2024 Annual Report University Presbyterian Church Chapel Hill, NC

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From the Co-Pastors

Beloveds,

As I sat down to write you on this threshold of 2025, I learned from a colleague that the wildfires currently burning in L.A. destroyed Pacific Palisades Presbyterian Church, one of our denomination's near 8,600* churches.

I thought of the bell that sits in our front yard, a reminder of the 1958 fire here at UPC. I thought of the magnolia there too, a gift from the Episcopalians, upon the rebuilding of our sanctuary.

In going to Pacific Palisades' church website so I could reach out in prayer to their pastor, I noticed this picture of a cross that they once had in the window of their sanctuary. It is an unfinished cross-- a symbol that the work of faith and sharing God's love is never done. It reminded me of a similar symbol used by the UCC, a comma (instead of a period), indicating that God is still speaking.

Presbyterians capture this theology in a motto—*ecclesia semper reformanda*. The church must always be reformed.

This report is a testimony to the ongoing work of God in this particular congregation during 2024. Jarrett and I give thanks for the ways this congregation is open to how God's Spirit moves in and among (and of course, despite) us. We have been your co-pastors for 5+ years now and consider it a gift.

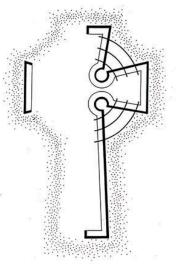
Here's to the ongoing work of God in this place and our call to participate in it!

Alleluia!

Meg

*Did you know? There are 8,650 churches in the PCUSA. 66% (two-thirds) of those congregations are under 100 members and 2% of those congregations are over 800 members.





Statistics

15 baptisms





76 new members (including 13 confirmands)

9 deaths





1212 total active members as of 12/31/24

Worship

Worship & Music



- The Worship and Music Committee facilitates the work of **greeters**, **ushers**, **and communion servers**, and works to beautify our worship space throughout the year.
- UPC continues to be blessed with **leaders who understand and value the root importance of music in worship**. Carefully chosen and masterfully performed music and congregational hymns of praise and reflection are an important part of UPC worship services. Special services in 2024 included Lessons and Carols services offered at Easter and Advent.
- Children and youth enjoyed practicing worship leadership, musicianship, and fellowship during Youth Sunday, Children's Sabbath, and the Annual Montreat Worship and Music Conference.







UPC continues to support young artists and invest in the future of sacred music education with our Music Scholars: Ethan Bunch, Hania Kantzer, Jackson Moseley, Victoria Song











Learn

Children's Ministry





- Vacation Bible School took place in a new location this year New Hope Presbyterian Church, following the theme of "Camp Firelight."
- Fourth and fifth graders gathered twice a month for **Kirk Club** and participated in the nationwide **Children's Sabbath**, with children leading worship and serving as ushers.
- **PYPs (Parents of Young Presbyterians)** gathered for fellowship around pancakes, pumpkins, biscuits, chicken tenders, frozen yogurt, movies, and trains.
- We had several monthly **volunteer kids' shifts at TABLE** to help support their mission of delivering healthy food and nutrition education to children in Orange County.
- **The Advent Craft Festival** gave people of all ages an opportunity to be creative together as we ushered in the Advent season.









Youth Ministry





- We enjoyed another fun year of **youth group** growing closer to one another and God through games, fellowship, discussion, prayer, and reflection.
- Another fruitful summer season filled with many trips and retreats (High School Sabbath Retreat, Massanetta Springs Middle School Conference, Montreat Youth Conference, Montreat Worship & Music Conference, and Appalachia Service Project).
- The first-ever **Christmas Olympics** were held for our annual Christmas party.
- 13 youth were confirmed as adult members of UPC.
- Our **Youth Engagement Council** (YEC), made up of high school youth, has been hard at work planning youth groups, leading devotions, and advocating for their peers during this program year.





