



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
of **MADISON**

THE ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
CONGREGATION
AND THE
CORPORATION
February 23, 2025

ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2024

19 Green Avenue
Madison, NJ 07940

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The Docket of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation of
The Presbyterian Church of Madison
Sunday, February 23, 2025

OPENING PRAYER	Rev. Carol Howard
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING Recognition of a Quorum Call of the Meeting	Rev. Carol Howard
REPORT OF THE CLERK Report and Memorial Roll Call	Rebecca A. Moody
REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE Election of Elders	
REPORT OF THE PASTOR	Rev. Carol Howard
SESSION COMMITTEE REPORTS Worship and Music Family Ministries Communication and Community Outreach Congregational Life Mission Finance Stewardship Personnel Properties Cemetery	
ADJOURN WITH PRAYER	Rev. Carol Howard

REPORT OF THE CLERK

A draft copy of the annual meeting minutes will be made available in the Church Office and any requests for additions, corrections, or amendments to the draft minutes should be given to the Clerk before the next meeting of Session.

Changes in membership during the calendar year 2024 are as follows:

Active Members, December 31, 2023		170
Members Received by Confession/Reaffirmation	0	
Members Received by Transfer	0	
Total Additions		+ 0
Removals from Roll/Transfers	21	
Deaths	3	
Total Losses		- 24
Active Members, December 31, 2024		146

Memorial Roll Call: The passing of three church members was reported in 2024: Ruth Carter (10/10/23), Nancy Croessmann (3/10/24), and Gar Burwell (10/17/24).

Special thanks to Alexandra Argiris and Eileen Koppi or their assistance with all aspects of maintaining the church records throughout the year.

In accordance with new provisions in the Book of Order, the session has adopted an Anti-Harassment Policy and an Anti-Racism policy, which are provided at the end of this annual report.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rebecca A. Moody,
Clerk of Session/Secretary to the Board of Trustees

COVENANT SUPPLY PASTOR'S REPORT REV. CAROL HOWARD

I first encountered The Presbyterian Church of Madison through the session. We had a phone call, zoom interviews, and then I sat down with them in the parlor. And from my first conversation with Clerk Becky Moody, I thought, "I *really like* these people."

As a pastor, we are called to churches for different reasons. Sometimes I might feel drawn to the church's geographic location or a need in the community. This time, it was because I really enjoyed being with the leadership. As the months have unfolded, and I've gotten to know the whole congregation, that feeling has grown to include all of you.

My main priority during these months has been to build relationships and get to know you. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the staff. Eileen Koppi, Christine Antico, Michael Callahan, and Anna D'Achille are excellent at their jobs and it's a delight to work with them. I really appreciate Jim Burnett's tireless efforts, as he coordinates activities that help us get to know each other better. I loved the petting zoo on Bottle Hill Day, singing Christmas carols downtown, and watching the live nativity on the lawn. It's a joy to meet with you over early breakfasts at Nautilus and hear about your lives.

I have been working with Becky, Anna, and Michael to add some creative elements to the worship service. We want to maintain the integrity and traditions of the service, while being open to some new possibilities. I love watching the kids sit on the steps on Sunday morning, all full of excitement. We always try to keep the children involved, and engage them with interactive spiritual practices, like baptismal blessings and body prayers. I'm continually amazed at the work that Becky does to coordinate the Worship Leaders. And I'm grateful for all of the people who read and lead the service. They are thoughtful and deliberate. And they also are understanding and flexible when things don't always go as we planned them!

As I started at the church, we needed to hire a new Administrative Assistant. I worked with our personnel chair, Yorgi Vlamis, Becky, and other session members to interview different candidates. Eileen Koppi stood out as our top choice. She has been excellent. She is dependable, learns quickly, and juggles the needs of the church and tenants incredibly well. She professionally smooths out tensions that arise. As Jim says, "She's as cool as the other side of the pillow." We are blessed to have her working here.

