



**First Presbyterian Church
Annual Report
2008**

SESSION

2008 Session

Pete Peery, Moderator (January-September)

Michael Poulos, Moderator (October-December)

Margaret Torrence

Lucy Keil, Clerk of Session

Class of 2009

Eve Bennett

Joyce Brown

Bob Cerwin

Bill Kantonen

John Meadows

Paul Vlieg

Josh Fowler, Youth Elder

2008-2009 Committee Chairs

Eve Bennett, Christian Education

Alan Thornburg, Finance

Joyce Brown, Property

Wayne Drummond, Outreach

Mark Fowler, Worship

STAFF

Pastoral Staff

Michael Poulos, Associate Pastor for Youth and Mission

Margaret LaMotte Torrence, Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care

Program Staff

Eric Wall, Director of Music

Nancy McNeill, Director of Faith Development

Administrative Staff

Angela Drummond, Church Administrator

Jo Nan Hester, Office Assistant

Penny Gibbs, Church Secretary

Kim Thomas, Choir Assistant

Diane Pennington, Music Assistant

Property Staff

Nancy Kuhn

Robert Bauman

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The CE Committee has operated for a number of years by using a system of sub-committees, or councils, which focus their attention on the Faith Development needs of the following general age groups: Children, Youth and Adult. In addition the library sub- committee provides resources for all age groups. Although each council is focused on the faith development needs of a specific age group, there is communication and cooperation among the three councils so that the faith formation efforts of the CE Committee address not only the individual demographics of the church but also the needs of the church as one body in Christ.

Child Protection Policy Implementation:

In the spring of 2004 the CE Committee approved a new *Child and Youth Protection Policy*. This policy was adopted by the session and implemented beginning in 2004. On an annual basis the Christian Education Committee requests continuing volunteers who have completed training in previous years to review and sign off on the policy and provides the required training for new volunteers.

Christian Education Committee: Cindy Clarke, a rotating representative from the Adult Council, Stevie Hoffman, Jean Shearouse, Howard Spanogle, Nancy McNeill & Michael Poulos as staff liaisons and Eve Bennett – Chair.

Children's Ministry

2008 Highlights

- Enrollment increased with the addition of five babies to the rolls plus four children ages 1 years- grade 5.
- Weekly Sunday morning faith development classes included Bible Quest for 2 year olds –5 year olds (curriculum purchased). Bible Journeys for elementary age children (curriculum developed monthly by FPC Bible Journeys planning coordinators). Bible Stories explored this year in Bible Journeys: Jesus Walks on Water, Finding My Way in the Bible, Jesus Washes Feet, Jesus Appears to Thomas, Stories of Joseph, Parables of Lost Coin & Sheep, Jonah, Abraham & Sarah, No Room in the Inn; the Birth of Jesus. A new component was added to Bible Journeys; an elementary child and parent class was offered "Finding My Way through the Bible" in the beginning of 2008. A Worship Education class was offered for new kindergartners and their parents.
- This year, through a generous donation to the Children's Ministry, along with money approved by the Session from the Phillips bequest, we were able to re-outfit the Bible Journeys computer workshop, Bible.com. We replaced 6 ten-year-old computers and 3 printers, with 8 new computers, one wireless printer, 2 additional computer desks, and purchased new software to use for exploring Bible stories.
- Provide for the regular participation in worship of children through acolyting, communion and 5 Cents a Meal helpers, prayer with the pastor, and during special services such as Christmas Eve, Palm Sunday, Easter, Pentecost.
- Weekly Wednesday evening faith development provided recreational/educational programming for elementary age children. Themes of getting along with others, being grateful for what we have and reaching out to others in need were studied.
- CE recognized graduating Bible Journey 5th graders and presented Bibles to them in Sunday worship service. This group (of 12) was the largest graduating class.
- Leaders planned and hosted two intergenerational family educational events which included spiritual practices to observe at home: a Holy Week and Easter Celebration and an Advent Celebration and wreath making.
- Family-friendly Advent and Lenten devotional resources were provided for families to use at home.
- Leaders planned and hosted Market Place 29 A.D. our annual ecumenical Vacation Bible School. The theme was *Lost and Found: How God continually seeks us*. Trinity Episcopal Church joined our venture this year. They added financial support and 30 more children. This brought the total to 130

children that attended the four-day event with seven churches participating. A new model was used for this year the 3 and 4 year olds were divided into four tribes: Esther, Ruth, Moses and Noah. This group had tents on the Children's Hall and participated in the Market Place Shops, Games and Music. These younger children did not go to Synagogue or Story Telling like their older counterparts. Instead, they had their own story telling and Synagogue time on the Children's Hall. All the Market Place children learned about the Heiffer Project outreach ministry and raised money to buy chickens as a donation to Heiffer International.

