NOMINATION BIOGRAPHIES – OCTOBER 26, 2025

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.*

Jon Conrad



Jon resides in Hanover Township and has been a member of FPCB since 1985. He and his wife, Suzanne Bleiler-Conrad, were married here by Rev. Keith Brown. Their son Christian (now dean of students and tennis coach at Liberty High School) was baptized here and went through the church's youth programs. Jon has over 35 years' professional experience in Human Resources, and is the retired Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer at Moravian University. He also serves on several local boards. In his spare time, he plays trombone with the Allentown Band (a music passion he shares with his wife) and teaches trombone lessons. Jon writes, "I am hopeful my background can be helpful to FPCB in fulfilling its inclusive mission and outreach in the years ahead."

Linda Filipovits

Linda, a retired medical practice administrator, lives in Allentown and has three adult children and nine grandchildren. A member of FPCB for over 40 years, she currently sings in the Chancel Choir, is a Stephen Minister, serves as co-chair of the Membership Directory Committee, and volunteers as a receptionist in the office. Writes Linda, "I look forward to serving as we seek to broaden our outreach to the community and be a church that is truly welcoming to all."

Jean Hunsicker



Jean joined First Pres in 1977; since then she has been a member of a K-group. She has also served as a Deacon and an Elder, as well as on the Congregational Memorial Committee. She and her husband Bob have two sons and three daughters, along with their spouses, and 13 grandchildren aged 7 – 23. Since Covid, she and Bob have volunteered for Meals on Wheels. About her nomination she says, "Having been a member of this church for many years, I feel privileged to serve once again. This church is going to be facing many changes, very soon. [Blessed] by belonging to this church for almost 50 years, I am familiar with its history. I love this church and the people in it. I would like to participate in planning our future together."

Ted Masthay



Ted and his wife Bekah live in Bethlehem Township with their four children, who were all baptized at FPCB. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Political Science at DeSales University and became a member of the congregation in 2022. Upon first attending FPCB, Ted and his family felt extremely welcomed in every possible way. Having served a previous term on Session, he is energized about the direction this congregation is heading and is thrilled to be a part of the team to help discern what that ultimately looks like.

Aileen Williams



Aileen is new to Pennsylvania and the Presbyterian Church, but not new to church participation. A 45-year member of a United Methodist Church in California, Aileen served as chair of their memorial committee, was head shopper and bagger for the food pantry, director of handbell choirs, and a church school teacher. She retired from teaching grades K - 8 in the California public schools, and then she and her husband, Barry, moved across country to be near children and grandchildren. FPCB's mission focus that seeks to help meet housing needs in Bethlehem, along with meaningful sermons and an expansively welcoming congregation, all added to Aileen's desire to become a member of the church, start a new K group, join the handbell choir, check out the Hearts N Minds class, and serve where asked to serve. She says, "I will do my best to faithfully serve our church community in this role."

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.*

Debbie Castellano



Writes Debbie: "I was baptized and confirmed in the Lutheran faith, which has been a source of strength and guidance through all the phases of my life. Before starting a family, I dedicated 18 years to Macy's West, where I served in multiple roles including manager, buyer (for 40 stores), in-house teacher, and college recruiter. In 1998, our family settled in the Lehigh Valley. I am blessed with two children, Kristian and Alex. Before retiring at 62, I worked as an office manager for two companies (at different times). Since settling here, I have actively taken part in the community. I have served as a PTO treasurer and fundraiser, and I have also volunteered my time with New Bethany Ministries as office staff and fund raiser for Souper-day, in addition to Luminaria captain for my neighborhood. This past February, I lost my mother. Seeking solace and a sense of belonging, I began attending FPCB last April. The warmth and welcome I received from the congregation were truly awe-inspiring. Since then, I have become involved in the mentoring program and a K group. I am deeply grateful for the faith and community that FPCB provides. It is an honor to be a part of this caring and supportive environment, and I look forward to continuing my involvement and contributing to the church's mission."

