



# Red Clay Creek

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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## REV. DR. NATHANIEL D. PHILLIPS

### SENIOR PASTOR

"Rooted in love, lighting the way"—this is who we are becoming, and I couldn't be more grateful to serve as your pastor. Together, we are growing into a true beacon in our community. We care deeply about the friendships we have with one another (Belong), the intentional care for children and youth (Nurture), about creating vibrant, meaningful worship (Rejoice), and about helping people in need (Reach).

This year, I've been struck by how Red Clay offers connection in moments of life's greatest joys and deepest heartaches. I was reminded of this at the first funeral of 2025.

The woman who died wasn't a church member.

She was only 46, and it had been a tragic accident. Her family, whom I had just met, was gentle and grieving. As I looked out at the full sanctuary—filled with many people who had never stepped foot in our church—I told them, "For 300 years, people have had weddings, baptisms, and funerals on this little piece of ground. They have rejoiced over good things and wept over the bad things. You join them today."

And they nodded. They settled in. Because people long for that kind of connection—to be part of something rooted and real.

Our roots run deep here at Red Clay. The same stones used to build the first church in 1761 were repurposed for the "new" building in 1853. And today, we stand on the shoulders of generations who have worshiped, served, and dreamed on this very ground.



But being "rooted in love" also means that we keep reaching out. We continue to grow as a community that welcomes the stranger, nurtures faith, serves our neighbors, and shines as a light in a world that often feels so dark.

This report celebrates all the ways Red Clay is living out its call—from children's ministry to mission work, from worship to care for one another. Thank you for being part of this remarkable family of faith. May we continue to honor our roots as we light the way forward.

Stay warm,  
*Pastor Nate*

## REV. EMILY SCHWENKER

### PARISH ASSOCIATE

Another full and meaningful year has drawn to a close at Red Clay Church, and once again I am deeply grateful to have served as your Parish Associate Pastor alongside such a dedicated and gifted staff. It has been both a joy and a privilege to serve this kind and committed faith community, not only by frequently participating in our church's Sunday morning as well as other special worship services, but also through the numerous pastoral opportunities that have come my way. These have included:

- Creating and leading the noontime Ash Wednesday Service
- Prayer Service of Hope & Healing
- Advent Service of Light & Hope
- The Blessing of the Animals
- Conducting four graveside services
- Facilitating the birth of the Prayer Shawl Ministry
- Continuing as pastoral liaison to the Stephen Ministers
- Leading an eight-week video discussion of "The Chosen"
- Leading the weekly Centering Prayer Group
- Coordinating a 2026 pilgrimage to Scotland



My ministry with the wonderful people and dedicated ministries of Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church, along with my private Spiritual Guidance practice and work with the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation in Washington, DC, have been both a gift and a joy, and have, each in their own unique way, all felt Spirit led. Trusting in God's Spirit to continue to lead us in all of our doing and being, I look forward to discovering what it is God has in store for us throughout the coming year. May we have the eyes to see it, the ears to hear it and the heart to embrace it.

With grace and gratitude,  
*Pastor Emily*



## JEFFREY MILLER

### DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Our music staff now consists of Deena Andrews (Children's choir and instrumental music), Lisa Nichols (Bell choir), Barbara Vanderkraats (Care choir), and myself. Staff members Ben Andrews, Rachele Gilmore, and Dinyar Vania are talented musicians who also participated in musical events in addition to carrying out their regular staff positions. Barbara continued her duties as director of the Care Choir and has taken on additional duties at Red Clay. She is now our church's Care Coordinator, which helps support Nate and the deacons in providing care for members on the KIT (Keeping In Touch) list, and additionally helps organize home communion. She also keeps in touch with people in the hospital or those who have other health issues.

Sunday morning services continued to be held at 10 am, with varied music ministries each Sunday. The Chancel Choir, Lauda, Bell choir, soloists and Festival Choir all shared in leading the music for worship. Deena Andrews played the violin regularly, and Ben Andrews joined us often on percussion. Midweek choir rehearsals have resumed on a very limited basis, but 2024 has supported the decision to meet for most rehearsals on Sunday mornings, rather than during the week.



We continued our Noonday recitals, and have expanded our concert series. The 2024 Gala Benefit Concert for Friendship House enabled us to make another generous donation to FH. Much of this had to do with a generous donation--an anonymous donor paid for many of the singers. It was a huge success musically, financially, and socially, drawing an audience from our surrounding community and featuring Red Clay staff members Dinyar and Rachele, with guest singers Nicole Joseph, Gina Perregrino, and Stephen Powell. A string quartet on Palm Sunday, trumpet and tympani on Easter Sunday, and piano/string trio with chorus and soloists on Christmas Eve were other musical highlights.

We continued to use more professional section leaders in our choirs, augmented worship with strings, brass, and tympani, thanks to the generosity of the Naylor Memorial Fund. An additional music fund is being set up for more community concerts like Charlie Zahm and the upcoming jazz concert on February 1.

Peace and blessings,  
*Jeffrey*

## RACHELE GILMORE

### DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY LIFE

As I enter my third January as Director of Community Life, I am filled with pride for the incredible growth and accomplishments of our church over the past year. From remarkable increases in attendance and membership among families of all ages to impactful year-round service projects, bustling Children's and Youth programs, our hugely popular Summer Arts Camps, and the wildly successful \$1.6 million Vision Campaign, it has been an extraordinary year.

As highlighted in our Christmas Eve bulletin insert and the annual Reach Committee report, we have done remarkable work in our community this year. We've continued to grow popular annual projects like the Roots & Rays Service Challenge, the School Uniform Store, the Lenten Food Drive, Thanksgiving and Easter meal bags, the Highmark Walk, the Christmas Toy Drive and Gift Cards for Friendship House, and monthly meals for Friendship House and Emmanuel Dining Room.