- Fellowship ministries.
Fall Festival for FPC and Childcare Center families. This year was very successful with games, prizes, and the addition of a large group of youth including new 6th graders helping with the games. A costume awards ceremony was held during the Wednesday night dinner. Easter and Holy Week celebration which included activities to remind children of Christ's last week: a station for making a dish garden; making gift bags for the Presbyterian Home for Children; a reenactment of discovering the Empty Tomb; and participation in a Last Supper. A winter bowling outing for adults and children was planned and well attended.
- Outreach ministry included: Apple Picking with a bag of apples picked for Manna Food Bank; Helped promote the Crop Walk; Christmas Caroling at Deerfield w/Pot Luck Dinner following; providing goody bags for Room in the Inn guests and Presbyterian Home for Children, making cards to send to homebound, ill, or grieving; assisting in the collection of hats, gloves, scarves for Presbyterian Women's Giving Tree; collecting food for Asheville-Buncombe County Christian Ministry.

The committee hosted, with Central Methodist, the annual Block Party Kick-Off for Wednesday Night Suppers.

The Children's Council Committee: Lisa Bridges, Ami Greene, Rebecca Huntley, Paula Vasey, Nancy McNeill – Staff Liaison, and Cindy Clarke - Chair. Susie Jameson resigned and we are recruiting a

Youth Ministry

2008 Highlights

- Weekly faith development classes and youth group meetings provided young people a safe place to explore their faith and build significant relationships with each other and adult leaders. The senior high girls club continues to provide an important monthly fellowship opportunity.
- Continued the tradition of fund-raisers (Super Bowl Sub Sale, Pancake Breakfast, Stop Drop & Roll childcare) to support summer mission trips and to build congregational excitement and connection to the summer plans. In the fall the senior highs began serving monthly on Wednesday night suppers, increasing their participation and gaining dollars for the 2009 mission trip.
- At his 6 year mark of service to FPC, Michael enjoyed a summer sabbatical. Highlights included: a family trip to Greece to re-connect with his family; a week of renewal at the Davidson Clergy Center; and conversations with former youth who were part of his past youth groups. In October Michael and family gave a report to the congregation on their experiences.
- During Michael's time away, a number of adults stepped up in a significant way to support the summer youth events. Adults who played a key role included Ed & Leslie Brenegar (mission trip), Pete Peery (mission trip), Susie Jameson (mission trip), Eve Bennett (Massanetta Springs), Josh & Michelle Robinson (Massanetta Springs), Aimee McNeill (Montreat Youth), Chris Reinhardt (Montreat Youth), Heath & Megan Morlok (Montreat Youth), Sandra & Mark Fowler (Montreat Youth).
- In June, the senior high mission group traveled to Mississippi to work on Katrina Relief projects in and around New Orleans. The group toured New Orleans, worked at New Orleans Mission, helped to rehab homes in Waveland through agency Katrina Relief, and had time for fun/sightseeing, too! . The group gave a congregational report during the faith development hour in August. Juanita Spanogle provided resources on Mississippi for the mission group as well as for members of the congregation, enabling them to connect with the experience.
- In July a group of fifteen middle school youth plus advisors traveled to the Massanetta Springs Conference. Shelby Brenegar served there as a senior high enabler for two weeks.
- Seventeen senior high youth plus advisors attended the summer Montreat Youth Conference in

late July/ early August.

- In August we welcomed a large group of 6th graders into the youth ministry program, presenting to them in worship their Bible Journey passports and a new Bible. We welcomed new youth advisors Heath & Meghan Morlok who are focusing on our senior high youth fellowship.
- Youth Choir members continue to provide leadership regularly for worship, including the annual Youth Sunday celebration, All Church Retreat and the traditional Moravian Love Feast. A large group of children and youth attended the Montreat Worship & Music Conference in June.
- Outreach continues to be an important part of our youth ministry. On a regular basis youth volunteer in the nursery and provide key leadership in programs such as Marketplace/VBS, Fall Festival, Easter Party, and assistance with other children's programming. The youth also help with our *Room in the Inn* program, occasionally cooking meals and serving as dinner hosts. In December the senior highs also prepared a breakfast for the homeless in Pritchard Park.
- Thank you to Youth Council members—Mark Fowler (chair), Eve Bennett, Ed and Leslie Brenegar, Sandra Fowler, Donna Frellick, Susie Jameson, Michael Poulos (staff), Deaune Reeves, and representatives from the Senior High Youth.

