



Annual Report 2014

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF CHESTNUT HILL

Cindy's Year at a Glance

January began with the Epiphany Party at Di Donato's, followed by a staff luncheon prepared and served by the Personnel Committee on the frigid day when the boiler failed, followed by the staff Christmas party at JoAnn and Larry's home, followed by the Deacon's All Church Brunch. In other words, the year began with parties! In addition, I had my share of committee meetings: Music and Arts, Nominations, Finance, Session, Social Witness, Investment, and Membership. The Pittsburgh American Guild of Organists invited me to speak at their January meeting on the relationship between minister and musician (I wonder why?). The days were also filled with visits to the hospital, dinners in your homes or on the Hill, and memorial services. As always, the anchors of every week were Bible Study on Wednesday and worship/preaching on Sunday.

February included attending all the usual PCCH meetings plus moderating the First Church of Germantown Session and Personnel meetings after Nancy Muth's retirement. Noticing a few cancelled meetings and a scheduled trip to a friend's funeral in Indiana (that happened without a number of us due to a grounded plane), I think it was a month of "weather" and huge bills for snowplowing at the church. The personal highlight of the month for me was the last part of my Lilly sponsored sabbatical: a week-long writers' workshop in Louisville, Kentucky. It was an exhausting and an exhilarating time with ministers, Ph.D. students and post-docs, subjecting our writing projects to one another's critique and enjoying Lilly-style hospitality.

March plunged us into the season of Lent, the first Wednesday being Ash Wednesday and a noontime service followed by lunch. The Lenten sermon series was based on the lectionary readings, focusing on encounters different characters had with Jesus. Two boards on which I served met in March: the board of the Lebanese American University met in NYC (I am one of two PCUSA representatives) and The Crossing board met at PCCH. Meetings (both PCCH and Germantown) continued, pre-marital counseling began in anticipation of summer weddings, visits in homes and nights at restaurants with members dot the calendar. Presbytery met in March and I continued to service each month on the committee that prepares people for ministry and receives new ministers into the Presbytery.

April brought elder training, examination/ordination/installation of officers, and a session retreat led by Nancy Muth on annual stewardship. There was a major celebration of Ruth Patrick's life in our sanctuary with scientists from around the globe. Holy week included a concert by the Merton College Choir and our service of worship on Maundy Thursday. Easter was glorious. A week after Easter I flew down to Florida for a few days with my parents.

May began with what has turned into a very, very long staff planning meeting (formerly the Staff Retreat). We cloister ourselves in Brian's office to reflect on the program year that is just about to end and dream, plan, imagine the year ahead. As you may recall, we talked about changing the Sunday morning schedule. As you know, we ended up tweaking the Sunday morning schedule after talking with many of you. On May 9 we hosted a service to celebrate the life of Jeff Dinsmore, co-founder of The Crossing with Donald Nally and special friend of this church. We also hosted a high celebration and dinner on the occasion of the installation of our new Presbytery Executive, Ruth Santana-Grace. At the end of the month, I left for Maine.

June was to be in Maine except for a wedding on the first Saturday back in Philadelphia. Instead I spent June 14 – 20 in Detroit at the General Assembly of the PC (USA) at the invitation of Presbyterians for Middle East Peace. I had been asked to "testify" at a committee meeting on the issue of divestment in Israel. Once I realized the lack of balance in the debate and on the national staff of the church, I not only spent the week at GA but spent the rest of my time in Maine dealing with the interfaith consequences of a very close vote. That work continues to this day.

July and August were months of weddings and planning for weddings. There were meetings with people from the Presbytery and our Jewish dialogue partners in Philadelphia as well as work on the national level as we agonized over the war. I continued to moderate the Germantown Session and to meet with members around various issues. I prayed at the dedication of the Habitat House that members of PCCH helped to build. There were meetings to plan the Children's Sabbath in October and the Covenant Network Regional Conference that will be held at PCCH on February 7. In July, I joined the board of the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia and attended an orientation retreat with an incredible array of religious communities represented. In August, the Membership Committee became the Church Life Committee and had a mini-retreat. Stewardship planning began at the end of August.

September is the month when simply every committee starts meeting again. Homecoming Sunday was another picture perfect day, with pictures taken for a phantom picture directory (whatever happened to that project?). A day was spent in a strategic planning retreat for The Crossing and the Lebanese American University board met again in NYC for two days. Bible Study resumed and we added an evening Bible Study that only lasted a few months, given the busy schedules of younger members. Our late afternoon music series filled the chapel, beginning an exciting year of monthly concerts and events planned by the Music and Arts Committee.

October began for me with a meeting of an Administrative Commission of Presbytery on which I serve. In the next year, we will work with a church that is leaving the denomination. The first Sunday we had a table on the Avenue for the Fall for the Arts Festival. I spent a few days during the first full week with my parents in Florida and returned to a most painful experience: watching, in person, the Eagles obliterate the Giants in Eagles Stadium. The deacons and elders had a joint meeting to talk about Stewardship and the Stewardship Campaign was in full swing. In the middle of the month I spoke at a synagogue in Bensalem about the actions of GA and spent a day sailing with Jewish and Presbyterian colleagues on the Chesapeake (there are some perks to this job!). This was the month I had three weddings on one weekend (Billy Murphy's wedding, Lauren Boyd's wedding and my first legal marriage of two women). The long-planned-for Children's Sabbath service took place in our sanctuary and I was privileged to be at the Constitution Center (thanks to the Commonwealth Choirs) when Malala Yousafzai received the Liberty Medal.

