NOMINATIONS – JANUARY 30, 2022

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.*

Jan Bickford
Jan and her husband George reside in Nazareth; their family includes two children and three grandchildren. They have been involved with First Pres since 1983. Among other things, Jan has served as a Deacon, taught Sunday School, and participated on the Discipleship Committee. She also enjoys volunteering at local soup kitchesn. As a Spiritual Director, Jan offers a spiritual direction ministry. Writes Jan, "We've been very blessed by this church and we're hopeful for its future."

Jennifer Cole
Jennifer, a Hellertown resident, has been attending First Pres for two years, and joined as a member in July. The parent of two sons and four grandchildren, she is a retired R.N. Says Jennifer, "I just love this church! So many wonderful, welcoming people! I feel that it's important to give back. If we are to be Jesus' hands and feet, then service is important."

Jon Conrad
Jon has been a member of First Pres since 1986 when he and his wife Suzanne Bleiler-Conrad were married here by The Rev. Keith Brown. Their son Christian was also baptized here and went through the youth programs; he is now a teacher and coach at Liberty High School. Jon has over 30 years' professional experience in Human Resources, currently serving as Vice President for Human Resources at Moravian University, where he has been for 21 years. He has also served on a number of local boards, and in his spare time plays trombone with the Allentown Band (a music passion he shares with his wife) and teaches trombone lessons. Jon has served on FPCB's Personnel Committee for three years, and writes, "FPCB has been a part of my life for many years. I am hopeful my background can be helpful in guiding FPCB into the future and is another way I can give back to a church that has given my family so much."

Jim Halkins
Jim and his wife Kathy live in Hanover Township, and have four grown children and six grandchildren. He was baptized into this church as an infant at our former location at Center and North Streets, becoming a member as a teenager through Youth Inquirers. He is currently on the Finance Committee, and previously served as Vice Chair of the Endowment Committee. Says Jim, "At this time, I feel the Lord's calling to greater service at the church and look forward to serving on the Session."

Daniel Magocs
Dan and his wife Wendy – and dog Rosie – live in Bethlehem; Dan retired from the USPS in 2013 after 41 years of service. They joined FPCB in 2013, after regularly attending for many years prior to that. Dan has involved himself as the co-chair and member of JOY Ministry, a member of the Memorial Garden maintenance team, and volunteering on Serve Days, as an usher/greeter and assists with the Memorial Service receptions. In the community he has

volunteered with New Bethany Ministries Soup Kitchen (20 years), Christ UCC Soup Kitchen, Meals on Wheels and New Bethany's Luminaria Night and Food Pantry. Dan writes, "I care very much about FPCB and its congregation."

Chris Moravek

Chris is a Bethlehem Township resident who works as a computer programmer at Aptean, a company that provides enterprise resource planning software solutions. He has been attending FPCB since 2019, where he has involved himself with Chancel Choir, Chancel Ringers (handbells) and a 'wonderful' K group. He became a member in July, continuing the Moravek family's long Presbyterian tradition. At his previous church, he was involved with leading numerous youth activities, and rang in their handbell choir for 24 years. Writes Chris, "FPCB finds itself at an exciting crossroads. We have an abundance of gifts to share: a caring and welcoming congregation, an extraordinarily gifted staff, a strong and committed group of lay leaders, and a spacious physical building, just to name a few. I'm excited to explore the ways that God might be calling us to use our gifts to expand our impact in our community."

Donna Taggart

Donna is a lifelong resident of Bethlehem with five adult children and eight grandchildren. She joined the church about 10 years ago. Serving her community has always been very important to Donna. However, she has not been very involved in the life of the church since joining and looks forward to becoming more involved as part of serving on the Session. She serves on the Board of several local organizations including The Hispanic Center Lehigh Valley, Community Action Development Bethlehem, SouthSide Arts District Advisory Committee and as part of the Leadership Team at Donegan Elementary School. Says Donna, "I am very humbled by this call to serve my church in this capacity and look forward to using my God-given talents to further its mission in our community."

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.*

Alesia Dietrich

Alesia, a Bethlehem resident, has been affiliated with FPCB since 1976. In addition to marrying and baptizing her two daughters here, she has been involved as a Sunday School teacher, choir member, and ran a singles group for two years. She is the office manager for the Boys and Girls Club in Bethlehem, where she also runs the resident dance program. She shares, "First Pres has *always* been my family, and assisted me when I was very ill in January of 2020. I always felt the need to give back and help others in areas needed most."

Yvonne Green

Yvonne's experience of moving four times in 50 years – and finding four church homes – has informed her life in significant ways. She says her 'church family' has always been her way to meet, care for, and love her friends. She joined First Pres nine years ago, where she has been involved with a K group, Hearts N Minds, and the craft group. She says, "I was ordained as an Elder and given the responsibility of Membership Care. At the next church I served on the Administrative Board, chairing the Membership Care and Pastoral Relations Committee. I love serving my God and my church family this way." Yvonne's adult sons and their families live in three states, and she lives in Bethlehem.