Adult Education

On Sunday mornings at UPC, we:

- Learned from **guest speakers** Kaitlyn Schiess and Rev. Paul Roberts
- **Hosted classes**, including: Confirmation 2.0, Pocket Parables, Earth Care, Cross Talk (Atonement Theories), Reparations (Racial Equity), Favorite Funerals (including my own), and Navigating Grief at Christmas
- Studied several books
- Heard from our **global partners** in: Lesotho, Haiti, Syria, Lebanon, Afghanistan
- Listened to **testimonies** in our Faith in Plain Sight class: Anne Scaff, Carolyn Karpinos, Sandy Alexander, Bob Slater, Molly Morgan, UPC Pastors
- Engaged **mental health topics**: sexual identity, adverse childhood experiences, body image and eating disorders, gun violence
- Hosted a **summer series** called Finding the Gospel through the Music: Appalachian Mountains, U2, Jesus Music of the 70s and 80s, and Taylor Swift











Racial Equity



In 2024, the Racial Equity Team at University Presbyterian Church continued to pursue ways to address racial equity within our congregation, in our local community, and in the world beyond our doors. We endeavored to do this in several ways:

- Offered a **Sunday School class for adults** based on the book, *From Here to Equality*
- Hosted the **Reverend Paul Roberts** as a guest preacher and teacher
- Presented a Fall Film Series for viewing and discussing two films, *All in: The Fight for Democracy* and *Acts of Reparation*
- Supported voting rights by participating in a **postcard writing campaign** under the auspices of Common Grounds, and providing non-partisan information on voting rights from Democracy NC at our film events
- Continued to **support our community partners** OCCRC, NAACP, and local churches involved with racial equity efforts









UPPS (Preschool)

- In Spring 2024, **GrandFriends** was launched as an intergenerational program to match senior UPC members with preschool children for 6 weeks to have lunch and build connections.
- UPPS EarthCare continued to educate preschoolers on ecofriendly habits, capped off by Earth Day projects focused on REUSE of materials
- Scholarships continue to broaden the reach of high-quality early education to populations who may otherwise not be able to benefit. In the 2024-2025 school year, UPPS awarded scholarships to 7 children, spread across the 2s, 3s, 4s, and 5s classes, for a total of \$17,393.75
- UPPS reintroduced **class and school-wide social gatherings** to meet the need for connections amongst our population









Connect

Connection Groups

Young Adults



Our young adults gathered regularly for lunch and other fellowship opportunities.

Men's Breakfast



The Men's Breakfast met twice a month during the program year, with member-led programs and conversations.

Small Groups



Five small groups gathered regularly for conversation about recent sermons.

Grief Group

Our 2024 grief group met in January and February for mutual support, sharing, and encouragement.

Arts Groups





A community knitting group provided weekly fellowship and creativity, and the seasonal Chrismon Guild gathered once again to create beautiful ornaments

Congregational Life







Where people are gathered, love is grown.

The congregation enjoyed **food**, **fellowship**, **and friendship** at communal gatherings throughout the year:

- Second Sunday lunches
- Advent and Easter brunches
- Punch on the Porch during the summer months
- Coffee on the Landing between church services





Retreats

Women's Retreat (Ocean Isle, NC)





Congregational Retreat (Montreat, NC)



Advent Taizé Retreat (Stoneville, NC)

Membership



Joe & Jane Bartel



Erin Bergstrom & Laura Fieselman



Adam Blackwell



Barrett Bolton



Brett Bolton



Rae & Josie Buckley



Dennis & Becky Dallke



Donald Dillport & Kathleen Wells



Grayson Elliott



Jane & Fenton Erwin



Brad & Lynn Fox



Ellen Ghodke



Lew Graham



Keagan James



Stephanie & Chris Johnson



Kathy Joyner



Ben King



Matt Kretschmer & Kathryn Leech



Tony & Julie Lindsey



Kacy & Keith McAdoo



Emily McNutt



Mandy & Sean Murphy



Audra Nelson



Nick Nguyen & Amy Poe



Grace & Matt Powell



Lynn Russell



Jules Semahoro



Kathy & Paul Singer



Allison & Brent Smith



Sandy Smith



Richard Taylor



Emily & Clint Thomas



Brooke & Nicolai Tvermoes



Charlie & Liz Vail



Stephen & Debby Wade



Bryan Wagoner



Satchel Walton



Leah Warnke & Juan Larralde



Betty & John Watson



Presbyterian Women



In addition to meeting monthly for fellowship, study, and prayer in 2024, the UPC Presbyterian Women:

- Led the **World Day of Prayer program** for Church Women United at Mount Carmel Baptist Church. This ecumenical event focused on the plight of the Palestinian people and was attended by women from 15 local churches.
- Hosted the women of the church at a **Spring Luncheon** with the Rev. Ginny Taylor-Troutman as keynote speaker.
- Served on a Sunday morning worship service by ushering and providing **flowers in memory of UPC women** who died in 2023.
- Partnered with Habitat for Humanity to **stock the pantries for four new homeowners** by gathering non-perishable foods, cleaning supplies, and grocery cards for fresh foods.
- Launched a UPC Children's Ministry scholarship, donated to UPC Afghan families, and contributed to Spring Hope Presbyterian Church to help replace their steeple after their sanctuary was devastated by a fire. UPC PW also continued generous benevolences to IFC, Children's Hope Alliance, Church Women United, Presbyterian Campus Ministry, and University Presbyterian Preschool.











