“I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.” (Eph. 3:17b-19)

For Lancaster First Church, 2018 was a year of major transitions and significant accomplishments, as well as one which yielded signs of great promise and hope. I am now in my fourth year as lead pastor, and can say that it was only in this last year that I have truly felt that this is my church. Of course, it is really Christ’s church, and I am but a temporary steward of its ministries and people. But I believe that a bond has been established between pastor and people, and foundations have been laid for a bright future of ministry together.

The year began with a church trip to Israel, Jordan and Egypt, which saw nineteen members and friends of First UMC experience a truly life-changing journey through the lands of the Bible. These pilgrims brought back with them revived spirits, and renewed excitement to serve Christ in our community. A sign that God’s Spirit was doing something new among our people came that winter, when 200 people joined short-term small groups as part of our Lenten focus on prayer; and the entire church came forward in March at all three services during a service of healing and anointing with oil.

Yet another external sign of improving spiritual health has been growth in financial stewardship among our people. For the third year in a row, early projected deficits were swallowed up by generosity, and December 31 saw church finances end in the black. A dual financial campaign in the fall was fabulously successful, raising nearly $2.1 million in commitments over the next three years to wipe out our debt, with pledges for the annual 2019 budget up 13% over the previous year. Much appreciation must be expressed to our campaign and stewardship committees, ably led by Kathy Steed, Kent Kroehler and Brian Dombach. An unexpected financial blessing came in the form of several bequests from departed members, totaling about $1 million.

A new statement of mission, vision and values was developed and adopted, thanks to the work of our Strategic Planning Team, led by Morgan Hafer Lucente. A dawning vision to become “a central hub of Christian ministry in Lancaster County & beyond” has begun to take hold, along with a desire to be “the church of “and:” in an increasingly polarized world of “either/or”, we will be the church of “and:”; Scriptural and sacramental; traditional and innovative; evangelistic and socially engaged; and more.

While all this was developing, the congregation went through near-bewildering staff changes. Beloved, long-time pastors Eddie Cameron and Kerry Leeper both departed in June to embrace new ministries in our conference. July saw the arrival of Pastor Janet Saddel, who was quickly embraced by the people, and soon demonstrated her gifts in preaching, pastoral care and leadership. As a fellow elder, she has truly become a partner in ministry. After just one year, secretary Sharon Heagy has become an invaluable anchor in our office, working harmoniously alongside Katherine Spear, whose ministry remains irreplaceable. New pastoral assistant Matt Suter has become an integral part of the team, as has DCP director Libby Barringer whose leadership has already brought growth in numbers and financial health to our preschool after little more than six months among us. New youth director Samuel Longmire has been connecting wonderfully with our youth; and while family concerns compelled Chris Phillips’ tenure among us to be short as Minister to Children & Families, his energy and creativity was a blessing to our church.

Our commitment to remain engaged with the people of the city continues, with constant activity throughout the week, as people are served through community groups like NA and AA, are served by our tax preparation ministry, benefit from our clothing bank, or meet here as part of a local home-school cooperative, or local community orchestra, to cite just a few ways we maintain open doors and a welcoming spirit. Though we were compelled to suspend our Upward Basketball program, we will be consider relaunching it or something similar to provide healthy activities for local children and youth. Though it is now an independent non-profit corporation, Anchorage Breakfast Ministry continues to garner wide support from our congregation, as well as from about a dozen area congregations of several denominations. The numbers of persons being fed have been rising steadily, and in 2018 we served 40,074 meals! It is my privilege to serve as president of the Board of Directors, and to work closely with Patty Eastep, program director.

(Continued on page 12)
**WEDDINGS**

Adam Castleman & Rebecca Doub - January 21st
George Apostolopoulas & Katie Lynch - June 16th
Evan McCann & Evelyn Hill - June 16th
John M. Lucente & Morgan E. Hafer - August 25th
Rory Lipsett & Jennifer Vogt - October 14th
Samuel Longmire & Laura Brubaker - October 20th

**BAPTISMS**

Ellie Kohana Marchessault – daughter of Steven & Heather Marchessault - January 7, 2018
Beau Hiroshi Marchessault – son of Steven & Heather Marchessault - January 7, 2018
Brielle Lyn Moyè – daughter of Ray & Brandy Moyè - May 27, 2018
Grace M. Lehman – daughter of Brian & Iris Lehman - June 3, 2018

**NEW MEMBERS + 31**

Confirmation Profession of Faith
Rebecca Franklin - June 3, 2018
Grace Lehman - June 3, 2018
Malini Sakrudkar - June 3, 2018
Lauren Markley - June 10, 2018

Profession of Faith
Bobbi Nicole Bentzel – April 22, 2018
Gregory A. Dissinger – April 22, 2018
John & Deborah Tornfelt – April 22, 2018

Transfer to First Church
Harley & Carol Barnes from Bethany UMC, Ellicott City, MD
James & Anne Brown from Bel Air UMC, Bel Air, MD
Robert & Lefitia Geiger from Williamsburg UMC, Williamsburg, VA
Jonathan & Kathy Miller from St. Paul’s UMC, State College, PA
Jeffrey & Susan Moyer from Leola UMC, Leola, PA
Barbara L. Snyder from First Presbyterian Church, Lancaster, PA
Brian Wolfe from Grace UCC, Lancaster, PA
Jeffrey & Vivian Wolfe from Grace UCC, Lancaster, PA
John & Adela Gladwell from Conley’s UMC Lewes, DE
Richard Lee & Catherine Engel from Calvary UMC, Frederick, MD
Robert & Victoria Meck from First Baptist Church, New London, NH

Restored to Membership
Norman & Marian Franck – August 31, 2018
Patricia Mentzer – September 30, 2018

**LOSS OF MEMBERS - 32**

Membership moved to Annual Conference
Carolene Brubaker, Edward Cameron, Sharon Barley

Transfer to other congregations
John Conley to First Church of Christ, Hartford, CT
Nathaniel & Regina Gilchrist to Millersville Community Church, Millersville, PA
Michell Leeper to Millersville Community Church, Millersville, PA
Linda Mamourian to St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Mount Joy, PA
Gabrellen Pfarr to Wheatland Presbyterian Church, Lancaster, PA
Earl & Linda Pickel to Grace Lutheran Church, Lancaster, PA