In addition to these ongoing initiatives, we embraced new challenges. We responded swiftly to the Hurricane Helene crisis in Asheville, launched a volunteer team at Humane Animal Partners, introduced a second Toy Drive for local schools, and renewed support for refugee families in our area. Our partnerships with local schools and guidance counselors have deepened, as more educators recognize they can rely on us to support students in need. We also increased opportunities for youth service, with Ben and I collaborating to add several meaningful projects throughout the year.



On an international level, I'm thrilled that we've continued to grow our mission efforts. This year, we took a group to Costa Rica to work with our partners at Clinica Cedcas in San José. Closer to home, we returned to Asheville, where youth and adults worked with several local nonprofits. These trips have been transformative, strengthening our bonds with each other and deepening our relationship with God.

Within our own congregation, we've also cultivated new ways to grow friendships. Highlights include our first "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" event and meet-ups throughout the year of the Arcaders Social Group for our "youngish" members. Building and strengthening friendships is vital to our mission, and I look forward to expanding these efforts in the coming year.

Thank you for your unwavering support and friendships throughout this past year. None of this would be possible without you. When I reflect on the success of our church, one word stands out above all: friendship. Friendship is the foundation of everything we do at Red Clay, and it shines through as we continue to light the way in our community!

Warmly,  
*Rachele*

## BEN ANDREWS

### DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Looking back on 2024, I'm amazed at all of the awesome things we have done together. I am lucky because I have the privilege to work with everyone in our community—our kids, our youth, our adults, and our friends who don't often (or ever) enter our building. And if I were to sum up the past year in three words, I'd choose these: discipleship, service, and fun.

We've seen so much discipleship happening in our church, even if we don't often use that term. Our youth invested intentional time learning how to read the Bible, engaged in transformative Confirmation classes, and helped out with some of the most urgent needs in Asheville, North Carolina. Our children have opened up a Bible every week in Sunday school and heard the message of Jesus throughout our Arts Camps. Our adults have launched new small groups, pursued spiritual practices like the Enneagram, and engaged in current, urgent crises within our community.

With discipleship comes service. In addition to our service trip to Asheville, our youth have packed hundreds of go-bags for Friendship House, washed fleets of cars, finished Eagle Scout projects (shout-out to Evan, Aidan, and Rian), cleaned up after countless events, and much more. Our children learned the value of working together as a team during our main Summer Arts Camp themed "Teamwork Makes the Dream Work." In addition to all of the service adults have done through our Reach committee (which is amazing itself), they have stepped up this year



through serving our Youth and Children's programs. For Arts Camp week alone, we had 34 adult helpers! This is a remarkable turnout for a mainline church today.

With discipleship and service forming the cornerstone of our ministries, we've also had plenty of good, clean fun! I love that in the face of what some may consider boring religion, we're committed to fostering a vibrant community that isn't afraid to have a good time. With our youth, we've enjoyed two Midnighters, our annual flag football game, mini golf, and learned how to tie bow ties! Our kids have perhaps had the most fun, with everything from Disney sing-alongs to foam parties to wheel parades! And don't count out our adults—from pickup pickleball to seeing the Blue Rocks to "Who's Coming to Dinner," they've also proven they're up for some good, clean fun!

As I reflect on 2024 and dream about 2025, I am honored and thrilled to play my part in this vibrant, growing, and loving community. I believe 2025 will bring more discipleship, more service, and more fun than we've had in a long time.

With love,  
*Ben*



# LEADERSHIP

## THE SESSION

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The Rev. Dr. Nathaniel D. Phillips, Moderator  
Sandra Sarjeant, Clerk  
Nancy James, Asst. Clerk

### CLASS OF 2025

Anne Ceres (3)  
Mark Cozine (3)  
Robert Emmons (3)  
Lois Galinat (3)  
Jim Murray (3)  
Vicki Smith (5)

### CLASS OF 2026

Andrew Bloom (3)  
Nancy James (3)  
Marcia Kelly (3)  
Heather Kennedy (3)  
Linda Reisor (3)  
Brandon Wallace (3)

### CLASS OF 2027

Stephen Armstrong (3)  
Brian Conly (3)  
Fred Crowley (6)  
Christine Fischer (3)  
Scott McHenry (6)  
Karen Vordemberge (3)

## THE BOARD OF DEACONS

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Sue Gleason, Moderator

### CLASS OF 2025

Norm Carlson (3)  
Jane Conly (1)  
Gail Eden (6)  
Darlyn Green-Kocher (3)  
Bonnie Hudson (1)  
Meredith Jones (3)  
Kathy Lassahn (3)  
Sue Leininger (3)  
Jayne Townsend (5)

### CLASS OF 2026

Karen Caldas (3)  
Sue Gleason (3)  
Mary Ellen Gruber (6)  
Barbara Jaffee (5)  
Brett Lanan (3)  
Donna Reilly (3)  
Alyce Graham Stiles (3)

### CLASS OF 2027

Kathy Ciabattoni (3)  
Sandy Dudley (6)  
Jackie Kacmar (6)  
Andy "Pei-Yi" Lo (3)  
Betsy Marsey (3)  
Barbara Sowden (6)  
Barb Tostrup (3)

( ) designates how many consecutive years served  
as of that term

# SESSION

## REPORT OF THE CLERK OF SESSION

January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024

### MEMBERSHIP

Communicant Roll as of January 1, 2024 - 710 (425 female)

GAINS:	Certificate of Transfer	-	0
	Profession of Faith	-	0
	Reaffirmation of Faith	-	12
	Reinstated	-	0
	Other	-	0
			+ 12
LOSSES:	Certificate of Transfer	-	1
	Deletion	-	0
	Death	-	10
	Other	-	2
			-13

Communicant Roll as of December 31, 2024 - 709 (421 female)