Adult Ministry

2008 Highlights

- Adult Faith Development Council continues to work on implementing some of the long range goals for the congregation established by the session in 2005 of nourishing personal faith, enriching spiritual lives, deepening biblical and theological grounding, providing opportunities for education on engaging in hands on mission, and addressing differences in the church and community. The council incorporates through out the year a variety of studies on biblical, spiritual, theological, life issues, and putting our faith into practice themes.
- On Sunday mornings offered several ongoing classes: Text Time, First Bible Class *Present Word* curriculum and "Come As You Are" *The Thoughtful Christian* curriculum and Greening the Congregation.
- Offered a variety of shorter term classes on Sunday mornings which incorporate long range goals—Jesus the Bible & Homosexuality – book discussion, Psalms for Lent, Immigration Fact or Fiction, Travels with St. Paul, The Kite Runner – book discussion, Inquirer's Class spring & fall sessions for new members, Beginnings – a study of Genesis 1-11, Parenting the Young Child in the Christian Community, Loving Our Neighbors, Spots in Time: The Experience of God in Nature, No Room in the Inn; An Advent Study on Homelessness, Exploring Advent Through the Arts; Nativity in Art, Hymn Singing and the Church with guest hymn writer Mel Bringle. Additional special guest teachers: Rev. Joe Ingle *A Christian Response to the Death Penalty*, Russell Jones Pastoral Counselor *World of Worry, World of Care*.
- The Adult Council formed the *Lay Institute* in 2007 an intensive course that offers more in-depth Bible and theological study. In January 2008 Session II *Understanding the New Testament* course was offered on Sunday morning and Monday evenings taught by Angela Drummond, M.A.C.E.. Fall of 2008 Session I of *The Bible and Theology* Course was offered on Monday evenings taught by Rev. Jerry Beavers.
- Offered a new course on Wednesday mornings this fall - *Great Themes of the Bible* taught by Rev. Jim Chatham. This course invitation was extended to area churches in the community. "Time-Out for Everyone" Thursday mornings studies included *Simply Enough*, *The Power of Forgiveness* and selected topics from *The Thoughtful Christian* website. In addition, this group offers intentional fellowship, support and prayer.
- The Adult Council organized the five week Wednesday Night Lenten series using the book SoulFeast by Marjorie Thompson, facilitated by Rev. Margaret Barnes Peery. This study provided opportunity for spiritual growth, small group discussion, reflection and greater fellowship.
- Committee hosted the annual five-week summer seminar series which featured Bible study & topics connecting faith and community led by guest leaders Rev. Jim Chatham -Psalms, Rev. Ken Sehested -Church in Cuba, Bob Kieffer- Afghanistan. Additional summer classes *The Politics of Jesus* – Dr. Earl Thompson, & *Exploring Our Guatemala Partnership*.

- Assisted in planning the Women's Seminar in October on *Finding Balance* including topics on personal and physical self care.
- Provided devotional booklets and resources for spiritual nurture during Lent and Advent.
- A Faith Development Preview kicked off the 2008-2009 year in the Wallace Foyer. The preview presented all Faith Development offerings, including weekday classes with opportunities to read class descriptions and preview curricula.
- Hosted a brunch during the Faith Development hour on Easter and during the Twelve days of Christmas.
- Coordinated and planned Wednesday evening programs that have incorporated worship, outreach and community-building. Intentionally schedule Wednesday programs that featured each component monthly.

Adult Council Committee: Bill Hoyt, Eula Pence, Susan Neff, Beverly Williamson, Bonnie Welden, Earl Thompson, Ellen McDougald, Nancy McNeill – Staff Liaison and Sarah Thornburg – Chair.

Library

2008 Highlights

The library cart in the Wallace Foyer continued to be a popular spot for periodical and book perusal. A small selection of social justice and advocacy books were shelved across from the children's section. Forty-eight books were added to the library collection. There are 10 more books to be added which were purchased from 2008 budget. Among the reference books purchased from this budget were the Harper Collins Study Bible, a large print copy of The Message Bible and Eerdman's Bible Dictionary. The Old Testament Books of the Pentateuch from the Daily Bible Study Series, Revised are on order as well as the Oxford Book of Carols. The plan is to purchase the entire Old Testament Daily Bible Study Series, Revised as money becomes available.

The environmental information exchange started near the beginning of last year was removed due to lack of interest. The magazine and articles were recycled.

During Stevie Hoffman's (Church Librarian) 3 month absence, the library was ably manned by committee members: Jean Shearouse, Bonnie Welden and the congregation.

- A Social Justice and Advocacy section across from the Children's books shelves was begun in order to provide information having to do with social issues.
- A combination of donations and the library budget portion of the Christian Education committee paid for the newly purchased additions to the library collection.

The Christian Education Committee welcomes your suggestions for potential classes and Wednesday Night programs as well as anyone who would be willing to facilitate a class. As always, your participation in any and all Faith Development offerings is encouraged.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

2008, while challenging and difficult at times outside the church, was yet another terrific year in the "Congregational Life" of our church, and showed the true, amazing, "purple" colors of everyone at 1st Pres. The programs that have been in place thrived, while new programs and events sprung up and brought another facet to the broad and vibrant vitality of this congregation. This will be a brief summary of some of the highlights from a truly memorable 2008.