Removed by Charge Conference action – 12/18/18
Michelle Alvelo, Gretchen Berlin, Berkley Crain
William Crain, Heather Harris

Death
Barbara Buchholtz - January 24, 2018
Thomas Leeper - January 25, 2018
Margaret Alexander - January 29, 2018
Shirley McCreary - February 2, 2018
Eleanor Roberts – March 29, 2018
John Logan – April 9, 2018
Sarah Hemphill – April 27, 2018
Patricia Pacinelli - May 15, 2018
Katherine Atkins Nichols - May 30, 2018
Ruth G. Collins - June 9, 2018
William Weiler – June 18, 2018
Charles Sload – June 22, 2018
Elizabeth Logan – July 15, 2018
Maribel “Mollie” Singleton – July 22, 2018
Richard Stewart – August 9, 2018
Amanda Sigman – November 27, 2018

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

**Katherine Spear, Membership Secretary**

**Total Membership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Membership</th>
<th>January 1, 2018 = 959</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 31, 2018</td>
<td>958</td>
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**BIRTHS**

Amelia Pearl Blackmon – daughter of Christopher & Megan Blackmon – April 5, 2018
Brielle Lyn Moyè – daughter of Ray & Brandy Moyè – April 27, 2018
Gideon Mark Campbell – son of Stephen Campbell & Rachel Eck – June 30, 2018
Airabella Dior Mendez - daughter of Ricky Mendez & Bobbi Bentzel - August 15, 2018
Olivia Grace Sakrudkar-Ehrhart – daughter of Minalli Sakrudkar & Jacob Ehrhart – Sept 29, 2018
Benjamin Austin Beittel - son of Andrew & Amanda Beittel - October 6, 2018
Aluel Thon Guot – daughter of Jacob & Rebecca Guot – December 2, 2018

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**SHALOM PARTNERSHIP REPORT**  
By Bob Hannum

Because of a disagreement with Superintendent Rau, Shalom Partnership sponsored no programs in 2018. We hope to expand into other county communities, such as Quarryville & Columbia in 2019, and continue to raise funds in order to be able to pay teachers who will head those summer programs with elementary and perhaps middle school students as well.

Our current board of directors includes other members of our church, Steve Franz, Jim Reindollar & Jess Henry.

Shalom Partnership was founded in 1999 and expanded over the years from one program at King School to fund 11 of 13 summer elementary school programs in Lancaster City through 2017, with over 3,000 students, mostly 3-5th graders.

Curricula are determined by principals and teachers from each school, and teachers sign a contract with Shalom’s board for the 2-4 weeks they will work.

Shalom merely funds the programs and sets the budgets for each program, monitoring them carefully.

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**DORCAS KAMANDA’S MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE**  
by Peggy Hannum

The Rev. Dorcas Kamanda was ordained an Elder in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church in June by Bishop Peggy Johnson. At the 2018 Women’s Banquet Dorcas was the honoree and the recipient of $2000 for her work in Sierra Leone and also in honor of her ordination. Dorcas will be present and honored again at the Women’s Banquet on April 30, 2019.

In a recent email from Dorcas in Sierra Leone: “Please keep us in your prayers as we sing to our Lord surrounded all around by people of Islam faith….There has always been a peaceful relationship between Christians and all other faiths in Sierra Leone.” In preparation for building permanent housing for the 7 orphan children they “have begun construction on the 100 acres of land donated to them by the community and the Paramount Chief together with the villagers,” which says volumes about their appreciation in the community for her establishment of the Clinic.

First Church is committed to walking with the Rev. Dorcas Kamanda to support her vision to relieve suffering in Sierra Leone.

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**OUR SYRIAN REFUGEE FAMILIES**  
by Peggy & Bob Hannum

We celebrate 2 years in Lancaster with our Syrian refugee families. The children are doing well in school, learning English and translating when we visit. The men are working hard, sometimes at several jobs in order to save money to buy homes. We now celebrate as well their independence and assimilation into the community. Members of our church visit with them for shared meals, shopping expeditions, ‘girls’ days out’ no longer as sponsors, but as family and friends.

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**MUTWALE NTAMBO WA MUSHIDI IN DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA**  
- by Steve Franz

FUMC Missions continued to support Mutwale with a covenant relationship of $2500 for calendar year 2018. We have supported him for many years and from time to time he visits us, and provides quarterly newsletters and our web site is kept current with the information that he transmits via emails. In addition, the Mission Team posts updates on the Missions bulletin board.

Mutwale and his wife, Kabaka, visited FUMC in 2017 and provided an update on their efforts in Tanzania. Details can be found on the FUMC web site. They are supporting many outreach ministries across Tanzania, and leading the UMC District Conference there.

John Spear of FUMC has been instrumental in monitoring the four-year construction of the Guest House and a separate kitchen that was started in 2015 and essentially completed in 2018. The Guest House was officially opened and dedicated in June, 2018. FUMC has gotten monthly updates of the pictures during the construction. Current construction at the site centers on completing a separate dining room. The activity involves final framing and tiling the roof. In addition, the construction team will be installing solar panels for electricity and will drill a well so the site has a better source of drinking water.

Construction of a pre-school center in Dar es Salaam was started on August 27th, 2018 with financial help from various churches in the US. They are planning for a capacity of 60 students. Construction on that project was stopped about October 01 for a lack of funds. Consult his newsletters for progress reports.

As of Mutwale’s January 10th, 2019 update, he needs funds to complete the roofing on the complex and to drill the well. If you would like to help complete this project, please discuss with the FUMC financial office.
Throughout 2018, our Strategic Planning Committee has been working to discern God’s leading for the future of First Church, under the able leadership of chair, Morgan Hafer Lucente. We have developed a new vision statement, which describes who we want to be in the years to come. We have reaffirmed and refined our mission statement – which describes our purpose or reason for existence. And we have created a new set of values – which are designed to guide us into fulfilling that purpose, and realizing that vision. We have also developed a 3-year plan, which begins in January 2019, with measurable goals and objectives.

