



BANNER ELK
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
PC(USA) Congregation

Banner Elk Presbyterian Church

2023 Annual Report

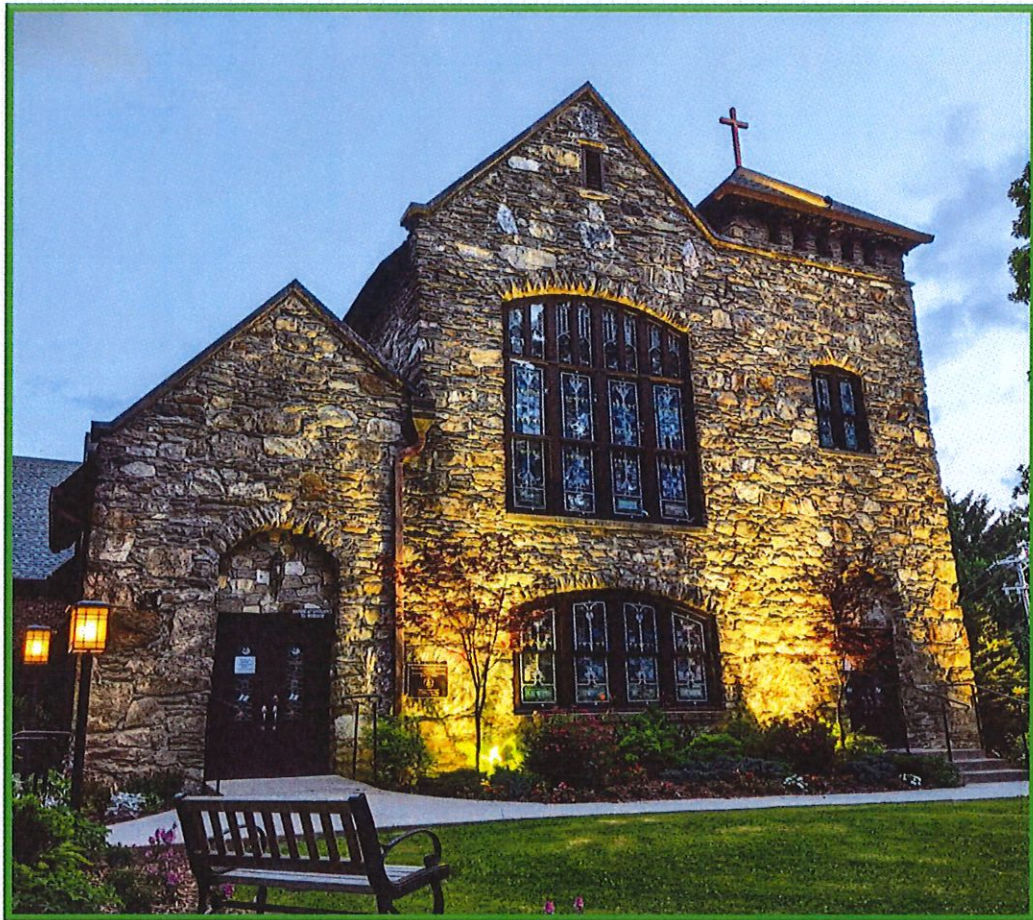


Photo Courtesy Mark File

The primary purposes of our 2024 Annual Meeting are:

- 1. To celebrate God's blessings in 2023**
- 2. To present the 2024 Budget**



Annual Report 2023

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Pastor's Report for 2023

Dear BEPC Family,

An annual report is sort of like a working out – you don't especially look forward to it, but in the end, it is good for you. It helps to look back and take stock before moving forward. The challenge for me has always been how to measure ourselves as a church. As Biblical people, we know that there will always be a difference between how we may measure ourselves and how God measures us. Our desire and prayer are that God is pleased by what has take place in our congregation this past year.

For me personally, there have been four highlights in 2023. The first is our worship life – the energy and anticipation prior to the service, the singing of hymns, beautiful and inspiring music offered by our choir and musicians, and the wonderful fellowship that happens after worship. How blessed we are!

The second highlight is all the work we have done toward preparing to call our next pastor. This includes the excellent work of the Mission Study Task Force, including the fantastic response to the Holy Cow! survey. It includes the election and commissioning of our top-notch Pastor Nominating Committee. And it includes all the work this committee has done since October to get us to where we are now – actively searching for our next pastor. As you know, this IS my first rodeo when it comes to interim ministry, and I have really enjoyed this part of my work.

The third highlight was our 130th Anniversary Celebration this past summer. Thanks to such creative and diligent planning by our anniversary team, we were once again reminded of and inspired by the legacy of mission that has been passed down to us by our forebears. On these cold, snowy, windy nights, I am reminded of Rev. Edgar Tufts riding miles on horseback to preach in a distant church or care for a family in need. I am reminded of Dr. W.C. Tate doing the same to deliver a baby or perform emergency surgery. This summer we were all reminded of the sacrifice and faithfulness of all those saints who have gone before us and on whose shoulders we now stand. What a privilege!

