

2024 Annual Report



Live into Hope



Vanderbilt
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



To Proclaim — To Glorify — To Equip — To Serve

Our Vision: A congregation...

- so grounded in scripture and sustained by prayer,
- so committed to spiritual growth and faithful discipleship,
- so inviting, welcoming and inclusive,
- so nurturing and healing,
- so mission-minded,
- so vibrant, energetic and open to opportunities to share the Gospel that lives are transformed by the love of Christ.

Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church is a safe place for all people to worship regardless of race, creed, age, cultural background or sexual orientation.

Our Mission: Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church is called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to live like Christ in a broken world.

- To Proclaim the Gospel
- To Glorify God in worship and deed
- To Equip our congregation for ministry
- To Serve others in Christ's name.

Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church is a member of the Peace River Presbytery, the Synod of South Atlantic, and the Presbyterian Church (USA).



Pastoral & Administrative Staff

- The Rev. Robert J. Marrow, Pastor/Head of Staff
 James Cochran, Director of Music
 Michele Byrd-Gerlach, Assistant to Administration & Music
 Heather Mikes, Director of Christian Education & Vanderbilt Learning Center *(added 9/24)*
 Tom Grundstrom, Adult Education Coordinator
 John Healy, Finance Manager
 Barbara Bonavita, Office & Facility Coordinator/Membership Secretary
 Norman Barillas, Custodian
 Cesar Guzman, Custodian
 Pedro Feliciano, Custodian
 Julie Carver, Pianist
 Gordon Black, Handbell Director
 Viki Bonavita, Audio/Visual Technician
 Jennifer Crossan, Vanderbilt Learning Center, Director *(resigned 9/24)*

“Grow in grace.”
~ 2 Peter 3:18



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From our Pastor—The Rev. Robert J. Marrow



Dear Friends in Christ,

The pages that follow tell only a small portion of the story that has unfolded over the 2024 calendar year at Vanderbilt. While much of this document is focused on the past, I hope that you read it with an eye on the future. There is no doubt that God has been at work in our midst over the past year. Let's not be content to rest on our laurels. Collectively, I hope that we continue to ask the following questions of ourselves – “Who is God calling us to be at this time and in this place, and what is God calling us to accomplish?” An important extension of these questions could be posed to each person reading this report: “How is God calling *me* to be involved in the ministry of this congregation over the coming year?” We need to be a people that seek God's will and then put into action what God reveals to us.

A long-standing principle that I utilize in ministry is to *bless what exists and add what is needed*. Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church has many exciting and useful ministries that are meeting the needs of our members and our larger community. This is fabulous news! Over the past year, we have implemented a few new avenues for enhancing our spiritual life. It's my hope that we will continue to identify new and exciting ways of bringing the gospel message to our community while strengthening our existing ministries. God demands for us to give our very best in all that we do.

Case in point – in the Fall of 2024, Vanderbilt Learning Center Director Jennifer Crossan resigned from her position. When this occurred, the decision was made to realign our Christian Education staffing patterns. The goal was to demonstrate our belief that the Learning Center is a vital element of our educational ministries and is not a separate entity from the church. Christian Education Director, Heather Mikes, enthusiastically assumed the position of Director of the Learning Center while continuing in her position of leading our Christian Education efforts for all ages. Additional personnel was planned to support her efforts in both church and Learning Center staffing. One example of this was the hiring of Tom Grundstrom as the Coordinator of Adult Education. Much fruit is being produced from this one change. More will come in 2025.

Serving as your pastor continues to be a delight. TOGETHER, we serve God! The Session, Deacons, members, EVERYONE! I would like to provide a special word of appreciation for the commitment and dedication displayed by the staff of VPC. Each staff member consistently provides their best efforts to ensure that our ministry is done exceedingly well! So, thank you staff members! As always, ministry is about teamwork. Each individual must generously contribute of themselves as they are able, as a church, if we are to be effective in serving Christ. Our collective ministry and mission as a congregation displays to the world that we worship Jesus Christ.

In the coming year, I pray that we do our very best at giving glory, honor, and praise to the Lord our God. I hope that you and I, together, can *bless what exists and add what is needed* so that Vanderbilt will become the church God is calling us to become.

In Christ,

Pastor Rob





From our Director of Music — Dr. Jim Cochran

The goal of the music department at Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church is to glorify God through carefully prepared musical presentations both within the services of worship and in our concert series.

The Chancel Choir has prepared and presented meaningful weekly anthems for church services, and prepared an amazing and uplifting Christmas season for all of us. A highlight was the Christmas Concert, featuring Mary McDonald's "O Holy Light" with a full string ensemble, trumpet, oboe, piano, and organ. The concert also included solos, duets, and trios and a beautiful reception was held in Fellowship Hall afterwards.

The Learning Center choir again presented the cutest Christmas concert ever, and also a beautiful Spring Concert in May. They rehearse each Monday through Thursday in Cochran Hall, learning songs and playing bells, boom whackers, and drums! Special thanks to all of the Learning Center teachers and Directors for helping with daily rehearsals and concert preparations.

The Alleluia Choir is back, and though it is small, the children really enjoy singing in church services and did an amazing job with the "rehearsed" parts of our annual "Unrehearsed" Christmas Pageant!

Pianist, Julie Carver, continues to provide professional accompaniment for the Chancel Choir, stunning accompaniments to the congregational hymns, mesmerizing improvisations as part of the weekly prelude, and super strong support for the Alleluia Choir.

Choir "Angels" handle the administrative details of maintaining the library and robes. Thank-you, Angels! And a special thanks to Andrea Daggett,

Archangel, and her helper, Joanne Lepore. Susie Hilton handles all of the electronic communications for the choir, and that is a big job. Thank you, Susie! Under Susie Hilton and Bob Martin's coordination, choir members prepare end of rehearsal prayers and devotions weekly. They are very meaningful, and help us stay connected.

The Handbell program, under the direction of Gordon Black, is booming, thriving, and growing! The Carillon Ringers group and the smaller Campanile Ringers group are fully subscribed, and Gordon maintains a list of excellent substitutes who can jump in at the last minute. The Bell groups provide anthems monthly and also participate in the Christmas and Spring concerts. Special thanks to Gordon, who is volunteering his time and talent in leading these two excellent ensembles!

In late April, several church members approached me about replacing the Baldwin B grand piano in the sanctuary with a larger piano more suitable for leading the congregational singing and accompaniments for choral anthems as well as being used for the concert series. After months of searching, we purchased a beautiful 1988 Steinway B grand piano whose provenance includes only one loving owner who sadly had to say goodbye to his piano to move north to be with family. Everyone who has played it loves it, and many members of the congregation have commented on the beautiful, rich tone.

The Concert Series is alive and thriving! We are presenting a more varied schedule of artists this year, but will continue to host the winners of the Cochran Organ Prize and one internationally recognized organ artist. You can look for chamber music, jazz, Broadway, and local, living composers in the coming seasons. Thank you, as always, for your very generous support of this community outreach program.



**The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit and always green;
The trees of nature fruitless be,
Compared with Christ the Apple Tree.**



Sincerely, James Cochran



From our Director of Christian Education —Heather Mikes



It's always an amazing opportunity to pause for a moment of reflection on the year past and look forward with hope to the year ahead. I encourage everyone to take time to review this annual report - reflecting on what our church family has been working on, how we have been serving, the love that has been poured in, the time, talent and treasure shared and what we aspire to continue working toward. Being the body of Christ in the world is an opportunity for all of us. Many of our efforts in

Christian Education are shared in the Education and Family Ministry Team report.

Through these moments of reflection, we learn to live into our calling. We are faithful and grateful for the unending love God has for us and we have a responsibility to share it. We have the great privilege of walking with one another through all of life's ups and downs. It isn't always easy, but with God, all things are possible. We find joy in the work -- not the fleeting happiness of a short-lived satiation, but rather the deeply held and enduring presence of God at work that comes in both the easy and hard things.