**Our Vision:** (What we envision FUMC to be in the years to come) To be a central hub of Christian ministry in Lancaster County & beyond

**Our Mission:** (Our purpose, or reason for existence) Connect people to Jesus Christ and the church; Grow Christian disciples; & Relieve suffering.

**Our Values:** (The commitments to guide us in fulfilling that purpose, and realizing that vision; in a time when many think in terms of “either/or” we want to be the church of “both/and,” using the ampersand (&) as a symbol):

- Both Christ centered & people focused
- Both Scripturally & sacramentally guided
- Both prayerfully & missionally devoted
- Both emotionally & intellectually engaged
- Both tradition honoring & innovatively creative
- Both evangelistic & socially active
- Both locally & globally involved

Our slogan will be Loving Lancaster, Loving the World

Our Logo is still being developed, and should be unveiled soon!

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**New Mission, Vision & Values Statements Adopted**

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### Mission & Outreach

#### SPECIAL MINISTRIES FUND

by Marc Russo

2018 was a very active year for the Special Ministries Fund. By the grace of God and the generosity of those who have come before us, the Special Ministries fund was able to fulfill its purpose in funding a number of worthwhile ministries that seek to glorify God, disciple those in Christ, and provide opportunities for persons to come to know Christ.

The following ministries were granted funding by the Special Ministries Committee in 2018:

- Discovery Corner Preschool
- Bethesda School, Bluefields, Nicaragua
- ALICE training for First Church staff
- LUMINA
- Wesley Singers

#### FLOOD BUCKET OUTREACH

By Pastor Janet Saddel

This past summer Hurricane Florence caused epic flooding. Estimates were that Hurricane Florence cause more damage than Matthew and Floyd combined. The flooding, fires and storms in numerous areas of the U.S. had nearly depleted the United Methodist Committee on Relief’s supply of clean-up kits (i.e., cleaning buckets or flood buckets).

Our Conference put out a call to all churches to help. With very little notice, First UMC orchestrated a “Ministry Minute” in three services on Sunday, September 16th to inform our congregation. We were so pleased with the outpouring of donations, both monetary and in supplies. We had three cars filled with flood buckets to deliver on the Bishop’s Day on the District!

In addition to this, we were able to make a donation of $1152, which included $616 in donations from the congregation! We received a huge thank you from Mission Central, whose mission is "Connecting God’s Resources with Human Need" through disaster response, mission outreach and mission education. Both Mission Central and our Conference were extremely pleased with the results of monetary funds and buckets that were brought in at the Bishop’s Day back in September. THANK YOU! THANK YOU! We are so THANKFUL FOR YOU!!
PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY - There are 14 knitters/crocheters lead by Alice Ahlfeld & Paula Banzhaf
* 12 prayer shawls were presented to members and friends
* 50+ pocket prayer shawls were given from the Welcome Center
* 4 baby baptism blankets were presented

FRIENDS AT HOME - At the close of 2018, we have 47 Friends at Home.
* 450 visits from Pastors (including retired Pastor David Myers), Director of Care, and volunteers brought spiritual support and love to them. Bulletins, newsletter, birthday cards, altar flower and holiday flower deliveries continue to help connect them with the church.

COLLEGE CARE PACKAGES
In February, the committee prepared boxes for the congregation to fill with goodies for our college students. 27 boxes were sent, 27 college students were blessed!

HOSPITAL CARE
Average people hospitalized weekly – 1
Visits – 84

CARD MINISTRY
* 149 cards were sent by Pastor Joe for birthdays (90+ & to Friends at Home) & anniversaries (50+ years)
* 4 members are also involved with the card ministry
* Sending caring notes for the one year anniversary of a loved one’s passing
* Writing encouraging notes to those mentioned in the service during the pastoral prayer
* Sending birthday and anniversary greetings
* Writing notes of appreciation for those serving in the church.

FELLOWSHIP TIME
60 volunteers, 3 for every Sunday
Total volunteer hours – 500

TRANSPORTATION
13 volunteer drivers to transport our members for medical appointments and to church every Sunday
Approximate miles – 1,500

BLESSINGS CARE FUND
* The funds in this account enabled the church to help a member with home repair and equipment purchase to ensure a safe living environment.
* For another member, it provided travel expenses to a specialty hospital out of the area.
3rd Annual Easter Eve - March 31st
A professional Orchestra of 57 performers made up of members of the Allegro Orchestra of Lancaster, the Allegretto Youth Orchestra, musician members of FUMC, members of the F&M Orchestra, and FUMC organist Peter Omundsen, along with a chorus of FUMC Chancel Choir with 45 singers and 20 guest singers, for a chorus of 65 singers. The presentation was a collaboration with Brian Lehman creating an Easter art piece live while the music was presented. The estimated audience for this performance was 600! The performance was video recorded and is available on YouTube.

Spring Cantata - April 29th 8:15 & 10:45
“Requiem for the Living” Dan Forrest
Orchestra of about 35 performers made up of FUMC members including FUMC youth, area professionals and F&M students. Chancel Choir of about 60 singers including about a dozen guests. This was the second presentation of Requiem for the Living in as many years, due to the difficulty of the work, but also due to the presentation of the Mahler Symphony No. 2.

Temple Avenue Jazz Ensemble July 8th 8:15 & 10:45
Jazz Combo made up of students who attend Temple University, but with ties to Lancaster County. This was the fourth presentation of the Temple Avenue Jazz at FUMC.

Christmas Cantata December 9th 8:15 & 10:45
“Journey of Promises” by Joseph Martin
Orchestra of 30 performers made up of FUMC members, professionals and F&M students. Chancel Choir of about 50 singers. Narration by Josie and Brian Dombach.

Allegro Christmas Concert, “A City in Song” December 15th 3:00 & 7:30
The professional orchestra, Allegro Orchestra of Lancaster, under the direction of Brian Norcross, presented the 4th annual Christmas concert with an orchestra of 45 players and a volunteer choir of 85 singers. This was a ticketed event with general admission of $30 and children 5 to 18 free. Allegro donated 10% of all ticket proceeds to the Anchorage Breakfast Program. Ticket sales were $13,400 making the donation to Anchorage $1,340. Estimated attendance was 300 for the 3:00 concert and 250 for the 7:30 concert.