Michael, Stephanie Haedrich, Yorgi, and I have been thinking about the children's curriculum and confirmation. Michael and I reviewed the current curriculum, and we're excited about starting confirmation. Kathleen Underwood has been working hard to make sure that the confirmation students have hands-on mission opportunities that they can engage in, along with their studies. I am so grateful for Stephanie's commitment and insight as she chairs Christian Education.

With the pastoral transition, the session felt that we could be doing a better job caring for the congregation. Many of the nurturing traditions of the congregation had been neglected. With Jim's input, I assembled a Care Team. They quickly got to work, making sure that we had a plan to send birthday cards, valentines, flowers, and care packages throughout the year.

I am always heartened by the work and attention of Mary-Anna Holden. In addition to making sure that everything is running smoothly in the facilities, I often find her cleaning up the toys from the parking lot or pulling weeds.

In the town, I have been working with other clergy to lead services, like the Prayer Vigil during the longest night. The group has been a great source of inspiration and history.

Finally, I continue my work with the General Assembly. For several years, I have been working with the victims of clergy sexual misconduct. Right now, I'm working on pamphlet to help guide churches during their healing. Also, I continue to work with Presbyteries and different denominational bodies as they seek to build healthier churches.

This has been a wonderful time, working with all of you. I look forward to another year, as we grow deeper in God's love and share that love with one another and the world.

Peace,

Pastor Carol Howard

FAMILY MINISTRIES

Family Ministries continues to provide a safe, nurturing, faith centered environment for youth and adults alike to grow in their unique faith journey. Activities that are at the center of this include the church school and nursery where children and youth learn the components of Christianity and core facets including Christian faith, love, sense of belonging, and service. Fellowship and other multigenerational seasonal activities (often with a service component) also take place throughout the year as in previous years. Additionally, the bell choir continues to be a big part of the culture of PCM with well rounded participants taking part in scheduled performances to enhance worship. We again expanded on our outdoor Christmas tradition with live animals - albeit on a very chilly day. This was a hit for children, parents and spectators alike and also inspired a smile from many a passerby. We were very happy to provide activities and events for our children and families. The Family Ministries Committee looks forward to a new year of exciting family and youth activities.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Callahan, Family Ministries and Outreach Director

MISSION TEAM ANNUAL REPORT

In 2024, we made a positive, powerful impact for our neighbors and communities. Here is what we did:

- February: Souper Bowl of Caring for the Interfaith Food Pantry Network ... Collected \$186, to which the Mission team added \$14 for a donation of \$200.
- March: Clothing for RWJ Barnabas Health Trinitas Regional Medical Center ... Collected gently used adult clothing for patients struggling with mental health issues.
- August: School Supplies drive for NORWESCAP ... Collected 3-ring binders and packs of filler paper for NORWESCAP that got Madison students off to a strong, structured start.
- September: Personal Care Items for nourish.NJ ... Celebrated Rally Sunday by kicking off a month-long collection of personal care items – toothpaste, body wash, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, and disposable razors to be given to their clients as needed.
- October: Thanksgiving Food Drive for the Interfaith Food Pantry
- December: Madison Eagle Christmas Fund drive -- \$650, plus \$350 from the Mission budget
- December: Operation Holiday wrapped gifts for three Homeless Solutions families ... All giving tree requests were fulfilled!
- December: Christmas White Offering for the Interfaith Food Pantry ... Diapers and adult incontinence products to be available for their clients.
- Ongoing throughout the year:
 - Homeless Solutions Cooking team (January, March, May, July, September, & November)
 - Interfaith Food Pantry weekly food collection and delivery – a total of 1,226 pounds!
 - RAMP: Quarter collection with the Mission Team’s matching gift amounted to \$320

Additionally, contributions from the Mission budget were:

Organization	Amount
Fellowship of Reconciliation**	\$ 200
Highlands Presbytery	4,500
Homeless Solutions	1,890
Interfaith Food Pantry Network	2,000
Jed & Jenny Koball Peru Mission Workers	600
Madison Adult School for ESL Program*	906
nourish.NJ	1,000
RAMP Special Gift	1,000
St. Peter’s Laundry Love	750
TOTAL	\$12,846

*includes 40% of Pentecost Offering

**includes 25% of Peace & Global Witness Offering

In keeping with the values of our Presbyterian roots, PCM gave generously to the Presbyterian Mission Agency's four special offerings:

1. One Great Hour of Sharing: \$925
2. Pentecost: \$390
3. Peace & Global Witness: \$630
4. Christmas Joy: \$1,205

With gratitude to you and each Mission team member - thank you!!