Presbyterian Campus Ministry

- PCM continues to offer **regular opportunities for fellowship and spiritual development**, hosting free dinner and student-led music and program every Thursday of the academic year, serving 45-55 students weekly, as well as regular Bible Study and small groups. In addition to being involved at UPC through Sunday morning worship, PCM students served at UPC in 2024 as youth advisors, nursery workers, livestream recorders, and in the chancel choir.
- Students had **5 retreat experiences** out of the Chapel Hill area that included retreats to both the NC beach and mountains, Montreat College Conference, Uwharrie National Forest, and Costa Rica.
- In November, PCM hosted its inaugural **PCM Homecoming weekend** with 100+ PCM alumni in attendance, and alumni families, current students, and board members enjoyed a Saturday evening banquet









PCM Staff (in addition to Berry French): Pastoral Resident Rev. Paul Burgess Seminary Intern Margie Peeler (Jan.-June) Fellow in Campus Ministry Jillian Marcantonio (Aug.-present)





Deacons

- Deacons ushered for **memorial services** and hosted receptions for 3 church members.
- Home Communion was served on Feb. 4 and August 4 to UPC members who were either homebound, living in care facilities, or found home communion convenient.
- Cards & Flowers sent **over 200 cards to members**, and distributed church and memorial flowers to various care facilities.
- Deacons helped to host **monthly worship services** at Carol Woods and Carolina Meadows, as well as periodic gatherings at the Cedars.
- Over a dozen Meal Trains were organized for member families.
- Senior Ministry hosted several special events:
 - Carol Woods a hymn sing in July, a dinner on Oct. 24, bus transportation to Lessons and Carols
 - Carolina Meadows a hymn sing in July, two luncheons, and a reception for the residents and children who sang after the service of Lessons and Carols on Dec. 15





Stephen Ministry





In 2024, the Stephen Ministry program:

- Provided **spiritual presence and emotional support** to nine members encountering difficult life circumstances.
- Commissioned four new Stephen Ministers (Mary Ellen Olson, Scott Culley, Gordon Merklein, and Alan Swendiman) and one new Stephen Leader (Nape Baker) during an April church service. Each Stephen Minister completed 50 hours of training prior to being commissioned.
- Hosted **Spring Education Day** for area Stephen Ministers. Church member Graham Ford, PhD, MDiv., presented a keynote speech on developing listening skills.
- Served as **spiritual leaders in special worship services**, such as Maundy Thursday and Longest Night.
- Provided **grief materials and quarterly contact** to church members who had lost loved ones during the past year.







Mental Health Task Force

In 2024, the Mental Health Task Force:

- Led an **interactive and educational time with youth**, reminding them of how much they are loved and cared for, and pointed out the resources for mental health support within our congregation
- Attended a symposium at Duke Chapel on Faith, Health, and Mental Community
- Overhauled an existing **spreadsheet that lists local counselors**, their contact information, insurance plans accepted, specialities, etc.
- Added new members: Mary Ann Kimball, Anne Wagoner-Ford, Katherine Higgins, Judy Redwine, Kris Parks, Amelia Howard, and Madeline Mitchell
- Hosted an **Adult Education 4-week session** in Spring 2024 that included topics on sexual identity and expression, dementia, eating disorders, and mental illness and violence







WILLIAM PRESTON FEW LECTURE

DR. THEMA BRYANT

FAITH, MENTAL HEALTH, and COMMUNITY







Local Outreach



In 2024, Local Outreach activities included:

- Intergenerational work day at TABLE
- Refugee Support Center backpack and school supply drive
- Rise Against Hunger
- TABLE food collections
- Financially supporting Habitat For Humanity's Weavers Grove building project







Global Outreach

In 2024, Global Outreach continued UPC's work with our longterm global partners and helped them to:

- Construct a **new surgical suite** at a women's clinic in rural Haiti
- Create a new well to **improve the water supply system** for a school in Kachele Village, Zambia
- Provide food and supplies for an orphanage in Lesotho
- Provide **relief funds and supplies** for conflict refugees in Lebanon
- Support **multi-faith educational programs** for students in the West Bank and Haiti
- Provide loving care and support for special needs students in Haiti
- Operate and improve **care at medical clinics** in Haiti, Malawi, Syria and Lebanon
- Build a **more resilient environmental future** and train young people to be stewards of the environment in Haiti







The Alternative Gift Market for 2024 allowed UPC to disburse over \$25,000 to our partner organizations.