First Fridays
November 2 Temple Avenue Jazz performed on the Walnut Street porch (“Stage 42”). Tables and food were provided, and art work displayed.

Sunday morning worship
- Chancel Choir presented 37 Sundays, 3 times at both 8:15 and 10:45. The Chancel Choir had 52 participating members in 2018
- Summer Choir presented 11 Sundays, only 10:45. The Summer Choir varied between 20 to 40 singers.
- 25 Different persons presented solos for offertories and communion. This includes youth and adults, vocalists and instrumentalists.
- Chapel Choir presented 17 Sundays, 8 Sundays only at 8:15, 9 Sundays at both 8:15 and 10:45
- Carol Choir presented 8 Sundays, at both 9:30 & 10:45 services. This included Children’s Sunday on April 15, which included a “musical”.
- Cherub Choir presented 4 Sundays, at both 9:30 and 10:45 services
- Wesley Handbell Choir presented 9 Sundays, both 8:15 and 10:45 services
- Youth Handbell Choir presented 6 Sundays, both 8:15 and 10:45 services
- Christmas Eve: Chancel Choir presented at the 4:00 and 9:00 services. The Wesley Handbell Choir presented at the 4:00 service. The Cherub, Carol, Chapel, and Youth Handbell Choirs presented at the 7:00 services. Soloists and organist Peter Omundsen presented at the 11:00 service.
- Chancel Choir presented at Maundy Thursday
- Chapel Choir presented at Ash Wednesday

Norcross Celebration
Brian Norcross’ 25 years of service to FUMC as Director of Music was celebrated. Donations were received that exceeded $20,000. This gift has been allocated in the following manner:
$10,000 for the 2018 Easter Eve Mahler Symphony No. 2 Concert; $ 5000 for commission of a new cantata by composer James Ra celebrating Appenzeller. The new work will be presented on April 28, 2019, titled “All is Yours”, $500 for a new anthem written by Jeffrey Binner titled Peace Be On this House Bestowed, which was premiered May 20, 2018 and again January 27, 2019

Allegro NextGEN Youth Orchestra
The Allegro NextGen Youth Orchestras are hosted at FUMC with 6 rehearsals in the fall of 2018. The rehearsals took place on select Sunday afternoons and Tuesday nights in September and October. There were two orchestras rehearsing, Allegretto Orchestra, with 36 members, conducted by Brian Norcross and Frank Caravella, rehearsing in the choir room; and Overture Orchestra conducted by Zach Levi and Brian Norcross, rehearsing in the Celebration Center. Auditions for Allegro NextGEN took place in June and July using the choir room, as well as Handbell Room, and Robing Rooms.
2018 was my last year as Chairman of the S/PPR Committee and I want to thank all the faithful members who have helped me through the past two years of change. They are Barbara St. John, Don Herneisen, Harry Yost, Allen Popjoy Jr., Dr. Jeffrey Steed, Louise Williams, Susan Kepner, Nancy Kompass, Mary Ann Herr and Paul Richer.

2018 was truly a year of change and transition! We have had a big turnover with lots of new staff, including the following:

- Secretary – Sharon Heagy
- Finance & Pastoral Assistant – Matthew Suter
- Minister to Families & Children – Chris Phillips
  Chris resigned at the end of December as the planned relocation of his family to Lancaster did not happen as they had hoped
- Minister to Youth & Young Adults – Samuel Longmire
- Discovery Corner Preschool Director-Libby Barringer
- Bookkeeper – Pam Young-White
- Full Time Custodian – George Johnson

Of course we had a huge transition with our pastors! Long-time First Church pastors Kerry Leeper and Eddie Cameron left us in June. We were sad to see them go but they were ably replaced by Rev. Janet Saddel as our new Associate Pastor. Our Bishop and District Superintendent appointed Pastor Joe to us for another year, Praise God!

A major focus for the Committee during 2018 has been a restructuring and a renewal of the contemporary service and this effort will continue this upcoming year.

Your Staff Parish Committee has both an administrative and a leadership responsibility. We must help to build relationships between the pastor, the staff, the District Superintendent and the congregation as well as “keeping an eye on the big picture” in our church.

Under the leadership of our new chairperson, Allen Popjoy, Jr, the Committee will continue this essential role.

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Over the past 6 months (the time I’ve been here) a more stable foundation has been laid for the youth ministry at First Church, though there is still more foundational work to be done. So far the majority of my energy has been directed toward Sunday night youth group, and what follows are some highlights from the past few months:

- We increased the frequency of youth group meetings from once every 2 weeks to every week.
- We worked through 4 multi-week series, covering (1) the big-picture gospel (Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration), (2) apologetics, (3) prayer, and (4) common struggles in today’s teen culture, as well as other single-week studies.
- We shared a special combined youth night with the Naeri Methodist Church from Korea, and received feedback that that was their favorite experience during their visit!
- We took 13 youth to the Peninsula-Delaware Conference Youth Rally in Ocean City, Maryland, where we enjoyed a weekend of fellowship and lively conference sessions.
- We grew from 1 weekly Sunday night volunteer to 3, though we are definitely still in need of more regular volunteers as we seek to grow the ministry.

While these are certainly things to celebrate, there is still much more groundwork to be done. As I write this (January 17th) we will be finalizing a vision and mission statement for the youth ministry, which will give us the necessary direction for moving forward across the board. (This is the biggest thing on my mind right now!) Simultaneously, we are planning some structural changes that will better align our programming with our new vision and mission. Once the plan is set, however, the real challenge will be actually implementing and sustaining it, which will require building and coordinating more volunteer support.