The fourth and final highlight for me has been to witness this congregation, over the period of an entire year, just being who you are! Joyful, generous, caring, welcoming, enthusiastic, devoted, hopeful, hard-working, flexible, and fun. And I could go on! It is an honor and privilege to spend this season of transition with such wonderful people.

By any measure, 2023 has been a good year for BEPC. Even a great year! Thank you BEPC for who you are and who God is making you.

In Christ's service,

Whit

Clerk's Annual Report 2023

New Members/ Affiliate Members (28)

Youth Profession of Faith: Kallista Rae Toler, Spencer Jesse Pope, Eriana Fidler (3)

Youth Baptism: Kallista Rae Toler, 5-28-2023 (1)

Reaffirmation of Faith: Laurent (Larry) Donald & Virginia (Anne) Fontaine, Nina Kay Allbert, Cynthia H. Macri, James (Jim) Allen Long, Alex Christiana (6)

Letter of Membership Transfer: Michael Lee & Patti Stevenson, Bill Hodges, Wesley (Wes) & Cindy Stonebraker Reed, Mike Myrick, Jim & Ginger Bruce, Roger & Gayle Rulifson, Mike Toler, John Tate, Susie & Doug Tart, Jim & Dee Ferguson, Walt & AnnaDell Pharr (18)

New Affiliate Members: Anne-Lyndsay Beall (1)

Members/Affiliate Members: Transferred Out/Request/Inactive List/Moved/Deceased (27)

Members Placed on the Inactive List: Matthew & Beth Garrett, Will Garrett, Zach Garrett, Tom & Lise Haizlip, Amy Jones, Michael Kirkpatrick, Mary Whiteacre Marine, Joel Owen, Bryce Pittman, Steve & Diane Rydell, Amy Tarrant, Bill & Maureen Walker, Jeremiah & Susan West. (18)

Removed from Affiliate Roll: Martha Williams by request (moved & not returning)(1)

Removed from Communication by request: Dr. Brad Knowles (1)

Members Transferred Out: Catherine Upchurch to Highland Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Gore Stevens restored from Inactive Roll and Transferred to Greystone Baptist Church, Raleigh, NC; Dorie Simpson to Chapel in the Grove, Lakeland, FL; Sarah Quaye to Grey Stone Church, Durham (4)

Deceased Members: Vivian Howard, 7-1-2023; Elizabeth (Libby) McGowan, 9-14-2023 (2)

Deceased Affiliate Member: Charles (Chuck) Portaro, 5-10-2023 (1)

Deceased Former Member and Elder: Marietta Elsner Breidenthal, 1-8-2023;

Deceased Friends of the Church: Rev. Ted Roeling 3-8-2023; Cheryl Long, 6-17-2023; Sharon Osteen 9-2-23, Bob Scott, 9-30-23; Betty Goolsby, 10-29-2023 (5)

Funeral/Memorial Service: Cheryl Long, 8-7-2023; Vivian Howard, 8-19-2023; Elizabeth (Libby) McGowan 9-23,2023 (3)

Former Member and Elder Columbarium Internment: Marietta Elsner Breidenthal, 4-22-2023 (1)

Births: Jackson Lee Austin, 3-14-2023, son of Mary Gilmer and great-grandson of Dudley Gilmer; Owen Taylor Winfrey, 7-18-2023, son of Drs. Brandon and Amanda Carringer Winfrey, grandson of Feild & Laura Russell; James Leo Hoffman IV, son of Emma and James Hoffman, grandson of Diane & Alfred Earwood, 8-30-23. (3)

Elder Ordinations/Installations: Ordination and Installation for Debbi Hagna, Class of 2025; Installation for Sara Brewer and Nancy Owen, Class of 2025; Laura Russell, Class of 2023 on 1-22-23. Ann McConnell, Class of 2025 on February 15, 2023. (5)

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Carter, Clerk of Session

Nominating Committee Annual Report 2023

The Nominating Committee met in early October to begin the process of discerning the names of four elders to serve in the class of 2026. Most subsequent communication was done via e-mail. Our work resulted in presenting the following members to be elected by the congregation in a meeting in mid-November: Jim Ferguson, Pam Hardin, Jim Jones, and Wes Reed. They were unanimously elected and will begin serving their three-year terms in January 2024.

Committee members included: Sara Brewer, Rick Owen, Ann Swinkola, Debi Tornow, Whit Malone, and Donna Dicks, chairman.

Submitted by Donna Dicks

Personnel Committee Annual Report 2023

Purpose and Responsibilities: Determine, define, and fill new positions for staff as necessary. Oversee and recommend activities, duties and responsibilities for each staff member. Evaluation of each staff member to be conducted on an annual basis with some positions more frequently if deemed necessary.

