



Year of Challenges

2024 annual report
First Presbyterian Church
of Medford, Oregon

Annual meeting January 26, 2025
Beginning our 140th year of ministry to
Medford and the Rogue Valley
At 11 a.m. following 10 a.m. worship





FIRST PRESBYTERIAN Church

85 South Holly Street, Medford, OR
Phone: (541) 779-1711
Email: fpcm@firstpresmedford.org
Office hours: Monday - Thursday,
9 a.m. to noon, and by appointment

Corporate Officers

President: Cathy de Wolfe
Clerk (Corporate Secretary):
Harlow Head/Tam Moore
Treasurer: Bob Haddon

Staff

Bridge Pastor: Mike Hubbard
Minister of Music and Media:
Tony Chunn
Administrative & Financial Assistant:
Elizbeth Mahan
Building manager: Mike Mahan
Sarah Corson Childcare Center
Director: Jaime Snider

2024 Statistics

Active members 146
Average weekly worship
attendance 157
20,390 sack lunches for the
hungry
20,358 persons served at
the West Medford Food
Bank
22,620 meals served by
Hawthorne Park Potluck
collaborators

Session

Class of 2025: Bob Frey, Patty Herkert,
Dan Johnson, Diana Kelley, Vera Mor-
rell

Class of 2026: Marthanne Dedrick, Bob
Haddon, Tam Moore

Class of 2027: Nikki Keating, Evonne
Hubbard, Cathy Ullrich

Board of Deacons

Class of 2025: Kathryn Adams, Marilyn
Hultquist, Ellen Rancik, vacant

Class of 2026: Janet Grunwald, Ann
Lowe, Josie Metz, Nancy Zitzner

Class of 2027: Barbara Moore, Betty
Tozier, Cindy Walker, vacant



Annual meeting of the congregation and the corporation

January 26, 2025

Opening prayer Pastor Mike Hubbard

Declaration of a quorum Clerk Tam Moore

Bridge Pastor's annual report Pastor Hubbard

Update on pastoral transition process Steve Roe

Financial report Cathy de Wolfe

Questions from the congregation on the annual program reports

Report of Congregational Nominating Committee Marthanne Dedrick

Introduction of nominees for Ruling Elder, Class of 2028

Introduction of Deacon nominees, Class of 2028, and for
the vacancy in the Class of 2027

Nominations from the floor, if any

Election of Elders and Deacons Moderator Hubbard

Nominations for members of the 2025 Nominating Committee (four con-
gregational openings; two from Session, one from the Board of Deacons)

Election of members of the 2025 Nominating Committee

Other business

Recognition of retiring church officers: *Bob Frey, Nikki Keating,
Diana Kelley, Vera Morrell, Kathryn Adams*

Remembering members and friends who passed away in 2024: *The Rev.
Sayer "Skip" Strauch, Bobbe Sinner, Sybil Vernon, Vickie Domis, Lynn
Sjolund, Dana and Pat Collins, Monty Holst, Harold Sudmeyer, Rose
Ullrich.*

Closing prayer

Bridge Pastor's report



When I wrote my first Congregational Care Assistant Report in early 2019, I knew the day would come when I would write my final one. That time has arrived. However, what I failed to consider was the possibility that in doing so, the “ending” would be the beginning of an enlarged role in the life of First, Medford.

I do not take this “beginning” and the responsibilities it brings lightly. On the other hand, I am confident that God has called me to this moment. That confidence is grounded in two things. First is my deep sense of God’s call in my life. Second, and, for me, the more important basis for this confidence is the overwhelming affirmation I have received from this congregation and from my colleagues in the Presbytery of the Cascades. Self-confidence is valuable—if used in moderation. On the other hand, the support I have received from you all is invaluable.

This past year much of my role as Pastoral Care Assistant was punctuated by loss, a loss shared by all of you. For me, all but one of the names on our necrology report was personal. These were friends, some were close friends; they were people Evonne and I met in the first two or three months after we began attending in 2002.

The burden of loss, as well as pastoral care in general, was made considerably lighter by the work of our Deacons. Many of the memorial receptions they hosted were large, and for the last six months of the year they hosted them without having a Fellowship Hall. They have my thanks.

In early July my tenure as chair of the Commission on Ministry—South Region ended, freeing up a considerable amount of time. I will continue to represent our church at Presbytery meetings and continue to serve on the Commissioned Ruling Elder Coordinating Committee, which meets on an as-needed basis. I am continuing to moderate First, Central Point’s Session and Annual Congregational meetings.