Right now I am beginning to give more attention to Sunday mornings, and we are in the process of discussing improvements that need to be made to this area of the youth ministry—both to enrich it and to increase interaction/unity between Sunday morning and Sunday night youth, as well as between the youth group and the larger church body. Beyond these things, the remaining area I need to address is the young adult ministry. While the 4 weekly youth leaders (including myself) are between 22-24 years old and therefore make up a small young adult community (and we would gladly welcome more, though we are not limited to young adults!), there should still be a better established community open to all young adults who are interested, youth volunteer or not. This is also something I will be working on in the coming months.
The Disciple of the United Methodist Church requires that every church have committees to carry out the ministry of Jesus Christ within the local congregation. At the First Church Charge Conference meeting on December 18, 2019, men and women were elected to serve on the following committees.

**CHURCH COUNCIL**
Joseph Reed is the new chairperson of the Church Council. Outgoing Chairperson Fred Clark will serve on the Council with Paul (Kit) Emert, Marvin Reinhart, John Spear & Carol Pyfer, secretary. Ex Officio members include Pastors Joe DiPaolo & Janet Saddel, Bill Henry representing the Board of Trustees, Steve Shank - Committee on Nominations, Meredith Hafer - Finance Committee, Allen Popjoy - Staff-Parish Relations, Brian Dombach - Stewardship, Paul Richer serving as Lay Leader, Nancy Kompass & Sue Kepner who are the Lay Members to Annual Conference, Katherine Spear - Membership Secretary, & Heather Herr - Young Adult Rep. Council voted to include the Discovery Corner Preschool and the Family of Funds ministries to the list of ExOfficio members of the Council. Kathy Seaber will represent Discovery Corner Preschool & Sarah Young Fisher will represent the Family of Funds.

**COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS and LAY LEADERSHIP**
Steven Shank leads the team of Nancy Bradley, Joy Kroehler, Betty Helms, Anne Griswold & Timothy Greiner.

**COMMITTEE ON STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS**
Allen Popjoy serves as the newly elected chairperson. Members of the committee include Mary Ann Herr, Barbara St. John, Jeffrey Steed, Greyson Redford, Louise Williams, Harry Yost, Pastors Joe DiPaolo & Janet Saddel. Completing two, three-year terms are John Gareis & Donald Herneisen.

**DISCOVERY CORNER PRESCHOOL**
Kathy Seaber & Brandy Moyé are co-chairpersons on the Discovery Corner Board. Members of the Board include Stephanie Cooke, Katherine Herneisen, Amanda Lehman, Linda Ross, Teresa Sakrudkar & newly elected Sharon Heagy and Karen DeLong.

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**
Meredith Hafer is our Chairperson of the Finance Committee. Chuck McWilliams, Robert Campbell, Amanda Lehman, Craig Schonour & Margery Kuhn help keep First Church on a strong financial basis. Each member may serve for two, three-year terms. Much appreciation is due to outgoing chairperson Lauren Schaeffer.

**COMMITTEE ON STEWARDSHIP**
Chairperson Brian Dombach works with Morgan Hafer Lucente, Glenn Miller, Marion Peirsol-Miller, Kathy Steed, Judy Williams, Lois Greene & Kirk Blazic. Each one may serve for two, three-year terms.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
Bill Henry is the chairperson of this physically active committee. With him on the journey are Pamela Emer, Barbara Hill, Timothy O’Brien, Valdimir Simic, Ryan Trees, Donald Palmer & new elected Virginia May. The Trustees express appreciation for retiring members Judy Siviglia & Art Williams. The Discipline states the Board of Trustee members may serve two, three-year terms and that the committee must have at least three women.

**FAMILY OF FUNDS**
Chairperson Sarah Young Fisher with Mark Campbell, Ellen Campbell, Bill Crabtree, Durwood Helms, Gary Johnson, Larry Kepner as well as newly elected Fred Clark, Zoa Kile and Bill Stadden oversee the investments and distributions from the Family of Funds. Members of the committee can serve two, three-year terms.

**SPECIAL MINISTRIES FUND COMMITTEE**
Newly elected chairperson Michelle Dombach serves with Beth Coder, Marcia Reed, Mark Stoner & Jordan Greiner to direct monies from the Family of Funds to new and emerging ministries. Greatly appreciated outgoing chairperson Marc Russo and Jeffrey Bradley served three, two-year terms.

**SCHOLARSHIP FUND COMMITTEE**
Chairperson Don Griswold with members Diane Styer, Jill Graybill & Anne Griswold direct funds from the Family of Funds to support seminary and college students who are members of First Church. Members of the committee can serve two, three-year terms.

*We give thanks for the time and talent and prayer that each one pours into their ministry so that the love of Jesus Christ can be made known through First Church!*
Discovery Corner Preschool’s mission is to help children and their families experience Christ’s love in a safe, nurturing, and encouraging, learning environment. DCP is open to preschool children regardless of ethnic, social, or economic background. Our school is set apart from the rest for many reasons. We offer classes for ages 2-5 years old, we are one of the only four hour programs in the area, and we combine teaching state standards with our Christian based curriculum.

Discovery Corner continues to receive oversight from its Board of Directors elected by the Church Council of First Church. The Board of Directors consisted of 8 members including Kathy Seaber, Brandy Moyé, Cathy Herneisen, Stephanie Cooke, Amanda Lehman, Linda Ross, Julie Grove, Teresa Sakrudkar, and Pastor Janet Saddel.

The staff of Discovery Corner Preschool consists of wonderfully warm, nurturing, and talented teachers. The 2 year old classroom, named “The Curious Kangaroos” is led by Alice Moraga and assisted by Elizabeth Chapman. The 3 year old classroom, named “The Hungry Caterpillars” is led by Beth Bjerklie and assisted by Isabelle Marascot. Finally, the Pre-K classroom, named “The Learning Llamas”, is led by Mandee Culp and assisted by Maddie Davis. These teachers work together to create classrooms filled with learning and play. The staff is a true example of Christian leadership while demonstrating God’s love and understanding to our precious students every day.

Enrollment has been on a steady increase with community outreach and a growing reputation of a strong, academic program. Through our annual fundraisers and the generosity of FUMC, the preschool has been able to support 8 families with partial scholarships. Many of these students would simply be unable to receive a Christian education without this scholarship funding, making the magnitude of this kind gesture truly priceless! DCP is grateful for our many devoted supporters in the congregation.