November was the month of our Music Festival with two nights of concerts and a marvelous play-reading on Sunday night. The Sundays from October until Thanksgiving Sunday prepared us, one way or another, to grow toward a tithe in our annual pledge to the church. As we now know, this was a campaign that bordered on the miraculous when all the pledges were in. At long last, our giving has caught up to our ministry and mission! Still, we were faced at the end of 2014 with \$70K to raise for our mission tithe. The Session rose to the occasion, freeing me from the responsibility and using the occasion of my 40th year in ministry to pull on your purse strings. I left for my usual week in Maine, where I finally finished editing my last volume of the seven volume commentary on the Gospels for Westminster John Knox Press. For these two reasons, I was particularly thankful on Thanksgiving, even though the power had gone out!

December was filled with the many ways we wait for Christ's coming. Sermons were preached on themes of light in the darkness, accompanied by astonishing anthems and organ pieces. Santa came to breakfast, I am told. We hosted the PA Girlchoir Winter Concert and filled the pews for the Crossing @ Christmas. A smaller choir filled the air and the audience filled the seats of the chapel as we gathered for a performance of Handel's Messiah. We also gathered in the chapel on December 21 for a "Longest Night" service, remembering with tears and thanksgiving those we have lost to death. On Christmas Eve, the Family Service was filled to overflowing with worshippers, young and old, and with wide-eyed wonder at Christ's birth. The music before and during the Service of Lessons and Carols

left me breathless and without words. Beauty does that to me.

These too many words do not begin to communicate the gift of this year to me. I am so grateful for the privilege of working with a most amazing staff, with remarkable leaders in the congregation—both on the session and on committees, and for the joy of being in ministry and mission with each of you. Thank you.

Cynthia A. Jarvis

Youth Ministries, Senior Ministries and Adult Fellowship

Deacons

The board of Deacons has sustained their mission to serve and minister to those in need. In 2014, the Deacons visited in the homes of the elderly, and when called on, delivered flowers to those in the hospital and recovery. Additionally, the Deacons prepared meals for those who recently welcomed a newborn into their families, and assisted in driving those-in-need to and from Sunday worship. Most recently, the Deacons arranged and delivered poinsettias to our senior adults at Christmas, and then hosted Sunday brunch for the entire congregation following Epiphany. Every Sunday morning, the Deacons greet folks as they arrive for worship, and then look for visitors in Widener Hall during coffee hour. One of their principal aims is extend a friendly church welcome, expressing their faith in Christ through the ecumenical spirit of hospitality. If you ever have a physical need, or even, just find yourself in want of an ear to listen, please call on the Deacons – they are ready to serve you!

Theology on Tap

Since 2009 our numbers at Theology on Tap have grown from 4 on average to 12. We once had a high of 26, which admittedly, was too much of a good thing. We meet once a month from September through May in the Upper Room at Campbell's Place on Germantown Avenue. We talk, debate and weave our way through conversations on War and Religion; The Modern Christian Family; Bio-Medical Ethics; and countless other topics. This group has functioned as a gateway for new members to meet others in the congregation in an informal location yet over serious discourse.

High School Youth Group

The 2009 Youth Mission Trip was cancelled on account of having only 2 interested teenagers; additionally the 2009 Youth Group averaged 6 in attendance. Comparatively, the 2014 Mission Trip to Oregon featured 19 youth and had 26 in total; and our first Youth Group of 2014 counted 16 in attendance. Over the last several years we have not only grown in number

but also in outreach. Locally, and primarily, we lend our hands and our time to OHAAT (One House at a Time; a non-profit organization which provides for the needy in the inner-city). We have also volunteered with Habitat for Humanity and will soon be partnering with LLS (Leukemia and Lymphoma Society) to help raise awareness and funds for research. In house, you might find us eating pizza or painting murals, but you'll also occasionally see us at the Retirement Homes on Senior Adult Visits and annually in Widener Hall as we serve the entire congregation the best plate of Spaghetti and Meatballs your capital gains can buy. Moreover, we initiated a new and exciting group that meets under the moniker: Theology and Pretzels. Mirroring the format of the more-adult Theology on Tap, we meet once a month for brunch and discuss and debate current events, especially as they relate to the understanding of our faith and spirituality.

Junior High Youth Group

Like their older brethren, the Jr. High Youth Group assists OHAAT and occasionally joins Brian on Senior Adult Visits. They are known to play high-energy games such as Manhunt and Dodgeball, followed by brief yet substantive conversations on such topics like the nature of violence, amongst other psychological, social, and religious issues. They are key contributors in helping to supply and organize the Warmth Drive every winter; and the last two preachers for Youth Sunday were both 8th graders.

Confirmation Class

18 youth are spending nine months with Brian as they learn about the Christian faith (and the Presbyterian Church) through the lenses of scripture, theology, history, and outreach. The class has attended two alternative services of worship (with two more still on the calendar) with the aim to broaden the scope of their spirituality while adding to the conversation of what precisely it means, and looks like, to believe in God. In previous years, confirmands have written upwards of nine pages for their faith statement! This year, each will read their faith statement aloud and before the elders of Session on the second Tuesday in May. Confirmation Sunday will be May 17, 2015 and we are hoping for the entire congregation to be present in their support and solidarity.