### BAPTISMS

Infant	-	12
Child	-	4

### IN MEMORIAM

Sallie Annett  
Virginia Armstrong  
Andrew Geiger  
Carolyn Harris  
Richard "Brad" Jeffers  
Marlene Kreps  
Coby Ross  
Leonora "Lennie" Ross  
Yuko Skoog  
Betty Walters

### YOUTH CHURCH SCHOOL

Total Students	
Nursery	- 15
PreK-2nd	- 20
Grades 3 - 5	- 12
Grades 6-8	- 15
Confirmation	- 10
Teachers/Helpers	- 20

## MEMBERSHIP

### BAPTISMS

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2/11/2024	Murphy Clark
4/14/2024	Noah Rada
5/19/2024	Bodie Jeffers
5/19/2024	Blakely Jeffers
5/19/2024	Nolan Hanna
5/19/2024	Liam Hanna
5/19/2024	Isla Hanna
6/09/2024	Lawson Vaughn
6/09/2024	Lily Vaughn
6/09/2024	Jovie Vaughn
6/09/2024	Harrison Vaughn
8/04/2024	Ellen VanDerSpuy
9/01/2024	Nora Andrews
10/06/2024	Abigail McLaughlin
11/17/2024	Marcus Kocher
11/24/2024	Elizabeth Bogdan
12/29/2024	Taron Grise

### NEW MEMBERS

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Lorraine Gilmore
Richard (Dick) Gilmore
Janice Hench
Thomas Hench
Ken James
Kara Lieberman
Richard Morgart
Charles (Glen) Noble
Eric Sanford
Isabel Sanford
Matt Vaughn
Megan Vaughn



## DEACONS

MODERATOR: SUE GLEASON

A deacon is someone who loves the Lord and acts upon that love with gifts of service to the congregation through a variety of ministries.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST YEAR:

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- Serving beverages and snacks every Sunday following worship.
- Keeping In Touch with members who are unable to attend worship services in person by delivering Easter flowers and Christmas poinsettias, sending greeting cards, and calling them.
- Delivering sanctuary flowers every Sunday.
- Maintaining a lending medical equipment closet.
- Assisting at memorial services held at church.
- Sending greeting cards to those 70 years+ and to those married 50+ years, in addition to sending cards for graduations, new babies, and illnesses.
- Hosting 6 Friends & Fellowship luncheons on the 2nd Tuesdays of March, April, May, October, November, and December.
- Serving breakfast in November to honor our Veterans for their service to our country.

## ADMINISTRATION

CHAIR: SCOTT MCHENRY

The Administration Committee has achieved the following:

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST YEAR:

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- Acquired two new laptops for staff
- Replaced the server
- Managed challenges posed by inflation and increasing postage costs

As we look toward 2025, our plans include improving the Wi-Fi and upgrading both desktop computers and the copier. These technological advancements are designed to keep our staff connected and ensure that our operations function smoothly and efficiently.

## BELONG COMMITTEE

CO-CHAIRS: PAM & GEOFF MEYER

*John 21:1-3, "Together"*

*The disciples are together after the resurrection.*

We saw another great year of Christian fellowship and community at Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church in 2024, fostered and supported by members of the Belong Committee and so many others. The main events supported by Belong in 2024 for everyone, young and old, were:

### ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

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Easter Sunday, March 24 following worship

### CELEBRATION PICNIC

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Combined with the annual Strawberry Social – Sunday June 2 in the Meadow following worship

### SUNDAE SUNDAY

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August 25 after worship in Founders Hall

### HOMECOMING SUNDAY

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Combined with Family Fall Activities (supported by Belong and Nurture) – September 8 after worship in the Meadow

### ATTIC TREASURES

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Thursday, Friday and Saturday October 17-19 in Founders Hall

### TRUNK OR TREAT

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(supported in part by Belong) Sunday October 27 after worship in the upper parking lot

### SHOWCASE SUNDAY

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Sunday, November 3 after worship in Founders Hall

### THE DINNER PARTY

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Following Pastor Nate's sermon series, Sunday, November 24 after worship in Founders Hall

### CELTIC CHRISTMAS CONCERT

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Concert by Charlie Zahm, with Tad Marks, on Saturday evening, December 21, presented in the Sanctuary, with intermission with wassail and refreshments served in Founders Hall. This free event was advertised and open to the public.

Many thanks to the members of this church on the Belong Committee this year who were instrumental in supporting the Belong activities of this congregation: Kathy Ciabattoni, Jane Conly, Gail Eden, Alyce Graham Stiles, Darlyn Green-Kocher, Meredith Jones, Mim Krout, Mary Norris and Liz Phung. Also, the support and assistance of many other members of our church and our church's wonderful staff made these activities for our church community possible.

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS COMMITTEE

CHAIR: ANDREW BLOOM

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST YEAR:

- The Community Partners Committee has continued to foster strong relationships with the local community. This initiative has provided us with the opportunity to build meaningful relationships and welcome a broader audience to the church.
- The partnerships with Jazzercise and AA continue to remain strong.
- We also are excited to be partnering with the Sun School of Taiji this year and hope to continue into 2025.
- The goals for 2025 are to continue with our current partnerships while actively seeking new ones to center us in the community.

Others serving on this committee: Amy Cozine, Al Behringer, Linda Neel, Al Leonhard, and Maddie Carlson





# FINANCE COMMITTEE

CHAIR: BRANDON WALLACE

## 2024 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

In January 2024, the Session approved an operating budget with total income of \$899,650 and total expenses of \$963,644 with an unbalanced budget deficit of \$ 63,994.

