



— 2022 —

# *Annual Report*

## *contents*

WORSHIP	2
MUSIC MINISTRY	4
ADULT FORMATION	6
YOUTH MINISTRY	8
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY	10
WEEKDAY SCHOOL	12
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER	14
LOCAL OUTREACH	16
GLOBAL OUTREACH	18
ADVOCACY	20
CONSTRUCTION	21
CONGREGATIONAL CARE	22
MEMBERSHIP	24
DIGITAL IMPACT	26
FINANCE	27

What a year it's been!

This annual report is designed to tell the story of where we've been as a church over the past year and give a glimpse of where God is calling us next. Through pictures, numbers, and story, what I hope is evident to you (as it is to me) is that God has been with us as we moved forward in ministry through a year of challenges and necessary flexibility due to the continued presence of COVID-19. What that tells me is two things: 1) the community and mission of First Presbyterian Church are important to our members and our city, and 2) God can be trusted to provide for us!

I am grateful for all the ways you are a part of what Christ is doing through our church, and I hope and pray that you will see 2023 as an opportunity to get swept up in the good things that God will do through us!

In faith, hope, and love -







## Worship

Worship in 2022 was blessed with a renewed spirit and vitality, highlighted by the glorious return to the newly-renovated sanctuary on October 23. As pandemic infections subsided and restrictions eased, the congregation gathered in Wood Fellowship Hall, embracing the opportunity to worship in person as a community of faith. Shared worship with First United Presbyterian Church that was initiated at the outset of the pandemic continued. While Wood Fellowship Hall served as beautiful worship space, the return to the sanctuary in October was joy-filled and awe-inspiring. Glorious music, inspirational preaching and a litany celebrating all that was and would be shared in the renovated space were highlights of the day.

*\*unique screens, not individual viewers;  
does not include TV viewers*



# 892

**Easter Attendance**  
686 in person | 206\* virtual

# 37

**Baptisms**

# 1,009

**Christmas Eve Attendance**  
875 in person | 134\* virtual

## Strategic Objective: Worship

One of our 2022 Strategic Objectives was to create a Sunday experience of worship, learning, and fellowship. A goal of our success in that regard was to have a weekly average of 275 people in person for worship (from September 1 to December 31). We are pleased to say that during that period, our weekly average attendance was 363 in-person worshippers.

Our goals for worship in 2023 are to continue to provide inspiring and transformative worship and music, to increase our in-person worship attendance at both the 11 a.m. service and the new 9 a.m. contemplative service, and to build more pathways from worship to our outreach and formation efforts.