Accomplishments This Year:

1. Solicited input from each Staff to assure their position descriptions match the actual duties being performed.
2. Staff evaluations to be moved to June. The Personnel Committee will be evaluating the Music Department as well.
3. Staff completed self-evaluation forms and at the Pastor's request a confidential assessment of his interaction with staff was included.
4. Maintained Personnel files in the locked fireproof box in the church office.
5. A Housing Allowance for the pastor was approved to start May 1 and continue to May 2024. Pastor will pay utilities.
6. The Staff salary increase of 3% was approved to continue July through December. An increase of 5% was recommended for 2024.
7. The Committee met in December to address possible pay increase for Handbell Choir director. The increase was approved.
8. A Christmas gift was presented to each staff member as was planned in the 2023 budget.
9. In December, a letter was sent to all church members informing them of the opportunity to send Love Offering for Rev. Dr. Whit Malone. The offering was collected and presented to him during the December 17 service.

2024 Goals and Objectives:

Continue to refine and assess duties and responsibilities of staff to ensure efficient and equitable workload distribution. Participate as appropriate in the Call of the next Pastor

Members: McNair Tornow, Chair, Murray Haber, Debbie Petree, Rick Owen, Donna Andrews, Whit Malone

Submitted by Donna Andrews

Mission Committee Annual Report 2023

This year our church began with a much reduced budget and, out of necessity, we were forced to reduce our benevolence giving at the start. However, due to an abundance of God's blessing and your generosity, our church was able to return to a level of benevolent giving similar to previous years, \$65,000 - a healthy 18% of the overall budget. Over and above these mission gifts, our church gave thousands of dollars to specific local and global needs, either independently or in partnership with the Presbytery of Western North Carolina.

Some of the local missions include:

- Reaching Avery Ministries (RAM), a ministry providing emergency assistance, food, and home repairs to families in need
- Avery Habitat for Humanity
- Yellow Mountain Enterprises, serving adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities
- Feeding Avery Families
- Blue Ridge Partnership for Children, a partner in Smart Start, a program for parents and the youngest children
- OASIS, a domestic violence prevention, education, and protection center
- New Opportunities School for Women, enriches needy Appalachian women
- Time for a Change, a formula and diapers program for families in need
- Avery Schools Clothes Closet, a clothes closet for students in need
- Mayland Fellowship, a PC(USA) church community from Mitchell, Avery, and Yancy counties
- Emergency Financial Aid LMC, available to LMC students through the financial aid office
- Children's Hope Alliance, providing safe homes and pathways to healing for children

Global missions we support include:

- our sister church in Guatemala, Arca de Noé, with more efficient and cleaner vented cookstoves, and with education scholarships
- our presbytery's outreach in Malawi. Specifically, this year the women of Banner Elk Presbyterian Church constructed washable feminine hygiene products for schoolgirls there which were delivered by the presbytery's delegation to Malawi
- the Causby China Mission effort, a husband and wife team who teach and minister in China

We also heartily support the Presbytery of Western North Carolina which provides for the needs of almost 100 area PC(USA) churches and their ministers.

Among the presbytery's functions are:

- Congregational care and counsel during times of growth, conflict, or dissolution
- Provision of transitional ministers to churches
- Education and training of commissioned pastors through the Church Leadership School
- Support, instruction, and guidance for ministerial candidates
- Coordination and administration of international missions and disaster relief
- Pastoral care for ministers
- Affordable housing funding
- Providing youth scholarships for Camp Grier
- Awarding grants to combat food insecurity

Members: Laura Russell, chair, Dan Akerblom, Ginger Bruce, Donna Dicks, Barbara Hosbein, Carolyn Jones, Carol Larson, Murry Haber, Gayle Rulifson, Barbara Sundstrom, David Tate

Submitted by Laura Russell

Communication and Marketing Annual Report 2023

Working with several committees including Worship and Membership, marketing and communication efforts included both digital and print. Also, "open doors" community events brought many visitors into the church. Below is a sampling of initiatives:

- The BEPC Facebook posts reached 42,500 people during 2023! Several times each week, videos of special music, photos of the life of the church and event promotions were posted. These were shared by many, reaching an audience in many states and several countries. This total is up 31% over last year.
- The 40-page church website was visited by an average of 600 people each month – mostly visitors and out-of-towners looking for church related info. The website and our Google Maps listing are optimized to appear in results of all search engines for added exposure. Special sections include history, missions, preschool and seasonal events.
- Coordination and promotion for church's 130th Anniversary in July included a special emphasis for each worship service plus many other celebratory events such as a guided hike, after hours ice cream party for BE Chamber of Commerce, Feeding Avery Families service day, picnic, open house for July 4th Parade, church workday and more. International mission fundraiser received \$6,000+ for cookstoves for Guatemala families.
- Updated and reprinted 600 copies of the History Booklet to distribute all year, mostly to visitors.
- Created flyer, sent press release and marketed the Community Good Friday Service.
- Designed Devotional Booklet for Stewardship Campaign.
- Created a "Welcome Banner" for college student move-in and coordinated an "open doors" event with snack table on the lawn for move-in weekend and stocking of the student food pantry.
- Updated and printed the "general" church tri-fold brochure that focuses on our mission outreach. It is stocked in the pew racks.
- Sent press releases to Avery Journal, Mountain Times and HCPress, including Kirkin' O' the Tartans, Chamber Open House and 130th events.
- Promotion of the Advent Season included:
 - Postcard (printed 500) with services and events
 - Flyer for Breakfast with Santa
 - Heavy promotion of the Community Carol Sing with flyers, press release, Facebook promotion, banner, and posters hung throughout town. Approximately 75% of the 225 attendees were visitors.
 - Special online promotion of Christmas Eve service resulted in an overflow crowd of 300+ with 80% visitors.
- Partnered with both the Banner Elk and Avery County Chamber of Commerce to promote special events at the church.
- Additional communications from the church office to members:
 - "Press-Byterian Weekly" emailed to 386 addresses.
 - "Press-Byterian" printed newsletter mailed the first of each month.
 - The weekly audio devotional podcast "Your Pastor's Voice" on Buzzsprout: 46 episodes in 2023 with 4,185 downloads in 11 countries