Movie Night for Active Adults

Over the last several years, the Senior Adult Movie Night has seen a shift in its name (now "Movie Night for Active Adults"); its start time (now 6:45pm instead of 7:30pm); its day of the week (Tuesdays rather than Fridays); and its attendance (averaging 25 as compared to 12 just three years ago – the most we had were 57 for

The King's Speech). No doubt much credit is due to the great success of the Center on the Hill and the publicity there offered, which in turn, has given way to a change in the demographics: moving from a 90% PCCH crowd to a 50-50% community split. What has not changed however has been the quality of the movies. Our 2014 lineup is as follows: Gravity; Nebraska; Philomena; All Is Lost; Doubt; Her.

Brian Russo

Children and Families Ministries

As the children finished rehearsing a song last Sunday morning, I approached a father to tell him how much his kids had enjoyed church school. He rather apologetically replied, "That's great. We're still working on our behavior during the church service." I assured him his children were welcome in worship: "Everything worth doing takes practice. All of us are practicing. You're not alone."

This week I've been thinking about that conversation and wondering how transformative our life together as a congregation might be if we all truly adopt and embrace the idea that we are practicing--practicing as in rehearsing and practicing as in acting out our faith in tangible ways. After all, we are a people who practice: In baptism, we practice dying and rising with Christ. In the Lord's Supper, we not only remember Jesus's death and resurrection, but we also practice being reconciled to one another and feasting at God's heavenly banquet. When we read the Bible and listen to sermons, we practice hearing God's word and being attentive to the ways in which God is at work in our lives. When we engage in God's work in the world, we practice putting hands and feet on our faith and seeking justice in anticipation of God's Reign.

The children are practicing, too. When they wonder about God or imagine how the shepherds felt when the angels announced Jesus' birth, they are learning to believe in what they cannot see. When they crowd the baptismal font and promise to share the stories of the Bible with each new member of the household of God, they are learning that their promises make a difference. When they lead us in song in worship, they are learning that God has given them gifts to share. When they whisper-yell "God's giving out bread today!" as they race down the aisle to take communion, they are learning that God provides for what they need. When they bring church school offering from their piggy banks, bake cookies for those on our deacons' care list, or donate food items to Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry, they are learning that God calls us to care for our neighbors.

There is a team of dedicated, often behind-the-scenes volunteers who make all of this (and much more) practicing possible. For several years now,

Pete and Joan Torello have been taking photographs of baptisms and editing and compiling these photos onto CDs for families and the PCCH archives. Our church school teachers share God's love and help our children to imagine the stories of the Bible and to think through the ways those ancient stories intertwine with their lives. Our current teachers are Debbie Lambeth, Icilda James (nursery); Brynne DiDonato, Elise Hocking, Lila Kushner, Beth Lutz, Sandra & Tom McClintic, Martha Sarpong, Christen Webber (Pre-K); Kelly Baughman, Lisa Burns, Shelli Katrina, Kimberly Nye, Page Pendse (K-1); Linda Amsterdam, Barbara Ebersole, Lyn Huertgen, Karen Kooman, Jeannette Quirus (2-3); Karen & Bob Bausman, Emily Camp-Landis, Virginia & Dom Rebeck, Tommy Rebeck, Barb & Jim Spause, Ali Watson (4-5); Katie Connelly, Pamela DiDonato, Amy Raphael, Brian Russo (Middle School); Becky Welsh, Steve Bishop, Julianne Pitone Watson, and Denise Elwell (substitutes).

As our children continue to grow and learn, we are looking ahead to several new ministries for and by our children. Our youngest children will learn to tell selected Bible stories by heart (with American Sign Language and puppets!). Our middle grades children will learn stories of the Bible by building scenes of each story with Legos. Our older children will team up with experienced seamstresses to sew pillowcases which will be donated to children who are undergoing chemotherapy. All of PCCH's children will spearhead an all-church art project which will serve double duty as a Lenten prayer station. Children and youth together are currently brainstorming with the staff of Broad Street Ministries ways that we might partner with them on a regular basis. If you would like to participate in these ministries, please contact me at ashelley@chestnuthill-pres.org. We would love to include you as we practice, practice, practice!

Austin Shelley

Church Administrator's Report

In 2014 through one of the hardest winters on record, with major capital improvement projects going on the facilities remained a sought after rental destination in the community. This is partially credited to our valuable and long standing relationships with four renowned music and choral groups: The Crossing, Piffaro, Tempesta Di Mare, and The Pennsylvania GirlChoir, each of which enhance the music ministry of PCCH and fill the building with three to four concerts, receptions and rehearsals throughout the year.

We continue to be the meeting home for Scouting Troop 221, The Chestnut Hill Rotary, The Outdoor Gardeners, The Mt. Airy Learning Tree, Monday evening Yoga, Penn Medicine for Mindfulness classes, Rau Animal Clinic classes, The Swing Dance Society, The Waldorf School and many others.