Late in the 2017-2018 school year, a new Director was hired to lead the preschool. Libby Barringer began her role as DCP Director on April 16th following interim Director, Kathy Seaber. Kathy’s unwavering kindness was evident during her 7 month run as Director and made the transition seamless. Libby was hired with a new preschool-and-church communication in mind and has become part of the FUMC staff in addition to leading the DCP staff. We hope this new emphasis on both ministry and education will continue to grow the preschool and its outreach efforts.

The new school year brought new events and ideas! The fourth preschool classroom was transformed into a music and sensory room. This space allows weekly music classes for all students. Each music class consists of singing, practicing Bible verses, learning Bible stories through song, dancing, playing instruments, and our first DCP hand-bell choir for enrichment students. The room also doubles as a “sensory room”, which provides a space for students who need extra assistance, or a quiet space, outside of the classroom. Sensory tools, toys, and a calm setting create an environment that is becoming increasingly necessary for more students. The school calendar has also grown with events like Church Trick or Treat, a Family Thanksgiving Feast, “The Nativity” which was our highly attended Christmas program, Donuts with Dad, Mother’s Day Tea, DCP Spirit Week, and our annual “Fun Day”. Children look forward to these events and it creates an opportunity to enhance learning through church and family participation.

Now, DCP looks toward its future in 2019. Our goals include continuing to find ways to raise money for the scholarship program and operating expenses, maintaining a hard-working and desirable staff, increasing enrollment, and to continue to provide students with a Christian foundation.
On July 9, 2018, Christopher Phillips, who was baptized, grew up, and was married at First Church, began serving in the role of Minister to Families and Children. Traditionally the primary focus of this position had been limited to the faith development of children within the walls of the church. While First Church offered occasional events open to children not affiliated with First, meaningful and significant interaction with the children and families of the local community had been limited. Seizing on the renewed mission of the church as proposed by church leadership, under Chris’ direction, the children’s ministry team began an examination of how to reshape First’s Children and Family Ministry to be a multi-generational ministry relevant and integral to the lives of children and families both within and outside of the walls of the congregation.

To ensure that all children attending the various classes and opportunities for spiritual growth and development received a high quality, engaging experience, a careful and thorough assessment of the resources and materials available to the various children’s classes occurred beginning in July. Functionally obsolete items were purged, and damaged or worn pieces replaced as needed. Specifically, the Kindergarten/Second grade class classroom received a new, bright and colorful carpet for story time, refreshed bulletin boards with new posters and backgrounds that were visually stimulating for young children were installed and all classrooms received a thorough cleaning. In the process, hundreds of pounds of outdated, theologically inconsistent and culturally insensitive materials were removed!

Jordan Greiner and the VBS team, a group of more than 30 volunteers of all ages- including high-school age youth, hosted what would be an event to remember! Vacation Bible School 2018 was not only fun and informative for the children of First, but also provided opportunities for the congregation to reach children for Christ from the local community. Based on the theme of “Shipwrecked”, the program occurred July 9-13 and averaged 30 children each evening for five nights. Children participated in a variety of activities including music, lessons, crafts, Bible stories and more that all came together to emphasize that Jesus rescues! Enthusiastically received by all, this important message led many kids to want to know more about Jesus and participate in the weekly Sunday morning program.

The 2018 children’s summer Sunday school program used a different approach from the normal age separated classroom format used throughout the school year term. All students Pre-K through grade 5 combined into one class to work on the weekly lesson. The one room, 13-week summer program, allowed the regular Sunday school volunteers to have a well-deserved break and enabled new persons to step forward and interact with the children of First. Both children and volunteers responded favorably to the break from the standard format. Average weekly attendance remained strong and consistent.

Kick-Off Day, held September 9th, used a football theme to start the new season of Sunday education classes. This fun day gave adults the opportunity to learn about the wide array of classes offered and for children to meet their teachers. With tailgating-themed snacks, games, and a whole lot of cheering, more than 100 children, youth, and adults participated in the Kick-Off Day opening celebration that occurred during the 9:30 a.m. worship service!

For the first time in the School District of Lancaster history, the district held its annual Parent Resource Fair at a non-school location. Working closely with Chris Phillips, district administration selected First Church as the ideal location to hold the fair due to the church’s central location, facility capabilities and most importantly First’s commitment to the city of Lancaster. During two separate events held in October, dozens of parents were able to learn more about the services and resources available to them. The event also provided an opportunity for the church to showcase the many ways in which it impacts the local community. Many attendees were surprised not only by the size and beauty of the building, but were unaware of the Thrift Shop, Anchorage Breakfast, Upward Basketball, worship services, and the children and youth ministries of First Church. The School District was very pleased with the hospitality demonstrated by the church and expressed the desire for more events and partnership programs in the future.

Saturday, December 2nd was the annual Gingerbread House event attended by more than 210 children and adults! Thanks to the efforts of Carole Reed and her incredible team of volunteers, more than 160 gingerbread house “kits” were created so that participants could build their own unique creations using tables full of candies and sweet treats as decoration. This fun-filled annual event provided the opportunity for families and friends to spend a few hours in fellowship, away from the stresses and strains of everyday life while showcasing their artistic sides, or lack thereof! in a relaxed and fun atmosphere.

The family Advent program for 2018 was a multi-generational experience where nearly 100 children and adults were treated to a spaghetti dinner prepared by Laura Meisl and served by the First Church youth. Following the wonderful dinner, guests were
invited to create their own paint swirl Christmas ball which yielded a one-of-a-kind decoration for their tree while they waited for their time to enter the giant inflatable dome erected in Celebration Center. The dome featured *The Star of Bethlehem*, a planetarium show hosted by Cosmic Adventures. The presentation examined the Biblical and scientific evidence for one of the great symbols associated with the birth of Jesus, the star of Bethlehem. Children were mesmerized with the light show and adults learned that the Bible and science can and do support each other. It was a day of fellowship, learning, and fun.