The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. - Proverbs 9:10

Joy is contagious. We want to be near it and experience its warmth. I encourage you all to jump in to your calling. Not sure what it is? Just ask..."Lord, lead the way!" And pursue it. Take a Christian Education class or teach! Serve on a ministry team! Give to your church to support ministry or a mission.

"The LORD is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts; so I am helped, and my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him." -Psalm 28:7

Whether you are two or 12 or 20 or 42 or 92, the world can sometimes feel overwhelming. Sometimes we struggle. We trust God to help us do the next right thing. We pray with childlike faith and we ask God for the strength to live in a broken world, to hope for a brighter tomorrow, to find joy and love without bounds expecting nothing in return, to overflow with grace and peace.



*"I am the vine, you are the branches."
- John 15:5*

Christian Education comes in many forms with Christ at the center. Our faith journeys are all different. Morning or night, on any day of the week, there are many ways to spend time in the Word that immerse you, inspire you and transform you. We're here to support and encourage you, to provide tools and resources, to teach and equip you to teach others. So, go be great! Keep serving or take on something new, but invest in each other - making time to connect, to love one another and to deepen your relationship with God.

We share joy as a church family and then we share it in the world through our families and in our community. We live into hope.

In Grace and Peace, **Heather Mikes**



From the Clerk of Session

This past year at Vanderbilt has built on the success of 2023 as it seemed that our church moved forward in all directions at the same time. Based on a strong Stewardship campaign in late 2023 we were able to fund our programs, support our Presbytery, and keep our building in good shape.

The year 2024 can best be described as one with steady forward progress. All of our ministry teams were staffed with volunteer church members and continued to support our missions, education programs, music programs, and all the other growth and social activities that make up a vibrant church.

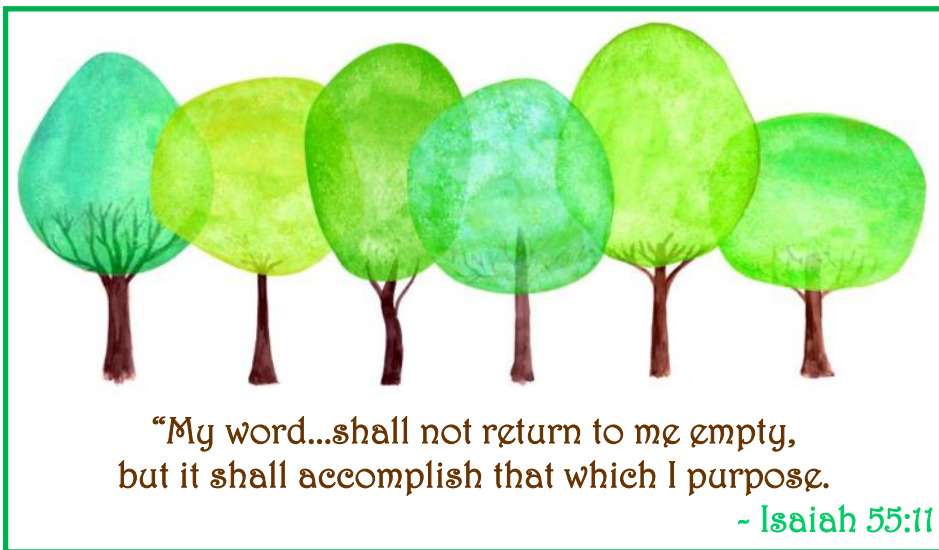
Our Vanderbilt Learning Center (VLC) went through a year of change and transition. Last winter we decided to repurpose some

of our space in the west wing which provided more space for the VLC and allowed them to expand their presence in the community by adding more students through converting the chapel to a kindergarten classroom. The work was completed during the summer break and was ready for the students upon their return in August.

The unexpected resignation of our VLC Director gave us an opportunity to rethink our church staffing. The result was that our Christian Education

Director, Heather Mikes, added directing the VLC to her responsibilities. We added some additional staff to support her in this change.

Our Sunday church attendance and our membership remained steady throughout 2024. With our enhanced internet service, we were able to improve the live streaming experience that allowed many of our members to use the virtual format and thus we experienced a growth in our Sunday online participation.



**“My word...shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purposed.
- Isaiah 55:11**

In the process of doing our church business your Session held 10 Stated meetings and 4 Congregational meetings during 2024.

Once again, your church staff supported our pastor,

Session, activities, and ministry teams with remarkable dedication and hard work. They have performed at a high level and continue to be a very vital part of our ministry.

And finally, it continues to be my privilege to serve as your Clerk of Session as we continue to forward with all of our ministries in 2025.

Richard A. Hilton, Clerk of Session

<u>CLASS—2024</u> (term ended 5/31/24) Pete DeBaun Amber Grider Mary Lynn Myers Pete Rodino Pat Rose Steve Schock	<u>CLASS - 2025</u> Greg Borden Joe Doggett Ann Foote Ron Shaffer Sue Van Fossen Becky Wheat	<u>CLASS - 2026</u> Arnold Alexander Nena Beynon Michael Bevilacqua R. Max Gould Eliza Nevin Steve Woodring	<u>CLASS—2027</u> Gordon Black Jan Fern Amber Grider Price Lindsay Penny O’Kelley Bill Schouldice
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Budget, Finance & Investment Oversight Team

Team Overview: 2024 was a good year from a financial perspective for the Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church. VPC revenues were approximately \$64K higher than budget, thanks to the membership giving. VPC expenses were almost \$50K below budget thanks to the committees watching their costs and budgets. The net result was a \$114K gain for the VPC 2024 year versus a balanced budget, defined as no gain or loss. The Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church Learning Center also had a positive year from a financial position as well as an enrollment that continues to grow.

Team Purpose: In 2024 the Budget, Finance and Investment Oversight Team carried out their purpose to ensure the “wise use of God’s gifts.” We guided the Session through recommendations for improvements, working with all the ministry teams through the 2024 budget process, and ensuring financial support for the church programs and projects while maintaining the financial integrity of all activities.

Description of Team’s Work:

- Coordinate the 2024 annual budget process, working closely with the ministry teams and Session.
- Monitor VPC and VLC financial operating performance vs. budget, reporting to Session monthly.
- Ensure the safety of the church’s financial assets and adherence to account policies and procedures.
- Continue to review and be aware of opportunities to enhance VPC’s financial position. Make recommendations when required.
- Working with the Building and Grounds Team to manage the disbursement of Capital Reserve funds.
- Stay aware of the long range and short-range initiatives & goals to support them financially.

2024 Accomplishments:

- Worked monthly with the B&G Team Moderator in developing a Capital Reserve report that also lists proposed projects for improvement. New classroom, for the VLC was a major undertaking.
- The BF&IOT participated in the VPC Ministry fair.
- Monthly review of the Endowment program and financial operating procedures established.
- Efforts were made to consolidate, eliminate and/or designate restricted funds. This was part of the 2020 Audit recommendations.
- Completed the audit of the 2023 financials with outside auditing firm.
- Recommendation to Session to approve that undesignated funds received by the church be distributed 50% to Endowment, 40% to Operating Budget, and 10% to Capital Budget. Approved by Session.
- Assigned individuals of the team to work with Personnel, B&G, VLC and Administration to better develop and understand the 2024 budget submittal.
- Developed a balanced and cost effective 2025 budget to submit to Session for approval.

Looking Forward:

- Continue to support increased membership in the church.
- Provide the funds necessary to ensure safety and required updates to the church structures and utilities.
- Ongoing process to look for alternatives and options to reduce costs.
- Reconcile all accounts monthly.



Bob Bush, Moderator

Team Membership:

Bob Bush—*Moderator*, Max Gould—*Treasurer*, Anne Parker Foote—*Session Liaison*
 Debbie Dawley, Penny O’Kelley, Terry Mountford,
 Staff—John Healy, *Financial Manager*, Pastor Robert Marrow, *Ex-Officio*

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. -Psalm 43:1



Treasurer's Report

Summary:

Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church (VPC) and the Vanderbilt Learning Center (VLC) 2024 financial results exceeded plan. The combined organizations had income of \$1,918K, better than budget by \$126K and 2023 by \$129K. Combined expenses were \$1,797K, just \$6K over plan and \$29K higher than last year. The combined Net was a surplus of \$121K, better than budget by \$121K and higher than 2023's Net by \$91K.