Our PC(USA) Mission Workers:



Karla Koll

Mission worker and Profession of History and Religion in San Jose, Costa Rica [pictured with her husband, Francisco Javier Torrez Bermudez]





Elmarie Parker

Regional Liaison to Iraq, Syria and Lebanon [pictured with her husband, Scott Parker]

Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri and José Manuel Capella-Pratts Regional Liaisons for Caribbean

Earth Care

In 2024, UPC's Earth Care Team:

- **Picked up trash along "Cook Out Creek"** in Chapel Hill with Orange-Chatham Interfaith Care for Creation.
- Initiated an Earth Day Craft Festival for children's Sunday School classes and continued Earth Care activities at Vacation Bible School, with emphasis on the "4 Rs" (reduce, reuse, recycle, rejoice!), composting, recycling, native plants, and water pollution.
- Led a three-week **Earth Care Sunday School series** with topics including recycling, legislative updates from the Southern Environmental Law Center, and "good news for Planet Earth!"
- Launched the **"NexTrex Challenge,"** encouraging UPC members to recycle 1,000 pounds of soft plastic bags and film within 12 months to earn a Trex® furniture bench.
- Set another annual composting record, with over 41 tons of waste diverted from landfills during the five years UPC has been composting, the CO2 equivalent of NOT driving over 240,000 miles!



UPC was once again certified in 2024 as a PCUSA Earth Care Congregation.



Administration

Personnel

- In 2024 UPC said a fond **farewell to Joey Fala** after his 5 years as Director of Music Ministry. Joey handed his conducting baton to **Dallin Baldwin**, who has brought new gifts to enhance our worship through music.
- Ellen Parker marked 15 years as the Director of the University Presbyterian Preschool.
- During the summer, Co-Pastors Jarrett and Meg Peery
 McLaughlin were on sabbatical a time of rest and renewal for them individually and for their family
- UPC is blessed with a gifted and dedicated staff who lead us in worship, tend to our needs in joy and sorrow, teach and guide us in the formation of faith, provide opportunities for service and fellowship, and lovingly maintain our operations and facilities.

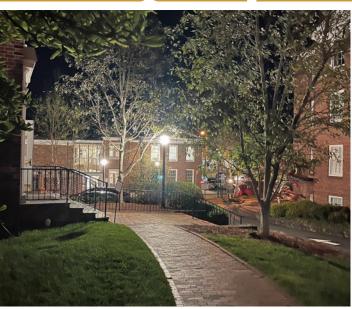








Property







Property work done in 2024 included:

- Terrace Room roof replacement
- Updated our Wi-Fi capabilities
- Installed **new light poles** in the parking area
- Refurbished the **front and side steps to the Sanctuary** (more coming in 2025)
- **New doors** at the back entrance to the Fellowship Hall.





In 2024 the solar panels on Dunham Hall generated 8.49 MWh (Mega Watt Hours). One MWh can power the average home in the US for 1.2 months; we generated enough power to run one home for 10 months this year.

Nominating

The Nominating Committee identified a wonderful slate of Officers to begin serving as Elders and Deacons in 2025.



Elders

John Blythe Catherine Duncan Kristin Hiemstra Carter Lovelady Whitney Martin Matt Marvin* Lawrence Sizemore II John Wallace Amy Wilson Ken Younts

*filling an unexpired term

Deacons

Allie Broman-Fulks Gary Crunkleton Becky Dallke Joe Deese Katie Edmiston Bob Greenwood Frances Hess Billy Parks JoAnna Younts





New Nominating Committee Members

Mark Bozymski Vicki Lotz Heather Hutchins Chuck Osborne

Endowment

In 2024, the following grants from the UPC Endowment were approved:

- \$10,000 for Family Health Ministries towards construction of a new surgical suite in Haiti
- \$10,000 to Union Presbyterian Seminary to support a new Vice President for administration in Charlotte
- \$6,000 for a one-day **UPC Elder Retreat**
- \$10,000 to Massanetta Springs
- \$10,000 to Habitat for Humanity for the Weavers Grove Project
- \$5,000 to Natema Learning School, Zambia, for drilling a bore hole to improve the water supply
- \$5,000 to **Beirut Presbyterian** for buying blankets, socks, and underwear as well as transportation costs to assist Lebanese refugees in Beruit
- \$10,000 to PCM to fund a **trip to the US-Mexico border** in conjunction with Border Service Corps and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America
- \$1,000 for the **Developing a Christian Mind conference** (Kyle Beardsley is helping put this conference together at Duke for graduate students)
- \$2,500 for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund









Discerning a Capital Campaign

2024 was a significant year in our capital campaign discernment process, as the Session approved moving from the Vision Stage to the Feasibility Stage.

What's happened so far:

• November 2022: Vision Team is commissioned by Session to consider possible projects for a future capital campaign.

Campaign Vision Team (Nov. 2022-May 2024)

Martha Aldridge, Jeff Howard, Beth Keith, Jay Klompmaker, Gordon Merklein, Than Powell, Donna Van Engen Meg Peery McLaughlin (staff liaison), Jarrett McLaughlin (staff liaison), Joey Fala (staff liaison)

- November 2022-May 2024: Vision Team spends time dreaming, researching, and discerning potential project scopes.
- May 2024: Vision Team presents their ideas to Session; Session approves the creation of a Capital Campaign Readiness Committee to select a consulting firm to help lead a feasibility study.

Campaign Readiness Committee (June 2024-present)

Allison Chambers, Megan Crunkleton (Co-Chair), Beth Keith, Jay Klompmaker, Anna Rose Medley (Co-Chair), Bob Slater, Scott Smith, Bill Whisenant Meg Peery McLaughlin (staff liaison), Erin Collier (staff liaison)

- June 2024-September 2024: Readiness Committee is formed, consultants are researched and interviewed
- October 2024: Readiness Committee recommends to Session that we hire Armstrong McGuire to lead our feasibility study; Session approves
- November 2024-December 2024: Armstrong McGuire guides the Readiness Committee in the feasibility study prework.

What's to come:

- Early 2025: Feasibility conversations with the congregation
- Spring 2025: (if feasibility study is favorable) Scope and structure of the campaign are finalized and presented to Session for approval

To follow along with this process, and for more information, visit: upcch.org/capital-campaign



Administration

Financial Summary

Thanks to the generosity of the congregation, the finances of our church remain on a sound footing. UPC operates using a balanced budget model, with expenses and revenues designed to zero out at the end of the year. At year end, any operating surplus is added to the Church's General Reserve, and any deficit is taken from the General Reserve.

The 2024 budget was \$2,379,300. On the revenue side, approximately 80% came from pledges and another 15% from non-pledge contributions, with a number of members of the congregation graciously choosing to overpay their pledge. Overall, 2024 was a particularly good year. The church received 105% of budgeted revenue and incurred only 98% of budgeted expenses. The year ended with a surplus of \$147,400 that far outweighed the much smaller deficit of \$44,500 in 2023. The General Reserve stands at a healthy level of approximately \$500,000 in uncommitted funds.

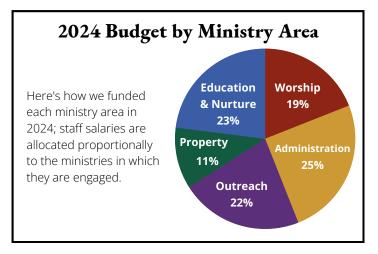
Activities

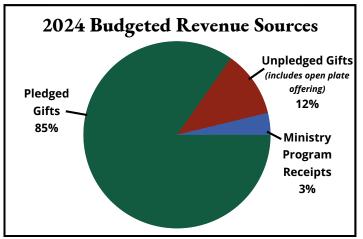
The primary work of the Administration Committee is overseeing the Church's finances, including providing guidance to the Session on the 2025 budget and receiving and reviewing the church's annual audit of the past year's finances. This year the committee reviewed the UPC Investment Policy and worked with our outside investment advisor both to ensure that the portfolio was optimally invested and to provide more helpful portfolio reporting to guide the committee's oversight. It also coordinated the work of all the Session's committees in revising and updating the UPC Standard of Procedure, which constitutes the church's bylaws.



