

NOMINATIONS – JANUARY 31, 2021

Elders

Elders comprise the Session of the Presbyterian Church which is, in essence, the decision-making body of the church. They recommend and approve all program and policy implementation and modifications in the church. Elders serve a three year term and the Session meets monthly; Elders generally serve on one or more committees, which also usually meet on a monthly basis.

Kari Young Keyock

Kari has been affiliated with FPCB for 42 years; she became involved with the YCX youth program as a middle schooler. She and her husband Michael have two sons, Nate and Jeb, and their family joined in 2000; they live in Bethlehem. She taught Sunday School for 15 years as well as coordinated numerous youth activities. Kari is a partner in the women-owned marketing and branding agency, Imagevolution, which also donates many services to community organizations. She writes: "I am inspired by FPCB's passion and commitment to an open and welcoming faith community, plus the vision of an 'experimental' church. I look forward to an opportunity to serve FPCB and its mission."

Kim Morey Miner

Kim has been involved at First Pres for several years, where she has been a member of the Personnel Committee and of the Chancel Choir, both for three years. She and her husband, Bill Parton, have four adult children and live in Lower Saucon Township; both were raised as Presbyterians. Kim is a retired HR executive with global experience, particularly in change management and talent management, and has volunteered for several political campaigns over the past two years. She writes: "I will be honored to serve my Lord and the First Presbyterian Church, if elected. I retired a bit early so that I could participate in the church more actively, so I am thrilled to be involved in shaping this church's future path."

Alvin Philpotts (second term)

Al joined FPCB in 1991 when he took an assignment for the Air Force at Lehigh University. His 1995 retirement from the USAF was followed by several other business assignments in the Lehigh Valley. He has been involved in the Rotary Club of Bethlehem for almost 30 years, where he is the webmaster. He and his wife Deb live in Lower Saucon Township, and they take part in the Zoom Sunday School and sing in the Chancel Choir. Both Philpotts are also involved in the weekly mentoring program at Donegan Elementary School. Writes Al: "I'm excited that we're an experimental church and look forward to continued work alongside our amazing and talented elders."

Steve Samuelson

Steve has been a member of First Presbyterian Church since 1995 and a Sunday School teacher for 23 years. In a prior life, he was youth director at the former St. Matthew's Lutheran Church. A member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, he serves the 135th District (Bethlehem and Bethlehem Township) and is Democratic Chair of the Aging and Older Adult Services Committee.

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JoAnne Turcotte

JoAnne, a Hanover Township resident, has been a member of FPCB for 34 years. Her involvement has been primarily with children's education, and she has taught Sunday School for 25 years; she also served on the Nominating Committee for one year. The daughter of FPCB members, JoAnne and her husband Michael have four children and three grandchildren. She and her daughter co-own The Knitter's Edge Yarn Shop in Bethlehem, where they are very involved in community projects. JoAnne writes: "Serving at First Pres is a way for me to give back to a community that has given me so much over the past few years. Since the split, our smaller church has felt so much like home to me. I want to help this tight knit group grow."

Deacons

The Deacons are the caregivers of the church. They minister to the individual members through home communion and visits, hospital and prayer ministries, and providing support to those in difficult situations. Deacons serve a three year term and typically meet monthly.

Melody Engel

Melody, a Macungie resident, started attending the church in 1979 and became a member around 2000. She has one son who lives nearby. She is a mental health professional, with many years' experience working with children and families. Melody retired from full time work five years ago but remain employed part time, doing family therapy. She writes, "I am happy to serve this congregation in any way that can be helpful. We are a strong group and need to lean on each other for help and support."

Phil Fair

Phil joined FPCB in 1971 with his late wife Loretta; their family includes two children and four grandchildren. He has served as a Deacon, usher, and youth mentor. A resident of Bethlehem, Phil is retired after a 35-year teaching career at Liberty High School. He is currently volunteering to deliver Meals on Wheels. Says Phil: "The church has meant a great deal to me over the years and I'm pleased for the opportunity to give something back."

Jane Masters

Jane came to FPCB in the mid 70's and became a member a short time after that. Since then she has been involved in a myriad of church volunteer work, including Sunday School, congregational care, the Presbyterian Players, and working at the reception desk. Her husband Don served as facilities manager and their daughter Allison was baptized at FPCB. Jane is a retired Family and Consumer teacher; she worked for the Bethlehem Area School District and most recently retired from Whitehall-Coplay School District in 2016. Says Jane: "FPCB has given my life direction, meaning, and so many wonderful experiences since I joined this church. I love all the caring members of our congregation and would like to serve where I can get to know members on a deeper level."

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Nominating

The Nominating Committee members are charged with identifying candidates for Elders, Deacons, Trustees, and the Nominating Committee itself. This committee usually meets three or four times each year; the term of service is one year, and a member may serve no more than two consecutive terms.

Matthew Cascioli

Matt, a Salisbury Township resident, is married and has two sons who also attend FPCB. For 16 years he has served as an usher, and has worked the computer at the Contemporary service and participates as a reader. Matt is a member of two community bands, one of which has appeared at FPCB many times. He is a retired school teacher and currently serves part time as the secretary/treasurer of AFM Local 45. Writes Matt: "I would like to serve because I feel a strong commitment to helping the church maintain its status as a Christian place of worship where all are made to feel welcome, to come as they are."