Church (VPC):

VPC had a full year income of \$1,319K, equal to 2023's income but \$49K higher than budget. Thanks to excellent support from our members and friends, Congregational gifts exceeded plan by \$23K. Program Income was over budget by \$12K because of increased interest and facility fees. Other income was over budget by \$14K. VPC expenses for the year were \$1,240K, less budget by \$30K and less than last year expenses by \$17K. The major variances were Building and Grounds being less than budget by \$60K while personnel (payroll) was over budget by \$29K. Net was a \$78K surplus better than the budgeted breakeven.

Learning Center (VLC):

The VLC full year income was \$599K, better than budget by \$78K. This reflects the addition of a classroom and a corresponding increase in the number of children enrolled. Expenses for the year were \$557K, higher than plan by \$35K. This is also related to the expansion of the learning center. Net was surplus of \$42K. The VLC also had a balanced budget.

Balance Sheet:

Current Assets decreased by \$11K during the year. This was primarily comprised of Operating Cash declining by \$425K offset by the Endowment Funds growing by \$394K and a \$20K increase in the Operating Investment Account. Fixed Assets increased by \$126K. The major areas were building improvements of \$56K and the purchase of a new piano for \$65K.

R. Max Gould, Treasurer

Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church and Learning Center Balance Sheet

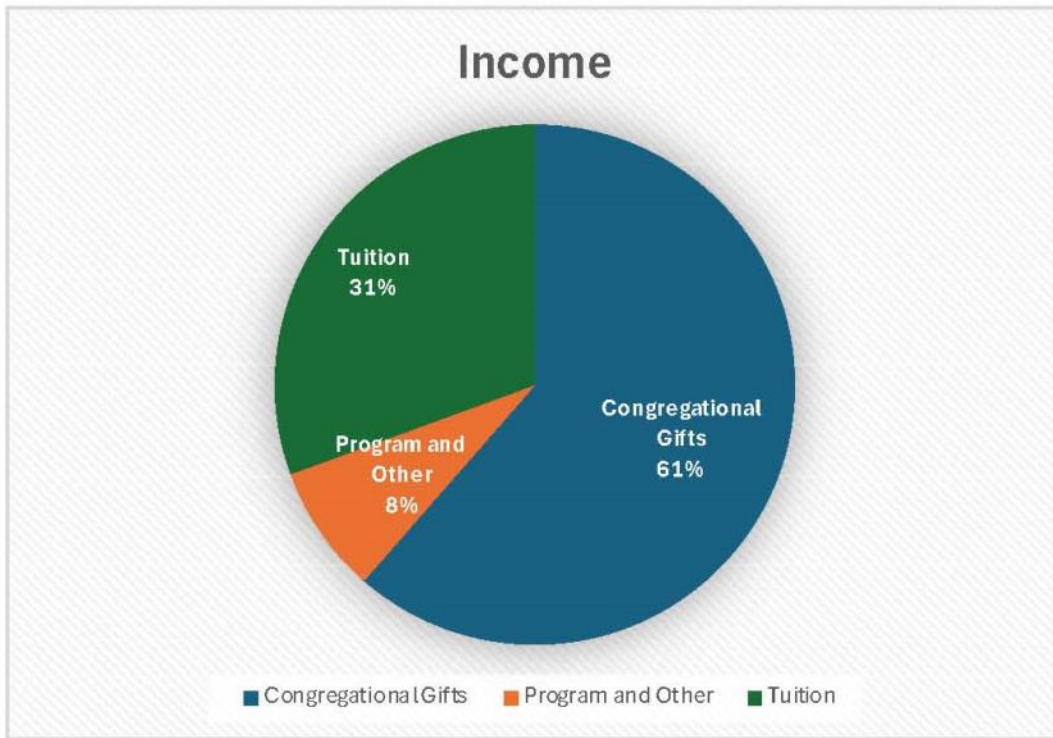
	2024	2023	2024 O/(U) 2023
Assets			
Current Assets			
Operating Checking Accounts	\$869,607	\$1,294,826	(\$425,219)
Investment Account	\$129,441	\$109,005	\$20,436
Endowment Accounts	\$1,439,195	\$1,045,556	\$393,639
Total Current Accounts	\$2,438,243	\$2,449,387	(\$11,144)
Fixed Assets			
Buildings	\$4,806,525	\$4,750,738	\$55,787
Land & Parking Lot	\$477,702	\$477,702	\$0
Furniture and Equipment	\$8,890,283	\$8,819,383	\$70,900
Total Fixed Assets	\$14,174,510	\$14,047,823	\$126,687
Total Assets	\$16,612,753	\$16,497,210	\$115,543
Liabilities & Net Assets			
Liabilities	\$0	\$4,734	(\$4,734)
Net Assets without Donor Restrictions	\$15,004,018	\$14,934,267	\$69,752
Net Assets with Donor Restrictons	\$1,608,735	\$1,558,209	\$50,526
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$16,612,754	\$16,497,210	\$115,544



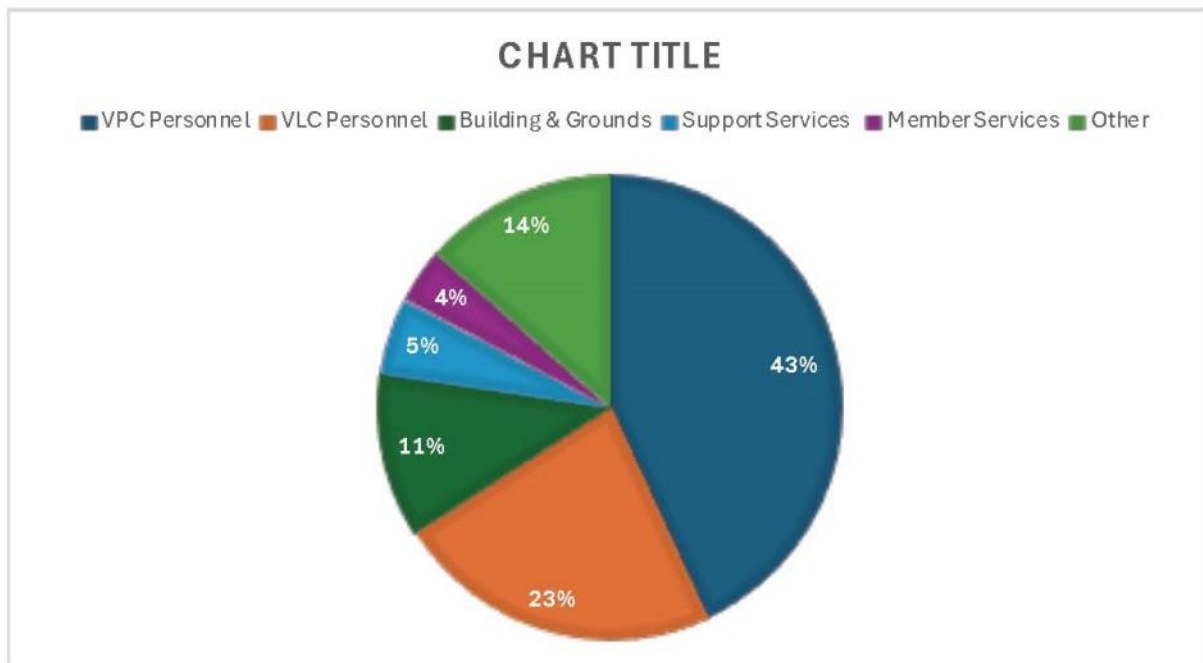
**Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church and Learning Center
2024 Financial Report**