# 363

**average in-person  
attendance**  
(Sept. 1-Dec. 31)



# 359

videos of choral  
music available  
on the church  
YouTube channel

# 64

Children enrolled in  
Children's Choirs

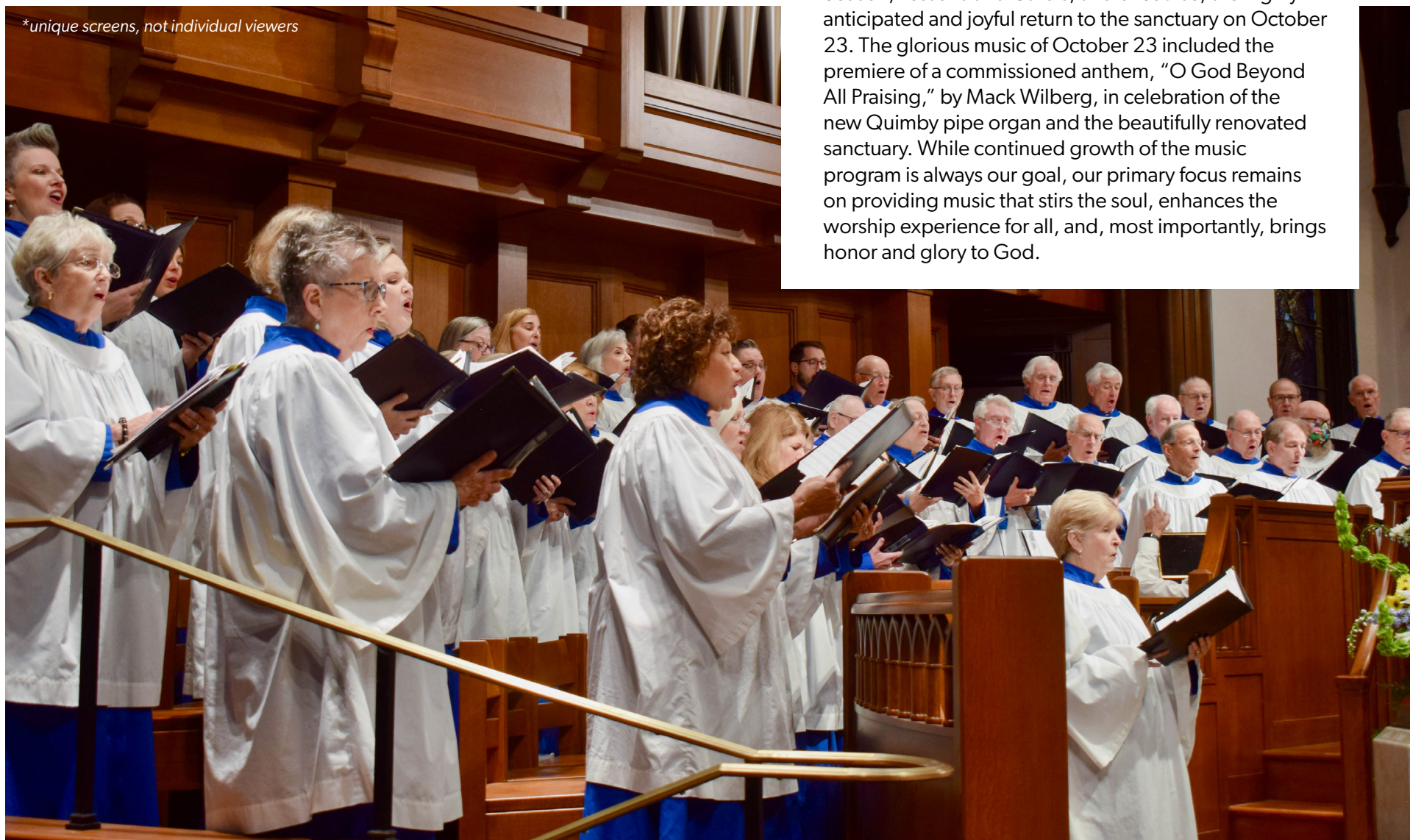
# 664

Singing in the Season  
participants  
475 in person/82  
virtual\*/107 participants

## *Music Ministry*

The Music Ministry returned to full-swing programming in 2022 with the return of mask-free singing and ringing, Wednesday night dinners, and growth in our children's music ensembles. Highlights of the year included our spring children's musical, the Montreat Worship and Music Conference, our annual Singing in the Season, Lessons and Carols, and of course, the highly-anticipated and joyful return to the sanctuary on October 23. The glorious music of October 23 included the premiere of a commissioned anthem, "O God Beyond All Praising," by Mack Wilberg, in celebration of the new Quimby pipe organ and the beautifully renovated sanctuary. While continued growth of the music program is always our goal, our primary focus remains on providing music that stirs the soul, enhances the worship experience for all, and, most importantly, brings honor and glory to God.

*\*unique screens, not individual viewers*







to grow biblical understanding and application. Speakers at two Willard events, Father Greg Boyle in January and TheoEd in February, gave perspectives on living as scripture teaches. In the fall, Formation partnered with the Anti-racism subcommittee to host a Racial Wealth Gap Learning Simulation.

