of ministry are Marcia Koch, Amy Beal, Wade Carter, Liz Siminoff, Sharon Betz, Kathy Claxton, Devyani Morris, Lissa Anderson, and Ashley Antonello. We had many other helping hands as well, "Friends of Fellowship". Thank you to Jane MacNeill, John Andrews, Danielle Doyle, Dave Kerr, Marilyn Willett, Bob Willis, Stefanie Fox, Cathy Malman, and Britany Gladhill. All are welcome to join in this important area of Ministry – grab a blue team shirt and/or apron and come along!
We look forward to another great year. Respectfully Submitted,

Devyani Morris
Fellowship Chair

Membership and Communication Committee

The COVID-19 epidemic significantly impacted church programs, membership and church attendance worldwide. Hilltop Church was by no means immune from its effects. Over the past year, our Membership & Outreach Committee has been focused on encouraging existing members to return to regular church attendance and engagement, enhancing and improving the Church's visibility locally and online and gently reaching out to those in our community who may be searching for a church home.

These efforts have included:

- Recovering the Church's original organizational Facebook account and revitalizing the Church's social media presence
- Creating a new email address hilltop.connected@gmail.com for the receipt of social media requests and other committee business
- Meeting with Pastor Scot McCachren early in his ministry to learn his priorities for our committee
- Creating and disseminating a press release announcing Pastor Scot's installation at Hilltop Church
- Scheduling, promoting and supporting small get-to-know-you meetings with Pastor Scot
- Identifying more than 20 existing and new members who did not yet have magnetic nametags and obtaining them through a new vendor
- Updating the content of the Church's new member outreach webpage
- Promoting events open to the community such as the Somerset Patriots game outing, lunch with friends, the Treasure Sale, Music on the Hill, the Christmas Concert, and other musical events
- Recruiting walkers for Mendham Borough's 2022 Labor Day Parade
- Participating in Mendham Borough's 2022 Holly Trail
- Developing a business card-sized "calling card" to be used as an invitation to worship at Hilltop
- Developing a new Church postcard to be used in various ways including outreach to potential and existing members
- Collecting and mailing completed postcards from regular attendees inviting other members back to regular worship
- Supplying Marilyn Willet with postcards and postage to support her outreach to new town residents
- Developing and including new visitor cards in the church pews
- Forming a subcommittee to initiate a complete refresh of the Church's website
- Completing an annual review of the Church's rolls
- Welcoming several families and a number of additional new members to the Church

Ongoing projects include:

- Completing a refresh of the Church's website
- Developing a new logo for the Church
- Developing an integrated communication strategy for the Church which is aligned with its mission
- Potentially scheduling an historical tour of the church and cemetery in late May which would be open to the public. At about the same time, we hope to seek publication of an article concerning the history of our Church.

Our current needs include:

- Social media and tech-savvy individuals
- Volunteers to assist with the historical tour and article

The committee meets monthly on the evening of the second Tuesday of most months. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you are interested in joining. The roster of members for our committee presently includes:

- Sharon Betz
- John Blumers (Chair)
- Britany Gladhill
- Keith Gladhill
- Chris Smith
- Amanda Vittitoe

Pastor Scot is also a regular attendee. Over the course of the last year we have also had support for a number of the Committee's initiatives from Bob Willis, Kristin Turner, Marilyn Willet, Carley and Alley Smith, Dev Morris and Meg Nervi. Please accept my apologies if I have missed anyone.

Although outside of our committee, we would also like to recognize the tremendous influence that the Quest program has had on bringing families into our sanctuary and to thank Pastor Scot, Britany Gladhill and Jim Wynne for their vision and efforts towards making Quest a vital program for our Church.

John Blumers
Chair, Membership & Outreach

Mission, Service and Benevolence Area of Ministry

The mission program of the First Presbyterian Church of Mendham helps us to be the serving church God wants us to be and provides opportunities for us to be witnesses to the saving grace of Jesus Christ. We support people, programs and ministries in the community and worldwide which spread the Good News of Jesus Christ and extend help to those in need. – Mission Statement of the MSB Area of Ministry

During 2022, the MSB Area of Ministry committee members included: Sharon Betz (chair), John Blumers, Ginny Gilman, Russ Hall, Paula Kumpf, Cathy Malman, Hope Swarts,

Wendy Whiting, Rev. Scot McCachran, and Rev. Meredith Mueller-Bolton.