	2024	2024	Act. B/(W)	2023	2024 B/(W)
	Actual	Budget	Budget	Actual	2023
Income					
VPC Income					
Congregational Gifts	\$1,178,078	\$1,155,000	\$23,078	\$1,209,895	(\$31,817)
Program	\$59,963	\$48,000	\$11,963	\$59,249	\$714
Other Oncome	\$80,629	\$67,000	\$13,629	\$50,204	\$30,425
VPC Total Income	\$1,318,670	\$1,270,000	\$48,670	\$1,319,348	(\$678)
VLC Income					
Tuition	\$586,342	\$447,550	\$138,792	\$448,218	\$138,124
Registration Fees	\$800	\$18,800	(\$18,000)	\$24,400	(\$23,600)
Parent Team & Other	\$11,938	\$55,000	(\$43,062)	\$5,480	\$6,458
VLC Total Income	\$599,080	\$521,350	\$77,730	\$478,098	\$120,982
Total VPC/VLC Income	\$1,917,750	\$1,791,350	\$126,400	\$1,797,446	\$120,304
Expenses					
VPC Expenses					
Personnel	\$829,135	\$800,000	(\$29,135)	\$812,693	(\$16,442)
Buildings & Gounds	\$222,941	\$283,000	\$60,059	\$285,233	\$62,292
Member Services	\$74,182	\$74,000	(\$182)	\$68,738	(\$5,444)
Support Services	\$104,107	\$103,000	(\$1,107)	\$90,214	(\$13,893)
Presbytery Support	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	(\$10,000)
VPC Total Expense	\$1,240,365	\$1,270,000	\$29,635	\$1,256,878	\$16,513
VLC Expenses					
Personnel	\$444,291	\$415,404	(\$28,887)	\$373,489	(\$70,802)
Administration	\$96,681	\$90,380	(\$6,301)	\$112,541	\$15,860
Classroom	\$15,818	\$15,560	(\$258)	\$24,782	\$8,964
VLC Total Expense	\$556,790	\$521,344	(\$35,446)	\$510,812	(\$45,978)
Total VPC/VLC Expense	\$1,797,155	\$1,791,344	(\$5,811)	\$1,767,690	(\$29,465)
VPC Net	\$78,305	\$0	\$78,305	\$62,470	\$15,835
VLC Net	\$42,290	\$6	\$42,284	(\$32,714)	\$75,004
Total VPC/VLC Net	\$120,595	\$6	\$120,589	\$29,756	\$90,839





Congregational Gifts	\$1,178,078
Program and Other	\$153,330
Tuition	\$586,342



VPC Personnel	\$839,135
VLC Personnel	\$444,291
Building & Grounds	\$222,941
Support Services	\$104,107
Member Services	\$74,182
Other	\$262,499



Buildings & Grounds Team

The Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church Buildings and Grounds Team oversees the maintenance and care of the church facility, property, and furnishings. This includes the church campus grounds, parking lots, and the residential house (manse) located next door at 1301 Piper Blvd. The team is also involved with developing the annual operational budget, determining capital replacement needs and recommending an annual capital budget allocation. As of the end of December 2024, Buildings and Grounds operated under budget and there was a contribution of Capital Funds for some projects.

Highlights of projects completed in 2024:

- Had fiber optic cable installed in the church
- Replaced Wi-Fi system to extend throughout the facility
- Had fire alarm system tied to wireless cell alarm as required by the county
- Replaced burned out light bulbs in ceiling of sanctuary
- Chancel lighting controller repaired/reprogrammed
- Installed pavers in section of Memorial Garden for safety and consistency
- Labeled entryways to church for Emergency Services
- Replaced broken parking stops (bumpers) in parking lot
- Replaced ice machines for kitchen and the Learning Center
- Maintained and replaced A/C units
- Added smoke detectors in Learning Center for replacement or new
- Maintained manse
- Replaced water fountain in Fellowship Hall
- Renewed all lines insurance, with coverage for wind/hurricane
- Plus extra assignments given to Custodian, Norman Barillas



Those projects completed using Capital Funding:

- Repainting of the church, washing the roof, replacement of some soffits
- Expansion of Vanderbilt Learning Center to add a new classroom
- Repairs and motor replacement of sliding entryway automatic doors to Narthex and Fellowship Hall

Plans and considerations for 2025:

- Continue to work on Norman's list
- Repair motors on screen in Harp Hall
- Playground resurfacing
- Repair chancel steps
- Replacement of fire protection backflow valve
- Prioritize a list of capital improvements

Peter DeBaun, Moderator

Session Liaisons: Nena Beynon and Bill Shouldice

Team Members: Nena Beynon, Dave Curtiss, Peter DeBaun, Doug Dunn, Price Lindsay, Bill Shouldice, Jerry Warnken, Becky Wheat

Ex-Officio Members: Norman Barillas, John Healy and Pastor Robert Marrow





Education & Family Ministry Team

We are all God’s children, growing together in Christ and answering God’s call to love each other and share God’s love with the world. The Education Ministry Team is constantly creating, implementing and evaluating programs based on the needs of our congregation and our community. We are a family — all of us together — young and old, near and far, in-person or live streaming!



Our team includes a number of dedicated volunteers who strive to support, encourage and equip all people to be faith leaders in the mission field where God plants us — church, school, office, neighborhood, car, soccer field, gym, studio... anywhere! We encourage corporate worship on Sundays and we also recognize that ministry happens 24 hours-a-day and seven days each week. It is a job for ALL and not the few. We are called to love one another, to be the church!

“Lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love.” -Ephesians 4:1-2

Planting Seeds & Blooming with Grace:



- Grew our education team with the addition of Tom Grundstrom, Adult Education Coordinator.
- Surveyed our congregation regarding adult education opportunities. Increased offerings and opportunities for study and fellowship.
- Fostered small group study through Friends In Faith, Pastor Rob’s Bible Study, Books Clubs, lunch and dinner gatherings.
- Continued Family Led Worship opportunities monthly. Facilitated Acolyte and Usher Training with our youth.
- VPC Children and Youth rallied for the Annual Souper Bowl of Caring and VPC delivered a check to the Grace Place Food Pantry in the amount of \$1,622, plus non-perishable food to help tackle hunger and homelessness in our community.
- Joyfully hosted our community Vacation Bible School for children ages three through fifth grade during “Scuba.” One of the most inspiring things about VBS is watching God work among us and through us! With the support of our amazing staff and more than 55 volunteers, we hosted 118 campers this year. We celebrated on VBS Sunday with song and testimony, and even added a beach gathering. Thank you all for sharing God’s love, for your prayers and donations, for encouraging one another and building each other up!
- Celebrated ministry, fellowship and community outreach opportunities for God’s glory through Graduation Sunday, Blessing of the School Year and Teacher Commissioning, Fall Education Kick Off, Trunk or Treat, the Ladies Christmas Tea,



Magi Processional, Flowering of the Cross, Holy Week and Easter activities, Beach Clean up, Meals of Hope, Relay for Life and more.

- Taught Chapel weekly in our Student Center with Mrs. Mikes and our VLC students and staff. Worked closely with our preschool ministry at the Vanderbilt Learning Center.



- Kicked off another successful year of Sunday school for children, youth and nursery ministry. Added a weekly offering opportunity and educated children and youth on the importance of giving. Taught the doxology.
- Created opportunities for intergenerational ministry and fellowship.
- Served missions of our church with time, talent and treasure including the LEGO Build Challenge for Habitat for Humanity and the Food Bowl Games for Meals of Hope.

- Encouraged spiritual growth and fellowship, together with the Endowment Ministry Team through the Birthday Club, sent eight, 5th and 6th grade girls to camp at Cedarkirk July 14-19. Invited youth to share their experiences during Sunday worship.
- Lent activities included distribution of devotionals for adults, children and families.
- Advent activities included distribution of a VPC devotional, family Advent calendars, family Advent readings and the beloved Unrehearsed Christmas Pageant. The Family Gingerbread House building contest is an annual favorite for everyone!
- Welcomed children, youth and families with children ages two through high school to “Wednesday Night Lights.”
- Collaborated with other ministry teams and staff members to accomplish our goals together.