Nancy Cramer

Nancy and her husband, residents of Lower Nazareth Township, raised their three daughters at FPCB. Since joining in 1972, she has been actively involved in children's ministry and family life, and served as the staff's Associate for Christian Education. In 1998, she returned to teaching in the public schools and is now retired. Says Nancy: "I'm happy to be part of this group responsible for finding the right leadership so the church continues to grow and respond to the needs of our community."

Linda Filipovits

Linda has been a member of FPCB for 45 years. In addition to singing in the Chancel Choir, she has been a volunteer in the church's Main office and served as a Stephen Minister and on the Church Directory task force. She lives in Allentown and has three adult children and nine grandchildren. She retired from 35 years of health care administration with Sacred Heart Hospital and St. Luke's University Health Network. "I enjoy speaking with others about the mission of our church and encouraging them to become part of this valuable mission."

Kurt Flammer

Kurt lives in Bethlehem and in the community of "those who believe in inclusion, diversity and love of God and his people." He was first involved with youth groups in the 1960s and early 70's and then left the Lehigh Valley for a number of years, but on his return in 1996 joined FPCB with his late wife Deborah. He was involved with the Serve Day program and the Communion team for about five years. Kurt is retired and due to Covid restrictions has scaled back his community involvement. He writes, "I would really appreciate the opportunity to find ways to invest in the church, seek serving opportunities and witness fuller presence of the Lord in my life and works. God has been ever present but the absence of involvement with others in sharing the faith has been hard."

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Michael A. Keyock

Michael has been affiliated with FPCB for over 20 years, taking an active role in Children's Ministry for over ten years. He has been married to Kari for almost 30 years, and they have two sons, Nate and Jeb; they live in Bethlehem. Michael has over 28 years of project and program management and business leadership experience. His business career has been with American Express, Guardian Life, Bristol Myers Squibb and he is currently employed with Sanofi. Michael enjoys fishing, golf, tennis and community service. He writes: "I feel called to have a more active role in the church again."

Wendy Magocs

Wendy was "born and raised" in FPCB. She joined a year after high school in 1975, after going through the Adult Inquirers class. Her volunteer activities are many, including serving as an usher and receptionist; co-chairing the JOY Ministry Planning team; monthly soup kitchens; Memorial Garden team; Serve Days; church clean-up activities and the Memorial Reception team. She and her husband Dan live in Bethlehem with their dog, Rosie. Wendy is a retired R.N and has been involved with numerous community initiatives, including Mask Force 2020 this past year.

Irene O'Connor Maunz

Irene has been attending FPCB since 1977, and has taught Sunday School and helped at Kirk Camp. She also worked at the FPCB nursery school, before going on to teach kindergarten and first grade in Bethlehem. She and her husband George live in Bethlehem, and have four adult children and six grandchildren. She writes: "I am grateful for the direction FPCB has taken and I would like to see leadership that encourages and supports movement in that direction."

Tracy E. Samuelson

Tracy has been affiliated with FPCB for over 25 years, including more than 18 years as a Sunday School teacher and more recently with youth activities. The parent of two adult children, Molly and Michael, Tracy lives in Bethlehem where she has been the Assistant Planning Director for the City of Bethlehem for almost 20 years. Tracy writes, "I firmly believe in the mission of the church and am very proud to be part of a welcoming and accepting church. I want to be part of its growth and service in the community."

Judith Smullen

Judy has been singing in the Chancel Choir since 1976 and became an FPCB member in 2018. She has been involved in the Crafters and Prayers & Squares groups, and the Hearts N Minds adult education classes. She has also been a volunteer receptionist. Judy, a retired teacher, and her husband David live in Bethlehem. She writes, "Though I don't feel in a position to serve in a leadership position, helping to find good leaders through the Nominating Committee will be a privilege. I'm grateful for the honor."

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Trustees

Trustees oversee all financial and property matters in the church including the budget, building renovations and repairs, planned giving, and investment funds. Trustees will meet monthly and members will also serve on one additional committee, such as the property or finance committee, which also generally meet monthly. The term for Trustees is three years.

George Bickford

George and his wife Jan, who live in Heritage Village in Nazareth, have a son and a daughter and three grandchildren. They have been members of FPCB since 1983. During that time George has been a Stephen Minister, served on the Nominating Committee on three occasions, and participated in many K-groups over the years. He is the retired owner of LB & W Engineering after a 41-year career in engineering. George has volunteered with Victory House as a weekend cook, Northeast Community Center as a painter, and he now provides handyman home repairs with the clients, donating his wage to their favorite charity. He writes, "I love FPCB and find my engineering and hands-on maintainable skills a perfect fit as a trustee in this wonderful institution."

Maurice Kasmiroski

Maurice and his wife Bobbi, who live in Lower Saucon Township, have attended FPCB since the early 2000s and became members about five years ago. Maurice has volunteered in a wide range of capacities, from supporting the Hi Neighbors program, to serving as a Trustee, to assisting the Finance committee and ushering, to multiple church-related community projects. Writes Maurice: "I'm always willing to help out and answer "the call".

Robert Hunsicker, M.D.

Bob has been an FPCB member since 1978, when he also joined a K-group. He has taught Sunday School, served as an Elder for two terms, and has sung in the Chancel Choir for seven years. He and his wife Jean live in Saucon Valley, and have five children and 13 grandchildren. A retired Ear/Nose/Throat surgeon, Bob is currently involved with the Wildlands Conservancy Board and is a part time faculty member at the DeSales University Simulated Patient Program. He says he would like to help find creative ways for FPCB to attract young families with children.