Respectfully Submitted,
Rebecca Moody, Chair

WORSHIP AND MUSIC ANNUAL REPORT

Worship is the heart of any community of faith - an opportunity to be together, to hear the Word of God, and to offer praise and thanksgiving to our Creator. In-person worship was offered each Sunday during 2024, with most services recorded and available on YouTube later that day. Contemporary music was featured on the fourth Sunday of each month, often with percussion in addition to piano. Communion was celebrated monthly, generally on the first Sunday, with bread and a common cup for intinction during the summer and individual cups of grape juice during the rest of the year.

Following the retirement of Pastor Jacqui VanVliet in mid-April, a succession of guest preachers provided worship leadership until the beginning of September and the arrival of Pastor Carol Howard. Lay readers also participated in worship each Sunday. This is a wonderful opportunity for intergenerational participation in the worship service, and new readers of all ages are always welcome.

Special services included Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Youth Sunday in June, All Saints Day in November, and the Christmas pageant (an abbreviated version outdoors with live animals due to the frigid temperature and snow on the ground) in December.

The Sanctuary Ringers (bell choir) and Sanctuary Singers (vocal choir) continued rehearsals and were able to provide music for a few services during the year. Zach Frank and Caroline Gurske provided vocal leadership for much of the year. The bell choir has recently gained some new members and is always open to more. New singers are always welcome as well. Special music was offered by Anthony D'Antuono on French horn for Easter and Jessica Cino on saxophone for Christmas Eve.

Special thanks to Laura Hunt and John Schanck for decorating the sanctuary for both Easter and Advent/Christmas.

Respectfully Submitted,
Becky Moody, Chair

PROPERTIES

Thanks to the installation of some new light fixtures and LED bulbs, coupled with new e-glass windows installed in the commercial kitchen, Fellowship Hall and the Montessori School area below the Main Sanctuary, the church has seen considerable energy savings on its electric bills. The windows provide great insulation and water-intrusion protection. They are all operable.

A large window was fabricated and installed where the rotted doorway stood at the front of the Parish House near the Breezeway. The sidewalk-to-nowhere in front of it was removed and replaced with lawn and a large tree placed that it is hoped, in time, will distract from the large commercial kitchen vent in front.

Parish House window wells and kneewalls were rebuilt near front entryway. Collapsed drains were replaced. Likewise the Webb Chapel front steps were reset to eliminate the trip hazards at the risers and an ADA-compliant railing was added and the lower sidewalk raised to reduce the initial step up.

Frank Klimaszewski was hired on an hourly basis as our buildings manager. He has been very helpful coming by at a moment's notice; finding the right contractors at reasonable prices; and even weathered the August tornado to come down to secure the church campus from further damage.

The two furnaces are now operational but require biweekly maintenance. This has been a two-year saga, but fortunately we now have the correctly certified contractor.

The elevator is operational again. However, due to its age, parts can be difficult to locate.

We wrestled with our fire alarm company and now have an excellent one in place. They have stopped the repeating "trouble" alarms and have installed state-of-the-art communications devices. The 5-year inspection of the suppression system supply lines was completed.

The Borough of Madison trimmed trees and repaired sidewalk along Wilmer Street. Parking lot trees and weeds were cleared to provide open parking spaces without tree overhang.