We are blessed by the many hands and hearts that serve — staff, friends, family, volunteers and community. Thank you for all the ways you support and encourage this very special ministry.

Session Liaison: Amber Grider

Team Members: Jason Mikes, Brooke Vayda, Caitlin Whittington

Staff: Tom Grundstrom, Heather Mikes,



Congregational Nominating Committee

The Congregational Nominating Committee is charged with choosing members of our congregation to fulfill the responsibilities of the Session, the Board of Deacons and the congregational members-at-large of this committee. It meets on a monthly basis, sometimes twice a month, until this important work is completed. The result of this work is shared with the congregation during the annual meeting in March when the formal nomination, vote and approval process of the individuals chosen takes place.

Purpose: In accordance with the Book of Order, the committee serves as the official nominating committee of the congregation, to provide nominees for all vacancies, either annually or when vacancies occur, on the Session, the Board of Deacons and the Nominating Committee itself (“At-Large” members only). It is the committee’s responsibility to prayerfully consider those individuals who possess those “Gifts of the Spirit” that are essential to the mission and the ministry of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church.

Accomplishments: The Congregational Nominating Committee presented the list of nominees for the Session, the Board of Deacons and the congregational members-at-large of the Nominating Committee at the annual congregation meeting in March.

The members of the committee:

Susie Hilton, Moderator

Session Liaisons: **Jan Fern, Price Lindsay**

Deacon Liaison: **Jane Repp**

At-Large Representatives: **Pricilla Kutler, Mari-Bea Warnken, Steve Blad**

Ex-Officio: **Pastor Robert Marrow**



Frank T. Mohr, Jr. Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden was created as a place of peace and repose in which to inter the “cremains” of those who have expressed their desire to do so, either under the pavers or scattered. The Garden was dedicated 26 years ago to the glory of God and in honor of former Associate Pastor Frank T. Mohr, Jr.

The Memorial Garden committee’s purpose is to manage the Garden, the interments, ordering and installing name plates for the Garden wall, maintaining the Book of Remembrance in the Library, landscaping and maintenance. In 2024 there were 8 interments of “cremains” — 2 were scattered and 6 were interred. We also received 3 reservations of space.



The Memorial Garden, with its bench, flowers, and trees may be used by anyone for Meditation and Remembrance. The Garden is located in front of the church facing Piper Blvd. Access to the Memorial Garden is through the Church Library.

Thank you to Barbara Bonavita for office assistance and to Norman and Cesar for their assistance in the Garden. If you need information or a brochure about the Memorial Garden, contact the church office or pick one up in the Narthex.



Membership & Involvement Team



AIM (Adventures in Membership): Classes were held after worship the first Sunday of each month. New members were welcomed into the congregation on the following Sunday. Our team contacted new members to invite them to join us in activities.

All Church Pot Luck: was held in February: Always a fun event. This year's theme was "getting to know You." VPC loves to share food and friendship!

Greeting and Attendance: Two of our team are positioned at the front doors of the church on Sunday mornings with a smile and cheerful "Welcome to Vanderbilt!" Greeters assist the ushers with the collection, distribution of flowers, and a warm wish to parishioners for the week ahead. They collect the attendance sheets, making note of new attendees especially those who fill out a blue information card and keep tabs on the pews to make sure important information is available in the racks.

Birthday Cards: Our team takes turns sending out Birthday cards to members on their special day. We have found it is a good way to keep in touch with those we have not seen for a while. This endeavor seems much appreciated by our members.

Craig Lecture Series: Our team acted as volunteers and greeters for the Pittsburgh Seminary speaker.

Ministry Fair: On January 28, our Team created a poster listing our activities: a good way to advertise our efforts!

Tours of the Church: These occurred monthly during high season. Our team hosts these tours along with Heather Mikes. We have found that these are popular with new and old time members alike. They like to find out what is going

on in the West Wing of the church. This year we added an Organ Tour & Demonstration to the schedule. Jim Cochran is very informative and entertaining with lots of stories.

Fall events included the ever popular **Trunk or Treat & Chili Cook-off**. We participated by making chili and manning the information booth. It was a lively and fun event and a great use of our parking space!

Ladies Christmas Tea: Our second annual event was wonderful and enjoyed by all who attended. The theme was "Joy to the World" which featured Christmas Carol Bingo and music provided by VPC's pianist, Julie Carver. Two of our team members made scones. We raised \$900 for Misión Peniel. We were disappointed that more younger members could not attend but it was a very busy day for that age group. We will try for an earlier date next year.



New Members: During 2024, we welcomed 15 active and 5 affiliate for a total of 20 new members. Many of these new people are already actively involved in the life of our church.

It was noticed that there was a need for our single and widowed ladies to get together in a casual setting for fellowship. Thus, **Vanderbilt Ladies Who Lunch** was formed! This has proved to be a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a lovely luncheon at one of Naples' fine restaurants, have a devotional time and form lasting friendships.

Priscilla Kutler, Moderator

Membership & Involvement Team:

Joan Butler, Ruth Felipe, Jan Fern, Pat Gagliano, Ann Grundstrom, Barbara Hebert, Susie Hilton, Priscilla Kutler, Beth Lee, Geri Payne, Dianne Townsend, CC Waskey & Becky Wheat.





Mission Involvement Team

The goal of the Mission Team is to lead and support the congregation in serving the needs of our community. Each group we serve has a “point person” to guide us in fulfilling our duties with our missions.



Co-Chairs:
Toni Keefer and Becky Wheat
Team Members: Heather Mikes, Amber Grider, Arnie Alexander (Elder Liaison), Eliza Nevin, Karen Chappler, Molly Godley, Pete Rodino, Sarah Smith, Jack Tanner

Café of Life is a Mission located in Bonita Springs. We provide a hot meal, which we cook and serve, to between 100-120 people on the last Friday of the month.

Collier Harvest is dedicated to providing healthy food to our hungry neighbors. Collier Harvest has a monthly packing event.

We are still connected with our fellow church in Cuba through the **Cuban Mission Partnership**.

We keep up with **Grace Place** through our members who are on the board and support their many projects. Our children and youth collect non-perishable food items to benefit their food pantry through the **Souper Bowl of Caring**.

Habitat for Humanity of Collier County is part of a worldwide non-profit organization. We highlight Habitat in March during Habitat month and send

workers to help build homes in Collier County regularly. Including the funding sent directly to Habitat, Vanderbilt people provided \$238,220. We highlight **Heifer International** in December each year through the Heifer Fair which is very successful and well supported by our congregation.

The Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance is an alliance that works to eliminate overcrowded substandard and rental housing for farm workers and other resident families with low income. Pastor Rob and Julie Borden serve on their Board of Directors.

Through **Misión Peniel**, VPC participants help migrant workers in Immokalee by supporting them spiritually and with material care. We have members who regularly volunteer in person as well.

New Horizons is a faith based mission to help children and first generation Americans by providing tutoring and helping mentor them.

We work with the **Salvation Army's** summer camp by sponsoring children who can't afford to attend and also through the Toys for Tots program.

Weekend Power Pack has volunteers who pack approximately 1600 bags of meals for 40 children who are at or below the poverty level at Sabal Palm Elementary in Collier County.

2024 Mission Giving

Café of Life	\$50.00
Christmas Joy	\$550.00
Collier Harvest	\$30.00
Grace Place	\$766.00
Habitat for Humanity of Collier County	\$29,612.31
Heifer International	\$3,905.00
Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance, Inc.	\$6,859.00
Misión Peniel	\$1,499.00
New Horizons of SW FL	\$100.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$200.00
Peacemaking Offering	\$5.00
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance	\$2,502.35
Salvation Army	\$1,830.00
Souper Bowl of Caring	\$1,894.00
Special Missions	\$3,782.45
St. Matthews House	\$50.00
Weekend Power Pack Program	\$10,219.76
TOTAL	\$63,854.87



“The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”

- Revelations 22:2



Parish Life Ministry Team

Mission: The mission of the Parish Life Ministry Team is to organize and facilitate events that bring our church together in food, fellowship, and fun.