As in prior years, MSB's focus in 2022 was Hands-on Mission. However, the Covid 19 pandemic has substantially changed procedures at many of our pre-Covid activities. We have continued to support our mission partners in modified ways.

Interfaith Food Pantry Network – The need for food is increasing but the pantry is also expanding its food storage capacity and distribution methods. The "Pantry Partner" program has expanded to 31 county-wide partners. In November, Hilltop and the Mendham Interchurch Committee partnered in a three Sunday food drive held in the Hilltop House parking lot. We worked with St. John the Baptist Convent, Brookside Community Church, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, United Methodist Church, and Grace Lutheran Church. The collection brought in 1,532 pounds of food including 33 turkeys. The congregation attended a family work day at the pantry in May. Hilltop and MSB support IFPN through food collections, financial support, volunteer pantry workers and food deliverers, and Board members.

Nourish.NJ – The Hilltop Breakfast Bag team packed and delivered 100 breakfast bags each month. Hilltop Church and Brookside Church joined together for the Walk for NourishNJ. which was also supported by our Deacons. The walk reached the \$1,000 goal. Hilltop and MSB support this mission partner with breakfast bags, volunteers, financial support, and Board members.

Homeless Solutions – We provided and/or served four Emergency Shelter dinners according to Covid protocols. Hilltop and MSB support HSI with volunteer cooks and servers, and financial support.

Act Now! Youth Fellowship – Hilltop sponsored Ally Smith on the 2022 Appalachian Service Project to West Virginia. Her team built a deck. There she learned about food insecurity, food deserts, construction, team work, and sharing the love of Christ. The 2023 trip will be to Kentucky July 23-30. Four Hilltop youth plan to attend. Meghan Turner will hold a coffeehouse in January 2023 to help raise funds for the ACT NOW trip. Hilltop and MSB support ACT NOW with leadership, volunteers, fundraising, and financial support.

Camp Johnsonburg –The camp is operating again with camp weeks, retreats, and special programs. Hilltop and MSB support the camp with funding and volunteers.

Market Street Mission Clothing Drive – The coat drive for the Market Street Mission collected 53 adult and children's coats.

Table of Hope- The Spring Street Community Development Corporation (CDC), associated with Bethel AME Church, sponsors the Table of Hope in Morristown. It is a community kitchen offering dinner at no cost Monday through Friday to needy residents in the area. Like other food providers, TOH has switched from sit-down dinners to staff-prepared food bags and serves up to 100 meals each day. Our team serves/ distributes meals once a month and MSB gives financial support.

Morris Habitat for Humanity – The program now encompasses six NJ counties. Work continues at the 25-unit project on Bennett Street, Randolph. They are greatly involved in advocacy for housing. Currently, we support Habitat through funding.

Family Promise – Because of Covid 19, the sheltering program has moved into hotels rather than churches. Hilltop, MSB, and Deacons supported two weeks of the hotel sheltering program with meals, gift cards for groceries, meals, gas, and transportation, and financial support.

Christmas Lights for Zimbabwe – Our annual Christmas fundraiser supported the established CE project Lights for Zimbabwe. Contributors received a card announcing the gift and explaining the mission. A votive candle was offered with each card. \$725 was raised and sent for the Musirizwi Poultry Project and school supplies.

Ukraine Relief - MSB forwarded \$14,760 to PDA for Ukraine Relief. These funds were raised from the congregation through a special appeal and from MSB international funds.

PDA—MSB made financial contributions through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to support people in areas affected by Hurricane Ida and also the floods in the Kentucky area.

Special Offerings – Our congregation supported the One Great Hour of Sharing and Christmas Joy Offerings.

Coffeeshouses - Our congregation was blessed by Meghan Turner and her family who held three coffeeshouses in 2022. Through their offering of time and talent, they contributed funds for Nourish breakfast bags, Walk for NourishNJ, and gift cards to support the Table of Hope.