Church Retreat:

Once again this was an absolutely phenomenal experience, promoting fellowship, friendship, and spiritual stirrings. Paul McNeill and his committee brought us a thoughtful and provocative program, and the participants made it come to life. We evaluated our congregation and the space we worship in, and found old traditions to embrace, and new frontiers to explore, arm-in-arm.

Athletics:

We continue to field softball and basketball teams. These feature church members and non-members; they are loads of fun and extremely successful avenues for fun and fellowship. We welcomed two new "members" to the church this year, via the subtle outreach of these programs. All are welcome to participate and may contact myself, Steve Frellick, for more information for 2009. (628-0789)

Annual Picnic & 4th of July:

Both very successful and fun events held in 2008, and to be repeated in 2009. Mark your calendars for May 17, 2009 and July 4, 2009.

Dine With Nine:

This group grew and thrived in its 1st full year of gatherings. Designed to provide food and fellowship in a warm and comfortable atmosphere, in groups of 7-9. Dinners are usually hosted at someone's house, with everyone bringing a dish to share. Groups are re-formed or rotated every 3 months. Meet new people, make new friends, strengthen existing friendships, and share in fellowship. Contact the church office to sign up for the next or any session. With the influx of so many new members in 2008, this is a tremendous opportunity to meet and create new church friendships heading into 2009.

Men's Breakfast Group:

This group also celebrated its 1st full year, and while doing well, we are still looking for "a few good men"! All are welcome and no reservations are necessary. Come on out & join us, and bring a friend! The group meets on the 3rd Thursday of every month at 8:00 AM at the church, Gardner Hall. Breakfast is served (\$5), there is a monthly program, and lots of fellowship and sharing. Come share with your fellow men, unwind, and release some stressful baggage you've been hauling around, and/or have some laughs.

Celebration Events:

We celebrated quite a bit this year, and had lots to be thankful for! We hosted celebrations for the service of Eric Wall & Nancy McNeill; and had a bittersweet celebration for our departing pastor, Pete Peery. We have some pretty amazing individuals leading this church, and celebrating anniversaries of tenure is an affirmation of the life of the church. While we will miss Pete, both he and we realize we will continue to grow and celebrate the glories of our church and the service of our Lord.

Wednesday Night Dinners:

Through the amazing leadership of Bob & Charlene Frellick, the dinners on Wednesday night have been terrific, varied, and worth coming back for! Come out and enjoy the great food, and join in the fellowship of friends, and partake of the fun, informative, and challenging programs coordinated by the Christian Ed committee.

Thank you to my entire committee: Valerie Vliek, Paul McNeill, Bob Frellick, LeNoir Medlock, Joshua Fowler, Bob Cerwin, Aletha Roper, and especially to Margaret Torrence for her endless and amazing efforts!

Steve Frellick, Chairperson

STEWARDSHIP

The Stewardship committee of First Presbyterian Church had the stated objective of attempting to raise resources to support God's purpose at first Presbyterian Church, Asheville, and the greater Christian community in 2009. Members of the committee who volunteered their time and energy were Todd Oldenburg, Ellen McDougald, Jim Cummings, and Neil Leach. Associate Pastor Michael Poulos advised the committee and also gave significant time and energy to helping with the 2009 stewardship effort.

The 2009 campaign was a difficult one. The national economic downturn of 2008 and subsequent recession played a major role in our ability to raise funds for the church. This economic situation has effected investment and retirement savings of many church members. Many of our older members draw from retirement/investment funds to give to the church and thus do not have the resources they once had. Since approximately 65% of our pledges come from members over the age of 60, this has had a dramatic impact on pledging for 2009. The campaign was further impacted by the departure of the senior pastor just before the start of the campaign.

The committee selected the theme of "Be Not Afraid: Faith in God's Future" for the 2009 Stewardship effort. This theme was chosen in light of the national financial situation and was intended to reflect our need to have faith that God will provide for us and we should not fear the unknown economic future. It also reflected our hope for the state of FPC as we prepared for a new stage in the life of the church after 14 years with the same senior pastor. The main efforts for the campaign were the Minute for Mission done from the pulpit during Sunday services and through publications that were disseminated to members. We also conducted a phone campaign in which members of the session called members to talk about the importance of pledging to the church.

At the conclusion of the pledge drive, the pledges for 2009 totaled \$789,000. This represents a decrease in pledges of 9% from 2008. The number of overall pledging households remained virtually the same but 24% of those that pledged decreased their pledge from the previous year. Many members expressed their desire to pledge more but felt constrained by their personal finances. The pledging for 2009 brought home the difficulty of relying on the older generation for the majority of financial support. The next step is to alert members to the current financial situation of the church and encourage those who are able to increase their pledges. In addition there has been discussion of doing a "supplemental" stewardship campaign later in the year when the national financial situation improves.