While each of these groups brings life, visitors, and in most cases income to support the ministries of PCCH it also requires staff to organize, staff the events, set up, send invoices, and clean. One of the aspects of PCCH's popularity as a venue is the reputation of being clean, modern and cared for. This has been accomplished by a congregation committed to being excellent stewards of its property and by having a well managed, caring staff, many who have been here for a significant number of years.

Please take a moment to give thanks for the staff that help to make PCCH the remarkable Community of Faith that it is: Evelyn Carpenter, Hillary Mohaupt, Felix Delgado, Owintier Charles, Icilda James, Debbie Lambeth, Joan Foster and her support staff.

Jo Ann West

Music

The church continues to maintain a vital presence in Philadelphia's cultural world, with the Gallery Choir at the center of the music program. The choir, a combination of volunteers and professional singers, offers a wide variety of sacred music, psalm settings, and hymns in worship each week. Anyone who would like to take a more active part in Sunday worship is welcome to join!

Our church is the home of a number of notable Philadelphia-area musical ensembles, including the Crossing, Piffaro the Renaissance Band and the Tempesta di Mare Baroque Chamber Orchestra. Additionally, the Pennsylvania Girlchoir, Philomusica, and several guest ensembles all make the Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill their home.

In April we welcomed the choir of Merton College, Cambridge, who sang a concert in the church. Many thanks to those church families who provided housing and hospitality for the choir singers and directors.

This year's Festival of Music and Art included a well-received exhibit by artists who are members of the church. Concerts included our own Gallery Choir singing music of John Tavener and Arvo Part, as well as a concert of Spanish Renaissance music sung by guest choir Aura Polyphonica. A play reading organized by Margaret Spencer completed the weekend.

Our Cantata and Chamber Music series re-launched in September with a program including Brahms' Liebeslieder Waltzes. Well-received concerts continue each month.

Church School Sings offers both a worship education component to our children's faith formation, as well as an avenue for the children to share the story of God's love with music. Through song, the children are learning about our faith and about some basics of music, as well as sharing what they have learned with the congregation. All children who participate sing in worship, usually on the first Sunday of each month, in

addition to other special services (Christmas Eve, Palm Sunday). Our goal is to help our children find their singing voices, and nurture them to be comfortable and happy using their voices in worship. We hope your children will join us!

Dan Spratlan and Ken Lovett

The Session

Class of 2015

Jill Bown
Lyn Huertgen
Landon Jones
Thomas McClintic
Brenda Phillips
Dominick Rebeck
Margaret Spencer
David Thornburgh

Class of 2016

Emily Camp-Landis
Emilee Carr
B. Graeme Frazier
Barbara Olson
Elizabeth Podraza
Martha Sarpong
Harry Spaeth
Julianne Watson

Class of 2017

Mark Bernstein
Robert Greer
Doreen Jones
Kristen Lawton
Anna McClafferty
Laurie Menyo
Matthew Ward
Ali Watson

The following members completed their journey on earth and now are in the eternal care of God:

Fred Achenbach
Rebecca Asher
Caroline Baldi
Irvin Boyd, Sr.
B. Gould Donahue
Stanley Frazee
Elizabeth Kirstetter
Jane Lorenzon
Elizabeth O'Brien
Jane Pfeifer
Donald Scott
Martha Smith

Highlights of Session activity in 2014

- Developed and adopted the 2014 operating budget;
- Hosted the installation service for the new Executive Presbyterian of the Philadelphia Presbytery;
- Oversaw Phase I of the capital improvement projects;
- Voted to use the balance of the designated mission funds from the Yet More Light campaign for support of Habitat for Humanity and to proceed with affiliation with HH;
- Received 17 new members and reinstated 2 members from inactive to active status
- Removed 12 members from the active role, either at the members request or by request for transfer to another church;
- Considered a request for funds from the Germantown Area Crisis Ministry to add to grants and pledges already received for the purpose of renovating the space where they provide services. The Session Voted to direct \$15,000 from the mission component of the current capital campaign be sent to GACM. The Session received a letter of sincere thanks for this gift and the continuing support our church has been to this ministry
- Heard a presentation from Bill Cobb and Joe Madje concerning the status of the boiler replacement project and VOTED to include the 3rd boiler in Phase 1 of the project. A meeting with the congregation was set to explain the situation and the potential impact on capital campaign funds.
- Moved and voted that the policy of the Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill shall be that the church's minister may officiate same-gender marriages.

Much of the activity of the church is accomplished through by committees - committees that sponsor play readings, special concerts, brunches, chili cook-offs, and Christmas basket raffles, make visits to the homebound, arrange flowers each Sunday, provide hospitality to the homeless, usher, witness against violence of all kinds, and teach and mentor children and youth. Without this involvement by the members of our congregation PCCH would not be what it is today. The Elders wish to extend their sincere thanks and gratitude to all who serve.

Barbara Rubin, Clerk of Session

Center on the Hill

Center on the Hill, the place for active adults at our church, provides a variety of programs, activities, and resources to enrich the lives of active adults in the greater Chestnut Hill area. Since opening its doors in October of 2009, the Center has grown its educational, cultural and health and wellness course offerings. Each week the Center on the Hill has approximately 40-45 different programs, some of which are offered on a weekly basis like Yoga, T'ai Chi, Soul Line Dancing, Folk Dancing, Zumba Gold, Super Bones and bridge play. Other programs like our Vegetarian Cooking and Italian are offered each semester for multiple week sessions. We also have several health professionals from Chestnut Hill and Abington Hospitals come monthly to share their knowledge and expertise on relevant health issues. Approximately 150-200 active adults come through the Center on the Hill doors each week to learn, be a part of the broader community and to challenge themselves.