A Mission Star was given to Wendy Whiting for her dedication to MSB projects and mission partners, particularly but not limited to the Interfaith Food Pantry Network, Homeless Solutions, Family Promise, and Hilltop's Simpler Christmas.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Betz, Chair



Nurture Education and Discipleship

It is no lie to say it is difficult to find effective ways of reaching the youth and families of Hilltop to administer faith and Christian education. It is also no lie to say the Christian Education committee is creative and dedicated to working on being successful in its mission! With busy schedules and an interruption in church routine due to Covid, bringing the children back is no easy task. However, providing faith formation and opportunities for Christian education, fellowship, and a church home are constantly at the forefront of our committee's agenda.

We strive to be a flexible group and meet families where they are, providing avenues for Christian connection and learning without undermining the importance of interests and activities outside of church. In her role as Director of Family Ministries, Cathy Malman was steadfast in her resourcefulness, introducing clever ideas for learning and serving. We all felt the loss when she announced her departure from the role in June, but were happy to know she continues on with the rest of our dedicated committee, including Veronica Poylngada, Fiona Stewart, Loren Darzano, Kate Coffey, and Deb Fox-Lopez. While Deb stepped away from the group mid-year, the rest of us enthusiastically welcomed Pastor Scot McCachren to Hilltop and are energized by his focus on the youth. Bringing Britany Gladhill on as the new Director of Family Ministries in November has been a true blessing to our church community!

In addition to the work we do engaging Hilltop's youth, we must acknowledge the wonderful Adult Education program led by John Blumers and Brian Elliott. Their energetic, thoughtful discussions and lively fellowship offer an inspiring environment for reflection and growth. Our women's and men's bible study groups continue to be dedicated to mindful conversation and deepened understanding of the scripture. Hilltop is lucky to have so many faithful servants in our congregation!

Our year in review was filled with many activities.

January: Sunday school returns to hybrid using both Zoom and in-person channels; Mission month focuses on a call to mission and what it means to serve others; Confirmation class adds The Chosen videos to supplement the lessons.

February: Souper Bowl of Caring and Valentines for church youth and HCNS students; CE delivers Lenten books to Hilltop youth; Movement as Prayer led by Veronica Poylangada and Megan Turner.

March: Communion, Bible, & Worship class begins with 4 children; Confirmands are helping with the CBW classes.

April: Brunch for CBW students and families; Youth Sunday during worship with children participating in all aspects of the service; Host "A Day at Camp" to support the Lenten campaign to raise funds for Camp Johnsonburg; Poylangada family prepares Bunny Bags for the Interfaith Food Pantry Network.

May: Mother's Day plant sale; Interfaith Food Pantry Network work day

June: Pentecost Sunday candle making activity during outdoor Sunday School; Cathy Malman steps down as Director of Youth and Family Ministry

September: Rally Day with a patriotic theme to remember and honor September 11, 2001; (1) 4 year old receives her storybook bible; Quest children's program with music begins after school on Mondays, led by Britany Gladhill

October: Reformation Sunday/Halloween party with Scottish history, Halloween activities, and a bag-piper!; Veronica Poylangada assembles Halloween treat bags for HCNS

November: Britany Gladhill hired as new Director of Youth and Family Ministry; Children make fleece hats for Market Street Mission

December: Hilltop debuted as a stop on the Holly Trail; Happy Birthday Jesus party during Sunday School; No Stress/No Tears Christmas pageant is held with children able to play multiple parts and participation from the congregation—young and young-at-heart alike!; New confirmation class begins with 4 students



In addition to the work we do engaging Hilltop's youth, we must acknowledge the wonderful Adult Education programs we have, including Sunday Adult Ed and the Women's and Men's Bible Study groups. Thanks to Jon Blumers, Brian Elliott and Ginny Gilman for their leadership within these groups. Hilltop is fortunate to have dedicated individuals who not only lead mindful conversations with deepening understanding of the Scriptures but also encourage a spirit of fellowship.