HOSPITALITY

The Hospitality Committee has developed a list of four primary goals, described below.

How do we attract visitors? We rented a space in the *Asheville Citizen-Times* newspaper every Saturday along with 9 other area Presbyterian USA churches. We coordinate with the church administrator and church secretary on relevant website items. We have encouraged church members to tell friends about our church and to invite them to come, letting them know we are a welcoming congregation. Although Invite-a-Friend Sunday was cancelled in October because it coincided with the departure of Pete & Margaret Peery, we plan for it to occur again in 2009, tentatively in March. We are currently exploring other ways to attract new members and are assisting the church staff in revising one or several church brochures.

How do we welcome and extend hospitality to new members? We maintained our greeter program and now have 2-3 greeters most Sunday mornings, placed in strategic locations, and have a visitor table after the 10:55 service with a banana bread gift and a packet of church information for first-time visitors. We continued to check the red book registries each Sunday so that we may contact visitors who leave contact information to welcome them, and so that we may pass visitor information on to the pastors. Efforts to add and improve signs to guide visitors and others are almost complete now. We also coordinated and recruited volunteers to staff the after-church refreshments in the Powell Atrium.

How do we encourage visitors to become new members? We encouraged members to continue to welcome repeat visitors and show them different opportunities for worship and service. We have had some visitors participate in volunteer activities. Although our efforts were side-tracked temporarily by the departure of Sylvain & Linda Ndebi, we have maintained a computer roster of visitors, and are developing a system whereby repeat visitors would be contacted again after a 3rd or 4th visit. We have assisted the church staff with planning and hosting the Inquirer's Class and invited new members and repeat visitors to attend. This is a 5 session series of classes usually held twice a year during the Sunday school hour. The next series starts April 26. Of course, we realize that congregation members are often the ones who play a key role in helping visitors make the decision to join, and we think you do an excellent job!

How do we orient new members and help them to become assimilated into the life of our church? We have a "Connections" program whereby we link new members, if they wish, with an established member or family, who serves as a mentor. We give a church directory and packet of information to all new members when they join and put new member photos on a bulletin board near the library. We phone new members and introduce them to the congregation, usually on the 3rd Sunday of each month. We have also called new members to invite them to attend new member dinners. These dinners have been temporarily suspended since the Peerys left, but we hope to have them resume soon. We also have kept a computer roster of new members, which helps immensely in keeping track of each item or activity for a given individual or family.

Committee members: Rob & Jamie Brady, Dick Graham, Barbra Love, Linda Milholland, Alex & Eula Pence, Joshua Robinson, Marilee Van Wye, Paul Vliek, Lynn & Bob Foster, and George Duncan (chairperson)

MEMBER CARE

The Member Care Committee, under the thoughtful guidance and support of Margaret Torrence, coordinates ministry to those in our church community with situational special needs. The committee is comprised of Joanne Bartsch, Elaine Cerwin, Marge Marsh, Norma McClendon, Esther Pardue, Randy Parker, Jean Webb and is chaired by Lynn Kieffer.

Under the auspices of Member Care are several committees to meet various congregational needs. Visits to the homebound are coordinated by Margaret Torrence and Lynn Kieffer. A newly formed **Church Visitation Team** is undergoing training by Earl Thompson for church members who are interested in visiting homebound.

Jean Webb and Bill Bell continue to lead the 9 **Bereavement Teams** to support and assist church families following a death. Currently 106 church members serve on these teams to provide requested assistance from these families in need, ranging from ushering during the service to meals or receptions.

The **Stephen Ministry** Program under the leadership of Esther Pardue and Pat Harr is still in place and available to care for members facing a crisis or a difficult situation.

A newly formed committee, **Caregivers**, under the direction of Marge Marsh and Earl Thompson, is a support group for those caring for a loved one with a deteriorating health condition. This committee meets monthly after church and information is shared from the moderators as well as the caregivers.

Another new committee, **Helping Hands**, assists members in time of need with meals or transportation. Elaine Cerwin and Randy Parker organized and coordinate this committee, matching members of the congregation with others needing these services.

Hugh Howell continues his ministry of making CDs of the services available to members unable to attend.

We rejoice and give thanks that many members of this congregation generously and graciously perform quiet acts of ministry for others. These include taking communion to homebound members, participating in our prayer chains and many other contributions that deeply touch those in need.

OUTREACH

The Outreach Committee of First Presbyterian Church – Asheville
as part of the body of Christ and disciples of Christ,
endeavors to share the boundary-breaking love of Christ
in the heart of Asheville and in the whole world
through the support and benevolence of our congregation.