Jane Mackie
Jane moved to Bethlehem to be near her family in 2018, and joined FPCB in late 2019. A resident of Hanover Township, she is a widow and has two adult daughters and three grandchildren. She worked in a hospital lab and later at Johnson & Johnson, taking early retirement to care for her parents. She has a long history of volunteering, including with the Girl Scouts, and various committees at her Quaker Meeting in California. She writes, "FPCB has provided so much support for me, like Hearts N Minds and my K group. I feel it's time for me to give back to this community."

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.*

Jacqueline Byrnes
Jackie is a retired school teacher who has served as a deacon, elder and usher at FPCB, where she has been a member since 1985. A widow, she is the parent of four adult sons, and also volunteers for ArtsQuest. Jackie lives in Bethlehem. She writes, "I have served on the Nominating Committee before, and enjoyed it."

Jeanette Claessens

Jeanette, an Easton resident, has been a member of First Pres since 1989, where she has served as a Deacon and been involved with youth programs. Jeanette also served as a Stephen minister for many years, and volunteered with Lehigh Presbytery's Helping Hands project, cleaning up and rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina in 2010 and the floodwaters in Iowa in 2011. She enjoyed a long career as a social worker, and since retiring has worked as a licensed massage therapist for six years in a private practice. She has been married for 34 years and has two adult children and a grandchild.

Sue Jones
Sue is a resident of Stockertown, and been a member of First Pres for over 40 years. She has taken on a number of roles at church over the years, including going on mission trips, cooking for youth groups, ushering, and participating in a K group, Hearts N Minds, and prayer group. The parent of a grown son and daughter and grandparent of three young adults, she is retired from managing a stove and fireplace business. She enjoys volunteering, gardening and reading. She tells us, "I'm looking forward to serving once again on the Nominating Committee, searching for new, abundantly gifted members to lead and serve our beloved church."

Froy Thompson
Froy, a Bethlehem resident, has been a faithful contributor to First Pres in many ways since she joined our congregation in 1964. She currently serves as a volunteer receptionist in our church office. A widow, she is the parent of Jennifer. Froy is a frequent volunteer for other community organizations, and tells us, "I think choosing officers for the church is important, so I'm happy to serve."

Phyllis Walker
Phyllis and her husband Jack have been members of First Pres for 30 years. They live in Bethlehem, and have a daughter and three grandchildren. She has served as an elder for five years, and has been involved with the Nominating Committee, Congregational Life Committee, Finance Committee, and the Hospitality and Memorial teams. Phyllis writes, "After serving on the Nominating Committee a few years ago, I realize that it is a very important committee in the life of the church."

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.*

Belle Marks
Belle and her family, who live in Bethlehem, have attended FPCB for 32 years, and she joined the church in 2001. She and her husband John have three daughters who attended Sunday School and participated in the Choir at FPCB. Belle served as a Sunday School teacher for over 15 years, is a member of the Endowment Committee and serves on the Building Reopening Task Force. She is a nurse and works in public health administration at the Allentown Health Bureau. Among other things, she volunteers with the local chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and other international health organizations. She writes: "I am enthusiastic about the direction the church is taking and want to contribute."

Joanne Kelhart
Joanne has been a member of FPCB since 1984. She is married to Ted Rewak, and they are the proud parents of another member, Max Rewak. She has been with the Chancel Choir during her membership, as well as serving in multiple capacities in leadership. She is currently an elder and chairs the Finance Committee. This will be a return to the Trustees that she chaired in the 1990's. Joanne is excited about the many new opportunities for the church to be the hands and feet of God in the world.

Melinda Stitt
Melinda, a Bethlehem Township resident, joined FPCB in 1997. She is the mother of two boys and a girl, and her parents were long-time Presbyterians. Melinda says the foundation for her faith was laid when she traveled with the Synod, and to an ecumenical center in Portugal during her high school years. She started her own securities firm, MSM Wealth Management, working as a registered investment advisor for over 25 years. She has served FPCB in many ways, including as a trustee the past two years, and on numerous boards in the Lehigh Valley. She says, "God seems to have called me to the church at a time when my needs and the church's have intertwined. I feel blessed to have been welcomed by friends and new friends in order to be able to help the church strategically grow into the future."

Mark Swank
Mark and his wife Pamela, residents of Bethlehem, have been members of FPCB since 1986. Pam is currently a deacon and member of the choir. Their three adult children grew up in this church and benefitted greatly from participating in the youth program and choirs. A retired physician, he writes: "I believe in the core values of this congregation and want to see us grow to more fully meet our mission to serve God and love people."