The August mini-tornado felled trees; twisted and tore up our Green Avenue signage. All doors were compromised by the strong winds, thus sending water inside all buildings. The door to the Breezeway was blown off its hinges. Fortunately, there was no glass breakage. The box culvert in the parking lot egress was overwhelmed by stormwater runoff and collapsed. Fortunately, Moriarity Contracting was able to rebuild it and repave it over a weekend.

Leases: Sellwood Music Studios leased additional space and a new tenant "Meal Prep Empire" has rented the kitchen for a food delivery business and is also available to cater events. There is one large office on the second floor of Parish Hall that is still vacant.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary-Anna Holden, Properties Chair

PERSONNEL

The Personnel Committee is responsible for assisting PCM leadership and Session with personnel needs and staffing. The members are Giorgios Vlamis and Rev. Carol Howard, Pastor and Head of Staff. Annual reviews will be done by the Pastor in consultation with the Committee.

In 2024, there were several personnel activities including assisting Session with candidate interviews and reference checks during the process of calling Pastor Carol, assisting Properties with the retention of Frank Klimaszewski as property maintenance manager (on an as-needed hourly basis), and assisting with the resignation of Alexandra Argiris and the hiring of Eileen Koppi as administrative assistant.

In addition, updates were made to the Personnel Manual, the Anti-Harassment Policy, and the Anti-Racism Policy which were all adopted by the Session. Staff job descriptions were refreshed and updated for 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,

Giorgios Vlamis, Chair

STEWARDSHIP ANNUAL REPORT

In keeping with the latest thinking, we have renamed our stewardship committee to a generosity committee, and we have asked for estimates of giving rather than pledges.

Our theme for 2025 was “Gratitude and Generosity”, based on a quote from Anne Lamott: “When you are aware of all that has been given to you, in your lifetime and in the past few days, it is hard not to be humbled, and pleased to give back.”

Letters were sent to 70 member giving units, both individuals and families, asking for personally meaningful financial support to PCM in 2025. As of this date we have received 23 responses, with a total estimated giving of \$115,560. We thank those 23 giving units, and encourage the remaining 47 to reconsider their commitment. It is never too late to submit an estimate for 2025.

We also thank everyone who contributes without providing a formal estimate of giving.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Moody

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

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FINANCE

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CEMETERY

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2025 BUDGET

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2025 Budget
INCOME					
10-4050 · Contributions					
10-4100 · Designated Giving		940.00		1,219.50	
10-4110 · Plate Collection	1,000.00	533.00	500.00	792.00	1,000.00
10-4120 · Pledges Income	200,000.00	193,505.00	195,000.00	133,800.52	140,000.00
10-4152 · Special Offering		5,048.00		4,772.00	
Total 10-4050 · Contributions	201,000.00	200,026.00	195,500.00	140,584.02	141,000.00
10-4210 · Transfer From Endowment	143,352.70	270,000.00	181,054.00	373,809.48	279,726.00
10-4211 · Transfer From Eppinger				15,150.00	10,000.00
10-4510 · Use Of Facilities	145,000.00	142,470.00	150,000.00	151,043.66	160,000.00
10-4530 · Other Income					
10-4531 · Technology Grant		2,000.00			
10-4530 · Other Income - Other		12,255.00		5,271.44	
Total Income	489,352.70	626,751.00	526,554.00	685,858.60	590,726.00
EXPENSES					
10-5150 · Covenant Supply Minister (CSP)					
10-5151 · Salary Minister	59,250.00	59,250.00	60,150.00	40,643.35	41,800.00
10-5152 · Housing	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	21,666.64	51,000.00
10-5153 · Mileage Expenses	1,000.00		1,000.00		1,000.00
10-5154 · Pension	35,590.00	35,637.00	35,589.00	22,416.95	25,410.00
10-5155 · Study	1,500.00		1,500.00	832.25	1,500.00
10-5150 · Minister Other				4,249.92	
10-5157 · SECA-Fed S/E Contribution	6,871.00	6,985.00	6,920.00	4,795.69	7,311.00
10-5158 403-B Contribution					8,400.00
Total 10-5150 · Covenant Supply Minister (CSP)	134,211.00	131,872.00	135,159.00	94,604.80	136,421.00
10-5170 · Personnel					
10-5171 · Musical Arts Director	29,106.00	29,106.00	29,980.00	29,980.07	30,600.00
10-5177 · Youth Minister	22,050.00	22,050.00	22,720.00	22,720.07	23,200.00
10-5178 · Bookkeeping	13,230.00	13,230.00	13,630.00	15,130.07	14,000.00
10-5179 · Sexton Salary	38,000.00	10,756.00	12,360.00	-	
10-5180 · Office Assistant	24,028.20	24,024.00	24,750.00	27,062.50	24,480.00
10-5181 · Snow Removal Personnel	-		-		
10-5182 · ER Social Security Expense	9,500.00	7,805.00	7,920.00	7,033.41	8,000.00
10-5184 · Payroll Processing Fees	3,500.00	3,114.00	3,200.00	3,337.26	3,500.00
10-5188 · Worker's Compensation Insurance	1,500.00	2,530.00	2,500.00	1,080.46	1,700.00
10-5190 · Misc Personnel		24.00		497.77	
10-5191 · Nursery Personnel	1,500.00	1,800.00	2,000.00	1,775.00	2,000.00
Total 10-5170 · Personnel	142,414.20	114,439.00	119,060.00	108,616.61	107,480.00