Prayerful discernment and consideration of requests and needs guided the 2008 process for helping those in need. In addition to financial support, members of our congregation continue to give many volunteer hours of time and talent to projects.

Committee Members: Wayne Drummond (chairperson)

Ami Greene, Jocelyn Baumgarten, Betty Holmes, Bob Cerwin, Helga Barden, Betsy Phillips, Jamie Brady, Owen Neff, Michael Poulos (staff liaison)

Highlights of supported programs include the following:

Beginning in January 2008 First Presbyterian of Asheville and partner church Eben Ezer Presbyterian of La Blanca began a **scholarship program for 23 Guatemalan children and youth**. The scholarship provides help for tuition, school supplies and uniforms. By the end of the year we received pictures and report cards from the students. Financial support for this program has come from Loaves & Fishes donations as well as funds from the Mission Endowment. Barbara Earnhardt has served faithfully as the point-person for our Scholarship Committee.

The Outreach Committee recommended and the session approved expenditure of approx. \$12,500 from the budgeted **Mission Opportunities** line item. After thoughtful deliberation and discernment, benevolent gifts were made to the Presbyterian Historical Society, Massanetta Springs Camp & Conference Center, Katrina Relief, Bringing Hope/Rwanda Scholarship, Presbyterian Disaster Relief, and Western Carolinians for Criminal Justice.

Under the leadership of Ami Greene, the Outreach Committee established the **Homeless Task Force** charged to deepen our commitment to ministry with those on the margins of our city. New initiatives growing out of this group include: 4th Friday Meal & Cleaning at A-Hope Day Shelter, Pathways to Permanent Housing move-in basket drive, and an advent faith development class "No Room in the Inn."

Increasing the congregation's hands-on mission opportunities have been an important goal for 2008. New volunteers have strengthened our quarterly hosting of Room in the Inn. We have begun serving a quarterly lunch for the Women at Risk program, as well as continuing our semi-annual blood drive for the Red Cross.

The FPC Child Care Center continues to thrive under the leadership of center director Mary Nivin. During 2008 the center maintained capacity enrollment as well as a 4 Star Accreditation ranking. The board, under the leadership of Keith Love, has done a great job strengthening this ministry in substantial ways. A September Fall Carnival generated much support from not only the church but the center's families.

We partnered with neighbor Trinity Episcopal Church to sponsor our annual **Loaves & Fishes Alternative Gifts Market**. Our collaboration brought new energies and increased support for the 15 participating agencies. Lynn Kieffer and Jo Nan Hester continue to bring much passion and leadership for this important ministry.

We continue to support member **Merriam Bass' education at Union-PCE/Charlotte**. We celebrated the graduation this spring of inquirer Alex McNeill (Harvard Divinity School) and candidate for the ministry Erin Keys (Columbia Theological Seminary).

The **Presbyterian Women** continue to strengthen our church's commitment to Outreach through their faithful giving in a number of areas: Presbyterian Home for Children, Black Mountain Correctional Center for Women, ABCCM clothes and food pantry, WNC Rescue Mission, Meals on Wheels and the ABCCM Women and Children Shelter. Donations to various thrift stores are also encouraged by the PW, and they have recently initiated a church-wide drive for toiletries. Another behind-the-scenes mission involving PW members is our **Sewing Group**. This group meets once a month to knit items for various missions ranging from caps for premature babies to bags for veterans at the VA Hospital.

2008 Benevolent Giving

Local Mission

Child Care Center (includes insurance & maintenance)	\$25,171
Presbyterian Home for Children	2,320
Habitat	8,400
Homeward Bound	7,200
Partnership for Pastoral Counseling	1,000
Black Mt. Prison Chaplaincy	1,200
Christians for a United Community	400
Pisgah Legal Services	1,000
Outreach Relief	1,500
Room in the Inn	1,000 (from Mission endowment)
Mission Opportunities –	
Bringing Hope – Rwanda	2,000
Massanetta Springs Conference Center	500
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance	3,293
Katrina Relief	500
Western Carolinians for Criminal Justice	3,000
Montreat Historical Society	2,500

International Mission

Turks	2,500
Dimmocks	550
Guatemala Partnership	300
Guatemala Scholarships	3,500

Denominational Relations

Presbytery of WNC	60,000
Montreat Conference Center	1,000
Theological Education Fund	4,000
Scholarships for Seminary students	5,374 (from Memorial Committee)
Union/PSCE Charlotte	3,583