Goals:

- Provide ongoing coordination of our weekly Sunday fellowship
- Maintain kitchen organization, making sure the kitchen is adequately supplied with needed items
- Maintain table coverings and decorations for Fellowship Hall
- Assist other ministry teams throughout the calendar year to provide fellowship events that meet the needs of our congregation

Challenges:

- Getting new members for the team
- Getting church members and/or teams to sponsor Sunday Fellowship



Many hands make light work

Accomplishments:

- Provided Sunday fellowship for the congregation
- Planned and executed the Stewardship Brunch with the Stewardship Team
- Executed the Maundy Thursday Dinner with catering from Boston Beer Garden
- Provided appetizers and cookies for Christmas Concert
- Planned monthly table/room decor, maintained for the different holiday/seasons
- Facilitated Christmas and New Years fellowship with the congregation providing the treats
- Ordered and maintained kitchen supplies



Members:

Karen Rodino, Chair, Carol Jorgensen, Pat Rose
Bill VanFossen & Sue VanFossen



Personnel Oversight Team

This report summarizes the activities and discussions of the Personnel Oversight Team (POT) of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church (VPC) for the year 2024.

The POT is responsible for overseeing personnel matters, including budgets, salaries, staffing, and policies, to ensure a supportive and productive work environment for church staff.

Key Areas of Focus:

Budgets and Salaries:

The POT reviewed and discussed budget vs. actual personnel costs, approved pay increases for select staff, and examined 2025 benefit rates. Special attention was given to staff compensation in the context of a tight economic environment, emphasizing the importance of valuing staff contributions.

Payroll and Operations:

The transition of payroll operations to VPC's Finance Manager was a key area. Discussions focused on improving the separation of duties and risk reduction by shifting primary responsibility for payroll and HR administration to the church.

Job Descriptions and Performance Management:

The development of comprehensive job descriptions for church staff and a new performance management program were prioritized.

Personnel Files:

The team addressed the critical task of auditing and maintaining employee HR files. This involved cleanup, securing files, and scanning information for digital storage in Paylocity.

Staffing and Resignations:

The resignation of the preschool director was discussed, and the team recommended its acceptance with regret to the Session. Heather Mikes, VPC's Director of Christian Education, agreed to serve as Director.

Policies and Handbooks:

Updates to the VPC Personnel Policies and Staff Handbook were reviewed and approved for submission to the Session for final approval.

Committee Members:

Greg Borden, Chair

Steve Blad

Karen Chappler

Ellen Crown

Debbie Dawley

Max Gould

Carol Lindsay

Price Lindsay

Janet Minch

Jim Muir

Pete Rodino

Steve Schock

Ex-Officio:

Pastor Robert Marrow



~ 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

"But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work.

Be at peace among yourselves."



Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry has a long and successful history at VPC offering quality Christian care to our congregation. It began here 26 years ago under the direction and active participation of **Rev. Dr. Thomas P. Harp** and two members of our congregation. Over the following years, an additional 95 VPC members have been trained and commissioned to serve as Stephen Ministers, as well as 29 Stephen Leaders. Our stated Mission is: **To offer confidential and distinctively Christian care by providing equipped lay ministers to those who are experiencing life changing circumstances.**



"Bear one another's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."
Galatians 6:2.

During 2024 our newest Stephen Leader, **Michael Swain**, completed the Stephen Ministry Leadership Training program and was Commissioned as a Stephen Leader in early 2025. He joins our Leadership Team as the Coordinator & Supervision and will also assist **Jill Peterson** in training our 2025 Class of prospective Stephen Ministers that began on January 14, 2025.

2024 Stephen Leaders:

Our Stephen Leaders and their respective responsibilities are as follows:

Karen Chappler — *Coordinator & Referrals*

Carolyn Magarro — *Coordinator, Administration & "Journeying through Grief" booklet distribution*

Jody Nowry — *Coordinator & Awareness Building*

Jill Peterson — *Coordinator & Continuing Education and Training*

Mike Swain — *Coordinator & Supervision*

2024 Stephen Ministers:

Joan Butler

Barbara Green

Judy Jacobs,

Sandra Johnson (Leave of Absence)

Karen Negri

Eliza Nevin

Geri Payne

Lee Weeks

Our Stephen Minister monthly Supervision/ Continuing Education meetings usually take place on the second Tuesday of the month from 1-3pm and may either be attended in person (preferably) at VPC or via Zoom.

***Journeying through Grief* booklets:** Stephen Ministry has provided a series of four booklets in this series to those who have recently lost loved ones. These wonderful booklets are mailed on a timely basis by **Carolyn Magarro** together with a hand-written note over an eleven-month period. They are written by **Kenneth Haugk**, the founder of Stephen Ministry.

Should you have any interest in serving our congregation through Stephen Ministry or are considering receiving care from a Stephen Minister, we welcome your participation and invite you to contact any of our Stephen Leaders to find out more about it.

Respectfully submitted, **Carolyn Magarro**





Stewardship Team

From the Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church’s Session Handbook:

The mission of the Stewardship Ministry Team is to equip and motivate the members of our congregation with the desire to be good stewards of the gifts God has provided...

Time, Talents, and Financial Resources.

During 2024, the Stewardship Ministry Team conducted VPC’s annual stewardship campaign with the theme: **God’s Gift to Me...My Gift to God.** We continue to be blessed by the generosity this congregation provides. There were 91 pledges who increased their pledge amounts from last year, 24 new pledges received, and an increase in the average pledge overall of almost \$300 a year!



A special *Thank You* goes to the Parish Life Ministry Team, who volunteered at the Stewardship Celebration of Thanks banquet, and the members of the church staff who continue to provide us with excellent and much-needed support.

We invite you to consider serving on this Ministry Team that is so vital to our congregation. Stewardship is a ministry that depends on everyone’s time, talent, and treasure.

At the end of 2024, VPC has received pledges for our operating budget that amounted to over \$927,000. While this reflects a continued generous outpouring, we did miss our goal of \$1,200,000 and fell short of last year’s pledge total that was just over \$1,000,000.

Team Members:

Steve Woodring, Moderator
Michael Bevilacqua & Ellen Tanner

*“Freely you have received,
freely give.”*

- Matthew 10:8

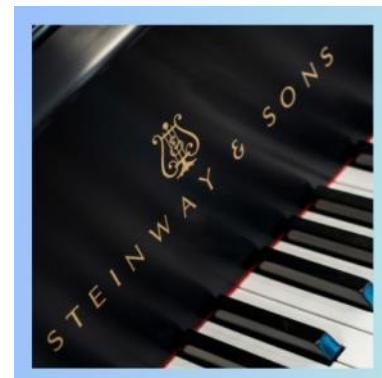




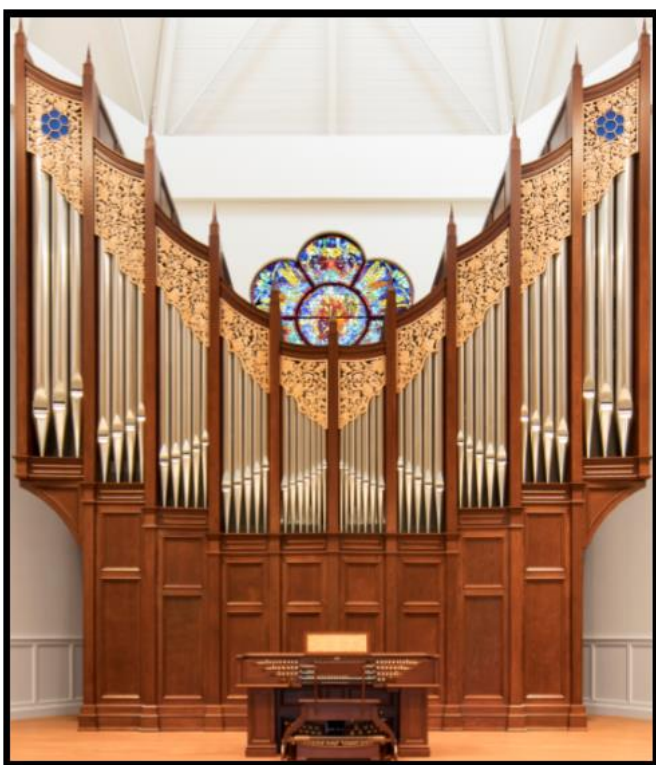
Worship, Music & Liturgical Arts Team

The WMLA team had a productive and impactful year in 2024, achieving significant progress on several key initiatives that enhanced the worship experience for our congregation.