Self-care continues to be a priority. In February, to fulfill my continuing education requirement, I attended a three-day discussion of C.S. Lewis’ “The Four Loves” at the Twin Rocks Friends Camp in Rockaway Beach on the northern Oregon coast. In September, Evonne and I enjoyed a full two-week vacation. We spent the first 10 days visiting my brother and sister-in-law in Prescott, Arizona. Hunting and some late season fishing plus completing a couple of small projects occupied the remainder.

I look forward to what God has in store for us all in the coming year.
Grace and peace, Pastor Mike



Finance report*

*unaudited

The Finance Committee met regularly in 2024 to review monthly financial statements, including our investment accounts at Morgan Stanley. Paul Smith, our investment advisor, came to several meetings to discuss how our investments were doing and to provide recommendations for changes to investments.

Overall, the income for Congregation expenses and Sarah Corson Center (excluding Urban Center II) did not meet the total Congregation expenses for the year. Income from Urban Center II produced a net profit. To cover the 2024 deficits and provide cash flow to pay bills, \$130,000 was transferred from reserves. Going into 2025 the Church will again address an expected shortfall in Congregational giving to meet budgeted expenses.

Committee members include Cathy de Wolfe, chair; Mary Lynn Lucas, Josie Metz, Bob Haddon Evonne Hubbard and Betty Tozier, ex-office Murray Richmond. Retiring in 2024 were Fred Willms and Sally Densmore.

For the period January through December 2024 the church received total income of \$978,491.94. The church expended \$1,111,505.90, leaving a deficit of \$133,013.96. The balance in the Pastor's Discretionary Fund is \$187.62. Church reserves now total \$674,877.21.

	INCOME	EXPENSE	BALANCE
CONGREGATION:	\$391,864.08	\$550,574.34	(\$158,710.26)
SARAH CORSON:	\$527,827.86	\$537,746.95	(\$9,919.09)
URBAN CENTER II:	\$58,800.00	\$23,184.61	\$35,615.39
TOTAL	\$978,491.94	\$1,111,505.90	(\$133,013.96)

Included in the above figures are income/expense from the Temporary Restricted Fund of \$140,104.21 of which \$21,230.87 was for Sarah Corson, leaving a balance of \$244,247.38.

Cathy de Wolfe
Chair, Finance Committee

Bob Haddon
Treasurer

Treasurer's Message

The caution flag is up regarding the church's financial future. We all know that 2020, the year of Covid, put severe financial stress on church operations. Covid ushered in a period of increasing costs just to keep the church open while our regular income failed to keep up. We were fortunate to receive grants from several sources which allowed us to weather the worst of the storm. The church also received a very generous bequest at the beginning of the pandemic, and another sizeable one since then, which ensured our financial health for the moment. Some of that money was put into investments as we prepared for an unsure future. That future is here now.

If we look at what the church receives through the regular giving of its members and friends, we see a growing discrepancy between what we receive and what we spend to keep this church open and serving ourselves and our community.

There is good news. Our expected deficit for the year 2024 was \$181,788.04. Through our efforts to address this reality we were able to reduce that deficit by almost \$49,000.00. Through tightening our budgets, and the use of some remaining grants and restricted funds, we have an expected deficit for 2025 of \$82,240.00. But we know that figure will be adjusted by the upcoming expenses of our search for a new pastor.

The report from the Mission Committee clearly demonstrates just how determined this church family is to carry out God's work in this community, and beyond. This church has been faced with serious challenges in the past and we are still here. To quote Barb Haddon, "Our God is a god of surprises." I wonder what surprises God has for us this time. —Bob Haddon

2025 budget, adopted by Session December 16, 2024

<i>Cost Center</i>			
Congregation			
	Income		235,177
	Expense		357,360
	admin	110,075	
	personnel	205,535	
(12 days)	(Sr. Pastor)	3,546	
	(Bridge Pastor)	77,650	
(12 days)	(Cong. Care Assoc)	870	
	Other expense	41,750	
Urban Ctr II			
	Income		58,800
	Expense		37,400
Sarah Corson Center			
	Income		583,710
	Expense		578,767
	<i>Net operating loss (funded from reserves)</i>		-85,840

Year of challenges



Sarah Corson Child Care and Learning Center

2024 Annual Report

2024 proved to be one of our most challenging years in operation to date, due to building and operational obstacles. In early January, we noticed a peeling baseboard from a half-wall between our Infant and Toddler 1 classrooms. It turned out to be massive water damage to the flooring of nearly our entire center. The farther we looked, the more damage we found. Belfor Restoration began mitigation work shortly after we discovered the peeling baseboard. American Leak Detection came out twice to look to help us determine the cause of our water damage. No significant leak was found.