2008 Special Offerings

5 Cents a Meal	7,549
Peacemaking Offering	3,066
Easter <i>One Great Hour of Sharing</i>	3,706
Habitat <i>Presbyterian House</i>	3,113
Mother's Day Child Care Center	2,060
CROP Walk	1,662
Thanksgiving <i>Presbyterian Home for Children</i>	1,058
Christmas <i>Joy Gift</i>	6,917
Christmas Eve <i>Room in the Inn</i>	2,642
Loaves & Fishes Alternative Gifts Market	23,123
ABCCM	\$1876
<i>Caring for Children</i>	\$1952
<i>Children First/CIS Buncombe County</i>	\$1730
<i>Church of the Advocate</i>	\$1008
<i>FPC Child Care Center</i>	\$835
<i>Homeward Bound</i>	\$950
<i>Manna Food Bank</i>	\$2839
<i>Meals on Wheels</i>	\$3417
<i>Partnership for Pastoral Counseling</i>	\$960
<i>Presbyterian Home for Children</i>	\$1870
<i>Presbytery—Malawi and Guatemala</i>	\$1644
<i>Rathbun Center</i>	\$675
<i>Room in the Inn</i>	\$1065
<i>Swannanoa Correctional Center</i>	
<i>for Women Chaplaincy Program</i>	\$564
<i>Western Carolina Rescue Ministries</i>	\$1738

PROPERTY

The current members of the property committee (PC) are Sandy Sellars, Steve Frellick, Tom Hoffman, Rieley Bennett, Gene Keil, John Meadows, and Joyce Brown (Chair). Angela Drummond serves on the property committee as the church administrator.

Following is a list of the PC 2008 accomplishments:

- The fence around the Memorial Garden has been expanded to protect the area from vandals and the doors to the Memorial Garden have been replaced. All of this has been made possible by a generous contribution from Bill Mynatt. The fountain and lights in the Memorial Garden have been repaired thanks to a generous contribution from Luther Barnhardt.
- The community room was remodeled. The door to the community room was replaced. The rooms adjacent to the community room were converted into an apartment. All of this was made possible by the generous contribution from Bill Mynatt.
- The security system was updated by adding several new cameras.
- Dedicated church members performed numerous minor repairs throughout the facility.
- Numerous larger repairs were performed throughout church property including: repair to the mirror in the Widman Room, re-hanging of the drapes in the Widman Room, plaster repair around the church, repair of leaks around sky lights, and repairs to several sections of the roof.
- Several interior areas around the church were repainted.
- Another section of gutter was stolen and therefore was replaced.
- We developed a new van use policy.
- The statue of the 'Boy with Loaves and Fishes' was donated by Colin Hudson and dedicated to the glory of God.
- The stairs to the balcony were re-carpeted.
- An ongoing work team, organized by Tom Hoffman, continues to address facility and grounds needs.
- We began renovations on the bathrooms between the Wallace Foyer and the Memorial Garden.
- The icemaker in the kitchen was replaced.
- The Sally Campbell Task Force (a sub-committee of the PC) has met regularly to evaluate the feasibility of replacing or renovating the current structure.
- The remainder of the pigeon problem under the parking deck was eliminated.
- 'Gutter sponges' were installed in the gutters of the education building in order to prevent clogs by leaves and debris that were making the gutters non-functional. This has finally solved the continual leak into the classrooms on the west side of the educational building.

The property committee asks that anyone with a property related request, comment, or recommendation, to submit the request in writing. Submittals and requests may be placed in the mailbox for Joyce Brown/property committee. Additionally, if funds are available from another source for the request, please notify us of that as well.

Looking toward the future – The property committee continues to work to find additional ways to improve the energy efficiency of the building in general. We have also been researching options regarding alternative energy.

There are still many repairs, upgrades, and requests that the property committee continues to address. Please be patient with us as we work to resolve all of these issues and others that you may bring to us.

Please extend thanks to Gene Keil, Rieley Bennett, Tom Hoffman, and the participants of the work team, who donate much time to make repairs throughout the facility. Additionally, the expertise and dedication of all the members of the property committee is **greatly appreciated** by the committee chair.

WORSHIP

The Worship Committee and its subcommittees are responsible for activities that support the pastors as they lead the congregation in the worship of God. The activities of this committee could not be carried out were it not for the efforts of numerous volunteers. As the chair of the committee, I would like to thank all of you who have given your time and talents!

Opportunities to serve include:

- usher
- hospitably greet members & visitors
- write & lead prayers
- arrange flowers
- plan & implement decorations for Advent, Christmas & Easter
- sing in choirs & ring bells
- assist with the music programs
- serve as wedding directors
- operate & maintain the sound system
- assist with communion by baking bread, preparing the elements, cleaning up and laundering linens

Music is an integral part of our worship and we are blessed to have Eric Wall and the talented members of the choir provide us their exceptional experience. All of our choirs; adult, youth, and children's, are growing in numbers and spirit.

Currently, we are looking for someone to take over for Bill Keys as the sound system coordinator. After three and a half years, Bill is stepping aside, and deserves a big thank you from our whole congregation. Anyone interested in serving with the sound system is encouraged to call Mark Fowler.