Respectfully submitted, Stefanie Fox
CE Chair

Report of the Personnel and Administration Area of Ministry

This year's update from the Personnel Committee begins with a celebration of the arrival of our full time Pastor, Rev. Scot A. McCachren, who joined us in June. We welcomed Britany Gladhill as our Director of Family and Youth Ministries in November. She has hit the ground running with energy and enthusiasm for our Youth Programs, including Hilltop Quest.

The Committee gratefully recognizes Cathy Malman (Director of Christian Education) for her many years of service to Hilltop. We also were blessed by the service of our Transitional Pastor, Rev. Dr. Merideth Mueller-Bolton, prior to Pastor Scot's arrival.

The current Hilltop Staff includes:

- Reverend Scot McCachren (Pastor/Head of Staff)
- Danielle Doyle (Office Manager)
- James Wynne (Director of Music Ministries)
- Britany Gladhill (Director of Family and Youth Ministries)
- John Andrews (Facilities Manager)
- Maria Pappa (Housekeeper)
- Victoria Legacki (Director of Hilltop Christian Nursery School)

We are thankful for the faithful and dedicated service of all members of our Hilltop Staff whose efforts are critical to helping Hilltop Church continue to succeed and grow.

The Committee worked very hard this year to produce a revised version of the Employee Handbook and a review of job descriptions. We also participated in the hiring processes for both Pastor Scot and Britany. I am very proud of what this Committee accomplished in 2022.

It's been a great privilege to serve the Personnel Committee this past year as its Chair. As of March 2023, Marcia Koch will be assuming the role of Personnel Committee Chair.

If you have an interest in joining the Committee, please contact Pastor Scot.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Waller, Personnel Committee Chair
Linda Perkins
Don Eberhart
Jeffrey Betz

Worship and Music Area of Ministry

The Worship and Music Committee works closely with the pastor and music director to provide meaningful and spirit-filled worship and music experiences for our congregation. Our work includes arranging for ushers, flowers, and readers, preparing communion, and decorating the sanctuary for the liturgical seasons and holidays throughout the year. In addition, we oversee the operation of Noah's Ark Nursery. We were blessed for the first half of 2022 with the leadership of our interim minister, Reverend Dr. Merideth Mueller-Bolton. We thank her for guiding us through the transitional period. We are grateful that Pastor Scot McCachren joined us mid-year to lead our congregation into a new era. Jim Wynne, our Director of Music, continues to bring his strong musical talents to our worship services and music ensembles. We welcome additional choir members, so please consider adding your voice to Hilltop's worship. The Noah's Ark Nursery provides loving childcare for our youngest ones through age three during services. Unfortunately, the nursery has been suspended since the pandemic, but we look forward to restarting it in the near future.

Some highlights from 2022 include

- Welcoming Pastor Scot McCachren over the summer, and his Installation Ceremony on October 2, 2022
- A concert by Celtic Psalms from Ireland in July 2022
- Concert Series featuring events such as The Hunchback of Notre Dame with organ accompaniment
- Hilltop Oratorio Choir Christmas Concert "One Small Child"
- Reintroduction of our children's choirs and handbell choir at worship services

As worship services and other events require the organization and efforts of many people, we'd like to thank a few of them for their vital service to our congregation.

- Buildings and Grounds committee for their continued support of our special events and care of our beautiful sanctuary.
- Bob Willis, who continues to be a dedicated and passionate caretaker of our amazing organ.
- Mitzi Fox, our Flower Coordinator, who oversees the lovely flower arrangements on the communion table, as well as the Christmas poinsettias, and Easter flowers.
- Dave Kerr, our Usher Coordinator, and the other members who perform this service.
- Ramona Balderson, who coordinates weekly greeters for Worship services
- Bob Willis and his team, who manage our live streaming of Sunday worship and special events. We look forward to offering a live streaming worship option for our congregants near and far for years to come. We welcome volunteers to help run this valuable part of our worship experience.
- Our committee members for their dedicated service: Lissa Anderson, Eric Balderson, Betsy Manchester, Shon and Bill Maurer, Laura Montenegro, Pastor Scot, and Jim Wynne.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to all the dedicated members who perform in our music ensembles, serve as ushers, readers, and greeters, prepare and serve communion, donate flowers, and perform so many other tasks to enhance worship for our Hilltop family.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Grzanka, Chair