Submitted by Mark File

Media/Technology Committee Annual Report 2023

- Ensured AV technician position was manned for all services.
- Upgraded Pastor microphone for better sound capture during services.
- Upgraded Alisa's workstation due to obsolescence.
- Upgraded File server in support of archived files and back up services.
- Upgraded pulpit microphone.

Submitted by William Dethlefs

Worship Committee Annual Report 2023

Members: Janet Speer (chair), Debbi Tornow (Assistant chair), Nina Allbert, Luana Anderson, Sara Brewer, Martha Burns, Suzie Fisk, David Soyers, Angela Todd, Barbara Sunderman. Reverend Whit Malone attends all meetings.

- Worship received high marks of satisfaction in the "Holy Cow" survey
- Worship Committee met monthly on the second Wednesday with one exception
- Budget was not quite enough to cover organ tuning costs, so we adjusted other line items.
- Asked and received a larger budget for 2024
- Organized the move to two services in the summer, including time for Sunday School
- Organized the transition to full communion
- Organized, with Communications, summer events supporting the 130th anniversary
- Provided several Worship Arts events
- Organized special seasonal services: Lent season, Advent season, Pentecost
- Provided by Worship committee
 - Communion; set up and clean up
 - Ushers: Organization and training
 - Liturgists: listing and one training
 - Readiness for congregational needs (water, questions answered, greeting, temperature)
 - Oversee flowers and weddings
 - Church appearance (banners, displays, paraments)
 - Provide music for services
 - Take care of supply pastors (welcome, give stipend, etc.)
 - Oversee budget
 - Punch on the lawn

Submitted by Janet Speer

Music Ministry Annual Report 2023

It has been our great pleasure to create worship music throughout 2023 with our many talented musicians/vocalists. We are so blessed by all those who share their musical gifts. We remain intentional about including diverse musical styles and genre to assure BEPC will have inspirational music with something that will appeal to everyone. Nina notes that our choral selections for the year included music spanning 900 years! During 2023, in addition to organ, piano, and handbells, we've enjoyed the sounds of flute, saxophone, bagpipes, timpani and djembe drums, violin, cello, and even a bluegrass string band.

Our choir family shares enjoyable and inspiring rehearsals as we prepare choral offerings to help lead in worship. Nina continues to create rehearsal tracks for each vocal part to aid members with learning our music. To assure adequate part coverage, we utilize up to four section leaders who receive a small stipend for attendance. We're also excited to host a choir scholarship program for Lees-McRae College students to help foster positive choral learning experiences. David strives to provide interesting, appropriate service music and hymn accompaniment that fosters confident congregational singing.

Hosting our third annual Community Carol Sing was a fun community outreach. Our music and worship leaders enjoyed participating in the community Christmas service hosted by Mt. Calvary Baptist church. We also joined the handbells in a Christmas music program that Suzie Fisk planned at The Lifecare Center. We're grateful for the continued support, feedback, and encouragement offered by so many in our church family.

Nina Albert, Director of Choral Activities

David Soyars, Organist

Membership Committee Annual Report 2023

Our church has welcomed 22 new members this past year. Their make-up is 1 by profession of faith by baptism; 1 Affiliate; 13 by transfer of letter; and 7 by reaffirmation of faith. We held 2 luncheon gatherings for these new members. We have started inviting anyone who would like more information about joining our church, or would like to join immediately, to meet with the Pastor, members of our committee and a few sessions members after church service the second Sunday of each month. We share with these folks different "types" of membership, information and history of our church.

Submitted by Sara Brewer

Fellowship Committee Annual Report 2023

May 14, 2023

Distributed "Muffins for Moms" on Mother's Day. Committee members made 100 assorted muffins at no cost to the church. Muffins were individually bagged, labeled, and sealed with a "Happy Mother's Day" sticker. There were enough muffins that all church attendees received one.