Financial Report

	2025 Budget	2024 Budget	2024 Actual (Unaudited)
Revenues			
Operating Fund Receipts			
401105 - Pledges and Commitments	2,150,000	2,030,000	1,968,802
401106 - Pledges - Contra Revenue	(43,000)	(40,600)	-
401110 - Non Pledge Contributions	275,000	275,000	380,161
401115 - Open Plate Offering	18,000	18,000	21,801
401120 - Pledges Paid - Last Year	-	-	33,286
401125 - Rec'd from UPPS	6,000	6,000	6,000
401130 - Rec'd for Weddings	-	-	3,000
401135 - Rec'd for Other Bldg Use	-	-	150
401150 - Misc Receipts		-	358
Total Operating Fund Receipts	2,406,000	2,288,400	2,413,558
Ministry Program Receipts	85,100	90,900	82,463
Total Revenues	2,491,100	2,379,300	2,496,021
Expenses			
Personnel	1,519,765	1,487,710	1,481,338
Administration	410,060	342,065	344,983
Outreach	348,400	340,100	340,100
Worship	6,600	8,400	7,772
Chancel Choir	19,400	17,300	18,386
Children's Choir	28,000	27,900	25,275
Children's Ministry	19,250	19,250	17,522
Youth Ministry	58,550	61,500	46,323
Adult Spiritual Growth	18,300	15,800	13,876
Deacons	7,000	5,000	3,897
Congregational Life	50,775	50,275	46,196
Membership & Assimilation	5,000	4,000	2,944
Total Expenses	2,491,100	2,379,300	2,348,594
Net Total	-	-	147,400





Stewardship

99.9%

of pledge

need

UNIVERSITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 2025 PLEDGE UPDATE





Number of Pledges: 371

Average Amount Pledged: \$5,792

TOTAL PLEDGE NEED: \$2.15M

2025 PLEDGES BY THE NUMBERS

PUPC	\$25,000-\$55,000 12			
STEWARDSHIP	\$15,000-\$24,999 20 \$10,000-\$14,999 30 \$7500-\$9999 33	MEDIAN PLEDGE \$3,600		
\$5000-\$7499	59	214 increased their pledge		
\$3000-\$4999 70		89 remained the same		
\$1500-\$2999 69		31 decreased their pledge		
\$1-\$1499 78		37 were new pledges		

Leadership

We give thanks for all of our leaders who helped guide and care for UPC in 2024:

Staff

Meg Peery McLaughlin, *Co-Pastor* Jarrett McLaughlin, *Co-Pastor*

Dallin Baldwin, Director of Music (July-present) Ryan Byrnes, Director of Operations Johnny Clay, Sexton Erin Collier, Director of Communications & Stewardship Peter Costa, Financial Manager Dennis Dallke, Operations Assistant Bob Dunham, Pastor Emeritus Joey Fala, Director of Music (Jan.-July)

Berry French, Associate Pastor for Campus Ministry Hania Kantzer, Organ Scholar Hadley Kifner, Associate Pastor for Spiritual Nurture Nancy Myer, Associate Pastor for Family Ministry Ellen Parker, UPPS Director Sara Richard, Office Administrator Tristan Wall, Director of Youth Ministry Melani Willhite, Financial Assistant

Treasurers

Kathy Clemmons, *Treasurer* Bill Whisenant, *Assistant Treasurer* Nan Van Der Puy, *Assistant Treasurer*

Session	Class of 2024 Lyn Billings Mary Bozymski Liam Drake Jay Klompmaker Aaron Lightner Adam Lovelady Lauren Mann Colin Minton Michael Olson Brian Vandersea	Class of 2025 Debbie Bevin Mike Edmiston Matt Marvin Bob Mosteller Nancy Oates Robert Owen Naomi Sherry John "Spencer" Spencer Ben Urick	Class of 2026 Martha Aldridge Jessica Beardsley Scott Culley Beth Keith Brian Meacham Sally Osmer Donna Van Engen Helen Warner Clerk of Session: Betsy Edwards
Deacons	Class of 2024 Ed Billings Brent Chambers David Lane Susan Michaelson Colleen Minton Madeline Mitchell Carolyn Schwarz James Smith Judie Waters	Class of 2025 Marla Dunham Jim Evans Mike Hammersley Bob Johnson Karen Morrell April Smithwick Chip Sudderth Beth Auman Visser Ashley Wallace	Class of 2026 Vicky Burriss Beth Furr Lauren Garber Nancy Jennings Lew Lampiris Jon Leggette Janet McDowell Donald McMillan Shannon Pace Marianne Ratcliffe



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA