SESSION HIGHLIGHTS:
NOVEMBER 2020 - FEBRUARY 2021

- Session continues to meet twice a month via Zoom. The twice-monthly meetings allow for more interaction and communication.
- During this time, the Deacons Board has been very active in trying to assess and meet the needs of the congregation. They are staying in touch with the congregation through repeated phone calls to all members and their meal ministry remains a continued need as they add new people. **Anyone interested in helping with the meal ministry** should contact Jeff Csatari at deacons@fpc-bethlehem.org or leave a message at the church office, 610-867-5865.
- David Macbeth, the Trustees Technology Task Force and the Worship Committee have worked together to determine current and future needs for continued livestreaming our worship services. With our current cameras and computers, we have reached our capacity. They presented a priority list and proposal for implementation. Session approved their plan and a maximum expenditure of $12,000. Funds will come from the Endowment funds.
- During time period, Session approved numerous additional church services including a Longest Night Service, a Carol Sing, and an outdoor intergenerational Christmas Eve Service.
- Session invited Rebecca Gorton, chair of the Preschool Task Force, to a meeting to update elders on the Preschool program during the Covid pandemic. Daily screening prior to admission each day, mask usage, and physical distancing have been effective in preventing potential spread of Covid in the school. Session appointed a Preschool Director/Mission Study Team in preparation for the retirement of longtime Director Andie Barbehenn. Chaired by Rebecca Gorton and Elizabeth Conard, the team developed a job description and identified qualifications for a new director. They also updated and revised the mission statement for the program. Other members of the team were Kim Miner, Leslie Pohl, George Campbell, Sue Farber, Carol Burns, Phil Clauser, Sarah Baer, and Ginny Dagnall.
- The Building Reopening Task Force continues to meet at least monthly to consider the possibility of reopening the building on a modified or full basis. Currently the task force feels we need to continue evaluating the progress of

the vaccination programs before reopening. They anticipate that there will be more opportunities for outdoor worship as the weather improves.

- Session, acting on a request from the Worship committee, delegated authority to the committee to choose dates for future outdoor church services, probably on a monthly basis. The first outdoor service is planned for Palm Sunday, weather permitting.
- The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee, chaired by Kristen Benway, continued meeting with great frequency and successfully presented a candidate at a Congregational meeting on January 10. Rev. Lindsey Altvater Clifton was approved as Associate Pastor for Formation and Justice and will begin March 1, 2021. [It should be noted this was done in record time] The congregation is grateful for the hard work of the committee members: Kristen Benway, Don Robertson, Rich Gorton, George Maunz, Blaine Sheppard, Froy Thompson, and Gail Watts.
- The Discipleship Committee has remained busy offering numerous educational events including Living Spiritually in a Material World (Rev. Steve Simmons), Tracing Your Spiritual Family Tree (Jan Bickford), and Domestic Abuse (Turning Point). During Advent they presented a well-received Advent Spiritual Walk in the Memorial Garden. During Lent they are encouraging the practice of daily kindness as opposed to "giving something up" for Lent; they have also provided Lenten devotionals. Lenten suppers will be held again virtually with a focus on different aspects of worship (Rev. Steve Simmons, Rev. Cindy Simmons, Jim Stahl and Janet Stahl, Rev. Lindsey Altvater Clifton and Rev. J.C. Austin.)
- The Congregational Life committee has also remained busy. They assumed responsibility for the Annual Giving Tree which focused on basic needs of the local community, as well as another collection in February to benefit Bethlehem Emergency Sheltering. As usual, the congregation responded generously. They have offered several Game Nights via Zoom featuring Trivia and Scattergories. They have also hosted several hospitality hours after church through Zoom.
- Officer training has begun for new Elders and Deacons and their installation should be scheduled by the end of March.
- It was with regret that Session accepted the resignation of Lisa Titus as President of the Board of Trustees due to increased work responsibilities. Dr. Mark Swank will assume this position going forward. Session and the

Congregation thank Lisa for her work on our behalf and we appreciate her generous time commitments to the church.

- The Finance committee prepared a 2021 budget. Revenues for 2020 were less than expected, in part due to the lack of loose plate offerings which were lost to Covid restrictions on in-person attendance. It should be noted that even though the building is “closed” many expenses remain close to the same as the building still needs heating and other costs.