June 11, 2023

Hosted a Second Sunday Breakfast with a Scottish theme in King Fellowship Hall. Approximately 50 people attended. The church provided beverages and utensils; the meal was potluck. Several people donated flowers or provided decorations with a Scottish theme.

June 18, 2023

Distributed "Donuts for Dads" on Father's Day. The church covered the cost of the donuts. Although appreciated, comments were made about people wanting to avoid sweets, being diabetic, dieting, etc., so this event was less well received than the muffins.

July 9, 2023

Provided 130 sugar cookies with "130" piped on each to commemorate the church's 130th anniversary. The cookies were served in the King Fellowship Hall along with coffee, juice, and water. There was a small turnout in the Fellowship Hall, so cookies were put on trays and handed out at the doors as people exited the worship service.

July 20, 2023

Annual church picnic in Tate-Evans Park in Banner Elk. There were approximately 55 people in attendance. The church provided pulled pork and barbecued chicken, soda/water, ice, and plates/napkins/cutlery. Church members brought salads, side dishes, and desserts. This event was very popular, and the committee received many complementary comments.

It was noted that since the picnic was held on a Thursday, choir members were unable to attend. Additionally, the weekly farmers' market and concert in the park made the area crowded and parking difficult.

August 13, 2023

A Second Sunday Breakfast was hosted between 9:45 a.m. and 10:45a.m. worship services in the King Fellowship Hall. The church provided beverages and cutlery. Fellowship committee members and church attendees provided food.

September 10, 2023

Hosted a Second Sunday Breakfast from 9:45a.m. – 10:45a.m. in King Fellowship Hall. This was the first time in 2023 that breakfast was held with only one church service. The number of attendees decreased from an average of 60 people in the summer months to just over 40. Due to the decreased attendance, and the unavailability of committee members in October, the committee decided to end the breakfasts for the remainder of 2023.

Summary:

The Second Sunday Breakfasts were well attended and popular among the congregation. While the extra activities (muffins, donuts, and cookies) were appreciated, the committee decided to eliminate those in 2024, but note special events as part of the monthly breakfasts. Debbi Hagna provided flowers for table decorations for the breakfasts at no cost to the church.

Tentative plans are to begin breakfasts in April or May while there is only one church service, and to monitor attendance. There will not be a breakfast in July when the committee hosts the annual church picnic.

Breakfasts may continue into the early fall depending on interest and participation.

The kitchen was used by a variety of committees for various events over the year, but they were not the responsibility of Fellowship.

Ann McConnell & Luana Anderson work to ensure the kitchen remains organized and clean. We purchased racks, had them attached to the back of the closet doors in the Fellowship Hall, and hung up the linen tablecloths. We plan to sort and organize the remaining tablecloths over the next month. Chris Zimmer continues to keep track of the kitchen inventory and do supply orders.

Ann will hire a company or individual to do a one-time "deep clean" of the kitchen sometime this winter.

The church recently purchased both a countertop ice maker and a hot water dispenser to be used for any food-related activities at the church.

Ann McConnell
Fellowship Committee Chair

Congregational Care Annual Report 2023

Congregational Care Committee continued in 2023 to devote most of our time to the Shepherd ministry! The monthly sign-up book is located in the church front office. We also include our committee needs in church bulletins and in monthly bulletins, when needed! We are aware that there are some members who love to do this and we are so thankful for these folks. The Shepherds books are a wonderful and easy way to keep in touch with members and our close families and friends who may need support through the sending of cards, making phone calls, texts, or simply a visit. We have two shepherds every month. Each equipped with a book and included easy information on how to do this. We want to reach out more to our amazing summer members this next year to help us as some may find this a great way to be included. We will show them how simple it is to help with an integral part of the love our church gives to others. Susan Blalock helps greatly keeping our MASTER Shepherd book stocked with cards stamps etc. The Master Book is kept in the church office to use when needed.

Our committee also helps to set up Sunday sanctuary flowers. Sara Brewer, Dekka Tate and I love to gather and arrange flowers from our gardens in summer. Anyone who has garden flowers available for us to use, please let us know. Thanks to Donna Dicks, we have a 2024 Flower Board set up on the church office wall for people to sign-up for a particular Sunday. Many members enjoy choosing a Sunday to commemorate a loved one, a birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion. After worship services on Sundays, someone from our committee will then take those flowers to someone with health issues or anyone requesting them. We also take them to nursing homes.

This committee also works with other committees to assist with funerals, baptisms, lunches, breakfasts , and weddings, if requested .

Submitted by Debbi Hagna

Prayer Ministry Team Annual Report 2023

The Prayer Ministry Team, consisting of 9 church members (six local and three virtual), sent out letters weekly to the families listed in our directory. Team members prayed weekly with focused prayer. Several times the committee met for a prayer luncheon. General weekly needs and private requests were also shared among the committee members whether public or private in nature. Many prayer requests were answered as indicated by the thank you and acknowledgement notes sent from church members back to the prayer team.