A big moment of transition occurred in mid-December with the suspension of Upward basketball. For more than a dozen years, First Church hosted the basketball program which had grown from its early beginnings of a few dozen players to hundreds. With the mission of reaching kids and families for Christ through basketball, the intent of Upward aligned with the mission of the church. However, it became apparent that, over the years, many persons viewed and participated in the First Church Upward program as simply another recreation league and that Jesus was just a distraction from playing. Statistics provided further evidence with the fact that only approximately 10% of the players resided within Lancaster city and almost none from the church neighborhood. Further, the church itself provided almost none of the more than 100 volunteers needed to operate the program. After careful consideration and much prayer, church leadership decided to suspend the program for the 2019 season to allow for a reset and refocus of the program and its original mission to be more than a recreation basketball league and be a means by which the church could reach the children and families of the local city community for Christ.

One more transition occurred in 2018 with the resignation of Chris Phillips as the Minister to Families & Children effective December 31st. For his final children’s message, which occurred on Christmas Eve, Chris challenged the kids to be a reflection of the light of Christ in the world. Each child at the two family-focused services was presented with an electric flickering candle to remind them that Jesus lights the way in our lives and also calls for each of us to help others find their way to Christ.

The events and activities contained in this report are only a selection of the many ways in which the Children & Family ministry was involved in the life of the people of First Church and the community in 2018. While the year was one of transition marked by many new events and activities, it was also filled with beloved traditions. Most importantly, though, the Children & Family Ministry was able to witness for Jesus Christ and continued to widen its reach and impact in the lives of children and adults alike for Him.
A pilgrimage to the Holy Land in January, led by Pastor Joe DiPaolo, was the best way to begin the 2018 new year! Visiting the birthplace of Jesus in Bethlehem, walking the streets of his hometown of Nazareth, standing in a synagogue in Capernaum where Jesus read from the Torah, riding on a fishing boat on the Sea of Galilee, seeing a huge stone jar which held water that Jesus turned into wine while in Cana, praying at the Western wall of the Temple, walking the streets of Jerusalem through which Jesus carried his cross, all made the Scriptures come alive. Plus, there was dinner with Palestinian Christians in Bethlehem and a visit to the wondrous UNESCO site of Petra in Jordan. Visiting ancient temples in Egypt reminded us of the desire of people through the ages wishing to worship the Lord.

Traveling with Pastor Joe were Susan DiPaolo, Tim DiPaolo, Valerie Cifuni, Daniel Diehl, Renee Dolly, Sarah Young Fisher, John & Dolores Garels, Jeff & Barb Greiner, Don & Anne Griswold, Rick & Sandy McCann, Marc & Correen Russo, Kate Beiler Toner, and Katherine Spear.

The Archives Committee is a group of ten persons dedicated to the continuation of collecting all important documents that show First Church history, past and present: i.e. minutes from every official church committee and special committees, worship service bulletins, newsletters, special reports, photographs, clergy files, church anniversary celebrations, records of deaths, new church members, baptisms, weddings, artifacts, and so much more. We meet regularly to organize and arrange these materials and enter information into a computerized inventory that helps us locate the materials after filing them.

We also provide the displays in the case in the Gathering Place several times a year! Most recently we hope you enjoyed the display of Christmas crèches!

Last year we had five Appenzeller photographs, gifts from the Chung Dong First Methodist Church in Korea, framed and mounted in the hall leading to the Appenzeller Memorial Chapel.

Several times a year, we receive genealogy questions and requests for information and documentation. We do the research with our own records dating back to the 1800s.

It is said that there is job security in archives. Why? Because as you are reading this report, First Church is making history that will eventually be documented in our very own church archives! We welcome any history items you may have and invite you to visit the archives with one of our committee members present.
TAX PREPARATION MINISTRY
Steve Franz, Coordinator

This is a First Church signature mission that has been in continuous operation since tax year 2007, so we have completed 11 years of operation. Our volunteers prepare tax returns for local people in Lancaster City and the surrounding area at no charge. This service is equipped to file electronically for Federal and State returns, and at the same time, prepare paper wage tax returns for the Lancaster County Tax Collection Bureau. We also prepare eligible real estate and/or rent rebates for qualified taxpayers.

There were 1948 client households served during the 2018 filing season. Most of our clients are not members of First Church, and are impressed that the service is so professional and free. Many clients come back year after year.

Our First Church site continues to be the largest AARP Foundation tax preparation site in Eastern Pennsylvania, in terms of the large number of e-filed returns. Our process is 100% laptop computer and network based, running the Taxslayer application. We electronically file as many current-year returns to the IRS as possible. There are only a few exceptions where we have to file a paper Federal return.

For the 2017 tax filing, we had 48 IRS certified tax preparers at the advanced level and 27 facilitators who review paperwork for completeness and check in clients on a first-come, first served basis. Our tax preparers were proficient in the Windows 10 environment and most had prior experience. Only 6 of the tax preparers and 11 of the facilitators are members of First Church. This means that a majority of the volunteers are from the community. All volunteers sign an agreement covering confidentiality and service protocols.

In terms of community awareness, the real success of the tax ministry is that it is “first come, first served,” and is the only such tax preparation office in Lancaster County that takes walk-ins. This means when other sites in the city are booked for appointments, the IRS office at Greenfield, the PA Department of Aging (located in Lancaster City), and the Lancaster United Way (call 211 referrals) sends taxpayers to the FUMC office. We also have referrals from several senior centers outside the city. And finally, we do get a few low income referrals from H & R Block!

