## SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, AND NOVEMBER SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- Throughout the Fall, the Building Reopening Task Force has continued meeting to revise our policies as needed while the COVID pandemic evolves. Currently Session has approved the following the following policies:
  - Continue to maintain a 3-foot distance between households/pods when seated.
  - Eating and drinking will be allowed at certain events/activities with approval and with the following stipulations: masks must be worn at all times except when eating/drinking and food and beverages are only to be consumed within family groups or pods and at specific locations.
  - Masks must be worn at all times unless eating or drinking.
- Session also approved guidelines for the Christmas Eve services. Masks are required and three-foot distancing maintained with the ushers helping enforce the distancing. Friendship pads will be used to keep track of attendees in the event of an outbreak.
- Earlier in the fall, Session approved in-person meetings provided that all attendees 12 years of age and older are vaccinated and all attendees wear masks. A virtual option will be provided, if needed, for those not vaccinated.
- Session approved recommendations from Trustees and the Reopening Task Force that all outside group attendees at meetings/events must be vaccinated (e.g., Bach Choir, Boy Scouts). Each outside group is responsible for providing compliance with vaccination requirements.
- The Rev. Lindsey Altvater Clifton's installation service was held Sunday, September 12 followed by a reception.
- Staff and volunteer receptionists returned to in person coverage of the office on November 8.
- Session accepted with regret and appreciation the retirement of Rebecca Angione, Facilities Director, effective December 31, 2021.
- Session approved, at the request of the Personnel and Finance committees, the hiring of Oscar Mendoza in the full-time exempt position as Director of Business Administration.

- With much regret and appreciation, Session accepted the retirement of The Rev. Sue Bennetch effective October 3 following the annual Blessing of the Animals. A reception, coordinated by the Congregational Life Committee, was held on October 3.
- Kyle Willans, part-time Facilities I incumbent will be reducing his hours as he begins a new job with Bitty and Beau's coffee shop in downtown Bethlehem.
- Session with regret and appreciation, accepted the resignation of Elder Mark Ferguson. Mark is relocating out of the area; his position will be filled during the annual nominating process.
- Session approved that the Thanksgiving Eve offering was donated to the Deacons Fund.
- Session approved the request of the Personnel Committee to designate December 27 and 28 as Christmas Eve/Day holidays and December 29 and 30 as New Year's Eve/Day as observed holidays. This was necessitated because this year the eve holidays are on Fridays when the office is normally closed and Christmas and New Year's Day fall on Saturdays.
- Session approved the hiring of Edward Ortiz to fill the Facilities I position vacated by Kyle Willans.
- Session approved the request of the Mission Committee to sign a contract with Bethany Christian Service as a co-sponsoring congregation for a refugee family. We're hoping to be paired with an Afghan refugee family, but it may be a family from elsewhere depending on the need at the time. Although a family is not in the area at this time, preliminary work is beginning and an FPCB committee will be formed. At least two additional congregations have indicated their desire to support these efforts (Metropolitan Community Church of the Lehigh Valley and Christ Presbyterian Church of the Slate Belt). Although the minimum contract is six months, the more likely commitment will be 12-18 months. As costs will most likely exceed the Mission Budget, it is anticipated that the St. Andrew's Fund from endowments can be used to provide funding pending approval from Session and Trustees. More details and opportunities will be available following the Christmas holidays.
- The Worship committee and David Macbeth hosted Emmitt Cahill in concert in September and St. Tikhon's Choir will participate in the Christmas Joy Concert.

- Elder JoAnne Turcotte is serving as the liaison with the Preschool and as such serves on the Preschool's Board. The annual mum sale in the fall was a great success in part due to the generous support of the congregation.
- The Engagement Committee, under Chair Kari Keyock, has updated the church website, prepared/sent postcards announcing Advent activities and in coordination with other committees is creating a procedure to welcome and engage guests to the church. It is also including the Preschool and Kirkland in mailings, etc. as appropriate.
- The Engagement committee is also working on updating/revising the FPCB history and is in the process of collecting information including information any of you may have to share with them. Contact information will be available in the newsletter after the holidays.

Session joins me in wishing all a blessed Christmas season and a healthy, peaceful new year.