Submitted by Emily Garrett

Stephen Ministries Annual Report 2023

Stephen Ministries continues to make its services available and public through newsletter articles, minutes for mission and information in the pews. Although we believe there are many more needs, we have tried to stay open to possible care receivers. There have been several short consultations (5-6) but none formalized. One case has been long term with a person outside the church. Meetings with this individual are not formalized but meetings are weekly; more if needed. Meetings usually occur in the church. One grief counseling group began to meet with Walking with Shadows in December and plans to meet more. Stephen Ministers are Murry Haber, Joy Rimmel, Janet Speer, Pat Anderson, Peter Stapleton and Don Hilsmier (inactive).

Submitted by Janet Speer

Comfort Makers Annual Report 2023

Comfort Makers began in 1990 and since that time has created over five hundred blankets which are dispersed to good causes. Their objective is to make full size comforters, plus lap blankets and children's blankets for those who need them. It takes about a month for each blanket, then we dedicate the blanket to someone in the church and hang the comforter in their honor in the hallway for all to see. Led by Debi Tornow and Mae Weed, members working with the group this year are Luana Anderson, Diane Earwood, Joy Rimel, Martha Burns, Beth Johnson, Luanne Guignard, Gloria Marshall, Michael Marshall and Janet Speer. Over the 2023 year the group made sixteen comforters which were dispersed to RAM, Habitat for Humanity, new babies, people experiencing health issues and recognitions. Comfort Makers meets from 10-12 on Wednesdays, and it is common for one of the sewers to come back in to finish a piece or take a blanket home for completion. Contact: Mae Weed.

Submitted by Janet Speer

Prayer Shawl Ministry Annual Report 2023

For about ten years, friends have gathered to knit, crochet and sometimes weave shawls and lap robes to be given to anyone experiencing health issues, grief or a time of celebration. Some have been taken to the Seby B. Jones Cancer Center. These shawls represent the care and concern of church friends and also symbolize being surrounded by God's love. Each shawl is dedicated with prayer, and anyone may share the name of a person who might enjoy receiving one of these gifts.

This ministry is budgeted as a sub-committee of the Missions Committee, and since much of the yarn used is donated, most funds are used to purchase additional supplies and for postage.

The creators of the shawls have various levels of yarn-skill, and someone is always happy to help instruct anyone wanting to learn to knit or crochet. Often seasonal friends contribute shawls they have made while they are at other locations, and many members of the group work on their shawls at home or while traveling. Everyone is welcome to join the time of work and fellowship, first and third Mondays, 2:00-4:00, in the Margaret Tate parlor.

"When I wrap up in the shawl you sent me, it gives me comfort and reminds me that I'm not alone, that church friends are thinking of me and that God's love covers me. Thank you for remembering me with this lovely gift," from a recent note received. Contact: Alice Johnson

Submitted by Claire Fortune

Christian Education Committee Annual Report 2023

Committee members: Alice Johnson, Julie LaGrone, Nancy Owen, Ginger Toler, AC Marriott (co-chair), Donna Dicks (co-chair); Whit Malone

Programs and activities carried out this year (number of participants listed):

- ***Sunday School classes:***

Adults (8-30):

Winter: Amy-Jill Levine's Short Stories by Jesus (parables)

Lent: Barbara Brown Taylor's Speaking of Sin

June: Janet Speer's Legacy of Edgar Tufts and Dr. W.C. Tate
as part of the 130th Celebration in July

Summer: Adam Hamilton's When Christians Get It Wrong

Fall: Jim Long/Whit Malone: Halleluia! The Bible and Handel's
Messiah

Advent: Eric Hillestad, Pat Anderson, Whit Malone: Adam Hamilton's Faithful: Christmas through the eyes of Joseph

Children and Youth (2-10)

Julie LaGrone and Judy Hilsmier: regular classes during school year with summer break

Women's study in late summer (6-12)

Led by Julie LaGrone: The Red Sea Rules by Robert J. Morgan

- ***"Back to School Bash"*** on Aug. 13th during worship; followed by bowling/pizza outing (8 youth, 3 adults)
- ***End of Life Seminar*** on Sept. 17; panel discussion with Walt Pharr, McNair Tornow, Carol Smith and Whit Malone (35-40 adults)
- ***Breakfast for Toys*** on Nov. 12, AC Marriott, collection of toys for RAM (40 folks), \$1300
- ***Breakfast with Santa:*** on Dec. 2, AC Marriott, organized and collected donations for preschool (150 guests), \$1000 raised
- ***Worship Bags for Children:*** provide 12 bags for worship year-round

Goals for 2024:

- Continue the work of the committee with additional new members
- Continue learning opportunities for all ages
- Provide Lent/Advent studies
- Women's summer study
- Continue support for Breakfast for Toys for RAM
- Continue support for Breakfast with Santa as fund-raiser for preschool

Submitted by Donna Dicks

Preschool Annual Report 2023

The Preschool operates following the 2013/2016 Banner Elk Presbyterian Preschool Bylaws, and BEPC Preschool Staff Handbook. The Director implements the 2021 COVID-19 Policy & Guidelines and bad weather decisions. The BEPC Office/Finance Manager uses QuickBooks Desktop to record and balance preschool finances in coordination with the Preschool Board Treasurer. The program serves children ages 2-5, operates 9 1/2 months following an August-June school year calendar, Monday-Friday, 9:00am-1:00pm. Eight weeks of Summer Camp is offered.