2025 BUDGET

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2025 Budget
10-5250 · Christian Education					
10-5253 · Curriculum & Supplies	2,500.00	-	1,500.00	-	1,500.00
10-5255 · Supplies	500.00	-	250.00	77.78	250.00
10-5261 · Christian Ed Events	1,000.00	300.00	500.00	950.00	1,000.00
Total 10-5250 · Christian Education	4,000.00	300.00	2,250.00	1,027.78	2,750.00
10-5270 · Congregational/Pastoral Care					
10-5271 · Fellowship	1,000.00	-	500.00	-	500.00
10-5272 · Congregational Care Committee	1,500.00	506.00	750.00	-	500.00
10-5275 · Community Outreach	3,000.00	1,467.00	1,500.00	2,727.31	2,700.00
10-5312 · Miscellaneous Expense	1,000.00	484.00	750.00	-	-
Total 10-5270 · Congregational/Pastoral Care	6,500.00	2,457.00	3,500.00	2,727.31	3,700.00
10-5300 · Worship					
10-5310 · Music Supplies	850.00	774.00	750.00	684.70	750.00
10-5311 · Organ Maintenance	1,600.00	985.00	1,000.00	3,321.00	2,000.00
10-5313 · Pulpit Supply	1,200.00	1,000.00	1,200.00	4,093.91	1,200.00
10-5318 · Audio Support	3,000.00	101.00	3,000.00	-	3,000.00
10-5319 · Musicians	1,500.00	1,475.00	1,500.00	15,425.00	10,000.00
10-5320 · Piano Tuning	500.00	300.00	500.00	320.00	500.00
10-5321 · Flowers	-	164.00	200.00	85.97	200.00
10-5330 · Communion Supply Expense	100.00	-	100.00	92.81	100.00
10-5300 · Worship - Other	-	16.00	-	-	-
Total 10-5300 · Worship	8,750.00	4,815.00	8,250.00	24,023.39	17,750.00
10-5350 · Building & Equipment					
10-5351 · Contracted Services	5,000.00	30,570.00	36,000.00	61,817.50	8,000.00
10-5352 · Cleaning Services	-	-	-	-	36,000.00
10-5352 · Property Management	-	-	-	-	23,000.00
10-5353 · Utilities	45,000.00	37,709.00	40,000.00	33,484.83	35,000.00
10-5354 · Repair & Maintenance	10,000.00	26,294.00	25,000.00	42,830.73	25,000.00
10-5355 · Insurance	30,000.00	44,637.00	38,000.00	39,094.75	42,000.00
10-5356 · Tools & Supplies	4,000.00	2,222.00	2,500.00	1,545.44	2,000.00
10-5357 · Preventive Maint & Inspections	7,500.00	9,907.00	10,000.00	3,204.12	3,500.00
10-5358 · Snow Removal	12,000.00	4,975.00	10,000.00	8,199.00	10,000.00
10-5359 · Rental Expense	6,000.00	2,654.00	3,000.00	17,320.17	3,000.00
10-5361 · Landscaping	5,000.00	7,283.00	5,000.00	16,712.96	5,000.00
10-5362 · Property Taxes	3,500.00	3,308.00	3,500.00	3,425.26	3,500.00
10-5371 · Capital Expense Items	20,000.00	136,887.00	40,000.00	233,112.74	80,000.00
10-5373 · NJ Sales Tax	1,000.00	1,463.00	1,500.00	1,636.78	1,700.00
10-5350 · B&E Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total 10-5350 · Building & Equipment	149,000.00	307,909.00	214,500.00	462,384.28	277,700.00