The Speaker Series on the Hill, formerly the Men's Luncheon, has been in existence at the church for many, many years. A new committee of church members was formed in 2014 to continue the good work of Jack Loughridge, the founder of the Men's Luncheon. Community members gather on the second Thursday of each month (September – May) to hear compelling speakers from the Philadelphia area. The Speaker Series averages between 40-65 attendees each month. However when Chris Wheeler or Ed Rendell visit, the crowd soars to nearly 125. Notable speakers and topics from the last year include:

- Sam Katz, "The Great Experiment Documentary"
- Derrick Pitts and Dave Heller, "WHYY SkyTalk"
- Dr. James Chan, "U.S. and China Trade through Photographs"
- Ed Rendell, "A Nation of Recovering Wusses"
- Chris Wheeler, "The Philadelphia Phillies"
- Dick Thornburgh, "The Role of Faith in Public Life"

Leslie Lefer, Director, Center on the Hill

The Stewardship Committee

"Where your treasure is, there shall your heart be also." (Matt. 6:21)

"Is your heart in the right place when you pledge?" challenged the Stewardship Committee in the Narrative Budget mailed to the church congregation at the start of this year's fall campaign. "Are you willing to increase your pledge by 1% of your household income?" we asked in written pleas and faith statements made in front of the congregation. It turns out the answer on

both counts was a resounding, "Yes!" At the time of this writing, we have received 211 pledges, the most received since 2007. More than half of the pledges (113) increased the amount of their giving! 48 of the pledges are the same; 15 have decreased. 35 pledges (including 11 from our youth) are new—the most new pledges since 2006. Pledges total \$581,638; this is \$84,720 above last year's pledges.

Our 2014 campaign pivoted on the presentation of a narrative budget—one that told the stories of how our money becomes our ministry—and a 2015 "Challenge Budget" asking us to collectively raise our pledges by \$89,265 so that we could fund our ministry and our mission tithe.

Our narrative budget outlined our story in 4 chapters: "Where faith begins" told how our pledges support the ministry of Austin and Brian in teaching our children and youth. "How faith grows" highlighted our ministry of praise and proclamation in preaching by Cindy, Austin, and Brian, and through exceptional music programs by Dan and Ken. "What faith risks" shared the ministry of our witness in the world—a witness where we risk our lives and resources to help people who are hungry and homeless, in prison and oppressed, hopeless and alone. Lastly, we talked about how our ministry of hospitality and love "deepens our faith" through connections to one another as we gather for social activities, Center on the Hill events, and pastoral visits.

Each Sunday, two families brought their stories to life by sharing from the heart why they treasure PCCH and why they're committed to support the church, increase their pledge, or live in faith through a tithe.

More than just stories, our campaign educated the congregation about pledging levels so we could see gaps in giving, including the eye-opening 92 household units who pledged \$0. A chart showing total pledge receipts by age bracket revealed the need to step-up to a higher level because it was apparent that our wonderful seniors, including those aged 80 and above, were carrying a large financial burden.

On Stewardship Sunday, we showed our pride with "I Treasure PCCH" pins and sealed our commitments with a traditional pancake brunch. On behalf of my stewardship co-chairs Mark Bernstein, Dom Rebeck, and Mark Nottingham, I'd like to extend our very sincere thanks and appreciation to Cindy for her unwavering belief in this congregation, for not leaving any stone (or household) unturned, and for guiding our committee to set high goals and live our faith in action. And in the words of John Armbruster, "This year, we have reversed course and have grown the base. Can we do it again? Next year?" Indeed, we can!

Laurie Menyo

Church Life

Earlier this year, the Church Life Committee changed its name from Membership to reflect a broader commitment to its mission to encourage and welcome visitors, cultivate new members and nurture and involve current members.

In October, with the help of session members, staff and congregation members, the committee staffed a booth at the annual Chestnut Hill Fall for the Arts Festival. We featured the church's many arts and children's education opportunities as well as the programs offered by the Center on the Hill. It was easy to involve passers-by in conversation about the church as we offered bookmarks with the PCCH website address, as well as brochures from both the Center on the Hill and the Pre-K.

This year the committee began investigating how and why visitors to our church become members. What brought them through our doors, how we (as a community) helped them feel "at home" and what activities and aspects of church life they find most meaningful and worthy of their time and treasure. We are preparing a brief survey of members who joined in the past three years and are looking forward to learning which aspects of our current process help visitors feel included and where we can make changes.

The committee continues to welcome visitors at second hour on Sunday morning and follows up with a note following their visit. The twice yearly set of "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" evenings provide an opportunity for all members of the congregation to meet up with friends old and new. Look for the next opportunity to participate coming in March.

Julianne Watson

The Flower Guild

The PCCH Flower Guild has just completed its first rewarding year of service. Our eighteen talented members work in teams to create the Sunday Chancel arrangements and to beautify the sanctuary with special Christmas and Easter floral displays.