New Steinway Piano: A major accomplishment was the purchase and delivery of a new Steinway piano, made possible through \$35,000 in generous private donations and a successful \$10,000 grant application to the Endowment Ministry Team. The piano was delivered in January 2025 and will enrich our worship services for years to come.



2024/2025 Concert Series: The concert series continued to thrive, with Vanderbilt hosting a diverse range of talented musicians and captivating concert events that were well-attended by the community.



Engaging Worship Experiences: Family Led Worship Sundays fostered active congregational involvement, and the new Hanging of the Greens event brought the community together to celebrate the holiday season and beautify our church.

Growing Handbell Choir: The Handbell Choir experienced continued growth and shared their musical talents through numerous performances throughout the year, adding a unique and uplifting element to our worship services.

Enhanced Organization: A new internal "working calendar" was implemented to streamline communication and coordination within the WMLA team, ensuring key events and dates are effectively managed.



*Worship the LORD with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.
- Psalm 100*

Committee Members:

Pastor Robert Marrow, Dr. James Cochran, Michele Byrd, Heather Mikes, Greg Borden (*Moderator*), Gordon Black, Steve Kutler, Bob Martin, Mary Lynn Myers, and Sue Van Fossen

**"The trees of the forest
will sing for joy!"
-Psalm 96:12**



From the Board of Deacons



Deacons serve the church body and support the church staff in whatever way they are called. Deacons are the “servants” or “caregivers” of the congregation. It is a calling and a privilege for each member of the Board of Deacons to serve others in Christ’s name.

Matthew 25:35-40

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

The specific ministries are: Assisted Living Visitations, Bereavement Receptions, Blood Drives, Communion Preparation, Communion Serving, Home Communion Serving, Flower Delivery, Sunday Letters of Joys and Concerns, and Deacon of the Day.



Our Deacon Assisted Living team visited **23** members at **10** different assisted living facilities in the area throughout each month. The Deacons signed up to be Deacon of the Day and reached out through visits, telephone calls and card ministries to numerous

individuals who were hospitalized or needed our support. The Sunday Letters team prepared **177** letters to be sent to those on our prayer list. The Monthly Communion team members prepared the elements for **12** monthly services and when specially requested. These were served in person at church, as well as in the homes of our members who could not attend worship service. Easter Lilies and Christmas flowers were personally delivered to many members after our special services. Our Blood Drive team hosted **4** Blood Drives which were once again successful and helped fill a need in our community, with **54** pints of blood being collected which impacted **162** lives positively. The Bereavement Receptions team served **7** receptions following memorial services. Our Vanderbilt Presbyterian

Deacons sponsored **8** children to attend summer camp at Salvation Army’s Camp Keystone.

As we look ahead to the coming year, we are filled with gratitude for God’s continued blessings and excited to further our mission together.

Respectfully submitted, **Ann Grundstrom**, *Moderator*



Class of 2024

Becca Acx
Michael Bevilacqua
Jan Fern
Judith Jacobs
Jill Peterson
Todd Truax
Lee Weeks

Class of 2025

Karen Chappler
Sharon Doggett
Jill Dunn
Jerry Grandey
Carol Lindsay
Price Lindsay
Barbara McElwaine

Class of 2026

Jeff Berger
Joan Butler
Tom Hauschild
Barbara Hebert
Dave Hinkler
Stacia Hinkler
Jane Repp

Class of 2027

Janie Ballurio
Martha Gates
Ann Grundstrom
Tim Riggers
Harriet Shouldice
Anne Smith
Ellen Tanner



From the Endowment Ministry Team



Purpose. The Endowment Fund was established on March 26, 2007, when Session approved the Original Declaration and Operations. The 2012 Annual Report listed 29 members of the "Legacy Society Members" at that time. In 2015, the Endowment Trust concept was authorized by the Session and the Trust was incorporated in Florida. The Endowment Fund Ministry is designed to provide funds outside of the operating budget to further the ministry of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church. Ordinarily, to conserve the purchasing power of the trust assets, annual distributions cannot exceed 5% of the average total assets for the last three years (trailing 12 quarters). Five of the six funds have donor guidelines about how the distributions can be utilized. Distribution requests are submitted to the Session and the Endowment Ministry Team for approval.

Portfolio Management. All six endowment funds are managed by the New Covenant Trust Company, a subsidiary of the Presbyterian Foundation. The accounts are invested in mutual funds. Financial markets were positive in 2024. The value of our endowment funds as of 12/31/24 was \$1,199,107.42. Our investments, aided by new contributions, increased approximately 22% in 2024. Since its inception (12/1/2016), the total fund return has been 6.02% on an annualized basis. The team regularly meets with our fund manager to evaluate the investment strategies.

Distributions. During 2024, the Endowment Ministry Team, with Session approval, distributed funds from the Craig Lecture Series, the General Fund, the Birthday and Anniversary Club, and Fors Habitat for Humanity Fund. The Endowment Ministry Team was delighted to provide distributions for several ministry opportunities including enabling a group of middle school youth to attend Cedarkirk, establishing an annual donation to Habitat for Humanity, presenting the annual James Craig Lecture Series, contributing a portion to the purchase of the sanctuary Steinway piano, and providing a Vanderbilt Learning Center Scholarship.

Our goals for 2025 are to distribute up to 4% of the total trailing three years' average to ministry efforts and be more actively involved in educating the congregation about the fund and how to contribute gifts to the Endowment Funds. The Endowment received generous legacy gifts from estate settlements in 2024. Legacy gifts minus administrative expenses totaled \$118,494 in Net additions for the calendar year.

Endowment Fund Market Values as of 12/31/2024	
James Craig Lecture Fund	\$ 120,905.99
Cindy Craig Theological Education Fund	\$ 28,924.61
Fors Habitat for Humanity Fund	\$ 83,212.85
Sound Board and Music Fund	\$ 16,621.14
Birthday and Anniversary Club	\$ 245,712.77
General Endowment Fund	\$ 703,730.06

2024 Members:
Julie Borden, Chair, Steve Blad, Debbie Dawley, Treasurer, Doug Dunn, Don Fern, Steve Kutler, Carolyn Magarro, Secretary, Jon White (through 5/31/24), Charles Whittington, Jackie Woodring, Marketing Ex-Officio:
Max Gould, Church Treasurer, John Healy, Pastor Robert Marrow
Session Liaison:
Max Gould (through 5/31/24), Steve Woodring



If anyone has an interest in contributing to one of the endowment funds, either now or through their will or other arrangements, please contact John Healy at 239-597-5410, or email him at JHealy@vpcnaples.org.

Julie Borden, Chair



The Vanderbilt Learning Center



The Vanderbilt Learning Center (VLC) is a lively ministry and mission of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church (VPC). The Learning Center Team works closely with church staff and operates under the watchful eye and loving heart of our Director of Christian Education, Heather Mikes. The team consists of families, teachers and staff working together to support school operations, raise funds for educational initiatives, generate opportunities for student enrichment, and create a nurturing environment for both the enrolled students and their families. There is great joy in the daily work of building strong academic foundations and positive attitudes toward God, self, friends, family and learning.

Vision Statement:

The Vanderbilt Learning Center provides young children ages two through six with meaningful opportunities to grow and develop with their peers in a high-quality, nurturing, faith-based environment. Its small group instruction, artistic enrichments and family-oriented programming ensure every child and family a joyful learning experience.