- Year-end 2024 total income was unfavorable by \$25,189 or 2.8% vs planned income
- Year-end 2024 total expenses were favorable by \$ 58,533 or 6% vs. planned expenses.
- Year-end 2024 resulted in a deficit of \$40,023 compared to planned deficit of \$63,944. See summary charts below.
- Investments: As part of the 2024 approved operating budget, \$62,750 was withdrawn from New Covenant Trust during the year to subsidize the Operating Income. The balances from investments as of Dec 31, 2024, below include these withdrawals.
- New Investment company- The Finance Committee and Session approved a change of financial advisors and company. RCC terminated the relationship with New Covenant Trust and entered into agreement with Merrill Lynch effective November 2024 with the transfer of funds to Merrill Lynch in November. Purpose was to establish a local financial relationship and partner with a Wilmington firm to improve personal contact with advisors and jointly select investment strategies with the ability to meet on-site as needed.

	Beginning Balance	Ending Balance	Net
Investment Funds	\$1,302,747	\$1,312,793	\$ 10,046. **

\*\* Includes \$62,750 withdrawals

### HIGHLIGHTS OF OPERATING INCOME FOR 2024

	Actual	Budgeted	Fav (Unfav)
Giving-Pledge, Non-Pledge, Loose Plate	\$ 771,418	\$792,500	\$ (21,082)
Income Withdrawals from Investments	\$ 62,750	\$62,750	\$
Rental	\$ 11,070	\$9,250	\$ 1,820
Committee Income -Belong, Nurture & Rejoice	\$ 5,947	\$21,450	\$ (15,503)
Other- Per Capita, Interest, Misc	\$ 14,235	\$13,700	\$ 535
Total Operating Income	\$865,420	\$899,650	\$ (34,230)

### HIGHLIGHTS OF OPERATING EXPENSES FOR 2024

	Actual	Budgeted	
Personnel	\$631,312	\$624,120	\$18,569
Stewardship & Finance	\$6,704	\$8,060	(\$ 7192)
Per Capita paid to Presbytery	\$10,470	\$20,940	\$ 1,356
Mission & Reach	\$60,500	\$60,500	\$10,470
Deacons, & Committees (Belong, Nurture & Rejoice)	\$22,099	\$53,597	\$ 0
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 905,443	\$963,644	\$31,498
			\$58,201

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

CHAIR: BRANDON WALLACE

### 2024 OPERATING BUDGET SUMMARY

2024 Actual Net Income	\$865,420
2024 Actual Net Expenses	\$905,443
2024 Net Income (Deficit)	
Total Operating Expenses	\$(40,023)

### NEW 2025 OPERATING BUDGET

Session approved the new 2025 Operating Budget with planned income of \$987,130 and expenses of \$1,024,831 with an unbalanced budget deficit of \$37,701. See attached pages for detail.

- 2025 Planned Operating Income Highlights
  - Pledges increases by \$20,000 compared to 2024.  
Merrill Lynch Investments will provide \$87,000 to subsidize the income or 6% withdrawal from this fund.
- 2025 Operating Expenses Highlights
  - Total budgeted expenses for 2025 are \$1,024,831 versus \$963,644 in 2024.
  - Personnel budget Increased by \$61,115.
  - Mission/REACH expenses for Local, Regional, and International increased from \$60,000 to \$63,525.

The Finance Committee will continue to remain diligent in monitoring this new budget, and, with God's blessing and provisions and the leadership of Pastor Nate's staff and Session, we will be able to have a successful year.

#### Finance Committee Members:

Curt Tompkins, John Schubel, John Gast, Fred Crowley, Jay Fuess and Pastor Nate along with support from our Office Financial Associate, Anthony Condoluci-Smith.

Submitted by,  
*Brandon T. Wallace, Ch.*

# FINANCE COMMITTEE

CHAIR: BRANDON WALLACE

	2024 Actual	2024 Budget	Difference Fav (Unfav)	2025 Income Approved Budget
<b>Regular Operating Income</b>				
Pledge	\$ 657,141	\$ 685,000	\$ (27,859)	\$ 705,000
Non-Pledge Giving	\$ 105,947	\$ 100,000	\$ 5,947	\$ 110,000
Loose Plate Giving	\$ 8,330	\$ 7,500	\$ 830	\$ 7,500
Per Capita Giving	\$ 4,901	\$ 6,000	\$ (1,099)	\$ 6,000
Misc Other & Interest from CDs	\$ 9,259	\$ 9,000	\$ 259	\$ 9,800
interest on ML HFT-1 funds	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 20,000
interest on ML HFT-2 funds	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 11,000
Income-Monetized Assets	\$ 9,250	\$ 9,250	\$ -	\$ -
Income- Endowment Fund (combined for	\$ 53,500	\$ 53,500	\$ -	\$ 87,000
Room Usage	\$ 11,070	\$ 9,250	\$ 1,820	\$ 8,520
Non-Budgeted/ Misc	\$ 76	\$ (1,300)	\$ 1,376	\$ (1,300)
<b>Committees</b>				
Memory Garden (new for 2025)	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 2,500
Belong Committee Income	\$ 78	\$ 8,200	\$ (8,122)	\$ 6,800
Nurture Committee Income	\$ 365	\$ 2,500	\$ (2,135)	\$ 2,900
Rejoice Committee Income	\$ 5,504	\$ 10,750	\$ (5,246)	\$ 11,410
			\$ -	
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	<b>\$ 865,420.27</b>	<b>\$ 899,650</b>	<b>\$ (34,230)</b>	<b>\$ 987,130</b>