2025 BUDGET

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2025 Budget
10-5400 · Administration					
10-5410 · Telephone	4,750.00	4,779.00	5,000.00	4,808.88	5,000.00
10-5411 · Per Capita Fund	6,927.50	6,928.00	7,310.00	7,310.00	7,400.00
10-5413 · Office Supplies	2,500.00	2,073.00	2,000.00	2,279.66	2,400.00
10-5414 · Postage	300.00	258.00	275.00	423.00	450.00
10-5415 · Copier Lease	5,500.00	5,401.00	5,500.00	5,031.65	5,300.00
10-5416 · Computer & IT Expenses	1,500.00	1,830.00	2,000.00	1,861.67	2,000.00
10-5421 · Auditor	4,000.00	3,600.00	4,000.00	3,600.00	4,000.00
10-5425 · Bank Service Fees		101.00	100.00	151.65	175.00
10-5426 · Breeze Processing Fees	1,300.00	1,375.00	1,400.00	1,259.63	1,400.00
10-5510 · Church Website	1,100.00	1,071.00	1,100.00	1,419.00	1,500.00
10-5520 · Advertising	1,000.00	432.00	500.00	732.00	1,000.00
10-5400 · Administration - Other					
Total 10-5400 · Administration	28,877.50	27,848.00	29,185.00	28,877.14	30,625.00
10-5600 · Stewardship Expenses					
10-5600 · Stewardship Expenses	100.00	123.00	150.00	286.85	300.00
10-6050 · Mission & Outreach					
10-6051 · Presbytery Missional Giving	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00	4,500.00
10-6053 · Homeless Solutions	1,000.00	799.00	1,000.00	897.71	1,000.00
10-6062 · Miscellaneous Mission Expenses	500.00	7.00	250.00	-	250.00
10-6064 · Interfaith Food Pantry	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	1,500.00
10-6065 · Discretionary Bevevolence	7,000.00	6,924.00	6,750.00	6,556.50	6,750.00
10-6067 · Special Collection		5,072.00		3,956.00	
Total 10-6050 · Mission & Outreach	15,000.00	19,302.00	14,500.00	17,910.21	14,000.00
10-7000 · Church Officers					
10-7010 · Elders	500.00	-	250.00	-	-
Total 10-7000 · Church Officers	500.00		250.00	-	
Total Expense	489,352.70	609,065.00	526,554.00	740,458.37	590,726.00

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

Mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work. Administration is the process by which a council implements its decisions. Administration enables the church to give effective witness in the world to God's new creation in Jesus Christ and strengthens the church's witness to the mission of the triune God. ... All councils shall adopt and implement the following policies: a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child and youth protection policy, and an antiracism policy. Each council's policy shall include requirements for boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every thirty-six months.