Board members are Co-Chair, Susan Carter & Sarah Whitfield; Preschool Director/Teacher, Jarrett Koski; Treasurer, Cila Leonard; Secretary, Alice Johnson; Congregational representative, Katy Fletcher; Session Representative, Nancy Owen; Parent Representatives, Sally Wimberly/Melanie Jochl & Carrie Smithey; Community Representatives, Sarah Whitfield & Susan Dean/Kelly Rodrigues; A.C. Marriott, Board Consultant.

The Preschool Board acknowledges and is thankful for the donation sharing space, maintenance, and office support gifted as a mission of the Banner Elk Presbyterian Church. The BEPC Preschool program could not operate without this funding and encouragement.

In January, the middle of the 2023-24 Preschool year, 25 students were enrolled with. Staff employed were Jarrett Koski, Director/4's Lead Teacher, Lucy Corning, 3's Lead Teacher, Britt Ammann, 3's Teaching Assistant. Erin Beretsky, 2's Lead Teacher, Sarah Bates, 2's teaching assistant.

In March, Jarrett Koski, Lucy Corning, Erin Beretsky, Sarah Bates, attended the curriculum professional development Georgia Preschool Conference honoring our Katie Fletcher (past president of Georgia Preschool Association). Each person attended various classes and many new skills were obtained while attending the two day conference.

During the scheduled 8 weeks of Summer Camp, using four teachers, the enrollment averaged 18 children per week. The BEPC Summer Camp weeks are reported to be joyful theme-based learning experiences, and the camp is meeting a need for quality early childhood summer activities. The theme for 2023 summer camp was Monkey Around in the Mountains: Curious George. Tuition was \$100 per week for current students and \$150 non-current students.

In August, the beginning of the 2023-24 Preschool year, 19 students were enrolled with 2's - 10, 3's - 5, and 4's - 4 with teachers rotating responsibilities. Upon examining the lower enrollment, enrichment possibilities were created to help the needs of the current students. Throughout the school day, there are blocks of time with smaller groups working on various activities. The 3 & 4 year old classes have combined and work together to meet the needs of the individual students. In November it was agreed the Preschool could operate with Jarrett as Teacher/Director, and three teachers, Lucy Corning, 2's teacher, with assistants Erin Beretsky, and Kathleen Goldberg.

January -June, Scholarship total: \$2,650. August-December total: \$1,350.

Tuition: Aug-December, \$300 per month; January-May, \$310 per month

Fundraising events included: 1) \$1,500 donations 2) Chick-Fil-A Spirit Day, \$202.31

3) Bake Sale, \$1,800 4) Cycle NC Fundraiser profit, \$ 5,484.70

6) Woolly Worm Parking \$1,772. Breakfast with Santa collaboration with LMC cheerleaders and parents, \$1,000).

A grant application was submitted to Kiwanis for Woolly Worm funds. The Preschool Board acknowledges that a lower student enrollment is a challenge to balancing the Budget and additional fundraising opportunities are needed. This lower child population in the Banner Elk area is also evident at Banner Elk Elementary School.

The SONshine Playground provides active joyful outdoor play each day the weather permits. Letterland literacy and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) inspired curriculum is implemented for the three classrooms. Susan and Lynn Carter donated labor and material to repair weathered ground covering. The plastic caterpillar has been removed and a wooden house installed. LMC organized a team lead by Derrick Lail (LMC professor) for a LMC Mountain Day of Service assisted with purging the supplies and toys, also organizing the playground shed. The team from LMC also had an opportunity to read a few books and create crafts with our students.

The children have Chapel scheduled every Monday and Thursday 10:45 – 11:00am led by Mrs. Lucy and Mr. K. This is an opportunity for the students to sing various encouraging songs about the love of Jesus. Songs include *Jesus is my Rock, I've got that JOY, The B-I-B-L-E, Why did God put the Rainbow in the Sky?* And many more. Various stories and lessons are also read. Bulletin boards, artwork, and newsletter articles creatively document many activities of the Preschool.

The evacuation plan continues with documented Fire Drills. The December 2023 drill was completed in 1 minute and 17 seconds. Preschool Staff members are encouraged to take training classes online and attend any Blue Ridge Partnership for Children sponsored trainings. Director attends quarterly director meetings. Staff Development continues at faculty meetings and other opportunities provided by the Blue Ridge Partnership for Children.

BEPC can be proud of the dedicated and educated Preschool Staff working each day to provide quality developmentally appropriate early childhood education.