	2024 Actual	2024 Budget	Difference Fav (Unfav)	2025 Income Approved Budget
<b>Regular Operating Expenses</b>				
<b>Committees</b>				
Belong - Community & Fellowship	\$ 1,133	\$ 15,775	\$ 14,643	\$ 15,100
Belong - Membership Care	\$ 325	\$ 1,850	\$ 1,525	\$ 350
Memory Garden (new for 2025)	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 3,500
Nurture- Education	\$ 812	\$ 875	\$ 63	\$ 1,352
Nurture- Children & Youth	\$ 1,555	\$ 8,950	\$ 7,395	\$ 10,150
Nurture- Deacons	\$ 2,696	\$ 2,500	\$ (196)	\$ 2,500
Nurture- Stephen Ministry	\$ 1,182	\$ 1,260	\$ 78	\$ 1,409
Rejoice- Worship & Music	\$ 14,163	\$ 22,387	\$ 8,224	\$ 25,025
<b>Support</b>				
Administrative	\$ 28,092	\$ 31,592	\$ 3,500	\$ 33,000
Home	\$ 146,266	\$ 164,835	\$ 18,569	\$ 169,740
Community Partners	\$ 233		\$ (233)	\$ -
Per Capita Assessment	\$ 10,470	\$ 20,940	\$ 10,470	\$ 6,000
Personnel	\$ 631,312	\$ 624,120	\$ (7,192)	\$ 685,235
Stewardship & Finance	\$ 6,704	\$ 8,060	\$ 1,356	\$ 7,945
Local Mission ( Reach )	\$ 35,110	\$ 34,760	\$ (350)	\$ 36,525
Regional Mission ( Reach )	\$ 1,320	\$ 1,320	\$ -	\$ 1,500
International Mission ( Reach )	\$ 24,070	\$ 23,870	\$ (200)	\$ 24,900
Undesignated Mission (Reach)		\$ 550	\$ 550	\$ 600
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 905,443.19</b>	<b>\$ 963,644</b>	<b>\$ 58,201</b>	<b>\$ 1,024,831</b>
<b>NET Operating Income. (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ (40,023)</b>	<b>\$ (63,994)</b>		<b>\$ (37,701)</b>
	Actual	Planned		Planned



## HOME COMMITTEE

CHAIR: MARK COZINE

2024 proved to be an eventful year for your Home Committee.

### HIGHLIGHTS:

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- We kicked off the year in January with a storm that knocked down trees. Thanks to the combined efforts of volunteers and hired assistance, we managed to clear the debris effectively.
- T-Mobile reached out for an evaluation of our steeple and antennae, which led to an upgrade of their equipment. This improvement reduced the footprint in the lower lot, creating a potential location for new AC compressor units on the second floor.
- We all recognize that our boiler is nearing the end of its life. As part of the Vision Campaign, the team gathered initial estimates for a new boiler, air conditioning, and window replacements. With the campaign's success and your support, we are still collaborating with additional vendors to ensure we spend funds wisely.
- The Home Committee partnered with the Deacons to replace the crumbling countertop in the Founders Hall Kitchen with a beautiful and durable quartz composite version, featuring a new heavy-duty deep stainless steel sink and high-quality faucet. We also plan to paint the kitchen soon!
- Phix-It undertook operation "deep clean," where the sanctuary carpets were cleaned while a dedicated team of Red Clay Creek volunteers devoted an entire day to scrubbing bathrooms, kitchens, and all tabletops.
- The cracked plaster ceiling in the transept was expertly repaired, restoring it to its original condition.
- We redesigned the drainage on the driveway adjacent to Fellowship Hall to eliminate the "hump" that previously directed water away from the building, making it much easier to navigate and move items in and out.
- Lastly, a storm in early fall again took down trees, particularly along the drive from Millcreek Road. Since the trees were too large for volunteers' chainsaws, we hired a vendor to cut them down and clear the area. We also requested they return to clear a 30-foot swath next to the drive to accommodate additional lighting in the future.

# LAWTON TRUST COMMITTEE

**CHAIR: CHARLES (CHIP) GRUBER**

Joseph Lawton and his wife Elizabeth (known as Andy) were extremely devoted and long-term members of Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church. As part of their end-of-life planning, they generously funded a trust which received the residual principal of their estate; Joe and Andy’s gift demonstrates their true concern for people less fortunate than themselves.

The trust was established in March 1995, stipulating that income from the trust is to be used solely for the benefit of needy people to alleviate suffering, with priority given to emergency cases in the Wilmington and New Castle County areas. The RCCPC Lawton Trust Commission receives and distributes income from the trust.

Cumulatively since 1995, the Lawton Trust Commission has granted approximately \$1,720,450 to over 60 different agencies and emergency causes. During 2024, \$49,373.76 was distributed as outlined below.

RCCPC remains a faithful steward of the Lawton’s beautiful gift.

## FUNDS DISTRIBUTED DURING 2024

SPRING 2024		FALL 2024	
Sojourners Place	\$ 6,500	Friendship House	\$ 3,000
STEHM, Inc.	\$ 6,500	St. Ann’s Society	\$ 3,500
St. . Paul’s Counseling Center	\$ 6,500	Latin American Community Center	\$ 5,000
St. Vincent DePaul Society	\$ 6,500	West End Neighborhood House	\$ 5,000
		Jefferson Street Center	\$ 6,500
		**Roots & Rays, Emergency Fund	**\$ 374
Totals	\$26,000		\$23,374

\*\* Roots & Rays, \$373.76 for Emergency Utility Payment Requested 11/18/24

## NURTURE COMMITTEE

CHAIR: NANCY JAMES

*John 21:4-6, "Taught"*

*Jesus teaches them how to fish on the other side of the boat.*

The NURTURE Committee is the umbrella for many of the activities centered around Christian Formation at RCCPC which fall into three categories: adult education, children's ministry, and youth ministry. Our scripture reference is John 21: 3-6 that describes a teaching moment between Jesus and his disciples. Nurture is mostly staff driven, with two session members currently assigned in a leadership role: Nancy James and Heather Kennedy.

### ADULT EDUCATION

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The Adult Forum meets every Sunday at 9am for religious education. Monday Women's Bible Study, Women's Body & Soul Bible Study (Wednesday) and Thursday Men's Morning Group continue to meet weekly. Centering Prayer, led by Rev. Emily Schwenker, meets weekly on Thursday at 4pm. Visit our website for more information.

In 2024, we have continued to strengthen our Adult Education with additional offerings. In the Summer, there were weekly movie nights watching episodes of the "The Chosen" with discussion hosted by Rev. Emily Schwenker. In the fall, Rev. Dr. Phil Jones led a group using the inductive KERYGMA Program to study "Great Themes of the Bible: Knowing God".

Faith, Hope, and Love Quilters continue to meet on Mondays at 9:30am. They, together with members of 1st Monday Quilters, provided over 500 pillowcases to A.I. duPont hospital and various nursing homes, and produced 1,000 stockings to be sent to deployed troops. Items produced and sold throughout the year yielded \$2,647 for the Memory Garden.

The church library currently houses over 2,000 items. The Library Committee, Alice Hanes, Christine Kitson, and Lisa Nichols, has been very busy implementing a new web-based catalog system, and are also in the process of adding donations received last year. Upgrading the Library technology remains a high priority.

### CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

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Our Sunday school classes continued to grow this year, as evident by the smiling faces joining us during the Children's Moment during worship and the number of kids joyfully playing together in Founder's Hall after worship. Ms. Judy and Ms. Sophia take care of our youngest in the nursery, while Ms. Shelby leads our pre-k through 2nd grade class, and Ms. Jamie, 3rd grade and up. Volunteers assist all age groups. Please contact Jamie at [jamie@rccpc.org](mailto:jamie@rccpc.org) to volunteer since as our numbers grow, so do our volunteer needs.

Special highlights this year include: 4 Open Gyms, our first ever Wheel Parade to celebrate the 4th of July, a Foam Party to celebrate the start of the new school year, and the start of our new Younger Youth Group for kids in 3rd-6th grade.

The Summer Arts Camp is a free program offered to children in kindergarten through 8th grade. The camp incorporates art, music, drama and storytelling with a biblical focus into a weeklong morning program. We had 76 participants this year, many from the surrounding community, non-affiliated with Red Clay. A mini arts camp was offered prior to the main camp and also in the afternoons during the week. The Arts Camp concluded with a Bingo fundraiser on Friday evening. A one-day camp was offered in late December as well.

## YOUTH MINISTRY

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Youth ministry has continued to grow with a mix of activities centered around service, spiritual growth, and fun.

The Youth participated in the MLK Service Challenge, Car Wash Fundraiser, Art Camps, Mission Trip to Asheville, and Spooky Service Night.

Three Boy Scouts obtained their Eagle Scout Rank.

The kids played pickleball, mini golf, participated in two Midnighters and the annual flag football game.

There were sessions on "How to Read the Bible".

A confirmation class began in the fall with 10 kids.





# SCOUTING AT RED CLAY

CHARTER REPRESENTATIVE: ELIZABETH (LIZ) SALTER

## SCOUTS

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- 120 boys & girls age 5-18
- Leadership gained, new skills learned, taught & practiced
- Scout Sunday
- Flags in the cemetery on Memorial & Veterans Day
- Joint Troop summer camp at Blue Ridge Scout Reservation in Hiwassee, VA
- Service, Learning, Fun, Religion & Outdoors

## TROOP 29 (BOYS 5TH GRADE THRU 18 YRS OLD)

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- 7 scouts earned their eagle rank (167 eagles scouts total)
  - *Rian Salter*: Nature Path & Benches at: Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church
  - *Chris Guckenberger*: Instruments for Musical Playground at Evangelical Presbyterian Church
  - *A.J. Lawson*: Culvert Installation & stream cleaning at Sanford School
  - *Aidan Hawley*: Bench Building at Battleship New Jersey
  - *Evan Hawley*: Shelving & Reorganizing storage at Humane Animal Partners
  - *Andrew Ou*: Display Case for Memorabilia at American Legion Post 491
  - *Nathan Chiou*: Raised Garden Beds at Sellers Senior Center & Forwood Manor

- Annual Plant Sale Fundraiser
- 10 camping trips & summer camp: 2 favorites Curling & Cape Henlopen Canoeing, Paddleboard & Beach time
- 5 scouts went to advanced leadership training

## PACK 29 (BOYS & GIRLS K THRU 5TH GRADE)

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- Built small cars & raced them at our Pinewood Derby
- Ran our districts Pinewood Derby
- Service projects: Friendship House, Food Bank, Clothes & Christmas collections
- Summer Camp at Camp Ware
- Successful Popcorn fundraiser
- 8 scouts crossed to a troop & earned their Arrow of Light award
- Family camping trips

## TROOP 1029 (GIRLS 5TH GRADE THRU 18 YRS OLD)

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- Car Wash, Mum Sales & Food stand at Pack & district derby
- Service projects ( stockings for soldiers, helped local packs & food bank collection)
- 4 scouts attended merit badge college
- 10 Camping Trips in addition to summer camp: 2 favorites were French Creek State Park Swimming & Outdoor Rock Climbing

## REJOICE COMMITTEE

CHAIR: LOIS GALINAT

*John 21:7-14, "Table"*

*Jesus calls them to the shore to meet him and share a meal.*

The Rejoice Committee's role is to create opportunities for worship and celebration that allow the congregation to experience joy and nourishment in their relationship with Christ, whether attending in person or via Livestream. In 2024, various worship experiences like Holy Week, Kirkin' O' The Tartan, and World Communion Sunday provided meaningful worship experiences.

### ADVENT DECORATIONS

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- Theme for 2024 was "Let Heaven and Nature Sing." Berries and pinecones adorned the wreaths and windowsills in the Sanctuary.
- The Chrismon's tree was again placed in the Sanctuary and the tree trim is quickly becoming a fixture for Advent.
- Additional window candles were purchased and installed in the remaining windows of the church.
- After more than 20 years, Marcia Kelly is stepping down from leadership of the subcommittee. Please talk with fellow members to help us find a new Chair.

### AUDIO/VIDEO

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- The system in Founders Hall was upgraded this year to a portable one that can be used through various areas of the campus. The system was purchased with Hope for Tomorrow funds.
- At the end of 2024, Livestream was discontinued and replaced with Vimeo. This changeover was challenging and may require additional changes.
- We are still hopeful to add some of our youth to the AV team.

### BELL CHOIR

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- Bell Choir played 9 times during worship, including the Sunday before Christmas.
- This year, the bells have started accompanying selected hymns during the service.
- We have 11 dedicated ringers, but we welcome new folks! A basic knowledge of music and a desire to learn are all that's required. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Lisa at [lialto@aol.com](mailto:lialto@aol.com).

### CANDLES AND PARAMENTS

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- Communion table candles are changed as needed, and the paraments are changed according to the Church calendar.
- This year we made several new purchases: an oil-filled peace candle and stand, a new candle lighter that uses oil instead of wicks, and new followers for the Communion table candles.

### COMMUNION PREPARATION

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- A crew of 19 dedicated preparers has functioned smoothly all year.
- For 2025, Chip and Mary Ellen Gruber will coordinate this activity.

## COMMUNION SERVERS

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- Elders and Deacons were actively involved in serving communion.

## FLOWER COORDINATOR

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- Flowers are ordered for New Members, Births, Senior Saints Day, Mother's Day, Easter, and Christmas.

## GREETERS

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- Greeters welcome worshipers in the Narthex as they arrive for services.
- Every four months, a request goes out to the 62 volunteers, they reply with available dates, and a schedule is made for the next 4 months. The church office adds them to the bulletin and sends a reminder each week.

## USHER COORDINATOR

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- There are currently 52 active ushers under the leadership of four full-time Captains and four part-time Captains.
- One Captain is retiring as of January 2024 so more captains are needed.



## REACH COMMITTEE

CHAIR: LINDA REISOR

*John 21:15-17, "Tend"*

*Jesus tasks Peter to leave the fire.*

In 2024 the Reach Committee provided leadership and financial support to over 20 organizations, focusing on areas where our congregation is engaged in building relationships to meet the needs in our community and beyond. Some highlights include:

### FOOD BANK OF DELAWARE

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- Monthly Volunteer sessions were held throughout the year, except July and August averaging 15-18 participants each month.
- Red Clay members volunteered a total of 531 hours in 2024.
- Lenten Food Drive contributed 1192 pounds of food. Thanksgiving offering benefited the Food Bank of Delaware.

### MEALS ON WHEELS

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- Five teams of people from Red Clay go to Murray Manor and deliver meals every 6 weeks. City Fare provides the meals for delivery.
- In 2024, we recruited 4 new volunteers and incorporated them into our delivery teams

### REFUGEE FAMILY SUPPORT

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- The Sharaf's continue their integration into life in Delaware with both parents having gainful employment, the kids (ages 2, 12, 13) growing and advancing through school. The parents now have Green cards.
- In October we welcomed the Shadi and Rabia Hussein and three children and helped them to get settled in a new apartment.

### MEETING GROUND

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- This has been a year of reconnection between RCCPC and Meeting Ground's Mary Randall Day Center, which serves those experiencing homelessness in the Elkton, North East, and Newark areas.
- Welcomed their new Executive Director for the local missions Showcase Sunday, collected sunscreen and lip balm over the summer, canned fruits/vegetables and paper towels at Thanksgiving, and will be preparing another chili meal for the Day Center as part of the upcoming January Service Challenge.

### FRIENDSHIP HOUSE

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- Continue to provide at least 3 meals per month to Epiphany House
- At Christmas supported annual toy drive and provided monetary donations for gift cards
- Hosted annual picnic by providing food and volunteers and hospitality
- Supported annual fundraiser Highmark Walk
- Provided hot lunch for approx. 35-50 people at Friendship House Wilmington Empowerment Center in January
- Group volunteer event at the Clothing Bank as part of 2024 Roots and Rays month



## EMMANUEL DINING ROOM

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- Continue to provide chili lunch once per month

## SIBANYE (SOUTH AFRICA MISSION)

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- In addition to our quarterly donation, we sent funds to have a Christmas party for the kids at Seki as well as funds to purchase Christmas gift vouchers as a thank you to the women volunteers at Seki.

## SERVICE PROJECT TRIP TO ASHEVILLE

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- This summer 30 people (adults and youth) traveled to Asheville for a week of volunteer work supporting 6 different organizations in the greater Asheville area. The youth also attended Montreat for one day.

## ROOTS & RAYS FUND

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- Raised over \$16,000 and matched \$10,000 from Roots & Rays fund for donations to Asheville organizations after the storms that ravaged the Asheville community.

## CDCA NICARAGUA

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- Sarah Junkin Woodard visited RCCPC in April, and brought crafts to sell and gave a slide presentation after church.
- CDCA continues to try to recover from the drop off in donations during COVID. A few delegations are returning, but the US State Department's code orange travel advisory has kept groups like Red Clay from organizing trips to Nicaragua.

## COSTA RICA

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- A team of 12 from RCCPC traveled to Costa Rica in January of this year and supported Lillian Solt and the CDCAS community by offering a sewing class and providing maintenance including painting. We also provided games and activities on a field trip for a group of 100 children from the city.

## QUILTS FOR COMFORT

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- Quilts for Comfort was able to give comfort to 500 people in 2024

## STEPHEN MINISTRY

STEPHEN LEADER: SUZANNE COURTER-JANN

We continue to have a Stephen Minister in the Crossan Lounge after worship services for those in need of personal prayer and conversation.

### JANUARY

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Prayers were taken from the ornaments placed on the Advent Prayer Tree. A voice was given to each request and a blessing read aloud during our meeting. Prayers were then burned and lifted to heaven.