The Flower Guild thanks church members and friends whose memorial donations to the Flower Fund in memory of loved ones or in celebration of special events make our floral mission possible. We look forward to your continued support as our program continues to grow.

A special thank you goes to flower arranger extraordinaire Ken Lovett whose inspiration, expertise and creativity have contributed so much to the Flower Guild in its inaugural year.

Thanks also to these Flower Guild Members for their commitment and enthusiasm throughout 2014.

Nadine Ball

Susan Shuchat

Mari Bernhagen
Katie Connelly
Sandy Connelly
Joan Demme
Barbara Frazier
Sally Johnston
Sara Allison Kern
Leslie Lefer

Kirsten Sebright
Barrett Stewart
Mary Anne Van Blarcom
Susan White
Suzan Willcox
Diane Murphy
Dorene Jones

Watch for a Spring Flower Guild Workshop, an excellent way for new volunteers to join the group.

Grace Stewart and Diane Cornely

Ushers

After 25 years as head usher John Armbruster retired at the end of 2014. John was there every Sunday to serve, getting the Church ready for services and managing a crew of ushers. We are greatly indebted to John for his service. As John is simply irreplaceable, starting in 2015 the Church has moved to a modified system, where the Team Captain for the week will perform the head usher duties each week. We have two new Team Captains – Mike Baughman and Barbara Keeler – who are taking over for the retiring Ken Brzozowski and Richard Hassold. We thank them for their years of service. Returning as Team Captains are Bill Cobb and Bill Chambers. One additional change for 2015 is that members of our youth will be taking time to volunteer for usher duty. The full complement of full time ushers is as follows:

Team One

William Chambers
Richard Brown
Carolyn Manwaring
Barbara Sheble
Harry Spaeth
Suzan Wilcox

Team Two

Mike Baughman
Jim Burns
Marcia Jones
Barbara Olson
Barbara Rubin

Team Three

William Cobb
Robert Bausman
Randy Bown
Peter Cooke
B. Graeme Frazier
Doug Olsen

Team Four

Barbara Keeler
James Cupp
Joan Demme
Peter Torello
Richard Hassold

Mike Baughman

Social Witness

Sharing Our Gifts Mission Campaign

In 2014 our campaign for the common good, “Sharing Our Gifts: PCCH’s Commitment to Mission”, continued to educate the congregation on the groups and issues we address through our volunteer work and our mission budget. Speakers from the following groups shared their stories and gave us a sense of the impact we can have through supporting their work, while PCCH’s children shared their time and talents during church school doing related service projects:

- Broad Street Ministry
- Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry & Freedom School
- Dawn’s Place
- Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network
- Heeding God’s Call
- Centurion Ministries

In December we held a gift basket raffle to raise funds for, and awareness of, our 2014 mission budget.

Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network Northwest Philadelphia (PIHN)

For two weeks in 2014 (one of which was VERY snowy), PCCH supported NPIHN’s sheltering of homeless families by being a “buddy” congregation to our neighbors at both Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting and St. Paul’s Episcopal Church. Our faithful members spent time with the families, cooked dinners, ate with the families, and were an overnight presence in case a need arose. Kudos to the entire group of about 30 PCCH members, particularly those who braved the many inches of snow in January.

In August we collected 30 filled backpacks for pre-K and kindergarten-age children in families supported by PIHN. The smiles that resulted were even bigger than the backpacks.

In November a group of PCCH members attended NPIHN’s annual Empty Bowl Dinner held at the Lutheran Seminary in Mt. Airy. The annual event supports PIHN’s efforts to raise awareness about family hunger and homelessness in Philadelphia, and to raise funds for their mission.

In December our members also “adopted” two families working with PIHN, giving them wrapped gifts selected from the family’s wish list. The parents and

children were the happy recipients of several gifts each. Our gift-giving allows the families to celebrate the holidays while still maintaining their tight budgets.

Emily Camp-Landis

Education Community for the Common Good

PCCH is committed to helping improve the quality and positive impact of education in the greater Philadelphia area.

As a part of this commitment, we provide substantial funding to the First Presbyterian Church of Germantown’s Freedom School summer reading program and to ACHIEVEability, an organization that focuses on supporting attainment of high school, college and technical school degrees so that families can break free from homelessness and poverty.

A particularly rewarding experience for congregational members is volunteering to read the opening story at the Freedom School, which serves 50 students, grades K-8, from June to early August.

The goal of this well-designed and impactful program is to build independent learners through improving reading skills and nurturing a love for reading. The first story of the day entails a rich ceremony, where students gather in a huge circle to hear a story for all ages. The students then ask questions or offer observations.

The reading closes with an affirming, lively song and dance, which praises the storyteller for their contribution to the day.

In December our congregation continued its support of ACHIEVEability’s annual holiday gift drive for the children of the homeless and formerly homeless families who participate in their self-sufficiency program. Thanks to PCCH, twenty-five children were the happy recipients of wrapped gifts from their wishlists.

Emily Camp-Landis

Community to End Hunger

The Community to End Hunger coordinates PCCH’s hunger outreach, focusing on direct assistance, education, and advocacy on the critical issue of hunger in the greater Philadelphia area.