Excerpted from *G-3.0106 - Administration of Mission (2023)*

Introduction

The Presbyterian Church of Madison strives to create and maintain an environment in which people are treated with dignity, decency, and respect. When the people of the church gather for worship, study, mission, and other work of the church, it is committed to providing an environment that is characterized by mutual trust and is safe and free from harassment, bullying, and intimidation in any form. The leaders and members of the Presbyterian Church of Madison will not and do not tolerate any type of harassment of its members, elders, deacons, volunteers, guest or staff. Through enforcement of this policy and by education The Presbyterian Church of Madison seeks to prevent, correct and discipline behavior that violates this policy.

Members, Volunteers, Participants and Staff

All members, volunteers, participants and employees/staff of the Presbyterian Church of Madison, regardless of their role or position, are covered by and are expected to comply with this policy and to take appropriate measures to ensure that prohibited conduct does not occur.

Appropriate disciplinary action, in accordance with the Book of Order and the Presbyterian Church of Madison Personnel Policy, will be taken against any member or employee of the church who does not follow this policy.

Prohibited Behavior

As used in this policy, the term "harassment" includes sexual harassment as well as actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected characteristic.

Any action may be considered harassing if it:

- creates a hostile, intimidating or offensive environment,
- unreasonably interferes with an employee's or volunteer's performance; or
- adversely impacts an individual's employment or volunteer opportunities.

Examples of prohibited conduct include:

Microaggressions

A microaggression is a verbal or nonverbal slight that affects an individual who might identify as being from a marginalized or non-mainstream community.

Microaggressions are typically indirect, subtle, even unintentional, but nonetheless are considered discriminatory to the recipient.

Bullying

Bullying is a pattern of behavior in which the bully attempts to intimidate their victim. Examples of bullying behavior range from teasing to extortion to physical assault. In addition to physical interactions, bullying includes any form of interpersonal communication, including by electronic means.

Violence

Violence is acting or using words to make an individual feel endangered. This includes actions that create actual harm to another individual or words that result in another individual having a reasonable belief that they are in danger.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, church member, or a member of the public at any time will not be tolerated; this includes any form of electronic communication.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harasser. This includes any form of electronic communication.

Prevention Practices

The session of the Presbyterian Church of Madison provides for regular anti-harassment training to ensure an environment free of sexual and other unlawful harassment. All church staff, officers, session and deacon members, and teachers are expected to complete an initial training event/program and participate regularly in anti-harassment education training opportunities.

Reporting Procedures

The session has established the following procedure for lodging a complaint of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation. The session will treat all aspects of the procedure confidentially to the extent reasonably possible.

- Complaints should be submitted as soon as possible after an incident has occurred, preferably in writing to either the pastor, chair of personnel or clerk of session.
- The session shall appoint a team to review the complaint.
- The session leadership may call upon the Presbytery of the Highlands for assistance.

Responding Procedures

Matthew 18:15-17

“If your sibling sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If you are listened to, you have regained that one. But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If that person refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a gentile and a tax collector.”

Remembering that Jesus continued to associate and eat with gentiles and tax collectors, the recommended means of response is to focus on grace rather than judgment, and education more than discipline, in all but the most intentional acts of harassment.

To err on the side of grace is

- not to dismiss or diminish the offense, but to name it , gently rather than in anger;
- to recognize that people come into this subject matter from a variety of backgrounds and history;
- to acknowledge that, consequently, the time, length, and intensity of new understanding will vary from person to person.

This requires mutual conversation, and formal or informal courses of study, designed to equip more than reprimand or punish.

As a final resort one can turn to appropriate measures within the Constitution's *Church Discipline*. It is incumbent to remember, however, that despite its title, *“The power that Jesus Christ has vested in his Church, a power manifested in the exercise of church discipline, is one for building up the body of Christ, not for destroying it, for redeeming, not for punishing. It should be exercised as a dispensation of mercy and not of wrath, so that the great ends of the Church may be achieved, that all children of God may be presented faultless in the day of Christ.”* (D-1.01 Power Vested in Christ's Church).