2009 will be an exciting time at First Presbyterian as we seek to worship and serve God. The worship committee has many wonderful opportunities to serve and needs to be met by the congregation.

Please call me with any questions, concerns, or to sign up for one of the service opportunities at 828-545-7538.

Mark Fowler, chairperson

Committee members: Evelyn Jarrett, Charlene Frellick, Gay Kriek, Mary Todd.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee, Stewardship Committee, and Session have worked closely together over the past month to adopt a balanced budget. Just as other non-profits and businesses are struggling to make ends meet, the church must ensure that bills are paid, programs continue, and we help those in need. The numbers listed on the following pages show areas that were cut. Please feel free to direct your questions or comments to any of the committee members: Alan Thornburg - chair, John Hansen, Colin Hudson, Barry Kampe, Lucy Keil, John Webb, and Angela Drummond, Church Administrator.

	<u>2008 Actual</u>	<u>Proposed</u> <u>2009 Budget</u>	<u>Reductions</u>	<u>2009 Adopted</u> <u>Budget</u>
REVENUES				
Total Pledges	\$ 842,139.13	\$ 792,000.00		\$ 792,000.00
Total Other Sources	<u>\$ 139,880.92</u>	<u>\$ 91,373.60</u>		<u>\$ 91,373.60</u>
Total Revenues	\$ 982,020.05	\$ 883,373.60		\$ 883,373.60
EXPENSES				
Benevolences	\$ 107,044.09	\$ 101,453.00		\$ 74,098.85
Child Care Center	<u>\$ 25,171.39</u>	<u>\$ 22,500.00</u>		\$ 22,500.00
OUTREACH COMMITTEE	\$ 132,215.48	\$ 123,953.00	\$ 27,354.15	\$ 96,598.85
FINANCE COMMITTEE				
Staff	\$ 496,651.20	\$ 518,126.34	\$ 40,931.50	\$ 477,194.84
Office and Administrative Expense	<u>\$ 53,777.79</u>	<u>\$ 83,850.00</u>	<u>\$ 26,950.00</u>	<u>\$ 56,900.00</u>
Total FINANCE COMMITTEE	\$ 550,428.99	\$ 601,976.34		\$ 534,094.84
WORSHIP COMMITTEE	\$ 8,834.32	\$ 6,850.00		\$ 5,400.00
CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE	\$ 10,873.18	\$ 15,265.00		\$ 4,830.00
HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE	\$ 3,190.00	\$ 3,400.00		\$ 1,900.00
MEMBER CARE COMMITTEE	\$ 198.21	\$ 850.00		\$ 150.00
STEWARDSHIP	\$ 408.87	\$ 800.00		\$ 500.00
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE				
Children's Council	\$ 3,630.82	\$ 5,625.00		\$ 3,975.00
Youth Council	\$ 9,107.82	\$ 12,775.00		\$ 9,325.00
Adult Council	<u>\$ 7,384.10</u>	<u>\$ 8,225.00</u>		<u>\$ 6,425.00</u>
Total CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE	\$ 20,122.74	\$ 26,625.00		\$ 19,725.00
Total Program Committees	\$ 43,627.32	\$ 53,790.00	\$ 21,285.00	\$ 32,505.00
PROPERTY COMMITTEE				
Church Van	\$ 668.98	\$ 510.00		\$ 510.00
Maintenance Staff	\$ 66,045.43	\$ 75,673.55		\$ 58,600.91
Maintenance Supplies	\$ 9,070.13	\$ 11,600.00		\$ 11,600.00
Parking Lot Expense	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00		\$ 600.00
Repairs and Maintenance	\$ 28,611.44	\$ 30,000.00		\$ 27,000.00
Service Contracts	\$ 21,022.84	\$ 21,547.00		\$ 21,547.00
Utilities	\$ 82,933.44	\$ 82,300.00		\$ 79,300.00
Insurance	<u>\$ 14,234.00</u>	<u>\$ 19,912.00</u>		\$ 19,912.00
Sally Campbell Lodge	<u>\$ 2,300.92</u>	<u>\$ 1,105.00</u>		<u>\$ 1,105.00</u>
Total PROPERTY COMMITTEE	\$ 225,487.18	\$ 243,247.55	\$ 23,072.64	\$ 220,174.91
Total EXPENSES	\$ 951,758.97	\$ 1,022,966.89	\$ 139,593.29	\$ 883,373.60
Total Net Income (Loss)	\$ 30,261.08	\$ (139,593.29)		\$ -

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

Membership	771
New Members	
<i>Profession/Reaffirmation of Faith</i>	22
<i>Transfer From Another Church</i>	8
	30
Member Deaths	10
Transferred Membership	10
Adults Baptisms	0
Infant Baptisms	7