Our Brother’s Place, one of Bethesda Project’s 15 shelters, is located at 907 Hamilton Street, Philadelphia. This shelter houses 150 men, and PCCH has been committed for several years to serve a supper on the fourth Sunday of every month, serving upwards of 150 men on average.

PCCH members generously prepare and donate the sloppy joes, and often donate clothing and magazines, too. Volunteers on teams, headed by an experienced Hunger Community coordinator, serve the meals to a grateful shelter population. This outreach has contin-

ued due to many members' gifts of time, money, supplies, and talent.

Germantown Avenue Crisis Ministry, housed at First Presbyterian Church of Germantown, provides support to Germantown-area residents who are experiencing crises related to hunger, housing, and utilities.

PCCH members have been supporting GACM's food pantry with donations of dry and canned goods, as well as monetary contributions, on the first Sunday of each month. Additionally, our Church School students have been donating special food items during Advent.

We also participate in special offerings for GACM, such as the annual Thanksgiving food collection. Many PCCH members, youth, and children participated this year, contributing to the provision of many grocery bags and turkeys for GACM's holiday food baskets.

Members of PCCH also assist in the ministry of GACM in volunteer capacities, delivering collections of food and clothing, as well as serving clients at the ministry.

We would love to have increased participation in order to expand this ministry further in the areas of education and advocacy. Let us know if you would like to learn more, contribute, volunteer, or offer suggestions for additional program support. The problem of food insecurity in our region is a large one and many hands are needed!

Jeff Podraza

Community to End Human Trafficking

This group picked up more momentum in 2014. With the restructure of the Social Witness Committee, there followed more interest and more support for the cause.

PCCH remains represented on the Philadelphia and Montgomery County Coalitions to End Human Trafficking which meet bimonthly and monthly respectively. Representation in these groups fosters networking, education and recognition of local needs.

PCCH made a significant mission budget to Dawn's Place of \$3,000 in 2014 and a projected commitment of \$5,000 in 2015. Dawn's Place is a Philadelphia-based residential safe house and treatment facility for victims/survivors of human trafficking.

In December the congregation was exceedingly supportive of a drive for gift cards for the residents and graduates of Dawn's Place.

Education will continue through PCCH's Speaker Series on the Hill when the topic will be presented by a member of the Philadelphia District Attorney's office.

The gains and support for this group was significant in 2014. We look forward to achieving specifically established goals for 2015.

Laura Brobyn

Community to End Gun Violence

Our Community for the Common Good concentrates on gun violence prevention and alleviation of the carnage caused throughout our society by illegally obtained and illegally distributed weapons.

We are part of a coalition of faith communities in Northwest Philadelphia, called Neighborhood Partners to End Gun Violence (NPEG). NPEG is one of a growing number of chapters of Heeding God's Call, our umbrella organization that is also faith-based. While we collaborate with other groups, ours is unique in that religious belief and fervor unite us and impel us to do battle against gun violence—which is really to do battle to protect and preserve human life, for each victim and each victim's family are one with us in the family of God.

How do we carry out this effort?

In a variety of ways. We push for legislative changes that will bring about greater scrutiny of purchasers of weapons. We conduct vigils at gun shops, asking owners and operators to take steps beyond the legally required minimum to screen buyers for straw purchasers, who resell weapons illegally. We hold murder-site witnesses around the city as a testimony of our oneness with those who suffer from gun violence and as a public plea for support against the rampant violence destroying lives. We hold special services at various public locales on Good Friday in the spring and the Day of Prayer for Peace in the fall.

Finally, we erect our Memorial to the Lost at various public sites in the Delaware Valley—a moving exhibition of tee-shirts with the names, ages, and dates of death for all those victims of homicide who died by gunfire in the past year. Three other chapters have now constructed and exhibit similar Memorials to the Lost in Chester, Harrisburg, and the greater Washington, D. C. area. The Philadelphia memorial, by the way, was first erected and exhibited on the front lawn of PCCH.

NPEG and Heeding God's Call do not have the money or the muscle of the organizations promoting the manufacture and sale of firearms. But we do have the faith and the determination to do whatever we can to heed God's call to witness to our faith, take a stand for social peace and justice, and live our faith on our feet.

Bob Fles

Finance Committee and Treasures Report

In conjunction with meeting with the Finance Committee, the Treasurer helps facilitate the adoption of the annual Operating Budget/Fund for PCCH. The Operating Fund is the financial roadmap for the church as we journey through the calendar year. Once the annual budget is set early in the year, the Finance Committee

meets monthly to review the Operating Fund with our accounting firm, Carlton Services. It is at these meetings we discuss the finances related to the Operating Budget/Fund, the current Capital Campaign and funds that are pledged to Mission. From these Finance meetings, the committee's findings and recommendations are then conveyed to Session at their monthly meetings. It is the responsibility of the Finance Committee, along with the Treasurer, to help the Session and the congregations view our current standing within the Operating Fund throughout the year. You will see these summaries updated in the Church bulletin in the coming months and throughout the year, for both the Capital Campaign as well as the Operating Fund. We are blessed to have our endowment invested for today and for the future of PCCH but remember that the majority of the Operating Fund and of the success of our budgeted through the year is dependent upon our Congregational Response and the annual pledges PCCH receives.