Responding Structure

The session shall maintain a team of individuals with experience in conflict resolution who will be called upon to assist in the resolution of a harassment complaint. The members of this team shall be congregation members to the extent possible, with others as necessary. The session can also request assistance from the Presbytery Conflict Response Team as needed. All complaints and outcomes of the complaints will be confidential.

Review of Policy

This policy shall be reviewed by the session annually, with the occasion of that review and any changes made to the policy recorded in the minutes of the session.

Anti-Racism Policy for the Presbyterian Church of Madison

December 11, 2024

We cannot move forward without looking back.

Repair begins when reconciliation and truth telling begins

Introduction

Timeline

In 2016, the 222nd General Assembly of the PC(USA) approved a new churchwide antiracism policy titled: *Facing Racism: A Vision of the Intercultural Community*. This policy began as a review of the earlier 1999 statement on racism in America, and began by noting that, "...the realities of racism in the United States have not improved significantly..." Several years later, acting on the recommendation and report of various committees, the 225th General Assembly revised the Book of Order (G-3.0106) to require all church councils to adopt and implement an antiracism policy.

Theological / Biblical Foundation

The Bible insistently reveals that God loves diversity and justice. This is seen in the wide variety of creation in which God delights. It is heard in the words of the prophets, who reject oppression and commend justice as true worship. It is embodied in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, who resists the power of empire and values all persons, regardless of status, as children of God. Jesus gathered a community of people around him that crossed over every social and cultural boundary. Those who had been set apart were brought together: poor and rich, male and female, Gentile and Jew, centurion and tax collector, Canaanite, Galilean, and Syrophonecian. Jesus called this community together in anticipation of, and participation in, the coming of the new creation.

-From *Facing Racism*

The Bible testifies that humanity is diverse and yet one, unique but together created in the image of God.

The words of the Apostle Paul remind us of the common identity we share as members of God's family. *"As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."* -Galatians 3:27-28

The vision of John in Revelation shows us a multitude gathered from every nation worshipping God together. *"After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!'"* - Revelation 7:9-10

Faith challenges us to acknowledge the distance between God’s vision for humanity and our present reality. Faith also calls us to action, building up things which help that vision to flourish, and removing obstacles and stumbling blocks we encounter along the way (John 10:10, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Romans 14:13). **One of the largest stumbling blocks that persists in our culture today is racism.**

Confession/Acknowledging our Complicity/Role

Recognizing that sin exists in our world at both an individual and a corporate level, in both intentional and unintentional harm, and echoing the words of Paul, who reminds us that, *“all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God,”* we confess our participation in a society and culture that allows racism to persist (Romans 3:23). **As a response to our confession, we affirm our desire to lean into uncomfortable conversations, to promote growth, and embody a faithfulness that works to dismantle racism within and beyond our communities.**

We Commit Ourselves to Accountability

We hold ourselves accountable for working consistently and purposefully towards racial justice and equity in our synod, our presbytery and our congregation.

We commit to take steps as a congregation of the Presbytery of the Highlands to participate in the ongoing process to dismantle racism in our congregation, our presbytery, our community and our own lives through the following and other ways we may not be aware of at this time:

- Engage with resources and conversations to help us grow and learn through training events or other similar opportunities.
- Create opportunities to invite people into conversations about dismantling racism.
- Provide for worship experiences that work toward dismantling racism.
- Commit to self reflective truth-telling concerning actions and experiences where our actions or inactions perpetuated racism or continue to perpetuate racism.
- Listen to voices long silenced.

ACTION STEPS

The session of the Presbyterian Church of Madison commits to the following:

- Hold at least one annual training/workshop on racism.
- Join others in the PC(USA) Matthew 25 movement.
- Provide at least one worship service annually that focuses on dismantling racism.
- Engage ourselves and others in conversations about racism through workshops, small groups, seminars, or book study.
- Provide resources and communications about dismantling racism.
- Annually review this anti-racism policy and recommend updates.

An Alternative to the Lord's Prayer, from *A New Zealand Prayer Book*,
p. 180-181

Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples
of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and for ever. Amen.