#### GOALS FOR 2023

With rhythms and patterns of participation resumed, Adult Formation will expand Sunday offerings during Lent and will continue to offer classes and small groups in a hybrid format. Bible studies and fellowship groups will remain vital for connecting on a deeper level. The Pathways to Discipleship website remains as a place to access past classes and explore extra resources. Rev. Dr. Serene Jones, the 2023 Willard speaker, and other programming will acknowledge the need to attend to our mental health and the call to treat one another with

dignity. New fellowship groups and opportunities will be offered in late winter and spring. Many of these will be focused on shared interests and fun activities. Special focus will be given to the continued growth in engagement of people in their early to mid-twenties.

### Adult Formation

Adult Formation was pleased to host many events that reconnected our congregation with one another and with our church facility, including a September scavenger hunt that reacquainted all ages with our beloved building. This resurgence contributed to our ministry exceeding its programmatic growth goals.

Thematically, classes and other programming emphasized how we are called to show God's love to others and to ourselves. A Sunday series led by Sun Counseling and Wellness featured ways we can flourish as God desires for us. "Faithful Learning, Faithful Living," a scripture-based Sunday class, offers a traditional Bible class that aims

# 163

Formation classes,  
groups, and events

# 19

Guest speakers

# 88%

Sunday classes  
offered in hybrid  
format





## Youth Formation

Youth Ministry enjoyed a fruitful year of connection-building, reflection, and mission work. Through retreats, basketball, PYC, and Sunday School, we continually look forward to the ways God is moving and working in the lives of our youth and look forward to sustaining and growing our connections with our youth members and families. We continue to adapt and meet the needs of the youth in our congregation, finding new ways to serve them and engage them in the life of the church. Additionally, we rejoice in the continued connection built with the youth from First United Presbyterian Church on our trips and in our programming. Lastly, Youth Ministry met and exceeded the programmatic growth goals set last year.

# 48

Middle School Youth

# 73

High School Youth

# 24

Unique opportunities  
for youth involvement

## GOALS FOR 2023

# 1

Host a congregational breakfast to raise funds for our mission programs and retreats

# 2

Utilize the summer months to develop youth connections between themselves and other congregations through our mission trips and retreats.

# 3

Continue to meet the mental health needs of our youth members through programming and discussion.

# 4

Continue to develop engaging programs which meet the needs of our youth and their families.





## Children's Ministry

Children's ministry aims to extend the invitation to the families of the Child Development Center and Weekday School to participate in the life of the church. Some of our greatest moments together are when we get to serve and play together! In 2023, we look forward to providing families service and fellowship opportunities that encourage a sense of belonging to our community and increase intergenerational participation in outreach.

We will continue emphasizing a biblical foundation as a cornerstone of faith formation. Children at First Presbyterian Church are beloved, and we are grateful our families continue to show up with dedication and joy!

# 130

Children led the Lord's Prayer in Worship

# 64

Children sing in choir each week

# 95

Children participated in the Nativity Play







## Weekday School

The Weekday School has continued its commitment to developing the whole child and providing a nurturing educational environment. In 2022, the children engaged in numerous hands-on learning experiences, such as visiting the rainforest at Discovery Place and seeing where the firefighters rest at Fire Station 4. We also enjoyed welcoming parents back to campus for events such as Polar Express and an adorable Teddy Bear Parade.

Embracing diversity and inclusion remains a top priority. In addition to prioritizing books, content, and experiences that highlight diversity in the classroom, we are also offering parent programming such as "Modeling the Way with Intentionality." We continue to serve children with various capabilities and work to ensure that every child receives the accommodations he/she needs.

**235**  
Children enrolled  
in the WDS

**38**  
Teachers  
and staff



**5**

### Children on scholarship

Offering scholarships to children who would otherwise be unable to attend preschool is integral to our mission. This year, we have five students receiving scholarships. These funds are provided by generous Weekday School families who believe in this mission.





## *Child Development Center*

The Child Development Center is a thriving, caring community fully engaged in demonstrating the teachings of Jesus Christ each day. Our Nurture Covenant remains our touchstone and guide for this important work. The staff and families are committed to creating an environment that promotes and celebrates each child's individuality and recognizes their importance in our future.