Marie Rosenthal



Marie lives in Bethlehem with her husband. They joined FPC-Bethlehem in 1991 after finding the church through our Preschool. They have two adult sons and three grandchildren. She is blessed to be a member of a K-Group. At First Pres, she is a current deacon, and is involved in creating a Manual of Operations and serving as a substitute receptionist. She volunteers with the Bethlehem Emergency Shelter. Over the years, she has served on the Nominating Committee and has been involved in childcare, youth ministry, home Communion, and a variety of other ministries. She continues to work at LVHN as a hospital pharmacist on a part-time basis. She enjoys traveling, reading and working out. She is looking forward to what's next!

Jean Toulouse

Jean has been a member of the church for 25 years and on the Lehigh University faculty since 1984. He and his wife have four children. Jean has always been active in religious activities, and most recently is a member of the Chancel Choir.

Nominating Committee

*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.*

Rebecca Gorton

Rebecca Gorton joined First Presbyterian in 1977. Becky has the good fortune of being in a K-Group during all these years along with her husband, Rich. She has served as a Deacon, with a term as Head of Deacons. She has also been a Session member, Sunday School teacher, Preschool Board member, member of the Kirk Center Building Committee, and a Mentor at Donegan Elementary School. She trusts that parishioners will respond to the 'Call to Serve' ensuring that First Presbyterian continues to be all that it can be.

Belle Marks



Belle and her husband, who live in Bethlehem, have attended FPCB for over 30 years, and she joined the church in 2001. She and 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, and completed her second term as a Trustee (vice-president and president). She currently serves on the Mission Strategy Steering Committee and Endowment Committee. She is a nurse and works in public health administration at the Allentown Health Bureau. Among other things, she serves on local boards and international health organizations. She writes: "I am enthusiastic about the direction the church is taking and want to contribute."

Bekah Masthay



Bekah and her husband Ted, and their four children, Mina, Marko, Malin and Michele, live in Bethlehem Township. They joined FPCB four years ago, and attend regularly; the children have all been baptized here. She is an elementary school teacher in the Bethlehem Area School District. Bekah writes, "This church has been a blessing to our family since we started attending in December of 2021. We were welcomed and loved immediately. It's been wonderful to find a church community to build and grow relationships when we live so far from family. Our children are so excited to attend every week and having them build connections and learn about God is heartening. To be able to invest more in the church, the community, to build relationships with the congregation, and continue to build roots would be an honor."

Pam Phillippe



Pam has been a member of FPCB for more than 30 years, but has become more joyfully connected since the schism. She has enjoyed greeting and ushering, getting to know and supporting our Afghan family, mentoring at Donegan Elementary School, and participating in the intergenerational Body N Soul class. She lives in Bethlehem and is retired from teaching in Southern Lehigh School District. Pam has two children and four grandchildren, and looks forward to contributing to the community of faith and mission that is FPCB.

Froy Thompson

Froy has been a member of the church for over 50 years and has always been active in the church, serving, among many other things, as a deacon and elder, Sunday school teacher, and Youth Club cook. She and her late husband Dick have one grown daughter, Jennifer, who lives in Lexington, KY. She continues her participation in Hearts N Minds and K-groups, and volunteers in the office and as an usher and greeter. As a member of the Nominating Committee, Froy is committed to the process through which we select leaders of the congregation.

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.*

Sue Nelson



Susan lives in Moore Township and was a member of FPCB for eight years in the 1990s, but has recently returned in 2021 as a member. In the 1990s, she assisted with Bible Studies, ushered, participated in a K-Group, and joined a group of individuals who were asked to call members in order to keep in touch with them. Recently, Susan has been involved in a K-Group and the Board of Trustees, as the recording secretary. Prior to being retired, she had worked in the Program Development Department at Hunterdon Developmental Center for 35 years, where she was responsible for running the team meetings for each individual. While attending her previous church, Susan volunteered in the Children's Ministry Office and assisted the Children's Ministry Director. She has also been on a number of mission trips to Philippi, WV, where she assisted with the VBS program, and to New Orleans where she assisted with construction. Susan writes, "In my journey of faith, FPCB has become so important to me that I would love to have the opportunity to assist in ensuring its sustainability."

Glenn Rossetti

Glenn has been a member of the Church for approximately 40 years and part of many K groups for many for over 20 years. He has also served on the Endowment Committee, the Building Committee, and the Communion Committee. He has also been a greeter and usher. He and his wife Darla have been married for 60 years and have three adult children and six grandchildren. Now retired, Glenn enjoys tennis, golf, and biking.