ANCHORAGE BREAKFAST PROGRAM
Patty Eastep, Executive Director

* Anchorage served 40,074 meals in 2018!
* The hiring of a team of Guest Services (security) to replace the former guard services in May has created a peaceful and welcoming atmosphere.
* Anchorage is proud to announce that we had No Violations under the Food Safety inspections in 2018! Thank you to the many wonderful volunteer teams for working toward making Anchorage program compliant.
* Also, Anchorage passed The Community Action Program inspection and the Central PA Food Bank inspection.
* In addition to food safety training, Anchorage volunteers have walked through ALICE Training, Narcan Training and AED Training.
* Several groups have visited/volunteered at Anchorage: LCBC, Lancaster BIC, F&M, Lancaster Leadership and Lancaster’s Mayor.
* “Guest Visitors” are volunteers who come to breakfast and sit with our guests. This is a great opportunity to listen and, when appropriate, speak lovingly into our guests lives. Four different Guest Visitors come on a consistent basis, with several others visiting sporadically.
* Anchorage hosted several fundraisers in 2018 in addition to the ongoing Servant’s Blend Coffee sales and Shoe collection: A LuLaroe pop-up in February, Dinner and Auction in August, Silver Wood & Ivory concert in October, and the Extra Give in November.
* Anchorage was also blessed with a donation from the Clark Associates annual Derby Party, the F&M Swipe Program and the UMW apple pie bake.
* Anchorage also received several grants; two of those grants were doubled in 2018.
* Last but not least Anchorage is grateful for the support of individuals and FUMC!
The facilities here at 29 East Walnut Street are used in varieties of ways to help support the mission of the church to connect people to Jesus Christ, grow disciples and relieve suffering. Our building has over 90,000 square feet, over 60 rooms, hundreds of people walking through the door every week, and a list of endless maintenance items and needs!

We started off the year of 2018 with a huge water leak, where the water ran all the way down to the basement and damaged the choir room. Water damage came back to haunt us later in the year, when a pipe in the men’s bathroom did not drain correctly and flooded the 2nd floor, ushers’ room and the basement ceiling. Both events required us to file insurance claims to help offset the cost of repairs.

During the year of 2018, many general maintenance items and repairs were completed: fire systems checks, kitchen inspections, elevator inspections, HVAC repairs, kitchen hood cleanings, and roof leaks were fixed. We had a new chimney liner installed and tree removed from a chimney, new automatic door closures installed, new porch lights in the old parsonage, wall repair by Anchorage Breakfast, and floors waxed in preschool and sanctuary. We purchased a new Billy Goat (an outdoor “vacuum”), a new refrigerator, and a new carpet cleaner.

Our building is rented out and used by the public every day. Below is a list of groups that have rented and/or utilized the space at First Church this past year:


In 2018, many First Church ministries also used space in our building: UPWARD Basketball, Discovery Corner Preschool, Tax Ministry, Sisters in Faith, Choir and Bell Teams, The Contemporary Praise team, Art classes, First Friday’s events, United Methodist Women, Prayer Shawl Ministry, Sacred Worth, Committee Meetings, Study groups, Book Club, Wesley Women, Wesley Singers, Women’s Banquet and the Skateboarding Ministry.

The team that takes care of the building is very vital in making sure the environment is welcoming and inviting every time someone walks through our doors. Laura Meisl is the Facility Manager, George Johnson is the full-time custodian, and Sam Stoner is the weekend custodian. First Church also contracts Orlando’s Cleaning Service to clean all bathrooms, the sanctuary and Gathering Place. Orlando also contracts with and cleans Discovery Corner Preschool and Anchorage.

The Trustees, led by Bill Henry, are charged with overseeing all property belonging to First Church. During the week, you will usually find Bill at church working with Laura to keep the place up and running! The Trustees are also in charge of the three-apartment building we own behind the church building. This year, we changed property management groups. American Heritage Property Management took over managing our properties in July of 2018. Our main apartment building was painted on the inside, new light fixtures installed in the entry, and Orlando’s Cleaning service started cleaning.

“GREEN TEAM” AT FIRST CHURCH
by Judy Williams

The Green Team was formed in July of 2018 as a branch of the Stewardship Committee to address stewardship of natural resources at First Church. It currently consists of five church members - Laura Meisl, Judy Williams, Ryan Trees, Susan Seavey, and Steve Franz - and works closely with FUMC Facilities to support recycling efforts. The team also focuses on finding improvements that impact FUMC’s energy usage, water consumption and, ultimately, the environment. The following are steps that the team has taken this year:

◊ Created a formal proposal to form a “green awareness” team
◊ Completed an audit of entire church building and trash storage area to determine next-step measures for a recycling program
◊ Purchased and placed recycling bins in all church classrooms and offices, each bin labeled with appropriate recycling instructions; sought and received donations of large recycling bins to recycle office paper; placed donated bin to collect chipboard from discarded cereal boxes

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The Mighty Men is a group of people who get together monthly to work on the long list of maintenance items in the building. Each member of the team contributes $100 per year and commits to 6 work sessions a year. The money is pooled and used to buy supplies for repairs. The list of items tackled by this group is long ... and never done! The group works on re-lamping, painting, ceiling tile replacement and many, many other items.

In 2018, a Green Team was started to look at how the building is recycling and using its resources the best way possible. The first big step for the group was to purchase recycling baskets for each class room and aggressively start to recycle cans and plastic bottles. Look for more to come from the Green Team!

Laura Meisl, the facility manager, became a trained ALICE certified instructor! The training for ALICE helps equip people for a situation when an active shooter would come into the building or be anywhere you go. Training for the staff took place and many different small groups. The preschool now does regular monthly intruder and fire drills to help the children understand what to do in an emergency. Remember, if an active shooter comes into a place where you are, always be proactive. Diving and hiding is not the answer!

Thank you to everyone who helps maintain and fix the church building. The welcoming environment goes a long way towards fulfilling the mission of connecting people to Jesus Christ, growing disciples, and relieving suffering.

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◊ Established recycling procedures for Anchorage Breakfast volunteers
◊ Recruited Anchorage volunteers from each weekly group to be liaisons to Green Team to oversee recycling needs
◊ Set up collection and washing procedures for collected recyclables to ensure they meet hauler’s specifications; set up system to transport collected chipboard and Styrofoam to recycling locations
◊ Placed articles in 3 monthly newsletters announcing the formation of the Green Team as a form of Earth Stewardship at FUMC and explaining why and what we recycle
◊ Contacted trash/recycling companies to compare cost and services
◊ Attended Energy Star presentation by the EPA hosted by the Mennonite Central Committee in Akron for information on energy and water conservation
◊ Began process of setting up Energy Star Portfolio Manager to measure and track energy and water consumption
◊ Began gathering information regarding food-waste composting
◊ Connected with Youth Director Samuel Longmire concerning future joint projects with church youth
◊ Contacted and met with representative from solar company as an information gathering session

For a copy of the Green Team Proposal, please contact the Stewardship Committee