Dear friends,

I have good news! This week we welcomed two new staff members: **Janet Askew** and **Brandi Kirkland** (see bios and photos below). We are so excited to have them both on board! If you see me around this week, you may notice have an extra bounce in my step!

Janet, our new **Business Associate**, is taking over the finance portion of Tom Bloom's job and has been training with Tom (who retires at the end of June) for the last few weeks. She will work approximately 20 hours a week. Her email address is finance@firstpres-durham.org. Please direct any finance-related questions to her moving forward. Her job description can be found here: https://bit.ly/4daIlAn.

Brandi occupies a new position, **Communications Associate,** and will work 30 hours a week in a hybrid model, spending mornings at the church in person and working from home in the afternoons. She will produce our weekly Sunday bulletin (starting with the May 24 bulletin), biweekly newsletters, Friday emails, and one-off emails informing the congregation of special programs or services. She will also manage our social media accounts and oversee website content and design work. Her email address is communications@firstpres-durham.org and her job description can be found here: https://bit.ly/3RkQ0EM.

For the past two months, we have enjoyed the excellent work of a communications interim, **Kara Pearce,** who worked remotely to keep our bulletins and newsletters going during this transition period. Kara, former Communications Coordinator at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Durham, came highly recommended as one who could help us through this interim period. She has been a delight to work with, and we are incredibly grateful for her willingness to step in for this short period. For the next two weeks, she will help Brandi transition into her new job. We couldn't have asked for anyone better to help us bridge this staffing gap. Thank you, Kara!

But lest you think we are done, stay with me, there's more! We have **two other active searches** at this time – the search for a new **Minister of Music** to follow Kathy Parkins, who retires in June, and a new **Facilities Associate** to take over the responsibilities of caring for and managing a large and aging campus. Soon, the search for a new Parish Administrator will begin. These are both full-time positions. We hope to have the right folks in place for these positions by mid-summer.

Friends, there are many moving parts here and I would not blame you if you were struggling to keep up. I often find my head spinning as I try to remember what search is at what point! Thankfully, this good and challenging work has been guided by the members of the **Retirements Committee** and the **Personnel Committee**. These wonderful folks have been working incredibly on nights and weekends, doing research, writing job descriptions, serving on search committees, and thinking hard about the best staff configuration for FPC to help us move into the future God is calling us to!

Please feel free to ask me or any of our Personnel Committee members about these changes. While we grieve those who are retiring and heading on to different adventures, we look forward

to a full staff and what that means for the ministry and mission of this congregation that they will support.

I hope you will have a chance to meet and welcome them soon!

Grace and peace to you all,

Mindy