### STEPHEN MINISTRY SUNDAY

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With input from staff, Stephen Ministry Sunday was changed to Caring Ministries Sunday to include all of the many caring ministries at RCCPC.

### SERVICE OF LIGHT & HOPE

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Held during the first Sunday in Advent, this became the benchmark for Hope and Healing Services to be held throughout the year. Stephen Ministry is assisting staff with various aspects of these Services. The time has been moved to 11:30 AM in hopes more folks will return to the sanctuary after coffee for a time of quiet meditation and prayer.

- *September 29th: Service of Hope and Healing*
- *December 8th: Service of Light and Hope*

### CONTINUING EDUCATION & APPRECIATION

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- Review of Module 16, Supervision: A Key to Quality Christian Care

- “*The Gift of Empathy*” book purchased & used for Continuing Education
- Prayer Cards given to each active Stephen Minister

### PEER SUPERVISION

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We welcomed Dan Elliott to our Peer Supervision. Dan continues a caring relationship with someone from his former church in Cypress, Texas. He is currently worshipping at West Grove United Methodist Church in West Grove, PA where there is not an active Stephen Ministry program.

### NOTES OF ENCOURAGEMENT

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Stephen Ministry delivered notes of encouragement and candy canes to Meeting Ground this Advent.

### BOOKS

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- Approximately 53-60 sets of Grief books were sent out to the congregation and the community throughout the year. We also have given out, “*Cancer, Now What?*” books to people who have received a cancer diagnosis and/or their family members.
- Updated Assertiveness training modules and books were purchased for the Assertiveness portion in our training manuals.

## MEMORY GARDEN

CHAIR: MARCIA KELLY

### HIGHLIGHTS:

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- Construction of an additional monument in the Garden and repointing of stone wall
- Revised application and rules (approved by Session action 8/20/24)
- Increased the donation associated with application for committal of cremains or installation of remembrance plate to be changed to \$1000 per person effective October 1, 2024 (Session action 8/20/24)
- Re-established the receipt of applications for committal of ashes in the Garden beginning October 1, 2024
- Created database for all persons remembered in the Garden and all subscribers.
- Re-established the receipt of applications for committal of ashes in the Garden
- Committal of ashes for:
  - Charles E. Davis*
  - Margaret Shakespeare Davis*
  - Lawrence Key Elwood*

## PERSONNEL

CHAIR: JOHN GAST

### HIGHLIGHTS:

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- The year 2024 has been a great year for Red Clay and for its Personnel staff. The staff has been complete and in-tact throughout the year, and is effectively supporting and leading a period of engagement, excitement, and spiritual growth for Red Clay.
- The Pastoral Staff, led by our Senior Pastor, Nate Philips, and supported by Pastoral Associates Emily Schwenker and Phil Jones, along with occasional guest staff, is leading Red Clay through a new period of growth and excitement.
- Our full-time and part-time support staff are effectively and creatively helping to guide Red Clay's growth in mission participation, new worship opportunities, including new and amazing youth and music participation programs and concerts, and the very exciting growth in our children and youth ministries. Our full-time lay staff, Rachele, Ben, Jeffrey, Julie, and Dinyar, along with the creative and very energetic efforts of Jamie and Deena, and our support staff of Kelley, Brandon, Anthony, Lisa, Charlie, and Judy, along with children and nursery staff, Shelby and Sofia, all have worked together to make 2024 an exciting year of growth for Red Clay. We look forward to 2025 and the many creative paths they will lead us to in our worship.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

CHAIR: CHRISTINE FISCHER

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present this slate of nominees for the position of Elder:

### ELDER - CLASS OF 2028

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Donna Reilly  
Darlyn Green-Kocher  
Bill Ciabattoni  
Diane Freed  
John Gast  
Steve Wood

For the At-Large positions on the 2025 Nominating Committee (1-year term) we present:

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

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Sue Gleason  
Anne Hawley

The following person was submitted in nomination for the Financial Review Committee for a one-year term:

### FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

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Carolyn Diehl

The Nominating Committee is pleased to present this slate of nominees for the position of Deacon:

### DEACON - CLASS OF 2026

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Bonnie Hudson  
Vicki Smith

### DEACON - CLASS OF 2027

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Jayne Abercrombie

### DEACON - CLASS OF 2028

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Norman Carlson  
Susan Emmons  
Carol Hiller  
Mim Krout  
Susan Leininger  
James Murray  
Mary Norris  
Susan Welsh



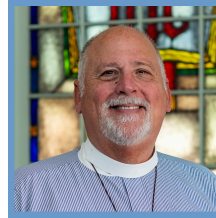
## PASTORS



**Rev. Dr.  
Nathaniel D. Phillips**  
Senior Pastor/Head of Staff



**Rev.  
Emily Schwenker**  
Parish Associate



**Rev.  
Phil Jones**  
Parish Associate

## MINISTRY DIRECTORS



**Jeffrey Miller**  
Director of Music



**Rachele Gilmore**  
Director of Community Life



**Ben Andrews**  
Director of Christian Formation



**Barbara Vanderkraats**  
Pastoral Care Coordinator

## ADMINISTRATION



**Julie Reeder**  
Office Coordinator



**Dinyar Vania**  
Facility Manager



**Kelley Norton**  
Administrative Assistant



**Anthony M.  
Conduluci-Smith**  
Finance Associate

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



**Jamie Russell**  
Director of Children's  
Ministries



**Judy Lozier**  
Nursery Supervisor



**Shelby Beattie**  
Nursery Assistant



**Sofia Martin**  
Nursery Assistant

## MUSIC & TECH SUPPORT



**Deena Andrews**  
Asst. Director of  
Instrumental Music



**Lisa Nichols**  
Bell Choir Director



**Charlie Hannagan**  
Tech Support