Mission Statement:

The students, families and staff of the Vanderbilt Learning Center are committed to becoming more thoughtful, caring and intelligent as we delight in our educational journey. We are getting to know God in our lives and working toward creating a more compassionate world. The Learning Center is a program for the whole child — providing a service to the community through the highest early childhood education to meet the physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs of each individual child in a loving, Christian environment.



The 2024 VPC Annual Report encompasses two consecutive school years at VLC: 2023-24 (January to July) and 2024-2025 (August to December).

VLC Team Efforts and Accomplishments:

- Instructed, loved, supported and encouraged 113 amazing hearts and minds in our student body.
- Graduated 12 bright, shining kindergarten students and 31 pre-kindergarten students.
- Completed Education Wing renovations to update our shared facility, including painting all hallways, baseboard replacement and relocation the teacher resource room and Dr. Jim’s music office.
- Created a beautiful new kindergarten classroom in Schock Chapel.
- Opened two new classrooms (three classes) for PK2 and PK3 to accommodate our incoming VLC siblings and alumni families (22 additional students).
- Created a new multi-sensory Learning Lab, together with the Parent Team. The Learning Lab hosts monthly Science visits by Parent Team volunteers and is available to teachers and students throughout the week for continued exploration. The Learning Lab is a multipurpose, creative classroom space designed to encourage children to explore and investigate



through sensory experiences including science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM). It's also a great space for rainy day activities and a positive place to promote self-calming strategies when needed. Thank you Parent Team for this incredible enrichment opportunity. Amazing things truly happen here!



- Welcomed new teachers and assistants to the team - Mrs. Kimberly (Krick) Brooks (PK4), Ms. McKenna Eichholtz (PK3), Mrs. Caitlin Fortier (PK2), Ms. Sabrina McBride (PK4), Mrs. Tami Micheli (PK3), Mrs. Dominique Nash (PK2), Ms. Monica Soyka (P2) and Mrs. Brooke Vayda (PK3).



- Commissioned and prayer over 25 staff members during our Back to School Blessing.
- Celebrated the ministry of Mrs. Jennifer Crossan, our dedicated preschool director, as she changed careers and resigned in September 2024.
- Restructured Christian Education leadership. Mrs. Mikes now serves as director of Christian Education and the Learning Center.
- Nurtured our relationship with God in Chapel with Heather Mikes and Music with Dr. James Cochran.
- Honored our dedicated teachers and staff during Teacher Appreciation Week.
- Navigated an active hurricane season, including emergency school cancelations, power outages and CCPS calendar adjustments.
- Produced and performed two concerts for students and families — Christmas and Spring/Graduation.
- Presented the Winter Carnival Family FUNdraiser for school, church and community participation.
- Learned about the importance of our community connections with visits from CCSO, NNFD, Dr. Lastres (Fantasea Pediatric Dentistry) and others throughout the year.
- Enhanced our educational journeys with fellowship through Parent Team activities like Family Movie Night, Spirit Dinners, playdates and more!
- Joyfully participated in Wednesday Night Lights, Trunk or Treat, the Ladies Christmas Tea, Unrehearsed Christmas Pageant and so many more exciting events in the life of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church and Vanderbilt Learning Center!
- Led by example in charitable giving to missions of VPC including the Souper Bowl of Caring, the Salvation Army and Misión Peniel Christmas Toy Drive, and the Grace Place Food Pantry. VLC families collected supplies for Humane Society Naples following instructional visits to the school in January and “Coins For A Cause” to benefit Habitat for Humanity. We are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this world and want our students to understand that they are connected to a much larger community. We see God’s light and love through them and encourage them to share it with others!





Additional Ministry Groups

VPC Book Club

The VPC Monday Afternoon Book Club is a group of women who enjoy reading and discussing together what they have read. We meet at 1:30 pm on the third Monday of the month, October through April. The meetings are usually at the church. However, luncheons are scheduled at a local restaurant in December and April in lieu of the regular meeting. The group decides on the books to read each season. Most choices are recent fiction. Occasionally, we read nonfiction or a classic. The group welcomes all interested readers to join them for discussion and camaraderie.

- Peggy Landon



Quilting Sisters of VPC

The Quilting Sisters of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church continued their good works in 2024. Quilts were distributed to both Habitat for Humanity and Friends of Foster Children. We have everything needed to make a quilt at the church, including working machines. We are welcoming and we teach. People with all levels of sewing skills have the ability to make a quilt. If you are daunted by the quilting and only want to piece quilt tops, we have willing sewers to complete your projects. Please watch the bulletin for the Quilting Sisters meetings. We welcome new sewers to join our prayer and sewing circle.

- Sharon Messmore

Handcrafting Group

The Handcrafting Group has been busy with our projects. We have from about 6 members in the summer and up to 14 in season. We work on individual projects mainly knitting, crochet and beading. We usually have a show and tell about completed projects at the beginning of our time together. We meet on Thursday afternoons from 3-6pm. All are welcome to come and have conversation and crafting.

- Karen Chappler

Mah Jongg Club

Mah Jongg is a popular tile-based game that started in China, brought to the United States in the early 1900's, and then brought to VPC in 2022! We have grown into a fun-loving group of 15 players who enjoy playing Mah Jongg every Thursday from 1-3pm, in Harp Hall. We play at the intermediate level and find that we continue to learn from each other. We welcome new members! If interested in joining us, please contact Geri Payne at paynegnb@comcast.net.

- Geri Payne

Recycled Card Ministry

Sonja Cookson comes to the church regularly to make and display all the beautiful recycled cards found in the office. She is looking for new people that are creative and want to help. We also accept donations of cards. You can pick up a recycled card in the office for almost any occasion.

VandeReaders

VandeReaders is a readers theater group which means we do not memorize but read. In 2024 our participation has been at the church. We read for both the Good Friday service and the Choir Christmas concert. Most of us are also liturgists. Members: Janie Ballurio, Karen Chappler, Judy Davis, Molly Godley, Jerry Grandey, Susie Hilton, Jim Muir, Ellen Tanner and Sue Van Fossen

- Sue Van Fossen





New Members

We give thanks to God for those members who joined Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church in 2024.

- ◆ Jeanie Darnell
- ◆ Noel & Shanna Davies
- ◆ Ailie Donlon
- ◆ Pat Gagliano
- ◆ Joan Harter
- ◆ James Hofert & Margaret Horstman
- ◆ Carol Jorgensen
- ◆ Ed & Pat Kirby
- ◆ Reid, Susie & Grant Lennertz
- ◆ Cynthia MacLeod
- ◆ Gillian & William Raymond
- ◆ Bobby & Danielle Riddick
- ◆ Michael Swain
- ◆ Lynn Thomas
- ◆ David & Vicki Walker
- ◆ Caitlin & Charles Whittington



In Memoriam

We grieve the loss of church members who died in 2024.

- † Jack Bell
- † Edna Benton
- † Bayne Carew
- † Robert Cassens
- † Bill Chandley
- † Bill Dersch
- † Marlene Everson
- † Elsie Fessler
- † Dale Free
- † Nadine Gaylord
- † Bud Getman
- † Richard Grunert
- † Ron Guthy
- † Gloria Hagopian
- † Bunny Heitmann
- † Clark Higgins
- † Bob Kassing
- † Chester Kauffman
- † Walter Lee
- † Bob Lockard
- † Marilyn McKee
- † Virginia McNabb
- † Dan Meeuwsen
- † Judy Meissner
- † Tom Messmore
- † June Peterson
- † Marjorie Renth
- † Donna Riley
- † Charlene Roth
- † Woody Schneider
- † Elizabeth Van Mater
- † Marion Wayenberg
- † Dot Williams
- † Mary Wollaston

Lord, I maintain my hope in You, and I hold onto the assurance that what I am praying for is already accomplished in the name of Jesus. Your Word promises, "no good thing does He withhold from those that walk uprightly" (Psalm 84:11). I wait upon You for Your definition of the "good thing." You will not withhold from me. As David prayed in Psalm 18:1: "I love you, Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold." Amen.



Vanderbilt
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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