We are continuing the work of fulfilling the charge given by the Session to increase diversity within the CDC enrollment. It remains our goal to have our community reflect a variety of cultures. With the full support of the FPC Schools' Board, diversity criteria was added to our priority waiting list. This change has resulted in a substantial increase in

# 6

**Children on capital campaign-  
funded scholarships**

# 115

**Children attend  
school at the CDC**

the representation of diversity in our community. We have added the Second Step program to enrich our social and emotional curriculum in our ongoing work toward inclusion. We are committed to building an inclusive environment where all children and families are welcomed and valued.

In addition, the congregation's generous contributions to the capital campaign have allowed six children to attend the CDC on scholarship.







# 239

Toys collected for children  
at Westerly Hills Academy

First Presbyterian Church and The Charlotte Church Partners built their 34th Habitat house in fall 2022. Fifteen FPC volunteers dedicated over 200 hours to the project.



# 800+

Sandwiches  
assembled for  
Operation Sandwich

# 65

Volunteers at our  
Loaves & Fishes  
pantry, which was  
the first to reopen  
to client shopping  
following COVID

# 4,320

Items donated to the  
Westerly Hills Academy  
food pantry

## Local Outreach

The Local Outreach Committee has been hard at work continuing to implement the strategic plan developed in 2020 with the help of C.A. Friend Consulting. Our goal of deepening community impact required the difficult task of reducing our number of community partners. In 2021, we awarded grants to 30 partners; in 2022, we reduced that number to 17. In alignment with our strategic plan goals, we focused our efforts on organizations that are addressing the needs of our neighbors in the 28208 zip code, where we already have a presence from our longstanding partnership with Westerly Hills Academy. Members of the Local Outreach committee met with our partners twice in 2022 to build relationships, discuss challenges and priorities, and learn how First Presbyterian Church and its members can best support their work in our community.



# 1,092

Hours spent tutoring students  
33 tutors / 60 students



## Global Outreach

Global Missions continues to support our mission partners despite obstacles presented by COVID, political unrest, and war. A small but mighty group from FPC traveled to Cuba to visit our partners at Matanzas Evangelical Theological Seminary. FPC is helping to support the Seminary's addition of a second campus in Havana. The goal is to train more pastors to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to more Cubans.

An outbreak of COVID cases forced the cancellation of our mission trip to Mexico. Still, we continue to support our partner Accion Ministries in housing students from surrounding villages so they may attend middle and high school. A residential facility has also been built to house girls wishing to attend university, a first for the community.



# 500

**Seminary students  
in Matanzas, Cuba**



*Carlos Ham (Cuba) preaches from the FPC pulpit.*

# 17

**Female university  
students housed in  
Merida, Mexico**

# 38

**School children  
sponsored in  
Bayonnais, Haiti**



*Actionnel Fleurisma (Haiti) offers a prayer during worship.*

# 4

**Global Partners  
in Haiti, Cuba, Mexico, Russia**

Political tensions and violence have precluded mission trips to visit our partners in Bayonnais, Haiti, but our work there continues. Working with our partner EWO for student sponsorships and Friends Empowering Haiti for school food, agricultural, and medical care, we have been able to make an impact on the lives of many community members.

Unfortunately, due to the war in Ukraine, we have not had contact with our partners in Russia. We keep them in our thoughts and prayers as we wait for the day when we can again have contact.

*left: FPC members traveled to Cuba in November.*



## Advocacy

This year the Advocacy Committee offered the congregation opportunities to learn and think about how we are Christians in our city. Through our five subcommittees, Anti-racism, Climate Change, Education, Housing and Homelessness, and the Plowshares book club, events offered throughout the year engaged more than 300 participants. Plowshares joined together to discuss four books ("How the Word is Passed," "Tomorrow's Bread," "The Book of Joy" and "Saving Us") as well as three congregational education events (Brooklyn Neighborhood Discussion, Climate Change Panel, and Wealth Gap Simulation). The history hallway and the Repentance and Reconciliation triptych were accomplished by the work and support of the Anti-racism subcommittee. In 2023, we will continue the work of congregational education and advocacy by offering events in each subcommittee area.