Submitted by Jarrett Koski and Susan Carter

Building and Grounds Committee Annual Report 2023

Maintenance of the beautiful building and grounds of Banner Elk Presbyterian Church should continue to be a priority in terms of funding for immediate and long term needs. Progress has been made to establish funding for emergency expenditures. The Clerk of the Works position has been dissolved, but a new Building and Grounds Team has been established to address routine maintenance and repair needs. Our first workday was scheduled this year, primarily for grounds cleanup and should be continued in the future with leadership from the B&G Team. Progress will continue to be made each year to prioritize and fund capital improvement projects.

Accomplishments This Year

1. In January, a Capital Improvement Fund was established as part of the 2023 budget.
2. On July 1, a church workday was held from 9:00 – 1:00 when 12 members participated and clean out the attic, cleaned the sanctuary, cleaned up leaves and tree limbs, and cleaned the Tufts grave sites.
3. On August 12 from 1:00-4:00 AED/CPR training was held in the fellowship hall with 5 participants.
4. In September, Appalachian Seal Coating made a proposal to add handicapped parking spaces and to reseal and restripe the lower parking lot.
5. In November, an assessment was conducted regarding the addition of a handicapped ramp at the front entrance on the cemetery side of the church.
6. In November, a new Building and Grounds Team with a variety of areas of expertise was established to address routine maintenance and repair needs.
7. The lower lever doors to the fellowship hall and the preschool were replaced on November 22, 2023.
8. In December, the snow removal procedures were revisited with representatives from Lees McRae College.

Committee Members

Rick Garrett, Chair
Larry Zimmer
Bob Todd
Rod Sundstrom
Mike Marshall
Peter Stapleton
Roger Rulifson

Submitted by Rick Garrett

Banner Elk Presbyterian Church
Treasurer Report
December 31, 2023

BEPC OPERATING FUND (FUND 01)

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
MONTHLY INCOME	83,980	17,305	22,375	22,125	30,485	39,992	35,014	37,118	24,010	40,960	34,945	72,834
MONTHLY EXPENSES	6,317	32,578	25,367	23,015	31,796	23,354	24,732	35,178	25,361	26,217	72,477	44,318
MONTHLY PROFIT	77,663					16,637	10,282	1,940		14,743		28,516
MONTHLY LOSS		(15,273)	(2,991)	(890)	(1,311)				(1,351)		(37,532)	
Year To Date	77,663	62,390	59,399	58,509	57,198	73,835	84,117	86,057	84,706	99,449	61,917	90,433

Comments:

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BEPC had a resoundingly successful year financially for 2023. We had contributions of \$461,124 and a year end surplus of \$90,433. Both of these key areas exceeded the past five years. These key numbers will give BEPC a "shot in the arm" going forward in 2024.

In conjunction with these very positive results, BEPC had an impressive stewardship campaign. Our 2024 stewardship campaign results reflect 99 pledges for \$336,100. These results enabled BEPC to restore our benevolence to previous year's giving, to grant our staff a 5% increase, and to budget for the expectation of our new pastor.

Our cash available for church operations is as follows:

Checking account balance as of 12-31-23	\$545,511.64
Less: PFM Funds	(100,000.00)
Committed Funds Net of Session Disc. Fund	(73,625.98)
Total Cash Available For Church Operations	\$371,885.66

2024 Budget Worksheet

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2024 Budget Worksheet

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Banner Elk Presbyterian Church							
2024 Budget Worksheet							
				2024	2023		
				BUDGET	10/31 YTD Actual	BUDGET	
	6630	Comfort Makers		500.00		500.00	
	6631	Prayer Shawl Ministry		250.00		250.00	
		SUBTOTAL MISSIONS		1,750.00	354.00	1,950.00	
		SUBTOTAL MISSIONS & BENEVOLENCE		66,750.00	29,197.00	41,800.00	
		PERCENTAGE MISSIONS & BENEVOLENCE		0.15	11.14%	10.78%	
STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE							
	6740	PFM Committee Expenses		500.00	\$	500.00	
MEMBERSHIP							
	6810	Committee Expenses		3,000.00	1,333.00	3,000.00	
COMMUNICATIONS							
	6910	Committee Expenses		2,000.00	687.00	1,000.00	
		SUBTOTAL COMMUNICATIONS		2,000.00	687.00	1,000.00	
PRIOR YEAR INCOME ADJUSTMENTS							
	6195	Real Property Disposal					
		Presbytery Gift net of Former Pastor Severance			(8,059.00)	(8,027.00)	
	??	Presbytery Gift net of Former Pastor Severance			(23,759.00)	(18,580.94)	
		SUBTOTAL PRIOR YEAR INCOME ADJUSTMENTS		-	(31,818.00)	(26,607.94)	
TOTAL EXPENSES				443,240.00	\$ 261,987.00	\$ 387,773.00	
SURPLUS/DEFICIT				(33,240.00)	\$ 123,098.00	\$ 1,834.94	