On July 8, after a miraculous series of events and permissions that had to happen in three-days' time, on a holiday weekend we moved our entire operation to the main church building. Our infants moved into the church nursery. Our two toddler groups became one. Our two preschool groups became one. We divided the church Fellowship Hall in half, with toddlers on one side and our preschoolers on the other. This all required multiple exceptions to our operational license, including the blessings from our local Health and Fire departments, and the Oregon Child Care Licensing Division.



Bare flooring ready to finish



New drains installed

At this time, we know the following to be true:

- * We are still housing our operation at the church, having been here for just over six months
- * The church appealed our insurance company's denial of our original claim, and hosted an independent engineer who will hopefully help us plead our case as to the cause of the water damage (which we believe to be a clogged downspout from the base of our building to the parking lot. It took plumbers with massive snakes to clear the pipe.)
- * We had a drainage system put into our basement, all but ensuring we will never have basement water damage again.
- * The total cost of this entire project is over \$100,000. We are praying that our insurance company will change their mind and accept our claim.

In addition to dealing with the water damage to our building, 2024 brought us other challenges and things to overcome.

We had a fair amount of staff turnover, which is very common in the child care industry, especially post-Covid. We continue to offer one of the most well-rounded compensation packages in the local child care industry. Along with good pay, we offer insurance to all our full time employees, which includes medical, dental, vision, and life insurance. We pay our employees for required training time and the fees associated with said training. We pay for downtown Medford parking spaces for our employees. We have paid sick leave, paid time off and paid holidays for our full time employees.

The year saw a high rate of staff absenteeism. Church and SCC Management met several times over the course of the final few months of the year and came up with a plan to combat staff frequent absenteeism. Beginning in January of 2025, we have an Employee Attendance Incentive Program, which will reward bonus money and additional paid time off to staff with good work attendance. Staff who are frequently absent and who do not have proof of said absences will not receive these rewards. This program has four tiers and staff move up and down on the tiers based on their work attendance.

We welcome 2025 with cautious optimism that we will soon get back to our beloved Center. We move forward in faith and hope for a better year ahead!

Jaime Snider, Director



Buildings and Grounds Committee



Restoration work continues in Urban Center II

completion of video screen in foyer, addition of video screen in fellowship hall, and renovation of first floor of Urban Center II building (in progress).

Committee members: Monty Holst (chair), Hugh Anderson, Don Bradshaw, Bob Haddon, and Dan Johnson. After we lost Monty, Bob Haddon became the chair. Major projects this year were repair of the boiler, remodel of the second-floor men's rest room (in progress), new floor in kitchen,

Feeding the hungry, helping the needy

Mission work in 2024 was funded through designated funds, bequests, and grants. We expect to invest about \$48,400 in mission in 2025 that's not reflected in the church operating budget.

Here's a summary of your mission work in the past year:

Brown Bag Café—This program provides sack lunches to anyone asking for one Monday through Thursday. We are blessed to have six other churches partner to make the sandwiches that go into each lunch. Volunteers staff the daily distribution. Those attending Sunday worship are invited to help by packing lunches for the coming week. We give away between 300 and 600 lunches a week. During 2024 the program gave out approximately 20,390 lunches.



Lunches to go

West Medford Food Project—This program was originally located in the church Fellowship Hall. When the Covid Pandemic happened, we migrated to 950 Columbus Avenue (a former Medford School District garage) and expanded in size. There are many volunteers each week that enable this program to function. We work with ACCESS, the area community action program, to provide a week's worth of meals to a family. During 2024 we saw record numbers of families receiving assistance. During 2024 they served an estimated 20,358 people.

Hawthorne Park Potluck—This program provides a noon meal for people. This meal is provided in Hawthorne Park and is open to anyone. In addition to the meals in the park, each Thanksgiving they serve a complete Thanksgiving Day Dinner in the Medford Library. During 2024 they served 22,620 meals.