496

days of sanctuary  
construction





## Care

This year, First Presbyterian members and staff have risen to the occasion of providing ongoing support and care to one another as we entered into the endemic phase of COVID-19. The Counseling Center opened in the Fresco Lobby space in late September. Two counselors from Sun Counseling and Wellness began seeing patients full-time, 60 percent of whom are receiving some level of support from our scholarship fund. The counselors also provide 12 hours of mental health education annually to FPC and the wider community. Our 20 Stephen Ministers attended three hours per month of supervision groups and continuing education and provided regular one-on-one care to 15 individuals. FPC pastors presided over 20 funerals, 37 baptisms, and six weddings.

**60%**

**Counseling Center patients  
receiving support from our  
scholarship fund**

**220**

**Calls and visits to at-home  
congregants made by 20  
caregiver deacons**



**150**  
attended the PW Advent  
Communion Service

Fifteen Presbyterian Women circles met monthly, 55 women attended the spring retreat at Camp Kanuga, and over 150 people attended the Advent Communion service and luncheon.



As a church, we fulfilled the need to hire a full-time Faith Community Nurse who led yoga sessions and coordinated COVID and flu vaccine clinics, which served over 90 children and adults. She also joins the pastoral staff in making regular in-person visits to congregation members.

**28**  
Yoga sessions



## Membership

Membership is finally re-emerging from the pandemic. In 2022, we welcomed 41 new members (not including confirmands) to First Presbyterian Church. Membership schedules four joining opportunities in February, May, August, and November. This includes a Sunday morning class about being Presbyterian, and an overview of FPC taught by Rev. Anna Dickson. The new members then join the church the following Sunday morning in front of Session. That morning, before they go in front of the Session, the new members attend a “meet ‘n greet” with representatives from all ministry areas. This has been a fabulous addition to the morning, making the day extra special for our new members!

Membership also hosts new members at a fellowship get-together during the year.

# 41

**New members**  
(excludes eight  
confirmands)





## Digital Impact

All statistics listed reference 2022 only.

### Podcast

In 2021, our sermon podcast had 1,367 unique downloads. In 2022, the podcast saw a 191 percent increase to 3,966 unique downloads.

# 3,966

Podcast downloads

### Email

This Week @ First, our weekly newsletter, saw an increase in open rate throughout the year – from 55 percent at the close of 2021 to an average of 63 percent in 2022.

# 1,351

This Week @ First  
subscribers

### Website

Our website had 127,616 pageviews and 65,279 total visits in 2022.

# 5,439

Average monthly  
website visits

### Livestream

Worship was viewed on our website, First United's website, Facebook, and TV apps. In 2022, 9,859 unique viewers watched 177 broadcasts in 29 countries and 45 states. Live views accounted for 51 percent of views, while views of recorded services accounted for 49 percent.

# 33,168

Total livestream views

### Social Media

# 688

Instagram followers

# 2,000

Facebook followers

## Giving in 2022

Thanks to the congregation's commitment to stewardship and the generous support of nonmembers, our total membership giving for the calendar year was approximately \$3.2 million. Our staff managed our operating expenses to a level that allowed us to end the year's expenses under budget by close to \$100,000. We were able to balance the budget with the use of additional funds from corporate revenues and reserves. We are thankful for the blessings of 2022 and prayerfully look forward to a good year in 2023.

### 2022 MEMBERSHIP GIVING TOTAL

# \$3,191,740

### department expenses by percent



### Jan. 2022-Dec. 2022 Totals

BUDGET	REVENUE	EXPENSES
\$3,618,166	\$3,532,454	\$3,532,454









First Presbyterian  
Church of Charlotte