For 2014, our congregation was challenged to help balance our current budget response by stepping up for Mission as a way to honor Cindy's 40 years of being ordained in Ministry. A letter was mailed to all members in the fall detailing the breakdown of current pledging households and our needs to bridge the gap to fulfill our current Mission drive and our future needs for the Operating Fund. The response was superb and the Stewardship and Finance Committees wish to thank you for your splendid help.

Additionally, in 2015 we adopted a "Challenge Budget" where we now will budget only upon our indicated formal pledges from our members. This will allow PCCH to better forecast our Mission giving each year before the year begins. We also would like to thank everyone for your excellent response to step up in annual pledging. We were able to add 35 new pledges and the majority of existing pledges were increased for a total of 211 pledging member households. A sincere "Thank You" will be echoed every time your pledges come in for both the Operating Fund for the church and Mission as well as the Capital Campaign. Note: An update for our current capital Campaign "Strengthen the Foundation, Transform the Future" will be included in the annual report.

Please feel free to contact Tom McClintic, Harry Spaeth (Head of Committee), Cindy, or any member of the Finance Committee to look at ways to submit your pledges (Pre-paid, Weekly, or Monthly; all of which now can be set up electronically for your convenience). And please note, we will always welcome fulfillment of any pledge made to PCCH even if it is after the pledged year. If you have any questions, please contact any member of the Finance team: Harry Spaeth, Tom McClintic, David Nation, Graeme Frazier, John Lawton and Beth Lutz. Thank you one and all dedication for

your stewardship to the Church.

Tom McClintic and Harry Spaeth

Strengthen the Foundation, Transform the Future: Capital Campaign Update, as of December 31, 2014

Original Capital Campaign Goal: \$1,500,000

Total Amount Needed for Revised Campaign:

\$1,222,480

Total Amount Needed for Campaign w/ Boiler System:

\$1,477,827

Total Amount Pledged: \$1,230,889

Pledge Receipts to Date: \$853,019

Gifts Received to Date: \$170,780

Capital Campaign Disbursements to Date: \$733,950

Cash on Hand: \$289,849

Phase 1 Tithe for Mission: \$31,902

Phase 2 Tithe for Mission: \$43,925

Percentage of Pledges Received to Date: 69%

Phase 1 Projects Completed in 2013:

- Architect and Consultant fees
- Repair of Sanctuary Ceiling
- Repair of Organ and Choir Room Floor
- Renovation of the Burleigh Cruikshank Chapel
- Renovation for new Handicap Accessible Restroom in Strouse
- Repair of the Chapel steps
- Youth Space Renovation in Strouse

Phase 2 Projects Completed in 2014, Ongoing:

- New Boiler System and Conversion (Part 1 and 2)
- Installed New Energy Efficient windows (Harris/Main Office/Kitchen)
- Replace Gutters (Sanctuary and Strouse)

Projects yet to be Undertaken Pending Further Receipt of Pledged Funds:

Phase 3 Projects in 2015-2016:

- Boiler Final Conversion and Control System (Summer 2015)
- Install New Energy Efficient Windows (Melcher, Offices, Strouse)
- Widener Restroom Addition
- Kitchen Renovations
- Corridor Improvements
- Skylight outside of Melcher
- Covered Walkway and Pre-K Entrance
- Phase 3 Tithe for Mission (\$66,300)

Investment Committee Report

The Investment Committee comprised of David Nation, Harry Spaeth, Michael Elwell, Cindy Jarvis, Mark Nottingham and John Lawton continued to faithfully oversee the Endowment Funds of our church. Our committee is responsible for investments that are managed by Merrill Lynch, PNC and the Presbyterian Foundation.

The 2014 Endowment Funds provided an income of \$131,336 to support the operating budget and \$115,296 to support the Senior Adult ministry of the church. Anyone who is interested in learning more about the Investment Committee, please contact John Lawton. We meet four times a year on the fourth Monday after Quarter End to discuss performance and set strategic direction.

John Lawton

PCCH Pre-Kindergarten Program: State of the School

This school year has moved along extremely smoothly – we can't believe that we end the school year in four months. The classrooms are well enrolled and hum with activity each day. One hears children singing in Spanish, sees children sitting in a circle generating long lists of words that start with the "letter of the week", painting a huge box for their hibernating animals' lair, playing with snow in the sand and water table, or listening raptly to a teacher reading a book. All of the children are happy to be in school.

Our children, as always, express themselves beautifully on paper, using a wide variety of mediums. For the spring, we are again planning enlarged, eclectic art centers in the classrooms so that children can paint, cut and paste, sculpt, etc. without suggestions by teachers. We look forward to interesting, imaginative results and the promotion of independent thinking and freedom of choice.

Again, we have our ten talented and hard working teachers who have been with us for many years, as well as our Spanish and music teacher and a new, delightful movement teacher.

Our Holiday Giving Project this year (to promote the concept of giving as well as receiving) was donating new and gently used essential items for children in need. From our families we collected coats, hats, shoes, baby items, toys, books, school supplies, etc. We delivered two cars full of items to Cradles to Crayons who greatly appreciated our efforts and told us that we had a major impact on thirty families in the area. We are all grateful for the efforts of Jo Ann, Evelyn and Felix, without whom the school would not run as smoothly.

Margot Cohn, Director, Pre-K Program