During 2024 these three programs fed the equivalent of 1,289 people three meals a day for the year.

Kiva Loan Program—We've continued helping people in Latin America with economic opportunity. Kiva is an online loan program providing zero-interest loans to small businesses and entrepreneurs around the world.

Recipients are screened in the country where they live, and their loan needs are posted on the Kiva website. The people pay back the money through the place they were screened. Since the beginning of the program, we've made 71 loans for a total of \$28,940. As money is paid back, we reloan it to another deserving person. At the end of 2024 we had outstanding loans of \$8,364. To date we have not had any defaults.

Street Nurses—This past year we partnered with the Oregon Health and Science University nursing program at Ashland. On Wednesdays, they provide footcare for people picking up bag lunches. They provide coffee and a roll, a foot soak and massage, while interviewing the client on healthcare needs and make referrals for additional care if needed. They provide this service on Wednesday morning when school is in session.

PCUSA National Offerings:

During 2024 we collected four special offerings sponsored by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA. Here's a summary of your giving: Christmas Joy Offering, \$2,571; One Great Hour of Sharing, \$2,586; Pentecost, \$940; Peace and Global Witness, \$945.

Committee Members: Bob Frey, chair; Sandi Frey, Dan and Terri Johnson, Nancy Zitzner, Betty Tozier, Nicole Hertzmark, Josh Hedge, Jim Foucault, Diana Kelley. Staff: Mike Hubbard.

Welcoming, reaching out to the community

The Church Growth Committee works to ensure that all people passing through our doors feel welcome, accepted, and loved. We organize membership classes for those interested and help them become part of our church family. This committee also works to enhance the on-going vitality of all our members.

Communication is a key focus of this committee. This includes the advertising and publicity of church events. Our organ concert featuring John West this fall, and our Christmas concert are two examples in which we successfully invited in the community. Maintaining a current website is also a critical task. We aim to make sure our message effectively reaches those exploring our church via the Internet.

In November, we returned to posting edited live recordings of Sunday services on YouTube. Previously, we prerecorded the weekly on-line worship. This change presented audio and video challenges which we are working through. The goal is to offer viewers an online experience of our church with the same quality a personal visit provides.

Committee members are Dan Johnson, chair, and Terri Johnson, Bob and Sandi Frey, Tom Formeller, Marthanne Dedrick, Diana Kelley and Tam Moore.

Personnel Committee 2024 report

This year the Personnel Committee completed performance reviews for all staff, recommended 2.5 percent cost-of-living increases for staff and updated employee handbooks to comply with current Oregon law. Our goals for 2025 include reviewing and updating all staff job descriptions. We plan to revise and streamline the staff evaluation process.

There may be other items we will review and discuss moving through this transition time.

Committee members are Cathy Ullrich, chair: Elizabeth Mahan, Jaime Snider, Meghan McDonald, Marilyn Hultquist, Doreen Bradshaw, ex-officio Pastor Mike Hubbard.

Women's Fellowship grows

This year saw the Women's Fellowship restarted after the Covid shutdown. There are 25 women actively involved. Not all these ladies are Presbyterian as there has been a concerted effort to include any lady from the community. We currently have five different denominations represented in the group. Several of these ladies have commented, "I come because of the love I feel in this group." They may attend their worship services but join us in loving fellowship. That is being a truly "connectional church"!

We meet twice a month. Each meeting has a brief devotional focus time. The first Saturday of the month we meet at a local restaurant, one time an American cuisine and the next time an ethnic plate. On the third Thursday of the month, we meet in the church workroom to apply our creativity to producing crafts.

Highlights this year were luncheons with special speakers. One luncheon featured a community partner (OHSU Street Nurse) program that uses our facility every Wednesday to provide crucial healthcare outreach. The other speaker was a local lady that has a large ministry with victims of human trafficking, especially on the I-5 corridor.

All women are invited to join us.
Evonne Hubbard

Fellowship celebrates community



Savoring the last Carolina BBQ in October

We “celebrate community” among our church family and friends. Our 2024 events included providing a meal for the Concordia Choir before their concert here, assisting with Soup Suppers during the Lenten study, taking a spring wildflower hike in the Elk Creek Recreation Area, and visiting the newly-renovated Japanese Garden at Ashland’s Lithia Park.

We rented a pavilion in Bear Creek Park for an August Brunch. The weather was comfortable, and many brought tasty dishes to share. This location was a good alternative, as the Fellowship Hall was not available to us.

October 26 found us at First United Methodist

Church’s Fellowship Hall, enjoying Pastor Murray’s Carolina Barbecue and a potluck meal.

Throughout the year, committee members and others provided cookies and other treats for fellowship times after our two worship services.

Committee Members: Diana Kelley, chair; Sandi and Bob Frey, Marthanne Dedrick, Doris Sjolund, Jan Barrett, Josie Metz and Pastor Mike Hubbard.

Board of Deacons

Deacons extend the ministry of the church by connecting with parish members by email, note cards, phone calls, and visits. We provide spiritual and emotional support, and send cards for holidays and birthdays. We were challenged this year with only 10 Deacons and two unfilled positions.

When speaking to our members and learning of an area of concern, if permission is granted, we share their situation with a minister. Often members do not want their information shared in any way, and we honor that wish by holding that in confidence and praying for them.

We help new members by passing along general information about other opportunities at church such as sack lunches and committees needing help.

Early in the time of Advent, we arrange to deliver a gift bag to persons in need or home bound. Our Deacons really like this personal touch. This year we made 16 bags, and always make a couple of extra, just in case we learn of a new need.

We coordinated food and refreshments, set up and clean up, for six memorial services.

We encourage you to join us in this important part of ministry!

Marilyn Hultquist, moderator Jan Grunwald, assistant moderator

Making a joyful noise unto the Lord



Minister of Music and Media Tony Chunn leads the Chancel Choir in an anthem

The Worship and Music Committee supports our pastor in worship services and the music program. In addition to Sunday morning worship at 8:30 and 11 a.m., we had Jazz and Classical vesper services each month and presented a Christmas Concert December 1.

A group of talented musicians played for our worship services. They included congregation members and guest pianists and organists. We have been unable to fill the organist position vacant since June of 2023.

Committee members are Patty Herkert, chair; Robin Blomquist, Kathy Gordon, Andy Ullrich, Harlow Head, Terri Johnson, Ann Lowe, Vera Morrell. Ex-officio Murray Richmond, Tony Chunn.

Education: Palestine to Proverbs, Bad Girls too

The Christian Education program offers Sunday morning classes between worship services, weeknight evening classes and special events to reach children and families. This past year our highest Sunday School attendance came in January, as we explored the backstory of the Hamas-Israel war with Avram Sacks. He's part of a group called Jewish Voices for Peace and a member of Ashland's Havurah Synagogue.



Avram Sacks has a full house

Highlights of the year included a Lenten study led by Hugh Anderson and the fall "Bad Girls of the Bible" class led by Josie Metz. These classes continues in 2025 using two more books by the same author. Among the topics tackled by our 9:45 a.m. Sunday School class was a study of Proverbs.

We hosted a community Easter Egg Hunt in Alba Park and offered a Saturday "fun day" in the park in June. Both events attracted few participants.

Committee members in 2024 were Nikki Keating and Tam Moore, co-chairs; Josie Metz, Doris Sjolund. Ex-officio, Murray Richmond.

Celebrating the ministry of the Rev. Murray Richmond

Over 100 people turned out the morning of January 12, 2025 for the final sermon delivered here by the Rev. Murray Richmond, our senior pastor since November 20, 2013. Pastor Murray presented his 2024 report from the pulpit. The congregation, with regret, ended the pastorate to allow retirement and honored his decades of service to the Presbyterian Church USA. Pastor Murray reminded us, as he entered retirement, that “God is with us” as we seek a new pastor.

He also wrapped up his final years of ministry in the January church newsletter:

These last eleven years have been some of the best years of my ministry. As a congregation we have had our ups and downs. When I first got here, there was some rebuilding to do. And we did it. We grew a music program that was already very good. We (with the help of Robin Blomquist) started Jazz Vespers and then Classical Vespers. The music at our Sunday morning services has only gotten better through the years.



Carolina BBQ prep



Installation, January 18, 2014

We increased our impact on the community through serving Brown Bag lunches. We housed an emergency shelter with the help of the city. When the fire raged through our community, we again opened a shelter for those who lost all they had.

We went through Covid together. Those were hard times, and frankly we are still recovering from that.

I cannot say enough about the talented staff I have worked with these past years. This is by far the best staff a church could wish for.

And finally, I want to say that I will miss you all.